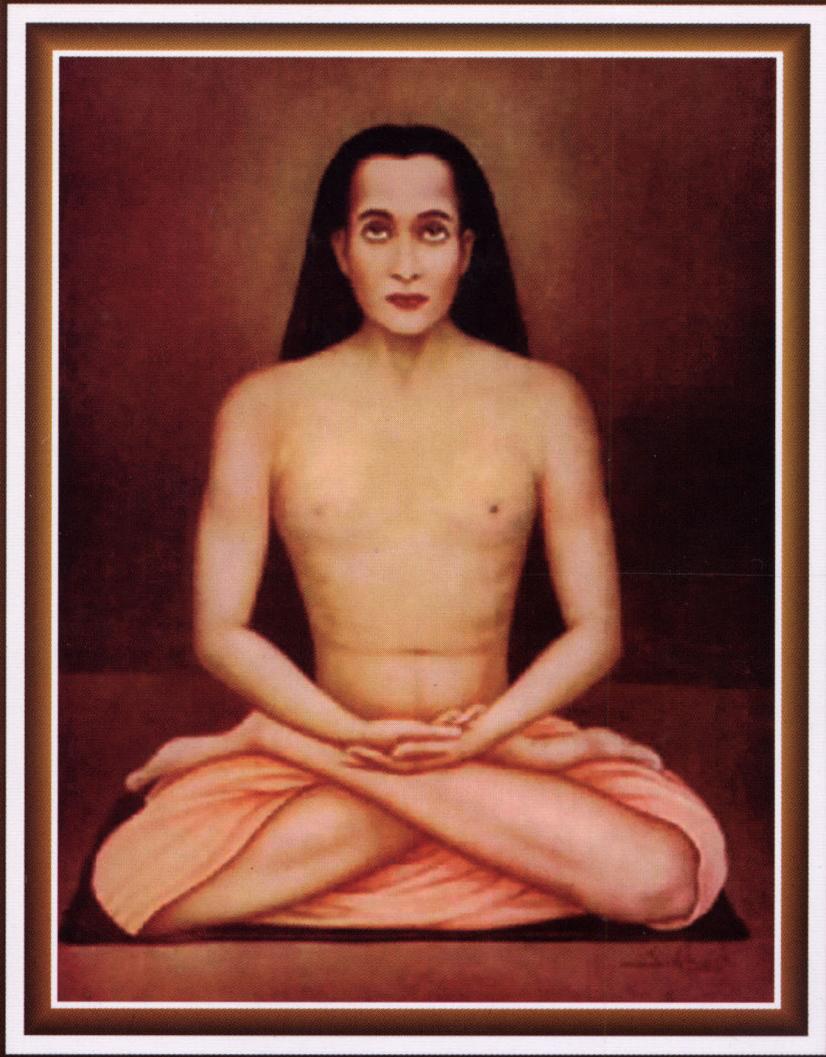


Kriyā-yoga

The Science of Life-force

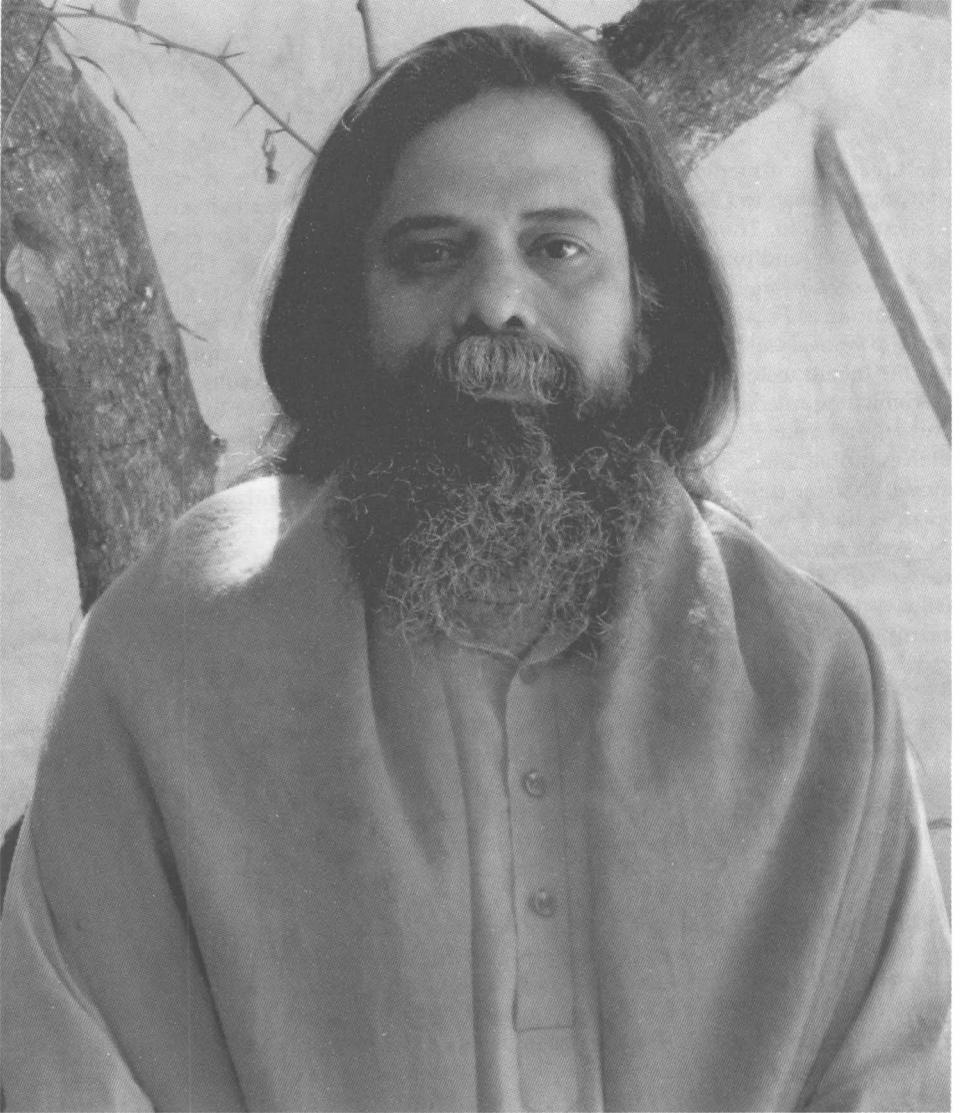


Swāmī Nityānanda Giri

Kriyā-yoga: The Science of Life-force

The breath-based meditation “Kriyā-yoga” is a familiar name after its reintroduction by Mahāvātara Bābāji to Lāhiḍi Mahāśaya and subsequent work of Paramahansa Yogānanda in the western world. Though many literatures are available but the lack of clear exposition on the philosophy and practices of this ancient spiritual science is still felt. The book, *Kriyā-yoga: The Science of Life-force* tries to fulfill this want. This work vividly explains “the Knowledge of Life-force” known as *Prāṇavidyā*, which forms the basis of Kriyā-yoga citing from Vedas, Upaniṣads, *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, *Yogasūtras* of Patañjali and many other ancient scriptures, and analyzes how the breath technique quiets the mind, brings equanimity and results in development of discriminating intelligence that answers the questions and purpose of human life. This also gives an understanding on our inner reading, the principles and practices form auspicious resolves, noble faith, self-effort and austerities from righteousness, *yama*, and observances, *niyama*, up to the transcendental state, *samādhi*, those form the appendages of this treatise, and describes how the breath-based practices and meditations described herein are necessary for a seeker to remain healthy and attain the Knowledge. The body principle, *śarīra tattva*, is also anatomized using both biological and spiritual sciences to accelerate spiritual practice and to facilitate the understanding on life and death, gross to causal bodies, five sheaths, five vital breaths, three knots, seven energy centers and their working. The most important aspect for readers and seekers is that for the first time they will find the secret techniques of Kriyā-yoga, viz., Nābhi Kriyā, Khecari *mudrā*, Guru Praṇāma, Haṁsa, *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā*, Mahāmudrā, Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā, Ṭhokar Kriyā, Jyoti *mudrā*, Sāmbhavi *mudrā*, and different techniques of meditation, e.g., *Aum*, twelve-lettered Vāsudeva mantra, inner-mātrkā and outer-mātrkā meditations, etc. are revealed, and explained in details citing their illustrations in Upaniṣads and ancient yogic scriptures and enumerating the rationale and scientific approach behind such practices and benefits involved.

His Holiness Swāmī Nityānanda Giri was born in 1961 in a remote village in Odisha State, India. He completed his post-graduate studies, MSc in Zoology in 1983 and obtained PhD on the subject in the branch Cytogenetics (Genotoxicity) in 1990. He was engaged in teaching to post-graduate and undergraduate students of Life Sciences in a prestigious institute of India from 1990 to 1996. From 1997 to 2002, he was engaged in social services related to health awareness and health services management. He was initiated to the Kriyā-yoga meditation techniques in January 1994 and belongs to the tradition of Śrīyukteśwarajī. He renounced all social and family obligations in June 2002 to become a monk and started living a monastic life at Rishikesh, the Himalayas. He is a revered monk and a master in the tradition of Kriyā-yoga. On occasions, he teaches and initiates seekers to the Kriyā-yoga meditation techniques in India and abroad from September 2005 onwards to disseminate the knowledge received from the masters of the lineage as a mission. He is living the life of a wandering monk from June 2008, monasteries in the Himalayas being his main abode.



The author of this book, Swāmī Nityānanda Giri

Kriyā-yoga: The Science of Life-force

Swāmī Nityānanda Giri



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To the Master who is the God and the Self

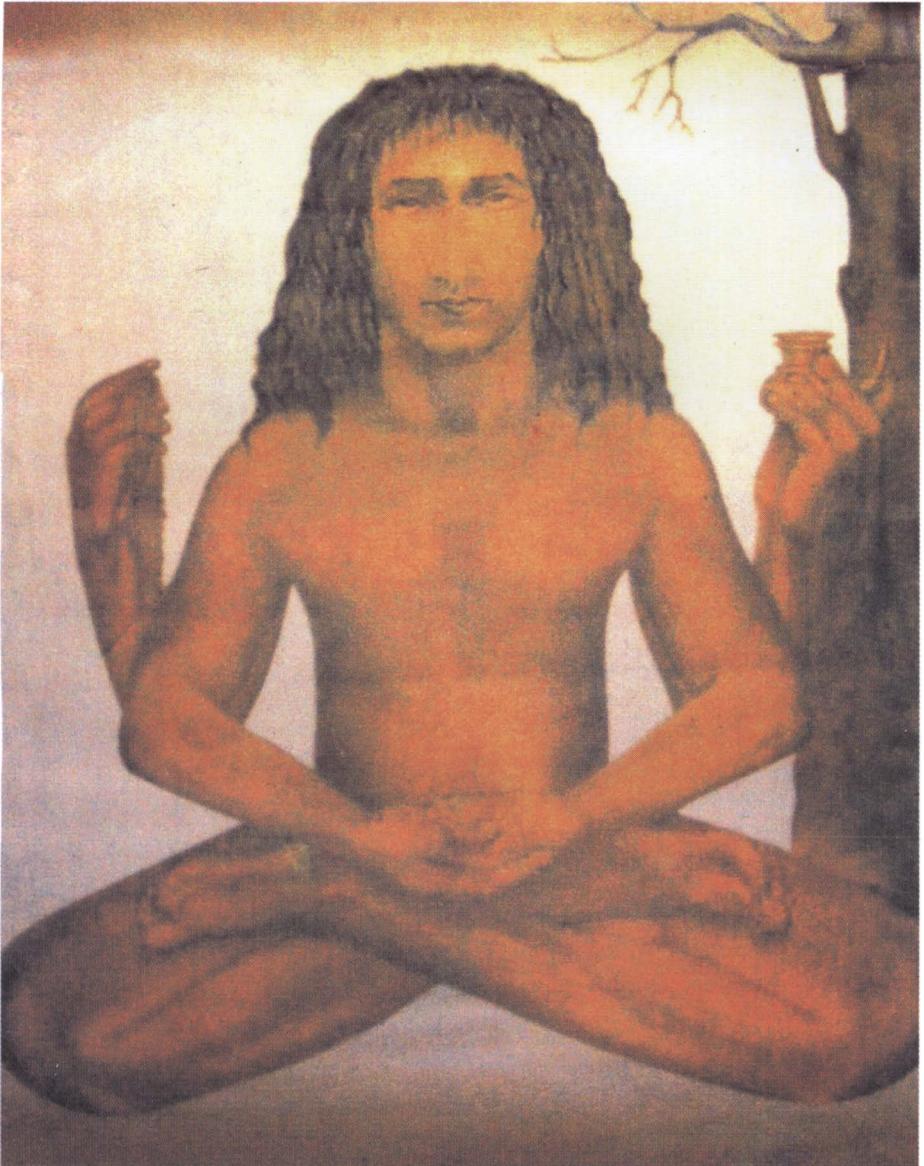
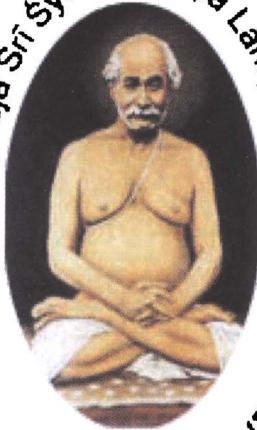


Image of a sketch believed to be about two-hundred-years old found in Uttarakhand, India, drawn by the then Chief Priest of Lord Badrinath Temple, Badrinath Dham. Some believe this as a portrait of Mahāvatāra Bābājī while others believe as that of Lord Badrinath who gave *darśana* to the priest. May be both are correct since it is the same principle that is the Lord and the Master.



The Divine Mother Dakṣiṇakālī: The deity of Pauldouna, Amgaon in Gondia district of Maharashtra where this book is written.

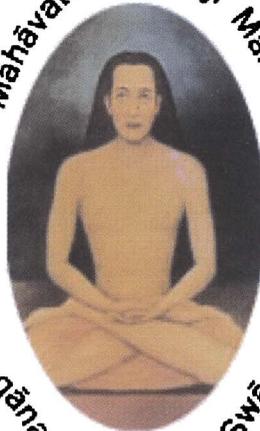
Yogirāja Śrī Śyāmācarāṇa Lāhijī Mahāśāya



Swāmi Śrīyukteśwara Giri Mahārāja



Mahāvātāra Bābājī Mahārāja

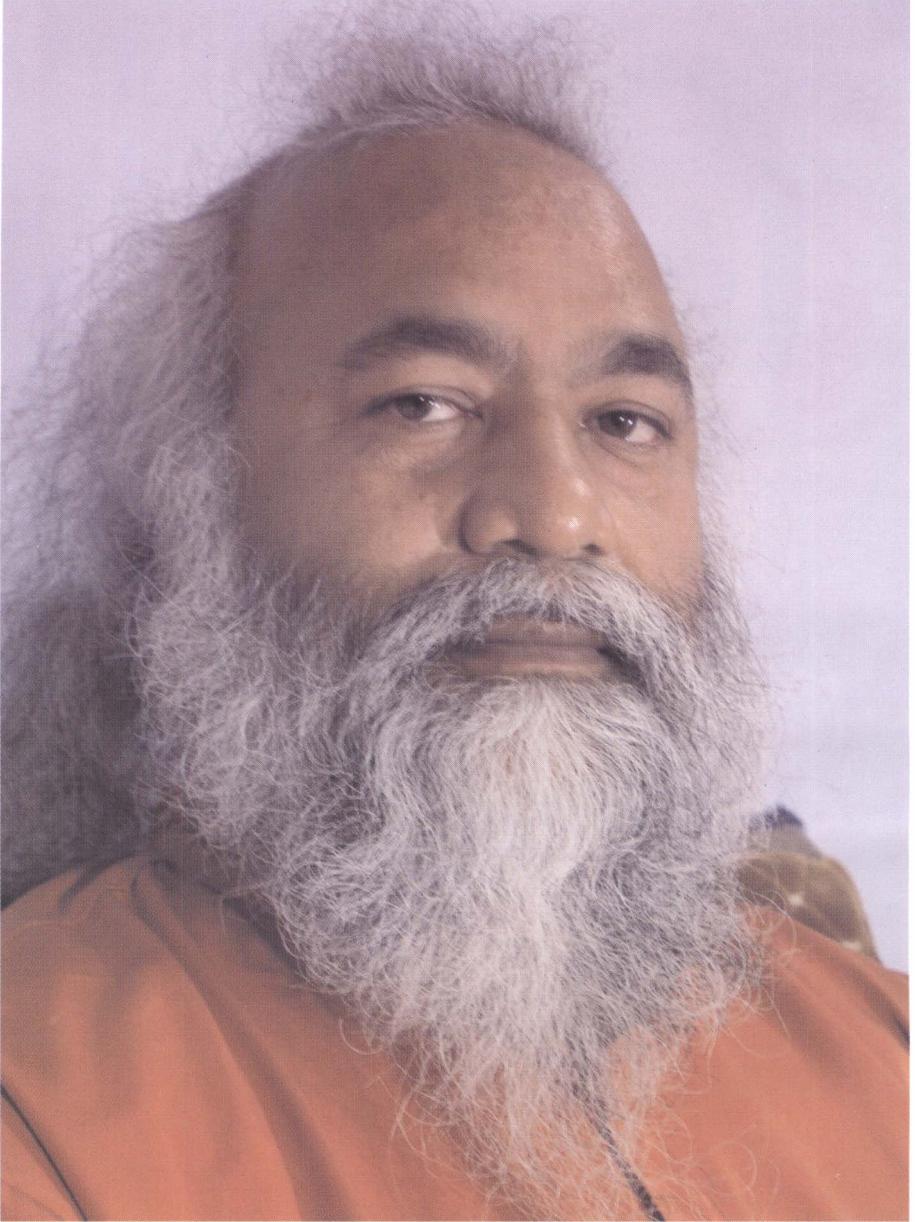


Paramahansa Yogānanda



Prabhuji Swāmi Nārāyaṇa Giri Mahārāja





His Holiness Swāmi Śaṅkarānanda Giri, the master who taught the Kriyā-yoga techniques to the author.

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Preface

In the beginning it is important to mention that in order to understand the philosophical aspects of knowledge we need philosophies, but after gaining an understanding we must resort to practice. Otherwise our understanding will simply become a form of intellectual gymnastics that will result in fighting between the adherents of the different philosophies as has happened in the past. But one who practices finds the Truth therein, puts an end to all differences. Yoga is more a practice than a philosophy and it does not believe in contradicting other philosophies. We need not have deep philosophical knowledge, if we do practice in a proper way, we will know. To find the proper way we need the knowledge from scriptures and/or a master who is realized or in the process of being realized. Again, to confirm the knowledge of our own spiritual experiences, to ascertain whether they are real or the result of hallucinations or mental manipulation we need the help from the scriptures and/or from the masters to correct us in our practice. But without practice, if we simply have the bookish knowledge then that can be devastating.

But why do we need a spiritual journey? The simple answer is because we need happiness in our life. With all our physical and material sciences and ideas of the philosophies we tried to obtain it and we failed. The reason is we are in a prison and not free men and what we do is within the boundaries of our prison whereas happiness lies in breaking the boundaries of the prison. Our prison is the world, *samsāra*, and the boundaries of our prison are the ideas revolving round the senses, the sense-organs and the sense-oriented objects and our preconceived mental occupation in finding pleasure in this outer world. I do not say that the outer world is to be out rightly rejected but it should be accepted as it is with all its limitations. While we need bliss we are lost in search of pleasure that is always associated with pain. And the warden of our prison is our mind and he gets command from his big boss, the ego. We create our own pain and pleasure due to the attachments and aversions we have in our own mind. Like Lord Kṛṣṇa, we take birth inside the prison and unlike Him we die inside the prison. To make us free from our prison Lord Kṛṣṇa is waiting to take birth within us.

Once Lord Kṛṣṇa is born, the gates of the prison will open automatically and the guards of the prison will fall asleep. No prison can confine the Lord; we simply have to know by our own practice and experience that we are the Kṛṣṇa. Reading the scriptures cannot do this. For that we have to conceive, brood and give birth to Him; and He is always with us, He is our *prāṇa*, the *Prāṇa-kṛṣṇa*, Kṛṣṇa the Life-force. But without that practice and without attaining that state, inside this prison our life-races from birth to death thinking that we are progressing and evolving. Then we start a fresh race and take birth again to commit the same mistake, “*punarapi jananam punarapi maranam janani jathare punarapi sayanam*,” again a birth, again a death and again sleeping in the womb of a mother (*Mohamudgara*).

Amid this, we will, at one point, have to ponder over these questions as the Vedic ṛṣi-s did, to ask ourselves who we are and what our life is for, from where we come and where we go. The ṛṣi-s knew and recorded the answers to these questions in scriptures but the knowledge of the scriptures and the philosophies reply to these questions only intellectually and do not solve our problems. We have to walk on our own for our freedom; we have to know that through the experience of the journey of our life. Without answering these questions we are subjected to birth and death again and again. We have to know that our true nature is immortal. Though the philosophical knowledge is necessary it can take us to imagination whilst our practice will lead us to realization. We have to know that our life is a journey to our own divine kingdom. We have to be a Sañjaya and not the blind king Dhṛtarāṣṭra who refuses to receive the divine vision from Ṛṣi Vyāsa. Vyāsa is vastness, Vyāsa is Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Kṛṣṇa, Vyāsa is Master, Vyāsa is Infinity, Vyāsa is the knower of Truth and the knower of Truth becomes the Truth itself. Vyāsa was a sage who reached that state. He is always sitting and waiting within us, ready to give us the divine vision but our blind mind, the king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, does not want to receive it. It is Sañjaya, who has control over the senses; sense-organs and the mind can have it. A person having control over sense-organs and mind receives divine vision. In the process of our evolution to the Divine, we have to do spiritual practices to win over the mind. And that is to train our mind to go beyond likes and dislikes to enable us to live in love and tranquility.

The breath, *prāṇavāyu*, does that training since the mind is absorbed in the vital force, *prāṇa*, and the senses follow the mind. By training our mind we can cultivate friendship (*maitrī*) with happy and prosperous (*sukha*) objects (*viṣayāṇām*, persons, places, situations, events or objects) instead of cravings, cultivate kindness (*karuṇā*) with the suffering (*duḥkha*) ones instead of aversion, cultivate contentment (*muditāḥ*) with ones of nobility (*puṇya*) instead of jealousy, and cultivate indifference (*upekṣā*) to those in the wrong path (*apuṇya*) instead of a feeling of revenge to remain in a mind full of bliss (*cittaprasādanam*), “*maitrīkaruṇāmuditopekṣāṇām sukhaduḥkhapuṇyā-puṇyaviṣayāṇām bhāvanātaś-*

cittaprasādanam." (Ygs., 1.33.) Here a mental contemplation is not denied but such a mental contemplation is to be based on vital energy. Breath based practices decrease desires by giving energy to the mind and intellect so that the discriminating ability is enhanced. For this first we have to do the breath technique, *prāṇakarma*, the technique of exhalation and inhalation, "*pracchardana-vidhāraṇābhyām vā prāṇasya.*" (Ibid., 1.34.) This leads to a breathless and thoughtless state, and when such a state is achieved then that results in, *tataḥ kṣiyate prakāśā'varaṇam* (ibid., 2.52), by that the veil of manifestation is thinned or the veil that covers the knowledge is thinned. Manifestation is *prakāśa*, light; knowledge is also *prakāśa*. This veil of manifestation covers the Knowledge. We are deluded by the outer world through our sense-organs and mind. By practicing *prāṇāyāma* or breathing techniques and attaining the breathless state, which is also a thoughtless state, again and again, we enter into state of sense withdrawal, concentration, meditation and then the transcendental state. This develops discriminating intellect and weakens the *karma* that covers the Principle of Self due to misapprehension. Finally there is eradication of false knowledge leading to liberation.

Our life is a journey to the Divine, from animal being to rational being and finally to the divine being. It is our own lost kingdom. Nobody has thrown us out of it; it is only our ego, our wrong identity with the body-mind interactions that has derailed us. This is subjected to death again and again. We have to leave this wrong identity till we answer the above questions through our life. We have to know that we are Truth, the Pure Existence. This physical death is nothing but the womb of Mother Nature to give us temporary rest for rebirth till we complete our evolution to the Divine. Similar to sleep this rest is also under the influence of sloth, *tamas*, rather in deep *tamas*, and since it lasts much longer its end remembers nothing. As we need sleep after a days work, we need death after the day of our life in order to take rest; otherwise with all our sorrows and miseries, with wrong identity and desires we will simply move in this world as psychic patients. Death and re-birth give us chance again and again for our evolution to the Divine. Do our births follow the theories of evolution that we study in biology classes, be they Lamarckian or Darwinian? The answer is both yes and no, yes in a secondary phase of material evolution from matter to life ending with modern humans. No, in a primary phase because there is nothing else but Truth, Consciousness and Bliss. It has never deviated from its own form. By its own nature it appears as matter and by its own nature it evolves into human intellect. Though immortality is always with us due to our ego we are dying in each moment. Our process of development lies with the annihilation of our ego, to kill the death called ego and to remove the darkness caused by it. The real happiness will then descend. For that we need to win over the senses and the mind. That is our practice and that is done through our *prāṇa*, the Life-force. In order to know

the *prāṇa* we have to know our breath, *prāṇavāyu*, which is always with us from birth to death. Simply we have to hold the two feet of *prāṇa*, inhalation and exhalation, the rest will follow. This Knowledge of the Life-force, *prāṇavidyā*, is the Kriyā-yoga; this is *kaivalya-yoga*, yoga of the One and Only.

We know that we need sleep every day to give rest to our mind and body but, as can be felt in daily life, that rest is not sufficient. What happens in deep sleep? The body, the sense-organs and the mind take rest and only our Life-force, *prāṇa*, and breath, *prāṇavāyu*, are awake. That is a rest but still it is done in a state of ignorance. Here the barrier between our causal body and subtle body is so strong due to qualities of darkness, *tamas*, that knowledge of Consciousness that we receive in deep sleep is not transmitted to our subtle body such as our mind when we are awake. The only thing we know upon waking is that we had a good sleep. We have to do the same thing in meditation that is done in deep sleep but do it with knowledge. In meditation we give rest to the body, the sense-organs and the mind while only vital force, *prāṇa*, is awake; even our breath may be suspended. However, since it is done with inner consciousness it transmits the knowledge to our subtle body, mind and intellect. That also gives abundant energy, which we never get in sleep. That is the reason sleep is said to be like unconscious meditation, and meditation is said to be like conscious sleep. In sleep it is the qualities of darkness, *tamoguṇa*, while meditation begins with the qualities of action, *rajoguṇa*, and settles with the qualities of calmness, *sattvagūṇa*, resulting in knowledge in *samādhi* when we go beyond the three qualities, *triguṇātīta*. As we need sleep so we need daily meditation.

Kriyā-yoga has now become a household name among westerners and urban elites of India though people still do not have a clear-cut understanding of it. Though we find many books on Kriyā-yoga the lack of clear exposition on its philosophy and practice is still felt very much. So many myths and misunderstandings are gaining ground regarding name and techniques. One of the reasons may be that present day masters of the tradition are more interested in teaching this in the west rather than in India. Though humanity is one and seekers from the west have equal rights, then in the same logic the seekers from India must not be neglected. A true master belongs to the cosmos. The second reason is the secrecy involved in the techniques. The secrecy was introduced with a view that a precious gem cannot be sold in the open market thereby bringing the suspicion of genuineness and the danger of having fallen into the hands of undesirable and not-so-serious people. Again secrecy developed interest among the masses to learn and practice it. So the purpose of secrecy was not to hide but rather to give to the public. Another aspect we learn from history is that in the name of secrecy, the teachers of yoga and tantra have only helped in the extinction of the precious techniques for knowledge. This sometimes brings additions and alterations that are not in accordance with the spirit of the scriptures though

additions and alterations, which facilitate progress and adhere to the teachings of scriptures, are always welcome. Over the ages it has been seen that due to hiding the techniques distorted variations appeared and, particularly in the name of *tantra*, many practices diametrically opposed to spirituality were introduced and are still in practice giving a bad name to a system that has nothing to do with those things. But we have to see that we are now in a completely revolutionary age of information and technology, which was not even thought of twenty years back. Now due to the development of technologies and various other factors the techniques are no more hidden and it is not even possible to keep them hidden. Moreover the scriptures have already described these techniques. A reader will find how the scriptures describe these techniques in this book in general and on the fourth chapter of the book in particular. So question arises since the scriptures donot hide the techniques then why should a book written on the subject does not describe the techniques. Hence it is time to discuss rather than hide and a middle way is to be accepted to keep the balance. I know many masters and organizations will not agree with me but I tried to act according to my conscience. Readers are always advised to learn them not from books but from a master and those who do so from a book it is at their personal risk. The book is only to clarify and help.

While going through the book it is advised that a reader should start from the beginning of the book to the end in the manner it is written, but one can even start from either any of the first three chapters. After finishing the first three chapters one can proceed to the fourth chapter. Verses, phrases and words in Sanskrit are given in italics and for that one has to follow transliteration. Readers unfamiliar with Sanskrit can skip them and go on reading only in English. I have tried to present in a manner so that the meaning and understanding is not lost even if one skips Sanskrit. However, any suggestions for improvements in subsequent editions will be highly appreciated. For suggestions please mail to swnityananda@gmail.com

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Rishikesh

30 November 2012

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Om Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya

When I was studying in class IV, my father gave me a copy of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, and asked me to read from it everyday, one Sanskrit verse along with translation to my native Odiya language. That was the beginning of my systematic spiritual training from my childhood days. Later, when I was a student of class VIII, he gave me a book named *Essence of Yoga* authored by the world famous Yogī Brahmaliṅa Swāmī Śivānanda Saraswatī and my maternal uncle introduced me to meditation through the teachings of Yogī Śrī Aurobindo. In this way I was introduced to the path of yoga and meditation. It is not possible to record here all those who have contributed to my spiritual life, however, I have learned many values to walk in my life from my mother. I learned the Kriyā-yoga techniques from His Holiness Swāmī Śaṅkarānanda Giri Mahārāj in January 1994, who later taught me the higher *kriyā*-s and initiated me to be a monk. I acknowledge all his contributions on my life with great humiliation. He gave me insight into the Kriyā-yoga, and influenced me to be firmly grounded in the field of spiritualism. I also acknowledge the contribution of Swāmī Kālikānanda Mahārāj for his teachings on Second Kriyā Techniques. During my stay at Sītā Ramaṇī Cave Ashram at Baijnath in Himachal Pradesh in 2008–9 and in Acyutānanda Ashram, Gourikund at Gangotri in 2009, I studied and contemplated on the teachings of Upaniṣads and commentaries of Bhagavatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, which had shown the seed for writing this book. This gave me the understanding how these scriptures pronounce the science of Life-force, and my understanding of Kriyā-yoga became more scriptural. I acknowledge the grace of Swāmī Premānanda Mahārāj of Harihar Kailāsa Jñānapīṭha of Rishikesh who allowed me to stay and meditate at those ashrams. In December 2009 when I was conducting a Kriyā-yoga camp at Kalibadi, Pauldouna in Amgaon tehsil of Gondia district in Maharashtra, Prof. Mahadeorao Shiwankar, Founder President, Mahākālī Siddhapīṭha, Amgaon, insisted me on writing a book on Kriyā-yoga. He said to me, “Swamijee, please write down those what you speak to us and that will be a good book.” I returned back to Kalibadi after attending the last rites festival (*ṣoḍaśī*) of Kriyā-yogī

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I am delighted that this book is being published in the 150th year of teaching of Kriyā-yoga by Mahāvatāra Bābājī to Lāhiḍi Bābā, and I accept this as blessings from the masters.

Transliteration and Pronunciation Key to Sanskrit Texts

अ	a	as	o	in son	द	ḍh	as	dh	in godhood
आ	ā	as	a	in car	ण	ṇ	as	n	in under
इ	i	as	i	in pin	त्	t	as	French t	
ई	ī	as	ee	in feel	थ	th	as	th	in thumb
उ	u	as	u	in put	द्	d	as	th	in mother
ऊ	ū	as	oo	in boot	ध	dh	as	theh	in breathe hard
ऋ	ṛ	somewhat between r and ri			न्	n	as	n	in number
ए	e	as	a	in play	प्	p	as	p	in pause
ऐ	ai	as	y	in my	फ्	ph	as	f	in further
ओ	o	as	o	in over	ब्	b	as	b	in butter
औ	au	as	ow	in cow	भ्	bh	as	bh	in abhor
क्	k	as	k	in king	म्	m	as	m	in mother
ख्	kh	as	ckh	in blockhead	य्	y	as	y	in youth
ग्	g	as	g	in gate	र्	r	as	r	in run
घ्	gh	as	gh	in log-hut	ल्	l	as	l	in luck
ङ्	ṅ	as	ng	in ring	व्	v	as	v	in avert
च्	c	as	ch	in check	श्	ś	as	sh	in brushes
छ्	ch	as	chh	in catch	ष	ṣ	as	sh	in show
ज्	j	as	j	in jug	स्	s	as	s	in son
झ	jh	as	dgeh	in hedgehog	ह्	h	as	h	in hunger
ञ्	ñ	somewhat like n			क्ष	kṣ	as	ksh	in worksheet
ट्	ṭ	as	t	in torch	ज्ञ	jñ	as		in jñāna
ठ्	ṭh	as	th	in ant-hill	:	ḥ	as	half h	in huh last h
ड्	ḍ	as	d	in duck	·	m̄	as	m	in hum

Abbreviations

<i>AV</i>	<i>Atharvaveda</i>
<i>Asg.</i>	<i>Aṣṭāvakraḡitā</i>
<i>AU</i>	<i>Akṣamālikopaniṣad</i>
<i>Ai. U</i>	<i>Aitareyopaniṣad</i>
<i>Br. U</i>	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad</i>
<i>Bb. U</i>	<i>Brahmabindūpaniṣad</i>
<i>BVU</i>	<i>Brahmaavidyopaniṣad</i>
<i>Ch. U</i>	<i>Chāndogyopaniṣad</i>
<i>Das.</i>	<i>Devyātharvaṇasīrṣopaniṣad</i>
<i>Db. U</i>	<i>Dhyānabindūpaniṣad</i>
<i>G Ka.</i>	<i>Gauḍapādakārikā</i>
<i>GS</i>	<i>Goraḡśasamhitā</i>
<i>Gh. S</i>	<i>Gheraṇḡasamhitā</i>
<i>GUU</i>	<i>Gopālottaratāpinyupaniṣad</i>
<i>HU</i>	<i>Hamsopaniṣad</i>
<i>Īś. U</i>	<i>Īsopaniṣad</i>
<i>JU</i>	<i>Jābāladarśanopaniṣad</i>
<i>Ka. U</i>	<i>Kāthopaniṣad</i>
<i>Kau. U</i>	<i>Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇopaniṣad</i>
<i>Ke. U</i>	<i>Kenopaniṣad</i>
<i>LS</i>	<i>Lalitā-sahasranāma</i>
<i>Mh. U</i>	<i>Mahopaniṣad</i>
<i>MU</i>	<i>Maitreyyupaniṣad</i>
<i>Mai. U</i>	<i>Maitrāyaṇyupaniṣad</i>
<i>MBU</i>	<i>Maṇḡalabrāhmaṇopaniṣad</i>
<i>Mā. U</i>	<i>Māṇḡūkyopaniṣad</i>
<i>Mbh.</i>	<i>Mahābhārata</i>
<i>Mu. U</i>	<i>Muṇḡakopaniṣad</i>
<i>Nb. U</i>	<i>Nāḡabindūpaniṣad</i>
<i>NBS</i>	<i>Nārada Bhaktisūtras</i>

<i>PBU</i>	<i>Pāsupatabrahmoṇiṣad</i>
<i>Pr. U</i>	<i>Praśnoṇiṣad</i>
<i>ṚV</i>	<i>Ṛgveda</i>
<i>RPU</i>	<i>Rāmapūrvatāpinyuṇiṣad</i>
<i>RUU</i>	<i>Rāmottaratāpinuṇiṣad</i>
<i>Śā. U</i>	<i>Śāṇḍilyoṇiṣad</i>
<i>SV</i>	<i>Sāmaveda</i>
<i>Śa. Br</i>	<i>Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa</i>
<i>ŚU</i>	<i>Śātyāyanīyoṇiṣad</i>
<i>Sā.</i>	<i>Sāvitrī</i>
<i>Sds.</i>	<i>Śrīdurgāsaptaśatī</i>
<i>Ś. Bg.</i>	<i>Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā</i>
<i>SBM</i>	<i>Śrīmadbhāgavata-mahāpurāṇa</i>
<i>Śv. U</i>	<i>Śvetāśvataroṇiṣad</i>
<i>Tai. U</i>	<i>Taittirīyoṇiṣad</i>
<i>US</i>	<i>Upadeśasāra</i>
<i>VŚ</i>	<i>Vairāgyaśataka</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vāmakeśvara Tantra</i>
<i>Vkc.</i>	<i>Vivekacūḍāmaṇi</i>
<i>YV</i>	<i>Yajurveda</i>
<i>Yā. S</i>	<i>Yājñavalkyasmṛti</i>
<i>YCU</i>	<i>Yogacūḍāmanyuṇiṣad</i>
<i>YKU</i>	<i>Yogakuṇḍalyuṇiṣad</i>
<i>Ygs.</i>	<i>Yogasūtras</i>
<i>YSU</i>	<i>Yogaśikhoṇiṣad</i>
<i>YTU</i>	<i>Yogatattvoṇiṣad</i>
<i>Ygv.</i>	<i>Yogavāsiṣṭha</i>

1

Introduction

In present day society the word *yoga* is very familiar. But do we actually understand what *yoga* means? As pronunciation of the word has been converted from *yoga* to *yogā*, our understanding has also changed and undergone a series of involution. People's understanding resembles that of blind men's description of an elephant according to their limited perception. Similarly, some understand *yoga* as a set of physical exercises to keep the body fit; some understand it as a series of breathing techniques for good health, release of tension and practices for concentration. Some understand it as a set of physical and breathing exercises for management of diseases and use *yoga* as a therapy, some use it for longevity. For some it is a concentration technique to improve mental power, release tension and increase work efficiency and for those of high understanding this is used to enhance discriminating intelligence. All these are useful, ethical and laudable but these are only parts or by-products of *yoga*. *Yoga* is our real life, it is our life to reveal the light we are. In order to understand *yoga* we have to understand our own life and our own body, both physical and subtle, that which conceals the real "Being" within us. Unfortunately we have an unclear understanding of our life.

Yoga: I will try to give you a simple idea although real understanding will come only through long and uninterrupted practice. *Yoga* means "to join," this is union with our own origin. In fact, we are never separated from our source but we have forgotten our true identity and identify ourselves with our physical body, our mind, our intellect and our ego. Speaking in broad terms, we can say that we are in our mind, *citta*, meaning that we are with the actions of our mind. This situation leads to duality/plurality and is the reason why we need to unite with our true Self. Then the state of unity with our true Self is the transcendental state, *samādhi* or *kaivalya*. And that is done when the actions of our mind are halted or when we reach a state beyond thoughts. Rṣi Patañjali calls this *cittavṛttinīrodhaḥ* (*Ygs.*, 1.2). All that we have understood as *yoga* is simply a part of *yoga* or a by-

product of yoga. Yoga means *samādhi*, it comes from *yuj* which means “to join” (*yujir yoge*) and *samādhi* (*yuj samādhai*); yoga means our evolution to the Divine and yoga means merging the individual self with the Cosmic Self. If we analyze the word *yoga*, we find it is composed of the letters *y*, *o*, *g* and *a*. The letter-*y* (or *ya*), *ya-kāra*, is the air element. It is said, *yañkāra sarvaṅyāpaka pāvana* (AU, 5), the letter-*y* is spread everywhere and pious. The letter-*o*, *o-kāra*, is the form of all sounds; *omonkārahilavānmayā nityasuddha* (ibid.), the letter-*o* is the form of all sounds and is always pure. The letter-*g* (or *ga*), *ga-kāra*, means vastness and that which removes all obstacles; *gañkāra sarvaṅvighnaśamana mahattara* (ibid.), the letter-*g* removes all obstacles and is great. The letter-*a*, *a-kāra*, is one that has no form or has absence of form, *ākāra*, and this is infinite; *omañkāra mṛtyuñjaya sarvaṅyāpaka* (ibid.), the letter-*a* is the winner of death and infinite. Yoga starts with air or breath. Then it goes to subtle breath. Sound vibrations are inherent in air. Vibrations are actions. So *yo* is the action of air. This is our breath and the activities of the subtle breath, *prāṇa*, within our body. Everything first appears in the form of thoughts; those are nothing but sound vibrations. When we go to the subtle breath we feel the life-force, *prāṇa*, in the form of vibrations. The *Om* technique, *soham* repetitions, meditation on single lettered sounds, *mātrkā*s, etc., are different yogic techniques. A practitioner feels the sound vibrations in the body as subtle *prāṇa* to merge the mind in infinity thereby establishing oneself in yoga or the “no thought” state. This leads to the eradication of all obstacles and suffering. By the action of breath, i.e., *yo*, we reach *ga* or infinite bliss. We move from a state of suffering to a state of bliss. This journey is named Yoga.

KRIYĀ-YOGA: A BRIEF NOTE

Kriyā-yoga is the practice part of yoga. Kriyā-yoga is an ancient technique of meditation found in India since time immemorial. This is a very simple and scientific technique based on our vital force, *prāṇa*, our body and our mind. It is a meditation based on our breath. The word *kriyā* is composed of the letters *k*, *r*, *i*, *y*, and *ā*. The letter-*k* (or *ka*), *ka-kāra*, represents the Lord, *Īśvara*. The Transcendental Lord, *Parama Śiva*, when He manifests Himself in the subtle world and makes Himself ready for creation He becomes *Īśvara*. The letter-*r* (or *ra*), *ra-kāra*, represents fire, light and manifestation. Creation is not seen by us with the ether and air elements since these are subtle elements. We are able to see manifestation from the fire element onwards. The letter-*i*, *i-kāra*, represents energy or *śakti*. So *kri* is the activating power of the Lord manifested in creation. This activating power is called *prāṇa* or vital force. The letter-*y* (or *ya*), *ya-kāra*, represents the air element and the letter-*ā*, *ā-kāra*, represents form. For the manifestations to take a form, *ākāra*, the Lord acts with the air element. With the ether element there is no form. The air element or gaseous state is the first created form although we only see the forms from the fire element onwards.

Through the action of air the whole universe is manifested. This is the action of the Life-force, *prāṇakarma*, of the Lord. The word *kriyā* normally means action, but this is the action of God. We are made with the same principle God is. Our identification with the physical body makes us separate from God and this is the state of ignorance. We have to eradicate this ignorance by the action of God, i.e., the action of the breath, *prāṇakarma*. Our mind is the result of ignorance and is responsible for this wrong identification. Breath-practice, *prāṇakarma*, absorbs the mind into vital force. This action of God reverses the process and leads us from body to God. This is why it is so necessary to perform that action. That is our spiritual practice. Then that action, *kriyā*, becomes yoga.

Simple and for All: These Kriyā-yoga techniques do not require any equipment, external means or spiritual aids. We are already equipped with our body, mind and breath and need nothing more for this practice. We do not need to change our clothes to those of a particular sect and we do not need to grow a beard or to put a particular type of paste (normally sandalwood paste, etc.) or colors on our forehead. One need not leave their family for this practice. To live a family life, to have children and even to earn money are not crimes but one should carry out these activities with self-restraint, in an honorable way as per the sanctions of the scriptures and without “stepping onto” others’ rights. A person can lead a blissful life in the world with a family if they have inner knowledge and know that the world is a manifestation of God. As a human being gives birth to a human being, God gives birth to God, it is due to our ignorance that we see the world in place of God. Being tired with the world without having inner knowledge is to simply dwell on limited things. A belief then arises in the seeker to reject them. Such a seeker renounces worldly activities because of their illusory nature, which give momentary pain and pleasure. However, real renunciation is an act in one’s own mind. Though there are exceptions this is the general trend. We cannot be free from pain and pleasure without a proper spiritual practice, i.e., *kriyā* or without an action to clean our mind in order to enable the Knowledge to arise. Kriyā-yoga teaches this both to householders and monks. Kriyā-yoga does not interfere with the religious practices of one’s community or the laws of one’s country. It does not contradict the philosophical or religious beliefs one possesses; rather it shows us the common factor within the different views. We will know the truth from our practice, by our own experience. The result of this practice can be felt quickly. People belonging to all castes, communities, religions, languages, countries, ages and sexes can practice this. This technique is in accordance with the scriptures and is scientifically designed according to our bodily composition. Many practitioners have benefited from it in the past, many are benefiting from it at present and many will be benefited in future.

Brings Unity among Sects: Kriyā-yoga shows the followers of different philosophies, sects, religions and spiritual practices what they have in common. It brings unity

to the believers of dualism, *dvaita*, and non-dualism, *advaita*, showing that the former is the foundation for the later and that our life is a journey from *dvaita* to *advaita*. Kriyā-yoga shows us the common principle of Śaivites, Śāktas, and Vaiṣṇavas, and that they essentially all teach the same Principle, only differing in their mode of expression. This yoga reveals the hidden truth behind the rites and rituals followed in religious practices and the principles hidden behind the forms and manifestations of the different deities. This yoga does not reject the rites, rituals and idol-worship but rather reveals the truth behind them in spiritual sciences in the context of the body, *adhyātma*, and helps the believer to evolve for higher knowledge. For a practitioner of *kriyā* the differences between Śiva and Śivā, Hari and Hara, Kṛṣṇa and Kālī, Īśvara and Allāh, Rāma and Rahīm, and Kṛṣṇa and Christ are finished. In this regard, the work of Paramahansa Yogānanda and Yogada Satsang Society/Self-Realisation Fellowship is laudable in trying to bring about unity among the followers of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Jesus Christ, since the teachings of the masters are the same. Kriyā-yoga does not believe in conversion from one organized sect or religion to another organized sect or religion since it has nothing to do with the outer *kriyā*s or actions of religions but believes in our inner conversion from an animal being to a Divine one.

History: This yogic practice is an eternal tradition beginning with human history. In the Upaniṣads it is described as the knowledge of Life-force, *prāṇavidyā* and as the worship of Life-force, *prāṇopāsanā*. Lord Kṛṣṇa referred to this practice in the *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, particularly in chapters IV, V, and VI. In chap. IV, He said that He had taught this technique to the Sun-god who in turn taught it to his son Manu (to whom the origin of the human race is referred to in scriptures) and Manu taught this to his son Ikṣvāku. In the *Mahābhārata* (12.349.65) and in the *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* Lord Hiraṇyagarbha, Brahmā the Creator, is mentioned as the first profounder of Yoga, “*hiraṇyagarbho yogasya vaktā nānyaḥ purātanaḥ.*” However, Rṣi Patañjali is credited with presenting and encapsulating yoga in its current form in his famous work, the *Yogasūtras*.

The general belief in India is that Lord Śiva and the Goddess Śivā are the deities who have existed from time immemorial, possibly even from the pre-Vedic era, and that the principle and techniques of Yoga started from them. They govern our life, birth and death. They are not the deities of a sect as people generally understand them to be nor are they a statue with a form; they are a principle, *tattva*, the principle that is our life, our breath, the source of our inhalation and exhalation, our Life-force. The knowledge of automatically suspending the breath, *kevala kumbhaka*, to have control over mind, came from Śiva and Śivā. The scriptures on Āgama, the Śivasūtras and the practices and teachings of the Siddhas also teach the techniques and principles of Kriyā-yoga in many ways. However, we find parts or remnants of Kriyā-yoga in almost all philosophies whether Buddhism, Jainism, Sāṅkhya, Vaiśeṣika, Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā, or Vedānta.

Although Kriyā-yoga has been continuously present in India since ancient times, in modern day India the present and popular form was reintroduced by a Himalayan yogi called Mahāvātāra Bābājī Mahārāja in the year 1863 when he imparted the technique to Yogirāja Śrī Śyāmācaraṇa Lāhiḍi Mahāśaya. Lāhiḍi Mahāśaya taught this technique to many disciples and one of them was Swāmī Śrīyukteśwara Giri Mahārāja. Paramahansa Yogānanda, a disciple of Śrīyukteśwarājī, introduced this technique to the western world in 1920 where it became very popular. His book, *Autobiography of a Yogi* became familiar all over the world.

Theme: The *Yogasūtras* is the most authentic and widely accepted text on yoga and its practice. In this text Ṛṣi Patañjali described yoga in four chapters: Samādhipāda, Sādhanapāda, Bibhūtipāda, and Kaivalyapāda. The second chapter, Sādhanapāda, deals with *sādhanā* or yogic practices. This says, “*tapah-svādhyāyeśvarapraṇidhānāni kriyāyogaḥ*” (Ygs., 2.1), *tapah*, austerities; *svādhyāya*, reading of scriptures; and *īśvara praṇidhāna*, knowing *Īśvara* or God, are Kriyā-yoga. *Tapah* or austerities mean control of the sense organs, the organs of action and the mind; this is self-restraint. One should not understand it to mean physically torturing the body by sleeping on thorns or putting fire around our body. *Tapah* means heat, the inner heat generated by spiritual practices that burn the impurities within; this is heat generated by breathing techniques. The first-*kriyā* breathing technique is the best example along with *guru-praṇāma* and *mahāmudrā* (see *infra*, Austerity, *Tapah*, p.115). *Svādhyāya* is reading of scriptures and also reading of our inner self. The *Haṁsa Sādhanā* technique of Kriyā-yoga helps us in reading our own Self (see *infra*, Self-study, *Svādhyāya*, p.117). *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is devotion to God, for success and knowledge we first need faith and devotion, *śraddhāvāṁllabhate jñānam* (Ś.Bg., 4.39). *Īśvara* is the Lord, the ruler, and *praṇidhāna* means to know in totality, to know with clarity when nothing is left to know. *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is practicing, *praṇidhāna*, the Lord, *Īśvara*. *Īśvara* is composed of three syllables, *ī*, *śva*, and *ra*: *ī* is energy, *śakti*, and whose energy it is, it is the energy of *śva*, the Self that manifests into *ra* or light, *prakāśa*. Light is the world, light is manifestation when we are in ignorance and light is knowledge when we are realized. In our body *ī* is inhalation and *ra* is exhalation, *śva* is in-between inhalation and exhalation and is our true self. The first-*kriyā* breath technique is called *Īśvarapraṇidhāna kriyā* (see *infra*, “Knowing the God, *Īśvarapraṇidhāna*,” p. 119). We know Him within ourselves. Practicing the breathing techniques when the actions of mind are inhibited reflects the Self. All these techniques are given to the practitioners, *sādha*kas, in the first-*kriyā*. All these three, viz., *tapah*, *svādhyāya*, and *īśvarapraṇidhāna* are further elaborated by Ṛṣi Patañjali into the eight limbs of yoga known as *yama* (rules), *niyama* (regulations), *āsana* (posture), *prāṇāyāma* (breath technique), *pratyāhāra* (withdrawal), *dhāraṇā* (concentration), *dhyāna* (meditation), and *samādhi* (the transcendental state).

This is a simple technique and at its core is breath. This yoga is fit for the common man, and householders can practice this easily for their self-development. The techniques are practiced following a traditional “*guru dīkṣā*” or initiation. We teach the technique according to the tradition of Śrīyukteśwarājī. In the first-kriyā, techniques like the *Aum* technique, *khecarī mudrā*, *guru pranāma*, *haṁsa sādhanā*, *mahāmudrā*, *kriyā*-proper technique of *Kevala Kumbhaka*, *parāvasthā*, *jyotimudrā* and *sāmbhavī mudrā* are taught and given in a capsular form to practice. Higher techniques are given depending upon the development of the practitioner.

***Prāṇavidyā*, the Philosophy:** Knowledge from the Upaniṣads on *prāṇa*, known as *prāṇavidyā*, is the philosophical basis of Kriyā-yoga. We should know *prāṇa* to know the science of Kriyā-yoga and its applications. Though normally *prāṇa* means vital energy, it is a greater term being used in relation to the sense organs like nose, etc. and for the airs like exhalation, etc. up to Hiraṇyagarbha, the *Īśvara* who is the Lord and is sum total of all powers of action and all powers of knowledge. *Prāṇa* is a term also largely used in relation to the Unmanifest, the Śakti. It is also used to describe the Supreme Brahman, the Transcendental Self. A practitioner of Kriyā-yoga, *kriyāvān*, starts the journey from the breath and ends with the Transcendental Self (see *infra*, “The *Prāṇa* Principle,” p. 43).

Life and Breath: This Kriyā-yoga technique will help the practitioner, *sādhanaka*, in knowing his life. It is our breath that controls our life. One can say that the meaning of breath is life and the meaning of life is breath. How can it be so? Because what we are is due to our breath. Once our breath departs our body, we are no longer here to complete our evolution into a divine being. We are temporarily in the grasp of death. The span of the pause between lives depends on the actions of our life juts lived. We again wait for a human birth to complete our journey to the Self. All living beings breathe. After we are born from our mother’s womb it is our breath, which is responsible for our growth, thought pattern and all aspects of life. Our life hides behind our breath. So, do you think our life is like that of animals who are also breathing? No. Then why do we say that our life is our breath? Because our mind, intellect and ego are all controlled by the breath. We can find that for all moods of our mind, be it anger, frustration, sorrow, happiness, desires, etc. the mode of our breath changes. So for a mind in equanimity we need to breathe properly. Other living beings do not have this understanding. A human being with an evolved brain and erect spine can utilize the power of breath to develop the discriminating intellect. That is the first lesson in yoga. One learns that through Kriyā-yoga.

Righteousness is the Precondition: Righteousness is the precondition for spiritual practice, without a vow to observe righteousness one cannot evolve from an egocentric individual to the Self. Since our practice is to have mastery over mind, we cannot give our mind a free hand to rule over us. Light and dark cannot go

together. If a patient wants to be cured he has to follow the dos and don'ts that need to be obeyed. Even if we go on inoculating our body with disease causing germs and simultaneously take medicines there is still a chance of being cured but if we follow the path of temptations and simultaneously resort to spiritual techniques we are not going to be successful. This is the present day problem in the spiritual super market with the so-called spiritual seekers and the so-called masters who want to combine sensual gratification and/or ego satisfaction with that of spiritual upliftment (see *infra*, pp. 132–46).

Haṁsa Sādhanā is the Foundation: Haṁsa Sādhanā or the practice of *haṁsa* is the very foundation of Kriyā-yoga. One should practice this for a long time without interruption; this will give an understanding of all other practices and will lay a strong foundation for success. *Haṁsa* is our breath, inhalation is “*saḥ*” and exhalation is “*ham*”; this naturally goes on within us from birth to death. Our breath is always saying *haṁsa*, I am That; *soham*, That is I. We have to be aware of our breath, to be aware of our *prāṇa*. Haṁsa Sādhanā can take one to the final state. Thoughts will come but we have to attend to “*so*” and “*ham*,” thoughts will become sparse and finally be merged in *prāṇa*. First we have to do *soham* and then watch *soham*, this is the Kriyā-yoga way whereas in other traditions it is simply to watch the *haṁsa*. If we start watching from the beginning without breathing ourselves and if we are not evolved enough in the path then thoughts may derail us from the track (see *infra*, “Haṁsaḥ Sādhanā,” p. 276).

Kevala Kumbhaka makes the Difference: The focal point of this practice is spontaneous and natural retention of breath, *kevala kumbhaka*. In many other yogic traditions we find the practice of closing the nostrils after inhalation or exhalation that is followed by forced breath retention, the duration of which is gradually increased. Then after a period of practice the practitioner is able to hold the breath for a while even without closing the nostrils. Though the scriptures also sanction these practices, in Kriyā-yoga these techniques are not followed. In Kriyā-yoga the techniques lead to an automatic suspension of the breath. If we hold our breath forcibly then that will lead to increased levels of carbon dioxide in the body. This has an adverse effect on our health, as we need more oxygen and not more carbon dioxide. Of course, this can increase concentration and will power but it does not lead to a state of natural bliss. So, Kriyā-yoga gives emphasis to the natural suspension of breath leading to a “no thought” state known as *kevala kumbhaka* in the scriptures and discourages the forced retention of breath by closing the nasal apertures (see *infra*, “Science and Spirituality of the Kriyā,” p. 301).

Dvija—A Twice Born: We are born from our mother's womb but we have to born again from our Father's womb, not from the physical father but from the spiritual father, the Great Father, *paramapitā*. Then we are Brahmin, a *dvija*, and that is our second birth. Otherwise we are born like animals with human

skin and appearance but with wild characters. Only human beings can be born twice. In the second birth our body will not change, only our animal nature will change. We are born as an animal being and will die as a divine being. In fact, one never dies, only the body dies, one will always be in life, in *amṛta*, in divine nectar. We are sitting and waiting inside our brain, in *Ājñā cakra*, to be born again from our Father's womb. We have to learn and practice Kriyā-yoga to take birth again from the breath of life and be the Self, to unite with our own source. Are we prepared to overcome all the manipulations of our mind and to take time to simply breathe and become? This technique of Kriyā-yoga, this knowledge of Life-force, *prāṇavidyā*, has helped many seekers who accepted and practiced it.

Meditation is Possible: Some religious masters preach and argue that in present day society it is not possible for people to meditate, such statements are not countered but are proved wrong by thousands of Kriyā-yoga practitioners, *kriyāvān*s. This is a very simple technique associated with our breath: our inhalation and exhalation. One such *kriyāvān* from the UK who was staying in my master's ashram at Rṣikeśa encountered such a teacher and was told that meditation was for *Satyayuga*, the noble era and not possible to practice in present *Kali-yuga*, the dark era. He replied, "No, it is possible." When the person argued against his statement, he said, "Arguments are not the answer. I do it, you come and follow me, learn the technique and practice. You will certainly be able to do it." Everybody is inhaling and exhaling irrespective of religion, caste, language, country, color, sex, and age. Therefore, this is a non-sectarian breath technique. Since everyone is breathing, everyone is a potential yogi.

Mother Nature is the Practitioner: Mother Nature does this practice for all beings: plants, lower animals, higher animals and humans. She is the Power of Consciousness, *citti-śakti*, She is the great vital power, *mahāprāṇa*. Consciousness (Śiva or God) on His own right by His own Power (*śakti*) appears as matter and by His own Power (*śakti*) evolved as human intellect. Mother Nature is carrying out Her own process of involution and evolution as individual consciousness within the body and mind. She then identifies Herself with the body-mind interactions and develops an ego, then again merges this identity with the vast Ocean of Consciousness. Whether we practice or not She carries out the process on Her own way. Humans, as the only beings endowed with a developed brain and an erect spine, are the only beings who can do this on their own in order to accelerate the process of evolution. A human being can win over desires, sex, anger, greed, delusion, lethargy, frustration, etc. and finally the ego. One has to just know they are a yogi and start practicing. Still then we have to remember that it is the Mother Divine who is practicing within us.

Breath is Our Teacher: It is very important for a spiritual seeker to find a teacher or pathfinder. Even if you have not yet found a teacher you can simply be with

your breath, watch it. Your breath is your teacher. Give some time in a day according to your suitability to sit straight, close your eyes, take a long and deep breath and then watch your breath. Your inhalation is “*so*” and your exhalation is “*ham*.” No breath should enter or leave without your knowledge. Do not attend to your thoughts. If thoughts trouble you then again take a long and deep breath. If the inner disturbances are more then do not watch your breath but breathe long and deep one breath after another. This is a most simple Kriyā-yoga technique that you can practice even without a master. However, it is important for one to find a master and be sure you will get one. If there is a seeker there must be one to guide him.

A Yogi is Always associated with the Self: Put simply, a yogi is he who is always associated with God, the Self, and not with the body-mind interactions. He finds the Self within, in each and every being. He does not see anything other than the Self. He roams in the Self, rejoices in the Self, sports self in the Self and finds pleasure in the Self. For that you have to be associated with your vital force, the *prāṇa*, and you can do that only through your breath, *prāṇavāyu*. So the breath is your immediate God. Of course you are always associated with *prāṇa*, simply you have to mind your breath not to your thoughts.

Lion in the Body-forest: My master used to say, “A yogi moves like a lion in the world of forest, of course the lion has family but he does not live in herds like goats and lambs. That is the reason you do not find large groups in the path of yoga, you find only a kriyā-family not a kriyā-herd.” But the days are not far away when the world shall have a large kriyā-family because of the fast evolution of human consciousness. Also inside the body forest a yogi is a lion. Among the animals in the forest the lion is a rational animal. The breath, *vāyu*, is the lion in the body forest. It develops our discriminating intellect. Breath practice makes us rational. All other animals in the body forest, the different desires like anger, greed, etc., run away from the lion, the vital power. One who knows the *prāṇa* and practices the *prāṇa* becomes *prāṇa*, the Self. So we must hold our breath, *prāṇavāyu*, for that purpose.

KRIYĀ-YOGA FOR HAPPY LIFE

Mind Deludes: In the present day world we have all become slaves to our mind. Whatever we do, we do simply due to the swaying of our emotions, influenced by our thoughts and desires or due to being attracted by gain and allurements. Things should not be like this. We have to be master of our mind. If we act according to the wrong ideas of our mind we will commit mistakes. For example, we may meet a person ugly in appearance and develop an unwelcome attitude towards them when in fact they may be very nice by nature. This means we are deluded by the ideas of our mind since the mind has a desire for external beauty, and that we are blinded from making the right decision. All our activities are

first done in mind and are then expressed as speech and/or actions. This is where our mind is cheating us.

The mind is generally categorized into two types. It is said,

*mano hi dvividham proktaṁ śuddham cāśuddhameva ca,
aśuddham kāmasaṅkalpaṁ śuddham kāmavivarjitam.*

(Bb. U, 1; Mai. U, 4.3f.)

Mind is said to be of two types, *mano hi dvividham proktaṁ*, pure and impure, *śuddham ca aśuddham eva ca*. Impure mind is with desires and resolves, *aśuddham kāmasaṅkalpaṁ*, the pure mind is desireless, *śuddham kāmavivarjitam*.

For the highest spiritual goal we need a mind free from desires. Then only we shall be free from suffering. But our immediate concern is to make our mind free from vices. At least we must have a mind with noble virtues, with divine qualities and not with demonic qualities.

The Mind needs to be Purified: Therefore we have to clean our mind to avoid being cheated. We always suffer mentally. We can tolerate physical pain but mental suffering is not tolerable. Whatever physical and mental activities we do to counter this only takes our situation from bad to worse. At the beginning the water is dirty, not suitable for drinking, but instead of cleaning it we make it more polluted. However, in order to live we have to drink water, so we drink the unsafe water and fall sick. We do not know how to filter and purify the water. We have to learn to purify otherwise we will remain sick forever. This is our main problem, the mental problem, perhaps the greatest problem of the present age. We are not able to sleep without sleeping pills, again problems of the heart, we visit a heart specialist, take medicines but hypertension is there as it is and again the hyperglycemia troubles us. The cause of all these are our uncontrolled mind resulting in various psychosomatic diseases. We know but are unable to take remedial measures. Kriyā-yoga helps us in controlling our mind.

Following Ego is Catastrophic: A pampered child demands a toy, then starts crying for it and after getting it he is soon dissatisfied and either throws it away or breaks it crying for a second one, then a third, a fourth and so on. Our mind is like a pampered child, like the spoiled son of a rich person who is addicted to alcohol or drugs, wastes money and does not obey his parents and elders. From the outset he wasn't able to control his son and now he is crying over the situation, still then he is not able to leave attachments. Such is the situation of our mind. Can we do anything positive with such a mind? We want to do something but then after doing it we think what we did was wrong. Again we want to do something and again commit the same mistake. When shall we liberate ourselves from the wrong impressions of the mind? Due to our mind, we accept something as noble when it is not. Similarly, if the mind tells us such, we accept it as horrible even though it may be honorable. Sometimes, even if we understand something

properly, we neglect it and do not work on it. We want to follow our ego blindly. This ego is the spoiled child of our blind mind. This blind mind is king Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the ego is its elder son Duryodhana, full of desires, *kāmarūpam*. We live in this kingdom of lawlessness. This is the reason we create problems for ourselves, and dangers for others.

Right Understanding: In the *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* (3.42) Lord Kṛṣṇa said,

*indriyāṇi parāṅyāhurindriyebhyaḥ param manah,
manasastu parā buddhiryo buddheḥ paratastu saḥ.*

Our organs, *indriyāṇi*, meaning our sense-organs and organs of action, are said to be greater, *parāṅyāhuḥ* (than our body), mind is greater than the organs, *indriyebhyaḥ param manah*, intellect is greater than the mind, *manasastu parā buddhiḥ*, and one who, *yaḥ* is greater than the intellect is He, *buddheḥ paratastu saḥ*, the Self.

In this saying lies the solution to our problems. We have to bring our mind under the control of our discriminating intellect and the intellect under the control of the Self. Such a situation will bring only happiness. According to the sayings of Lord Buddha, “From right understanding proceeds right thought; from right thought proceeds right speech; from right speech proceeds right action and from right action proceeds right livelihood.” So we have to make noble our thinking, belief-system and thought processes, we have to purify our internal organ mind. According to the Upaniṣads,

*śreyaśca preyaśca manuṣyameta-
stau sampañtya vivinakti dhīraḥ,
śreyo hi dhīrobhi preyaśo vṛṇīte
preyo mando yogakṣemādvṛṇīte. (Ka. U, 1.2.2)*

The preferable (the exalted ones), *śreyaḥ*, and pleasurable (the attached ones), *preyaḥ*, both approach a man, *manuṣyametaḥ*. A man with discriminating intellect, *dhīraḥ*, after examining, *sampañtya*, separates, *vivinakti*, the two, *tau* and chooses, *abhi vṛṇīte*, the preferable in place of the pleasurable, *śreyo hi preyaśo*; but a man with dull intellect, *mandah*, prefers the pleasurable for the growth and protection, *preyo yogakṣemādvṛṇīte*, of the body (for him the body is the self).

So our discriminating intellect is to be made sharp and strengthened so that our mind or desires should not overpower it. The mind should always remain under the control of the intellect. We also need to reduce our desires.

The Breath, *prāṇavāyu*, strengthens the Discriminating Intellect: How will discriminating intellect develop? How will mind be cleaned? For this we need faith and devotion, we should read the scriptures and control the senses. However, all these precautions are only mental based. We therefore need something to absorb the mind and that is our vital force, *prāṇa*. It was said in Yogic scriptures,

“*indriyāṇām mano nāthaḥ manonāthastu mārutaḥ,*” mind is the master of the sense-organs and air (the breath) is master of the mind (GS, 4.29). So we have to take the help of our breath. Everyone has experienced that when anger, greed, fear, sex, frustration, desires, emotions are in our mind our breath also becomes different. To keep our mind in equanimity we have to make our breath stable. This is our practice. The entire Vedic literature sings the glory of the knowledge of *prāṇa*, *prāṇavidyā*. According to the *Praśnopaniṣad* (6.4), “*sa prāṇamaṣṭjata prāṇācchradhām kham vāyurjyotirāpaḥ pṛthivīndriyam manaḥ, annamannādvīryam taṇo mantrāḥ karma lokā lokeṣu ca nāma ca,*” He first created *prāṇa*, the Life-force. From *prāṇa* he created faith, ether, air, fire, water, earth, organs, mind, food, vigor, austerities, mantras, actions, worlds and name (for explanations see *infra*, “Sixteen Parts of the Brahman,” p. 80). *Prāṇa* is the first of the sixteen parts of the God. Everything has been created from *prāṇa* and merges into *prāṇa*. To know *prāṇa* we have to take the support of our breath, *prāṇavāyu*.

Worshipping *Prāṇa* is Kriyā-yoga: We have to learn *prāṇopāsana*, worship of *prāṇa*, by that our internal subtle organs like mind, etc. will be pure, our concentration will increase, the intellect will be sharp and the discriminating capacity will develop. That is yoga. The practice part of yoga has been known as Kriyā-yoga. By practicing the Kriyā-yoga breath techniques the practitioner reaches the “no thought” state when the outer breath becomes slow or may even be suspended and one remains only with the inner subtle *prāṇa*. Since the technique is based on automatic suspension of breath, *kevala kumbhaka*, the breath also starts automatically after the suspension period. Achieving again and again such a “no thought,” *nirvicāra*, state one becomes specialized in it which results in *ṛambharā prajñā*; *ṛambharā tatra prajñā* (Ygs., 1.48). This means the intellect of the practitioner now holds the truth by experience. He now has knowledge, his discriminating intellect is sharp and the desires are thin. For simple understanding we have to know that as our mind becomes more silent by meditation with less volitions and desires, our discriminating intellect becomes more sharp and powerful.

The whole process of Kriyā-yoga is an art of breathing. This is called a breathing science. The secret of life is hidden within the breath. Barring aside the higher spiritual goal, this makes the intellect sharp, and then one finds the answer to all questions in life. Longevity increases. Problems are solved. Proper breathing is the key to good health, and is the cause of a peaceful and healthy mind. We can develop proper breathing by the practice of Kriyā-yoga. This is the spiritual tradition of India given to us by the ancient saints and sages, and is depicted in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads. A peaceful breath silences all the desires and angers of the mind and develops an intellect that can take right decisions. Our environment then becomes peaceful. This also results in material prosperity. Individual, family and society become happy and prosperous.

A healthy person takes about fifteen breaths per minute. In this way in twenty-four hours one breathes 21,600 times. A healthy man can live a life of one hundred and twenty years and in this way has a capital of 933,120,000 breaths. However, due to excessive attachments, aversions, disturbances of mind, sorrow, excessive pleasure, excessive work due to desires, etc. the rate of breathing increases. This makes life shorter. The impurities of mind and body increase, and death soon approaches. If we want to remove sufferings, poverty of mind and failures we have to develop equanimity in our mind through equanimity in breath. That is Kriyā-yoga. In the Kriyā breathing practice we only breathe three breaths per minute. In ancient India by reducing the breath rate people lived a long, healthy and peaceful life. They knew the breath technique that is key to a successful life. Kriyā-yoga is the gift of the ancient sages of India to the mankind.

Kriyā-yoga evolves to Kaivalya-yoga: This is the technique to balance the exhalation, *prāṇa*, and the inhalation, *apāna*; this is the technique of suspension of breath, *prāṇāyāma*. This is the technique of merging the exhalation, *prāṇa*, and inhalation, *apāna*, in to the air that wholly pervades the body, *vyāna*. And for higher yogis it is the technique of winning over the air in the body that has an upward trend, *udāna*. By practicing the breath techniques the actions of mind are inhibited and then in a mind with the “no thought” state the Self is reflected. One is then established in *Kaivalyam*, the One and only. *Kaivalya* is *adhyaṭma prasāda*, the bliss of the Self. Ego is finished; one is in the Ocean of Consciousness, one with all, the narrow identity being left behind. These are all called Kriyā-yoga, and it evolves to Kaivalya-yoga. If we practice then there will be no tension in our life, we will not become living dead-bodies. We will always remain in life. This is the key to a happy life.

Healthy Individual and Healthy Society: A healthy society is based upon its healthy individual members. Our individual health is dependant on the health of our physical, vital, mental and intellectual faculties. Though Kriyā-yoga is mainly based on vital energy we find it to be integrated with the involvement of *bandha*s and *mudrā*s, *prāṇic* exercises and Kriyā-*haṭha*-yoga techniques as found in *haṭha*-yogic practices; involvement of breath and vital energy as found in practices of both *Haṭha*-yoga and traditional *Rāja*-yoga, and involvement of concentration techniques as found in *rāja*-yogic practices, so of course differences in techniques are there. Also in higher Kriyā-s it has meditation based on *mātrkā*s as found among *Sāivites*, *Śāktas* and the practitioners following *Āgama* scriptures. Here though some traditions follow it in the spirit of scriptures but for the most part it has become either rituals or a mental technique. In Kriyā-yoga, we can call this a psycho-vital technique in the spirit of the scriptures for increased concentration, for the development of the discriminating intellect and to inhibit the actions of mind leading to the state of Zero Absolute.

As well as higher objectives, for the common man with ambitions this yoga has enough treasure as it helps the practitioner to live long, to keep good physical health, to keep mental balance, overcome anxieties and mental tension, manage stress, control psychosomatic diseases, aid personal growth, develop leadership and social services, etc. These qualities result in the development of a healthy society.

2

Prāṇavidyā: The Knowledge of the Life-force

THE GOAL

Haṁsaḥ, to know the Self is the Route: There are no other routes, only one route to reach the Ultimate. That is to know Him, to know the Self. This is what has been said in Upaniṣads again and again.

*eko haṁso bhuvanasyāsya madhye
sa evāgniḥ salile saṁniviṣṭaḥ,
tameva viditvā-timṛtyumeti
nānyaḥ panthā vidyāte ayannāya. (Śv. U, 6.15)*

In this world, *bhuvana*, there is only one, *ekaḥ*, Swan, *haṁsaḥ*, who is the fire, *agniḥ*, in the water, *salile saṁniviṣṭaḥ*. When That is known one crosses the death, *tameva viditvā-timṛtyumeti*, there is no route other than this for liberation, *nānyaḥ panthā vidyāte ayannāya*.

He is the Only One. Multiplicity is creation of the ignorance, *avidyā*, and He is Swan the Divine Bird, *haṁsaḥ*. *Haṁsaḥ* means one who kills, *hantvā*, bondage of the ignorance. Removal of the ignorance is the Knowledge. *Haṁ* is Śiva but due to the ignorance, this *haṁ* has become “not Śiva” and now this “not Śiva” is named *jīva* or the individual self. The very existence of this self is based on the ego or “I,” *aḥaṁ*. This negation of Śiva is due to our identification with the limiting adjuncts like the body and the mind in which the individual soul dwells, and this results in a state of having desires and lost in senses and sense objects; and then enjoying both pains and pleasures. However, Śiva is limitless, infinite, and is a state of bliss. This is the Great Vastness named *Mahāviṣṇu*. *Saḥ* means “He” or “That,” *tatpada*. When “I” merge with “That” then this is *haṁsaḥ*. Now “That” and “I” are one, my God and I are one, and the universe and I are one. Then this is the Knowledge. When “I” exists as a separate entity then this is the ignorance. Though “That” is always with “I” and though “I” proceeds from “That” but still then due to the ignorance “I” close its eyes and refuses to recognize “That.” When the third eye or the discriminating intellect develops then “I” recognize and merge with “That.” Then there are no *ha* or *sa*. There is only

Aum, and that is *bindu*, *m̄*, (point) and *visargaḥ*, *ḥ* (infinity). *Bindu* or *m̄* is the “half letter,” *ardhamātrāḥ*, of *Aum*, and this *Aum* is “no letter,” *amātrāḥ*, Lord the Pure Existence. *Visargaḥ* or *ḥ* means beyond the world, *sarga*, and this means the Infinity. The Transcendental Self known as *parabindu*, beyond the point and this means He is beyond the manifestation. He is beyond the ether element and beyond the sound. This *parabindu* or one who is beyond the point has become point, *bindu*, and infinite, *visargaḥ*. The beginning of whole creation is with sound, that is *Aum* and is same as *Hamsaḥ*. It is composed of two seed sounds, viz., *ham̄* and *saḥ*. The seed of creation is *saḥ* and this is Śakti. Śakti is the power of Śiva, the Cosmic Self. The seed of dissolution is *ham̄* and this is Śiva. The first manifestation of *Hamsaḥ* as combination of *ham̄* and *saḥ* from the Transcendental Lord, *Parama Śiva*, is the primitive *hamsaḥ*, *ādihamsaḥ*, and this is in between the Transcendental State and the creation. This is both Śiva and Śakti. This is named as *Prāṇa* in Vedas, this *Prāṇa* is the root of the creation, and this has further become the entire creation. This *Prāṇa* within our body is in the form of breath, *hamsaḥ*; the exhalation is *ham̄* and the inhalation is *saḥ*. The Transcendental Lord, *Parama Śiva*, is neither Śiva nor Śakti. That Principle cannot be described since that is beyond the reach of the human intellect. By practice of this *hamsaḥ* or the breath technique one can reach to the Transcendental State. That transcendental state is the Knowledge. At that state one is joined with its source. That one Knowledge is within this world, *bhuvana*. That is the Fire, *agniḥ*, the Fire that burns the ignorance, its actions and results. And this fire is among the

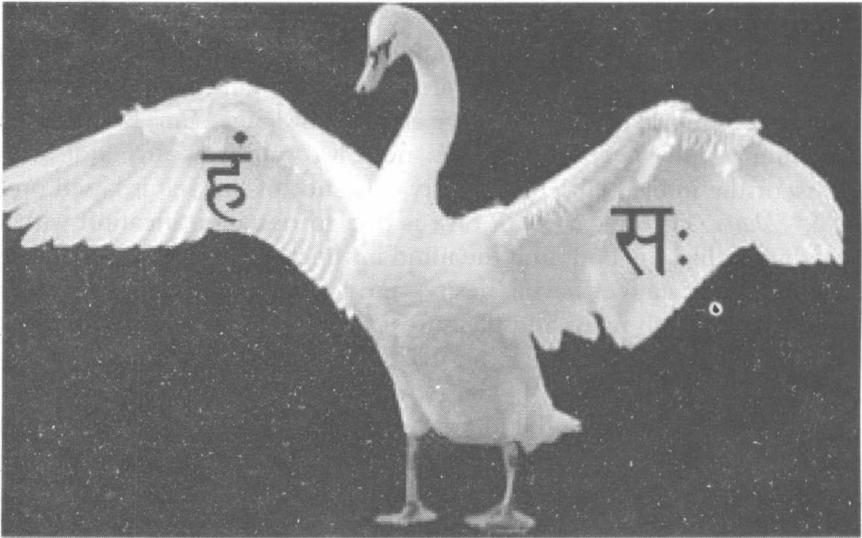


Fig. 2.1. A swan symbolizing the Knowledge spreads its two wings, which represent the exhalation, *Ham̄*, and the inhalation, *Saḥ*.

water. This world is the water. This is the ocean of manifestation, *bhavasāgara*. Water is also referred to a body and water is life. This needs no explanation. Water is the form of *prāṇa* or life, *āpo vai prāṇāḥ* (*Sa. Br.*, 3.8.2.4). The physiological functions of our life are water based. Ninety per cent of our physical body is water. Life manifests in a planet where there is water. So the water is said to be the base of the whole world, *āpo vā asya sarvasya pratiṣṭhā* (*ibid.*, 4.5.2.14). Here the ocean of world, *bhavasāgara*, is the cosmic physical body, *Virāṭa Puruṣa*, it is the macrocosm, whereas in this verse mentioning the water, *salila*, after the world, *bhuvana*, indicates the individual body, the microcosm. According to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (5.9.1), “*iti tu pañcamyāmāhutāvāpah puruṣavacaso bhavanti,*” on the fifth oblation the water becomes *Puruṣa*, takes a human form. Again our body is a miniature form of the universe, hence it is said, *yathā piṇḍe tathā brahmāṇḍe*, as in the body same in the world. One can understand it through the spiritual practices. So to know the principle of spiritualism, we have to know it within our own body system. Then only we can know it in the universe. We can know that one Swan, *ekah haṁsaḥ*, the Knowledge within the world (*bhuvana* or *brahmāṇḍa*), when we know it within our own body (*piṇḍa* or *salila*). When that divine Swan is known which the Fire is, mingled in the water body (or our individual body), one crosses the death, and becomes immortal. This physical body cannot become immortal. This is subjected to birth, growth, changes, decay, diseases and death. Only yogic practices, herbs and will power can prolong this. Then who will become immortal? This is we, ourselves, the Principle that we are. This is always immortal, only one has to know that. Then one is immortal, one with the Principle. Multiplicity is finished; it is the unity, the One and the Only One, *kaivalyam*. This is the Knowledge, not the knowledge of the outer world, but the knowledge of the inner self.

The Knowledge, the Fire, and the Prāṇa Haṁsaḥ is Same: Here in the above verse the Fire is the Lord himself, Lord of the world, *Īśvara*. We are not talking here about the fire element; of course the fire element is within the water element. We are talking here about the Fire that is beyond the ether element. This Fire involves all the five elements, viz., the ether, the air, the fire, the water and the earth. So the fire element is also the Fire, the water element is also the Fire and so on, and that is *haṁsaḥ*, the Swan. *Haṁsaḥ* as the Knowledge is the Fire of the world; the same *haṁsaḥ* is the Fire-god, the fire element and also the fire in a body. These all are one Principle. We pray, “*om agnimūḍhe purohitam yajñasya devamṛtvijam. hotāram ratnadhātāmam*” (*RV*, 1.1.1), we sing the glory of the Lord Fire, who is the priest (who conducts the ritual sacrifice) of the *yajña* (the sacrificing rituals), *agnimūḍhe purohitam yajñasya*, also *dev* (the god who gives the results), *ṛtvij* (who completes a ritual in time), *devamṛtvijam*, and *hotā* (who invokes the gods with hymns), let He give jewels to the performer, *hotāram ratnadhātāmam*. This is a most widely used and famous Vedic hymn used in the beginning of all

yajña-s. Here the ordinary meaning is that the Lord Fire is the presiding deity of a *yajña* and let he fulfill the purpose for which the *yajña* is performed. But the inner meaning is different for a seeker. *Yajña* is the inner sacrifice by which we sacrifice our desires, attachments, hatreds and our wrong identification called ego for the purpose of attaining the Knowledge. The Fire is the form of the Knowledge. Here the Fire-god, the performer, the priests, and others, all are the Lord Fire; this means they all are One-Principle. Here unity is sought with that Principle casting off the wrong identity. That is the Knowledge, and that is the Power of Consciousness, which is also same as the Life-force. The Life-force is both the consciousness and the vital energy. In the form of jewel that knowledge is prayed. In Upaniṣads it is said, *asau vāva loko gautamāgnistasyāditya eva samid* (Ch.U, 5.4.1), Oh Goutama, this famous world is the fire, *asau vāva loko gautamāgniḥ*, the sun is verily its fuel, *tasyāditya eva samid*. Here the famous world refers to *dyu lokā*, the glowing world or the heaven. This glowing world is the greater space where the cosmic energy remains in unmanifested form. When we say energy in English we normally understand the physical energies but the meaning here is to the Power of Consciousness, *citti śakti*; this includes all the physical energies. This Power of Consciousness is both the power of knowledge and the power called vitality or vigor. This is one power. That Fire manifests as life in this earth. The fuel of that Fire is the Sun. The Sun is the source of all the lives in our earth. And in the fifth step of the life-cycle this fire takes the human form from the water (*vide supra*, Ch.U, 5.9.1, p. 17).

But what is the fire in a body? We pray to the Lord Fire, *prāṇadā apānadā vyānadā varcodā varibodāḥ* (YV, 17.15), you are the giver of the exhalation, *prāṇa*, the inhalation, *apāna*, and the vital energy inside the body, *vyāna*, also the vigor, *varcas*, and the prosperity, *variba*. So the fire in a body is naturally understood as the life-force, *prāṇa*. As the vital energy this fire is described as,

*tamoṣadhīrdadhire garbhamṛtviyaṁ
tamāpo agniṁ janayanta mātaraḥ,
tamit samānam vaninaśca vīrudho-
ntarvatīśca suvate ca viśvahā. (RV, 10.91.6)*

Medicines or herbs hold the fire in their wombs according to the seasons, *tamoṣadhīrdadhire garbhamṛtviyaṁ*, the water or rain gives birth to the firelike a mother, *tamāpo agniṁ janayanta mātaraḥ*. Plants and herbs hold that (fire) in their womb, *tamit samānam vaninaśca vīrudho*, and holding that they manifest that in the world (as food and medicines), *antarvatīśca suvate ca viśvahā*.

Above this is a description of the energy cycle; *prāṇa* or the vital energy is referred as *agni* or the Fire in the creation. Again in Upaniṣads it is said: *sa eṣa vaiśvānaro viśvarūpaḥ prāṇo'gnirudayate*, that very one rises up, who is the *prāṇa*, *prāṇa*, and the fire, *vaiśvānaraḥ*, and who is possessed of all forms, *viśvarūpaḥ*

(Pr. U, 1.7). Vaiśvānara is a name of the fire and *Vaiśvānara* means one who is identified with all beings. The fire as *prāṇa* is identified with all beings. All the forms are nothing but the life-force, *prāṇa*, which is the fire.

Since the Lord Fire, *Agnideva*, was first created, *sarvasyāgramasṛjyata*, so it is called the fire, *vaitamagnirityācakṣate*, in an indirect way, *parokṣam*; *sa yadasya sarvasyāgramasṛjyata tasmādagrirha vaitamagnirityācakṣate parokṣam* (Śa. Br., 6.1.1.11). Also it is said that the *prāṇa* was created first, *etasmājjāyate prāṇo*, from That Principle the *prāṇa* was created (Mu. U, 2.1.3). Again, *sa prāṇamasṛjyata prāṇācchradhām kham*, etc., He created the *prāṇa* first and then from the *prāṇa* he created other fifteen parts like faith, ether, etc. (Pr. U, 6.4). This shows it is one-energy principle called as the *prāṇa* and also as the fire. The Lord Fire is the soul of all the gods, *agnivai sarveṣām devānāmātmā* (Śa. Br., 14.3.2.5); it is the *prāṇa* which glows in all, *prāṇo hyeṣa yaḥ sarvabhūtaivibhāti* (Mu. U, 3.1.4). All these show unity between the *prāṇa* and the fire, so the *prāṇa* and the fire is one. The same fire is dweller in the heaven, lord of the earth and inside every being as the *vaiśvānara* fire, *mūrdhānam divo aratim pṛthivyā vaiśvānaramṛta ājātamagnim*, (S.V, 1.7.5). This *vaiśvānara* fire is the vital energy, *prāṇa*, in a living body; Lord Vāsudeva says,

*aham vaiśvānaro bhūtvā prāṇinām dehamāśritaḥ,
prāṇāpānasamāyuktaḥ pacāmyannaṁ caturvidham.* (Ś Bg., 15.14)

The Lord says that I as the *vaiśvānara* fire, *aham vaiśvānaro bhūtvā*, is inside the bodies of the beings, *prāṇinām dehamāśritaḥ*, and am attached to *prāṇa* and *apāna*, the exhalation and the inhalation, *prāṇāpānasamāyuktaḥ*, and digest and assimilate the four types of foods, *pacāmyannaṁ caturvidham*.

That *vaiśvānara* fire remains as the *prāṇa* in a person and the same is called *hamsaḥ* since outer manifestation of *prāṇa* is through the breath, *prāṇavāyu*, which is the exhalation, *ham*, and the inhalation, *saḥ*. It is understood that, in the physical body, which is a form of water, the vital energy, *prāṇa*, remains as the fire.

Hamsaḥ also means one that moves; *ham* means to move. *Prāṇa* as the vital energy moves within the body and is also the cause of our physical, physiological and mental movements. The Knowledge though appears static, it moves as power of the knowledge, *citti śaktiḥ*. But how the same *prāṇa* can be equated with the Knowledge, and how the principle called *prāṇa* appearing as the vital energy having activities is same as the *prāṇa* appearing as the Knowledge devoid of activities? We discuss this time and again and see that the *prāṇa* as the vital energy also kills the bondage of the ignorance by absorbing activities of our mind and thereby reflecting the Consciousness within us.

Many Routes are Creations of the Ignorance: Once that *ekah hamsaḥ* is known, one crosses over the death. There is no other route. Again Upaniṣads say,

*eko baṣī sarvabhūtāntarātmā
 ekam rūpaṁ bahudhā yaḥ karoti,
 tamātmasthaṁ ye'nupaśyanti dhīrā'-
 steṣāṁ sukhaṁ śāśvatam netareṣāṁ. (Ka.U, 2.2.12)*

There is one controller, *eko baṣī*, who is the inner Self of all, *sarvabhūtāntarātmā*, He makes, *yaḥ karoti*, (His) one single form, *ekam rūpaṁ*, into many, *bahudhā*. Those discriminating persons, *dhīrāḥ* who see through their inner eye, *ye'nupaśyanti*, to That inside the intellect (calm mind without volitions), *tamātmasthaṁ*, they only get the eternal happiness, *teṣāṁ sukhaṁ śāśvatam*, and not the others, *netareṣāṁ*.

This makes even clearer that one inner controller is everything, which is the Self. That is *hamṣa* and That is the Knowledge. One has manifested into many. Once we know that Principle then the veil of ego falls down, the wrong identity ceases. Knowing Him is only the route for the eternal peace named liberation. But one can say there are many routes like intellectual practices, *jñāna*; practices of devotion, *bhakti*; practices of action, *karma*; sacrifices, *yajña*; yogic practices, *yoga*; practices of occult culture, *tantra*; worships, *pūjā* or *ūpāsana*; prayers, *prārthanā*, and so on. But Bhagavatī Śruti (Vedas) says that there is only one route. Then according to the Vedas, appearances of many routes are only creations of the ignorance. That is why in Upaniṣads it is said,

*vidyāṁ cāvidyāṁ ca yastadvedobhayaṁ saha,
 avidyayā mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā vidyayāmṛtamaśnute. (Īś. U, 11)*

One who knows the knowledge, *vidyāṁ*, and the ignorance, *ca avidyāṁ*, both at the same time, *yastadvedobhayaṁ saha*; he crosses the death, *mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā*, through the ignorance, *avidyayā*, and attains immortality, *amṛtamaśnute*, through the knowledge, *vidyayā*.

Here the ignorance, *avidyā*, means action that is based on desires. Desires, actions and its results are under the purview of the ignorance. Once one attains the Knowledge, then actions do not become actions or the cause of bondage. Here again it is said that one has to cross the death through the ignorance, *avidyā*. When we say action is *avidyā*, we have to remember that in the scriptures dealing with emancipation, there is no scope for forbidden actions; only those actions approved by scriptures are to be understood. This can be one's duties to the family and the society, the Vedic/scriptural rites, rituals practiced in different religious communities, actions for social and human welfares, actions and results surrendered to God, actions without any motive (or desire for results) and done as a duty for duty's shake, worship of gods and goddesses with a desire for results and so on. These are only purification processes. And at the end of these processes it is worship of gods to find unity with the God, *ahamgraha upāsana*. The last one will result in the Knowledge, *vidyā*, which is the cause of immortality, *amṛta*. All

these routes of *karma*, *jñāna*, *bhakti*, *yoga*, etc. are within purview of the ignorance, but this ignorance is dependant on actions based upon noble qualities, *sattvaguna*. Since an action is result of *rajoguna* when it acts on *sattvaguna* then only it is possible. When *rajoguna* acts on qualities of darkness, *tamoguna*, then this results on activities forbidden by the scriptures. This is not even the ignorance, *avidyā*, this is at much lower level than that of the ignorance, and is not considered by the scriptures on spiritual discussions. These three qualities are qualities of the Nature, *prakṛti*. For details on these one can read the fourteenth chapter of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, the Guṇatrayavibhāga-yoga.

Result of Karma, Actions: But again scripture says, *karmanā pitrlokaḥ* (*Br. U.* 1.5.16), through the actions one attains the World of Manes. By doing Vedic and scriptural rites and rituals, and actions for human welfare one goes to the World of Manes. This is the Southern Route, *dakṣiṇāyana mārga*, and one has to return to this world after enjoying in the World of Manes when results of the actions performed are finished after their enjoyment. Similar is also the result of worshiping different gods with a desire or a noble motive, after enjoying the fruits of such noble deeds in the heaven or in the World of Gods one again returns to this world. However the heaven or the World of Manes can be in this world, but whatever it may be it is a good and pious life. But these are all temporary; and this is said in the context of a higher spiritual evolution ending with unity of the individual self with the Transcendental Self. Again the individual soul is in the wheel of the world subjected to misery and happiness, in jaws of darkness and in jaws of the death. The Wise-ones therefore reject this path. But one can only reject this depending upon his elevated status in the process of his spiritual evolution. If he is in a lower ladder of human evolution then he has to perform these actions to evolve on to the higher stages. Since most of us are in a lower stratum of human evolution we must have to perform these actions to ascend to higher strata. Still then we can say that those persons performing scriptural activities are in much higher position than those humans who are engaged in forbidden activities. Those engaged in forbidden activities are called demons, *asura*-s. Here we should remember that normal human tendency is after desires and after enjoyment by fulfillment of desires. These desires are many and have no limit. If we leave our actions and enjoyments uncontrolled, and run after them, then that will result in big social, moral and psychological catastrophes. These desires of individuals can class against each other because enjoyments by one individual are very likely to encroach the rights of others. So scriptures canalize them in the form of righteousness. For example if a person is after sexual enjoyment with many partners like a beast that would result in a social and psychological catastrophe, so moral rules are framed to give sanctity to such an enjoyment within limitation of a husband or a wife along with performance of the family obligations and duties. The same is for acquiring

wealth. According to the scriptures one cannot steal or earn money by corruption because that will encroach others right to enjoyment of wealth, but one can earn wealth by honest efforts. This is giving a controlled direction or ventilation to the uncontrolled desires so that the enjoyment is done with social harmony. If one wants to have enjoyment in heaven then he has to worship the king of the heaven, Indra and other gods; he cannot simply go and fight with the gods. But the demonic way is different and that is to snatch away others rights to enjoyment. Many of the fights between nations and groups are of demonic in nature because one wants enjoyment by snatching the rights of others. Though in ancient India there were warriors and braves in plenty but saints and sages always guided the ruling class and they had not fought to occupy and rule over others land. Whenever such an attempt was made by any, history had recorded their names in the class of demons. But to save the citizens from excesses of the ruling classes and splitting the nation into many segments, Rājasūya and Aśvamedha *yajñas* are allowed according to the ruling of scriptures and the performer king was subjected to many rules and regulations and guided by the monk-guru of his dynasty. The purpose of all these was to deny the forbidden activities for sensual gratification and ego satisfaction, and to allow the scriptural activities in their place so that the enjoyment is not denied but simultaneously the harmony is also maintained. Scriptural activities also promote those works of social and religious welfares like schools, hospitals, roads, drinking water facilities, temples, ashrams, orphanages, destitute homes, cooperatives, self-help groups, forestations, environment protection, viz., protection of atmospheric air, rivers, lakes, other water bodies, forests, wild-lives, etc., heritage preservation, knowledge dissemination of various kinds like scriptural, cultural, social or economic, voluntary works and charity, etc. Such activities enable one to have a better type of enjoyment by serving to others. Thereby a person gives himself a chance to broaden his mind from narrow sense enjoyments to the joy of serving others and qualifying himself for better worlds. If people perform the scriptural activities and abandon the forbidden ones, then the heaven will descend on this world.

Two Types of Humans, *Deva-s* and *Asuro-s*: According to Lord Kṛṣṇa, in the world there are only two types of human beings, *devas* and *asuras*, men with the divine qualities and men with the demonic qualities; “*dau bhūtasargau loke’ smin daiiva āsura eva ca*” (Ś. Bg, 16.6). Though different worlds are described for gods, devils and humans but all the worlds are present here in this world as per this quote. On the sixteenth chapter of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, the Daivāsura-sampadvibhāga-yoga, the Lord has described these in details. Fearlessness, purity of mind, establishing in yoga of meditation for realization, charity, control of sense-organs, oblations and sacred duties, studying scriptures, austerities, righteousness of mind, body and senses, nonviolence, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, equanimity, abstaining from malicious gossips,

compassion, absence of craving even on contact with objects, no egoism, no fickleness, vigor with sublimity, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness, not to be reactive, not to seek excessive honor and other such qualities are the divine properties.

On the other hand the opposites of these like stubbornness, arrogance, pride, anger, hypocrisy, ignorance, demonstrating ones wealth and power, not knowing the difference between activities to be performed and abstinence, uncleanness, bad conduct, falsehood, unholy desires, anger, hatred, jealousy, satisfying ego, sensuous pleasures or lust, to be blind by wealth and power, brutal force, etc., are the demonic properties as described by the Lord. We have to learn the division as per the scriptures and work according to the rules prescribed by the scriptures. The divine properties are the cause of liberation whereas the demonic properties are the cause of bondage. We have to leave those activities forbidden by the scriptures.

Our discussion on the subject is not centered on persons with the devil qualities. They have to wait till they receive a strong blow from the Mother Nature for their unholy actions according to the rules of the nature, so that they can turn their eyes from those apparent dazzling objects of sense enjoyment and return to the path of self-growth. Then they have to perform those actions that have scriptural sanctions and then they shall qualify for the World of Manes. Since the World of Manes is the Southern Path by which the individual-self returns back to this world, persons with a discriminating intellect reject this to aspire for higher stage. Now let us see what that higher stage is.

Vidyā, the Knowledge is the Higher: *Vidyayā devalokaḥ* (Br. U, 1.5.16), through the knowledge, *vidyā*, one attains the World of Gods; *na tatra dakṣiṇā yanti*, people going through the Southern Path do not reach there. This means those who are engaged in higher form of practices like worshiping of gods, etc. to find unity with the God, they attain the World of Gods. The qualifications for these types of practices come from the scriptural actions performed in this life or in previous lives. Worshiping gods with a motive can have a good life in this earth or can attain the World of Gods but they return back to this world after enjoying when the results of their good deeds are finished. So this is same as the Southern Path. But those who worship gods to find unity with the God do not return from this path. This is the Northern Path, *uttarāyaṇa mārga*. This is *amṛta*, immortality, and *na mṛta*, not death. But here is also found a thin line of demarcation. This immortality can be a relative immortality in comparison to the Southern Path, since this is for a much longer span of time than the previous one. Why it is said so? Because this immortality is due to identity with a particular god and it depends on practitioner's idea and contemplation on that god. If we have not established total unity with the Truth, the Pure Existence and if our god and/or goddess is a separate entity then this will last till the existence of that god, means up to the

end of the present creation, *kalpa*, even if one's personal god is very powerful. Then our *vidyā* is simply worshiping, *upāsana*, and not the worshiping resulting into the Knowledge, *jñāna*.

Two Types of *Vidyā*, *Parā* and *Aparā*: The knowledge or *vidyā* is of two types.

“*dve vidye veditavye iti ha sma yadbrahmavido vadanti parā caivāparā ca.*”
(*Mu. U.*, 1.1.4)

(Rṣi Aṅgirā explained that) the Knower of the Brahman said, *brahmavido vadanti*, about two types of knowledges, *dve vidye*, which are to be acquired, *veditavye*, one is superior, *parā* and another is inferior, *caiva aparā ca*.

***Aparā Vidyā*, the Inferior Knowledge:** The inferior knowledge, *aparā vidyā*, deals with dos and don'ts, deals on noble qualities, worshiping, their means and ends. This comprises Vedas, viz., *Rg*, *Yajur*, *Sāma*, and *Atharva*, pronunciations, *śikṣā*, Vedic rites, *kalpah*, grammar, *vyākaraṇa*, etymology, *nirukta*, metre, *chandah*, and astrology, *jyotiṣah*, etc. But the superior knowledge is one that is not eroded, *atha parā yayā tadakṣaramadhigamyate* (*Mu. U.*, 1.1.5). Here in *aparā vidyā* both actions and worshipings are included. But in the previous example given from *Īsopaniṣad*, v. 11, *vidyām cā vidyām ca*, etc. worshiping is separated as *vidyā* (meaning there by *aparā vidyā*) from actions as *avidyā*.

Here it can be mentioned that worshiping, *upāsana*, referred in the text is not rites and rituals or worshiping with physical activities. These come under the actions, *avidyā*. The worshiping described here is more a mental one; this is a contemplation to develop a particular belief system. What we are presently is nothing but our belief system and what we will be is dependant on what type of belief system we inoculate. Our actions are dependant on our belief system. If our belief system is negative we lead a disastrous life, if it is positive we live a good life. So worshiping is done more at a mental and intellectual level than at physical level. But still then the worshiping is called *aparā vidyā* or the inferior knowledge. But with worshiping we are in a much higher stage of human evolution to reach the perfection, just in the process of reaching the near final stage. When our worshiping results in the Knowledge it becomes *parā vidyā*, the superior knowledge.

***Parā Vidyā*, the Superior Knowledge:** Then what are that final state or the superior knowledge and how we can reach that?

yattadadreśyamagrāhyamagotramavarṇa-
macakṣuḥśrotram tadapāṇipādam,
nityam bibhum sarvagatam susūkṣam
tadavyayam yadbhūtayoniṁ pariṣāsyanti dhīrāḥ. (*Mu. U.*, 1.1.6)

Wise persons realize, *pariṣāsyanti dhīrāḥ* the Supreme Knowledge as that, *yattad*, which cannot be perceived, *adreśyam*; cannot be captured, *agrāhyam*; without

root or ancestry, *agotram*; without color, features or caste, *avarṇam*; without eye and ear, *acakṣuḥśrotram*; without hands and feet, *apāñīpādam*. Then it is eternal, *nityam*, not subjected to destruction or even mutation; again that One is multiform, *bibhum*, all the forms are only His manifestations; omnipresent, *sarvagatam*; very subtle, *susūkṣam*; uneroded, *avyayam*; and is the source of entire creation, *bhūtayonim*.

This is the Supreme Knowledge. But here it is said that which cannot be perceived, cannot be captured both physically and mentally. This means that, this is beyond the purview of the mind, and even the higher intellect. Then how to have that knowledge? That is the focal point of our discussion.

Again it is said, “*satyaṃ jñānāmanantam brahma*” (*Tai. U.*, 2.1.1). The Brahman is Truth, Knowledge, and Infinity. Truth is the pure existence, without any mutation, and never eroded. That is the Knowledge, the form of the pure Consciousness. We use the word “pure” because our mind and intellect etc. are only reflections of the consciousness. We should not confuse them as the pure Consciousness though often we use the term consciousness for them and this Knowledge under discussion here is beyond the purview of the mind and the intellect. But since that is *sarvagatam*, entered inside everything, then everything is consciousness and appearance in different names and forms are only works of the ignorance. This means we are with That, only we have to know that.

The Ultimate State: “*sa yo ha vai tatparamam brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati*” (*Mu. U.*, 3.2.9), One who knows this Supreme Brahman becomes the Brahman itself.

Then there is no separate existence. The Brahman has manifested into everything and I am that principle. Elimination of separate existence of the individual self is elimination of the ignorance. This does not mean that our physical body will collapse at that moment of realization. Because even our physical body is also Thyself, and everything is Thyself. That is ten, thousand, many and infinite, *vai daśa ca sahasrāṇi bahūni cānantāni* (*Br. U.*, 2.5.19). That is not outside. He is That Puruṣa who is staying in all the bodies and there is nothing that is not covered by Him, *sa vā ayaṃ puruṣaḥ sarvāsu pūrṣu puriṣayo nainena kiñcānānāvṛtam* (*ibid.*, 2.5.18). Once you have this knowledge, you are *brahmavid*, a knower of the Brahman. Now you know, *tattvamasī*, “Thou art That” (*Ch. U.*, 6.8.7); *ayamātmā brahma*, “This Self is the Brahman” (*Br. U.*, 2.5.19); *tat satyaṃ sa ātmā*, “That is Truth, which is the Self” (*Ch. U.*, 6.8.7). This is the final knowledge. Acquiring this knowledge, you are one with all. You are established in the Truth, Knowledge and Infinity. You are *Viṣṇu*, the vastness. With your identification with the body-mind interactions and identification with names and forms, you are just a small entity separated from your own source. But still then you are a particle of the Consciousness embedded within the whirlpool of the ignorance, *avidyā*, subjected to its actions and results, enjoying the results of actions, going up and down, and feeling sorrow and happiness. These all phenomena vanish when you have that Supreme Knowledge, *parā vidyā*.

From the above discussions we know that the Vedic ṛṣis preached the practice of the path of renunciation, *nivṛtti dharma* and the path of worldly happiness, *pravṛtti dharma*. *Pravṛtti dharma* is the practice of religious rites, worship of gods and practice of charity, kindness and noble deeds. These actions are capable of presenting happiness and enjoyments in the present life and the life beyond in the heaven. The Vedic path of worldly happiness is not like the happiness as understood normally by a modern day man. Here enjoyment is not uncontrolled according to enjoyer's will rather this enjoyment is given a direction according to the scriptural sanctions. This is *pravṛtti dharma* sanctioned in scriptures and this lays foundation for *nivṛtti dharma*. But *nivṛtti dharma* says that enjoying in the heaven through good behaviors and noble actions is temporary and does not lead to freedom from the cycles of birth and death, hence miseries are not eradicated. Freedom can be achieved only through the Knowledge or in other words by removal of the wrong knowledge, *avidyā*.

HOW TO HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE?

But when it is said that this Knowledge is *adṛśyam* and *agrāhyam*, cannot be perceived and grasped (*vide supra*, p. 24), meaning thereby beyond the purview of our mind and intellect then let us discuss how to have that knowledge. We understand the outer world by our mind and intellect. The sense-organs are doors of the mind. Since That is beyond perception and grasp, then the five sense-organs, viz., ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose along with the five senses, viz., sound, touch, vision, taste, and smell are negated, so also negated is the sixth sense named mind. In Upaniṣads it is said,

*parāñci khāni vyatṛṇat svayambhū-
stasmātparāñ paśyati nāntarātman,
kaścīdhīraḥ pratyagātmānmekṣya-
dābṛtacakṣuramṛtatvamicchān. (Ka. U, 2.1.1)*

The Lord that is self-existing, *svayambhūḥ*, destroyed the outgoing senses, *parāñci khāni vyatṛṇat*, so one sees the outer objects, *tasmātparāñ paśyati*, and not the inner Self, *nāntarātman*. Rarely, a discriminating person, *kaścīdhīraḥ*, wishing immortality, *amṛtatvamicchān*, covers his eyes, *ābṛtacakṣuḥ*, and turns his senses away to see the indwelling Self, *pratyagātmānmekṣyat*.

The Lord is always self-existing as the Supreme Self, the Cosmic Self or the individual self. This Lord is always one and has no beginning or end. This is a homogeneous principle, *tattva*. Due to His tri-fold-nature, the individual self appears to be deluded and then the *rajas* and *tamas* qualities make the senses outward. That is destruction of the senses by the self-existing Lord and due to this, one is not able to see the indwelling Self. But one having a discriminating intellect, a *dhīraḥ*, by preponderance of *sattva* qualities in him knows the distinction between mortals and non-mortal, and hence prefers immortality, i.e., the indwelling Self. Such a person does not prefer the objects of the outgoing senses.

So he covers the eyes, not to see outward world. Here the eyes represent all the five sense-organs along with the mind. This is the way to have the Knowledge. We have to look inward. This is reversing the direction. This is moving against the water current like a fish, and not to be swayed away by flow of the current.

The Way of Fish: In the words of Śrī Aurobindo, “the life you lead conceals the light you are” (*Sā.*, 4.3). So such is the nature of human beings to see the outer world through five senses; only a rare person possessing the discriminating intellect, *viveka buddhi*, can swim against the reverse flow of water and will not be dragged into the way of the water current. So in yoga and tantra, this is described as the way of fish, *mīna mārga*. As the fishes move against the water current in an upward direction during their breeding seasons, a discriminating man does not engage in the thought of sense objects. This teaches us not to follow our animal instincts; hence we have to move against the path of desires, *pravṛtti mārga*. This is the path of returning, *nivṛtti mārga*. Our saints say, “An elephant is swayed away by a strong water current, but a fish swims against it.” Elephant represents a strong ego giving rise to many desires. To move against the current or *dhārā* is *Rādhā*; we have to reverse *dhā* and *rā*. The principle called *Rādhā* is the path of returning or renouncing the desires. *Rādhā* will take us to Lord Kṛṣṇa and *dhārā* or the way of desires will take us to bondage. And for this to happen, we have to observe control of the senses and control of the mind. So in the path of spiritualism, this is the first condition.

The Sense Enjoyments kill: Bhagavatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya has given us the examples how the attachment to the sense objects takes one to devastation.

*śabdādibhiḥ pañcabhireva pañca
pañcatvamāpuḥ svaguṇena baddhāḥ;
kuraṅgamātaṅgapataṅgamīna
bhṛṅgā naraḥ pañcabhirañcitaḥ kim. (Vkc., 76)*

An animal being is attached, *baddhāḥ*, to only, *eva*, one object out of the fives, *pañcabhiḥ*, like sound etc., *śabdādibhiḥ*, due to its own nature, *svaguṇena*, meets the death, *pañcatvamāpuḥ*, as in case of a deer, *kuraṅga*, an elephant, *mātaṅga*, an insect, *pataṅga*, a fish, *mīna*, and a bee, *bhṛṅgā*, whereas what, *kim*, will happen to a man, *naraḥ*, who is attached, *añcitaḥ*, to all the fives, *pañcabhiḥ*.

A deer is attached to sounds and while listening to the song of a hunter it comes close to the hunter and the hunter’s arrow hits it. An elephant is attached to touch and hunters exploit this. They dig a trench, and on the other side they keep a female elephant. The elephant having a desire to coupling the female counterpart falls on the trench and found itself in a captive condition. Insects are attached to vision and die in mass when they see a fire. A fish is attached to taste and is captured by fishing through a feed on a hook. A bee is attached to smell and dies inside a lotus in night when the petals are closed. Whereas a human being is attached to all the five senses, viz., sound, touch, vision, taste, and smell. Then how will he save himself? So King Bhartṛhari sings,

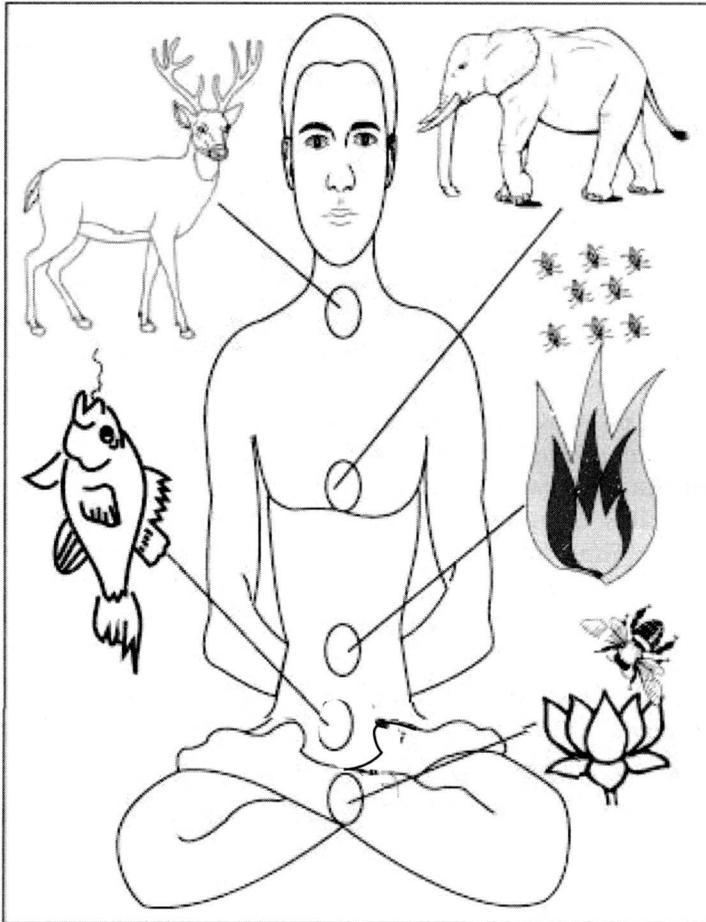


Fig. 2.2. The sense enjoyments kill. A deer dies for attachment to sounds, a negative effect of Viśuddha. An elephant dies for attachment to touch, a negative effect of Anāhata. Insects die for attachment to visual objects, a negative effect of Maṇipūra. A fish dies for attachment to taste, a negative effect of Svādhiṣṭhāna. A bee dies for attachment to smell, a negative effect of Mūlādhāra.

*bhogā na bhuktā vayameva bhuktā-
 tapo na taptam vayameva taptāḥ,
 kālo na yāto vayameva yātās-
 tṛṣṇā na jīrṇā vayameva jīrṇāḥ. (VS, 7)*

We have hot enjoyed the enjoyments, *bhogā na bhuktā*, rather we were being enjoyed, *vayameva bhuktāḥ*, we did not perform austerities (meaning here for efforts to arrange materials of pleasure), *tapo na taptam*, rather we suffered from burning (of desires), *vayameva taptāḥ*, time did not pass, *kālo na yāto*, we were by-

passed by the time, *vayameva yātāḥ*, desires were not thinned, *tṛṣṇā na jīrṇā*, rather we were thinned out (suffered from the ignorance), *vayameva jīrṇāḥ*.

Such is the pitiable condition of ours who are after the sense enjoyments.

Control of the Sense-organs and the Mind: Therefore we must have control over the five sense-organs. Without controlling ears, eyes, skin, tongue, and nose we cannot move forward one step in the way of God. This is called control of the senses, *dama*, and this is not possible without controlling the mind, *sama*. From this we understand that the main instrument of our spiritual practice is the mind.

Ṛṣi Aṣṭāvakra explains to king Janaka,

muktimicchasi cettāta viṣayānviṣavat tyaja,
kṣamārjavadayātoṣasatyam pīyūṣavadbhaja. (Asg., 1.2)

If you want liberation, *muktimicchasi cettāta*, leave enjoyment of the sense-objects like poison, *viṣayānviṣavat tyaja*, and cultivate forgiveness, *kṣamā*, broadness, *ārjava*, kindness, *dayā*, contentment, *toṣa*, and truth, *satyam*, to drink them like nectar, *pīyūṣavadbhaja*.

This means one has to leave attachment for body, senses and the sense objects, and has to cultivate noble virtues. But all these things happen only within the mind, because mind is the ruler here. Mind roams in objects, and the mind becomes the objects. Then that object or in other words the thought of that object takes the form of the self, so we become that object; *urttisārūpyamitaratra* (Ygs., 1.4), at other times when thoughts of the mind are not halted the seer appears to assume the form of the thought. That is the bondage. That is contraction of the Infinite into finite. So it is said, *saviṣayam mano bandhāya nirviṣayam muktaye bhavati* (MBU, 5.1.1), a mind with objects is the cause of bondage and without objects is the cause of liberation. Hence objects, means attachments and aversions to objects, are like poison that kills the self. To counter this poison we need to drink the nectar, this means we have to cultivate noble virtues. Those are forgiveness, broadness, kindness, contentment and truth. For that we need to develop our discriminating intellect. It is said,

indriyairbadhyate jīva ātmā caiva na badhyate,
mamatvena bhavejjīvo nirmamatvena kevalah. (YCU, 84)

The organs bind, *indriyairbadhyate*, the individual soul, *jīva*, and do not bind, *caiva na badhyate*, the Self, *ātmā*. Due to I and mine, *mamatvena*, one becomes the individual, *bhavejjīvo*, once “I sense” is finished, *nirmamatvena*, this attains the state of the One and Only, *kevalah*.

The sense-organs only bind an individual with the “I sense” or a person with attachments to body, mind and relations with the body. The basis of all our thoughts and desires are “I sense”: the world of I and mine. Once this is finished due to development of the discriminating intellect then there are no sufferings. One is in *kaivalyam*, the state of oneness with all things and beings.

Again,

*yadi deham pṛthakṛtya citi viśramya tiṣṭhasi,
adhunaiva sukhīḥ śanto bandhamukto bhaviṣyasi.* (Asg., 1.4)

If you separate yourself from body, *yadi deham pṛthakṛtya*, (includes senses and the sense-objects) and give rest, *viśramya tiṣṭhasi*, to your mind, *citta*, then at this very moment, *adhunaiva*, you will be, *bhaviṣyasi*, in a state of bliss, *sukhīḥ*, peace, *śanto*, and (will be) liberated, *bandhamukto*.

Our own body is due to our mind, not only our own body but also all other bodies, both living and non-living, are due to our mind only. Senses are the doors that bring outer perception to the mind and then the mind creates attachments etc. depending upon the types of sensations it received. Again the mind remembers those sensations stored in it in the form of impressions and thereby creating further attachments and aversions and further impressions making it an unending cycle of pain and pleasure. So clue here for liberation is to give rest to the mind, because a mind is always in volition, in thoughts. A mind is just a bunch of thoughts, and this has no definite shape. It takes the shape of an object on which it roams, so we can say the thought of objects are mind. This mind with its actions is just the world. This world is due to our mind and mind only. Once with the dissolution of this mind there remains no world. What exists then is the Truth, Knowledge, and Infinity.

The Supreme is not Comprehended through the Mind: But we have said that Lord is *sarvagatam*, inside everything. So let us understand it phase by phase.

*yanmanasā na manute yenāhurmano matam,
tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidamupāsate.* (Ke. U, 1.5)

That is not comprehended through the mind, *yanmanasā na manute*, by which the mind is comprehended, *yenāhurmano matam*; know that to be the Brahman, *tadeva brahma tvam viddhi*, and not the object that people worship, *nedam yadidamupāsate*.

Here it is made clear that the Brahman is not grasped through the mind, *manasā na manute*. The Brahman is the force by which we comprehend the mind. This point is of utmost importance. Similar verses in the first chapter of *Kenopaniṣad* teach the same thing about the sense organs (Ke.U, 1.6–8) and speech (ibid., 1.4), means through the Brahman we comprehend the senses, speech and the mind. Speech here represents the action organs. But all these cannot comprehend the Brahman.

That Supreme Knowledge or the Brahman has been described as Truth, the Pure Existence, Infinity and Consciousness. This has also explained as cannot be perceived, cannot be grasped, without ancestry and so on in the previous pages. But still then we have an abstract idea, and our understanding is not concrete. It is only through spiritual practices we can know, but to have some idea and to

facilitate our practice we should chose from scriptures one term that will nearly describe the Brahman. What is that term, which will give us at least some concrete idea according to our state of understanding? Scriptures name that as *Prāṇa* and that is the theme of the present discussion.

Know That through the Mind: In the above it is discussed, *manasā na manute*, not possible to know the Brahman through the mind. Again in other places it is said, *manasaivedamāptavyam*, one has to know That through the mind or *manasaivānudraṣṭavyam*, one has to see That through the mind.

*manasaivedamāptavyam neha nānāsti kimcana,
mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyum gacchati ya iha nāneva paśyati.* (Ka. U, 2.1.11)

or

*manasaivānudraṣṭavyam neha nānāsti kimcana,
mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyum āpnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati.* (Br. U, 4.4.19)

That is to be known through the mind only, *manasaivedamāptavyam*, That is to be seen through the mind only, *manasaivānudraṣṭavyam*. There is no multiplicity here, *neha nānāsti kimcana*. One who sees multiplicity here, *ya iha nāneva paśyati*, goes from death to death, *mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyum gacchati (āpnoti)*.

So multiplicity is creation of the ignorance. Multiple names and forms are only appearance of one homogeneous principle. We study this, but this knowledge should settle within us. We should know this in totality without any doubt, simply knowing it in our faculty of intelligence but reacting to situations with our ego, i.e., with identification with body-mind interactions as the self, would not work. That is the reason earlier it was said that the Knowledge cannot be comprehended through the mind, but we have to see the One only through the mind as it is advocated here. But how this will be possible?

Possible through a Mind at Rest: The above discussions appear to be contradictory as it is first said that the Supreme cannot be comprehended through the mind and again later it is said to know That through the mind. But actually this is not contradictory. To know we have the only one instrument called mind. In that mind we have to see the unity of our individual-self and the world with the Cosmic Self, One and the Only One, *kaivalyam*. But it was said that such a realization is not possible through the mind since the nature of mind is to remain in a state of volition. Here in the above discussion we have already said, *citi viśramya tiṣṭhasi*, give rest to your mind, *citta* (*vide supra*, "Control of the Sense Organs and the Mind," p. 29). So this Self-realization is not possible through a mind that is in volition but is possible through a mind at rest. When actions of the mind, *citta*, are halted, then that is called yoga, *yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ* (*Ygs.*, 1.2). This is the unity or union of the individual with the source. The same thing was told differently as,

*yadā pañcāvatiṣṭhante jñānāni manasā saha,
buddhiśca na viceṣṭati tāmāhuḥ paramām gatim.* (Ka. U, 2.3.10)

When the five sense-organs, *yadā pañca jñānāni*, along with the mind, *manasā saha*, rest together, *avatiṣṭhante*, and the intellect too does not try, *buddhiśca na viceṣṭati*, wise men call that the highest state, *tāmāhuḥ paramām gatim*.

How these five senses will take rest? These fives can take rest along with the mind only. These fives are mind only since their functional existence is dependent on the mind. Once we separate our mind from them then they cease to perform. These five do not create any problem for us as such; they simply bring the perception to the mind. Now the mind recognizes them, even recognizing by the mind is not also a problem, but it fixes tag on those perceptions as pleasures, pains or neutral sensations. This determination or tagging is done by the intellect. Now the mind creates likes and dislikes depending upon type of the tag fixed to a perception. Here lies the actual problem of likes and dislikes. Then the mind stores them and that forms a knot in the subconscious mind. Again this knot appears time to time as a memory and the mind desires to have the pleasurable sensations and acts in that direction. If it gets pleasure then it is happy, if not then the mind is unhappy. Similarly the mind does not want the unpleasurable sensations and if it encounters them then it becomes unhappy. Even when physical action is not done to attain the pleasurable ones and discard the unpleasurable one, the mental brooding goes on. And all these mental broodings makes further knots. In this way impressions are multiplied and a man is bounded strongly. So the clue for liberation is to give rest to the mind along with the five sense-organs and also to stop the activities of the intellect. Here in this verse intellect though represents determining faculty but is not said simply as the determining faculty, rather it is presented here as a broader term representing the greater mind, *citta*.

In Ṛṣi Patañjali's description of the greater mind, *citta*, both the active mind, *mana*, and the intellect, *buddhi*, are included. So this is a complete rest to all the subtle internal organs, viz., mind, intellect, ego and subconscious. For simple understanding we refer here *citta* as the mind but in actuality it includes these four. Commentators forward an argument that Ṛṣi Patañjali has not said, *yogaḥ sarvaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ*, all the actions of the mind are halted as yoga; so when you are in noble qualities, *sattvaguna*, that is also state of yoga. But he has also not said that a part of actions of the mind when halted is yoga. He only said when actions of the mind are halted is yoga. So the final stage of yoga is when all the actions of the mind are halted, when a part of actions are halted and you are in noble qualities, you are in processes of yoga.

Citta, the Mind Stuff: In the above we discussed that *citta* is the greater mind. This has generally four divisions, viz., mind, *mana*, intellect, *buddhi*, ego, *ahankāra*, and sub-consciousness, *citta* or *avacetana*. These are called four inner instruments,

antahkaraṇa catuṣṭaya. Our sense-organs are simply inert instruments of knowledge, eyes cannot see on their own or ears cannot hear on their own. The inner instrument called *citta* does this, though this is one but on the basis of works this is compartmentalized into four and these four compartments are not watertight compartments. The mind is the surface part of *citta* that appears; a mind is a bunch of thoughts and most of the time directed towards either external or mental objects. We easily understand that this is our mind. The general aspect of a mind is receiving perceptions brought by the sense-organs. Coming to its special aspect, it is said that, *manastu saṃkalpavikalpanādibhiḥ*, the mind is verily resolves and alternatives (Vks., 93). This makes resolves or takes decisions to do or not to do. Whereas the intellect is described as, *buddhiḥ padārthādhyavasāyadharmataḥ*, the nature of the intellect is to determine the matter (Vks., 93). The sense-organs bring perceptions and the mind receives them, then the intellect decides the nature of the perceptions and fixes a tag whether it is good or bad, hot or cold, pain or pleasure and so on. According to the nature of the perception determined by the intellect the mind takes a decision either to do something or not to do and if necessary it directs the action organs to act. This is spoken as resolves, *saṃkalpa*, and alternatives, *vikalpa*. When for a second time a similar perception is received then the mind recognizes and acts. Here the problem is not with receiving or recognizing the perceptions, not even with the taggings, but with the mind creating either cravings for favorable tags or aversions for unfavorable tags. These become knots or impressions, *saṃskāra*, and are stored in the subconscious-mind in the form of memory, *smṛti*. So it is said, *svārthānusandhānagruṇecittam*, the nature of *citta* is to remember the favorable ones (ibid., 93); we should understand here that remembering the favorable ones also includes remembering the unfavorable ones. When these are remembered these appear in the mind, and again creating cravings and aversions in a cyclic order increasing the knots. The focal point of all these mental activities is the ego, *ahaṃkāra*. This is, *atrābhimānād-ahamityahamkṛtiḥ*, here due to identification of this as I is called ego (ibid., 93); due to this identification we say: I am doing, I am happy, I have pain, I am in sorrow, I am king, I am beggar and so on. This attachment with the objects due to “I thought” is the cause hankerings and bondage. This ego is the deadly poisonous black snake that has bitten all the beings; *ahaṃ karttetya haṃmāna-mahākṛṣṇāhidamśitaḥ*, I am the doer (includes I am the enjoyer), this great black snake named ego has bitten you (Asg., 1.8).

Let us further understand *citta*. The Supreme Brahman is called Truth, the Pure Existence. This is also called the Pure Consciousness, *cit*, which is same as the Power of Consciousness, *citti-śakti*. Since in the Pure Consciousness actions are denied according to the scriptures, this is the potential form and the Power of Consciousness is the kinetic form. When this Power of Consciousness, *citti-śakti*, contracts itself from limitlessness to be identified with limiting adjuncts as

name and form then it is called *citta*. This identification is named as the ignorance, *avidyā*. So this *citta* is a product of the ignorance. The Power of Consciousness has three main divisions, viz., the power of will, *icchā śakti*, the power of knowledge, *jñāna śakti*, and the power of action, *kriyā śakti*, though three this is only one power. This Power of Consciousness on its own right wills by Her power of will to be many and manifests as the world, and many names and forms are created; and again this Power of Consciousness enters inside these names and forms to be identified with them. *Citta* is the power of knowledge, *jñāna śakti*, which is contracted to be identified with a name and form. Hence the central point of existence of *citta* is "I thought." In other words it can be said that this *citta* is just a reflection of the Consciousness but is subjected to volition due to actions of three qualities of the nature, viz., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* known as the ignorance, *avidyā*. The power of action, *kriyā śakti*, remains as the vital energy, *prāṇa*, inside the body. Here the power of action (*prāṇa*) is most important because the power of will and the power of knowledge are dependant on the power of action to act in a body. The power, *śakti*, is represented by action and the power is the common factor in all these three forms. Here the vital power is of utmost important to understand the activities of the three and these three are different forms of one principle known as the Power of Consciousness, *citti-śakti*. However the term *prāṇa* is broadly used for the Power of Consciousness, *citti-śakti*, and the power of action, *kriyā śakti*.

Five States of the *Citta*: The mind, *citta*, can have generally in five states. However, we can describe it into seven, eight, fourteen, sixteen, twenty-five or fifty states by permutation and combination, but for simpler understanding we describe it in five states. These are dull, *mūḍha*; violated, *kṣipta*; violated at times, *vikṣipta*; concentrated, *ekāgrā*; and halted or at rest, *niruddha*. When the mind is in a dull state it is the qualities of darkness, *tamogūṇa*, which manifest. This is complete lethargy, sloth, drowsy, fear, depression, illusion and delusion. When the mind is in violation the qualities of actions, *rajogūṇa*, manifest; it is also *rajogūṇa* acting on *tamogūṇa*. This is physical restlessness, turbulences in thoughts, desires, sex, anger, greediness, delusion, excessive attachments and such qualities. In the mind violated at times it is mainly the qualities of actions, *rajogūṇa* and calmness, *sattvagūṇa*, acting together. This is happiness and sorrow, forgiveness and cruelty, craving and contentment, patience and restlessness, believes and doubts, greediness and kindness and such dual qualities. In the mind at concentration it is the effect of calmness, *sattvagūṇa*, and the noble qualities. Here one starts to become a witness, and cravings and aversions start disappearing. In the mind at rest it is beyond the three qualities. This leads to the state of one's own form, *svarūpe sthiti*.

Some may confuse the dull mind with that of the mind at rest but they are separate like darkness and light. We can compare both these minds as standstill

water-bodies but the dull one is dirty and as if a gel or an oil film is coated on the surface of the water-body so that we cannot see our image. Whereas the other one is a crystal clear water-body in which our clear image is reflected. The violated mind is like a water-body that is dirty, covered and having waves frequently. The mind violated at times is like the previous one but with less frequent waves. The concentrated mind is like a clean water-body without waves but the dirt settled at the base. Here reflection is possible but not clear. The cleaner and still the water-body will be, clearer will be the image. These three things, viz., dirt, *mala*, coverings, *āvaraṇa*, and turbulence, *vikṣepa*, of the mind are to be finished, then only that mind can reflect the Self. The *tamoguna* or the qualities of darkness is responsible for coverings, *rajoguna* or the qualities of action is responsible for turbulence, and the results of actions making it dirty and increasing the covering thereby. These dirt or waste materials are results of actions, which is the cause of further actions thereby having an unending cycle. Doing noble actions, which is the result of *rajoguna* acting on *sattvaguna* cleans the dirt, and this counters the *rajas* and *tamas* based actions. But noble actions also give noble results and become cause of enjoyment, so those are also to be discarded at the final state. Then *sattvaguna* or calmness calms the waves as it counters the *rajoguna*. But when the mind transcends beyond the three qualities then the wisdom appears which makes it crystal clear removing coverings.

The Whirls of Mind, *Cittavṛtti*-s: The actions of mind, the modifications of mind, the fluctuations of mind or the whirls of mind are called as *cittavṛtti*-s. These are many but categorized by Ṛṣi Patañjali into five categories and each one is grouped into two, viz., painful, *kliṣṭa* and painless, *akliṣṭa* (*Ygs.*, 1.5). The whirls of mind those have their roots in afflictions and cause afflictions (see *infra* head, “Afflictions,” p. 123) are the painful ones, *kliṣṭa*. Whereas the mental modifications related to the discriminative intellect and that counter the operations of qualities of Nature, *guṇa*-s, are the painless ones, *akliṣṭa*. The five categories of painful and painless actions of a mind are proofs, *pramāna*, catastrophes, *viparyaya*, alternatives, *vikalpa*, sleep, *nidrā*, and memory or recollection, *smṛti* (*ibid.*, 1.6).

Knowledge about a real object is called *pramā* and the way of getting correct knowledge about an object is named proof, *pramāna*. This is mainly of three types: *pratyakṣānumānāgamāḥ pramāṇāni* (*ibid.*, 1.7), direct perception, *pratyakṣa*, inference, *anumāna*, and authoritative testimony, *āgama*, are proofs, *pramāṇāni*. Direct perception, *pratyakṣa*, is an action of mind from the knowledge of cognition through the five sense-organs and the mind. This happens when the mind, *citta*, comes in contact with an object through the sense-organs. This may create cravings or aversions according to the type of cognition. Inference, *anumāna*, is an action of mind based on the knowledge from the general characteristics of a knowable object and the identifying marks present there off. Testimony, *āgama*, is an action of mind based on the knowledge of hearing from a reliable and trustworthy person or words from the scriptures.

Catastrophes, *viparyaya*, are actions of mind from the knowledge of an object different from the reality; *viparyayo mithyājñānamadrūpapraṭiṣṭham* (ibid., 1.8), catastrophe, *viparyayah*, is a false knowledge, *mithyājñānam*, other than what it is, *adrūpapraṭiṣṭham*. This is a false cognition of a differently existing thing.

Alternatives, *vikalpa*, are actions of mind arising out of the meaning of a word having no real existence; *śabdajñānānupātī vastuśūnyo vikalpah* (ibid., 1.9), alternative, *vikalpah*, is based on sound cognition, *śabdajñānānupātī*, for a thing that does not exist, *vastuśūnyah*. From hearing a sound an idea takes place in our mind about a nonexistent entity, this is a vague notion.

When knowledge of any object does not exist to an individual and the mental modification is based on the knowledge of the absence of knowledge then this is called sleep; *abhāvapratyayālambanā vṛttinidrā* (ibid., 1.10), sleep, *nidrā*, is a modification of mind, *vṛtti*, based on the knowledge of deficiency, *abhāvapratyayālambanā*. This is in regard to the knowledge of deficiency to the states of waking and dreaming. In a waking state the mind, the sense-organs and the organs of action work whereas at a dreaming state only the mind or the seat of thinking works. Sleep is a state of mental inertia under the influence of *tamas* and the action of our mind, *citta*, subject to the knowledge of that *tamas* condition is sleep, *nidrā vṛtti*.

When a previous experience is reproduced in the mind that is a memory; *anubhūtavīṣayaśampramoṣah smṛtiḥ* (ibid., 1.11), memory or recollection, *smṛtiḥ*, is latent impression of previous experience, *anubhūtavīṣaya*, being manifested as it is without alteration, *asampramoṣah*.

Actions are done by the Qualities of Nature: According to Bhagatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya,

*akhaṇḍanityādvaya bodhaśaktyā
sphurantamātmānamanantavaibhavam,
samāvṛṇotyāvṛtiśaktiresā
tamomayī rāhurivārka bimbam. (Vkc., 139)*

The Self, *Ātman* is uninterrupted, *akhaṇḍa*, eternal, *nitya*, one, *advaya*, exists with the power of knowledge, *bodhaśaktyā*, and exuberates, *sphurantam*, infinite wealth (not possible to count), *anantavaibhavam*. But the power of covering, *āvṛtiśakti*, which is the form of darkness, *tamomayī*, covers, *samāvṛṇoti*, it as the Rāhu covers the Sun, *arka bimbam*. Further he says,

*tirobhute svātmānyamalataratejovati pumana-
nātmānam mohādahamiti śarīram kalayati,
tataḥ kāmakrodhaprabhṛtibhīramuṁ bandhanaguṇaiḥ
param vikṣepākhyā rajas urśaktirvyathayati. (Ibid., 140)*

When the effulgent, *tejovati*, and pure, *amalata*, Self is covered, *tirobhute svātmani*, (by the qualities of darkness) then due to delusion, *mohāt*, a man,

puman, adopts the body as the self, *śarīraṃ kalayati*, which is non-self, *anātmānam*; that is ego, *ahamiti*. Then, *tataḥ*, the desires, anger and such qualities, *kāma-krodhaprabhṛtibhiḥ*, those are causes of the bondage, *amum bandhanaguṇaiḥ*, and named as turbulence, *vikṣepākhya* and are creations of the powerful qualities of action, *rajas urśaktiḥ*, give much pain, *vyathayati*.

Here the Self is described to be one, uninterrupted, eternal and full of knowledge, there is no darkness in it, and it is the form of light, the form of consciousness. The exuberating phenomenon or vibration (His Power) is its inherent nature; due to that we know our mind, we know the outer world. But still then That Knowledge is being covered by the darkness. But how this can be covered? This only appears to be covered. This power of covering is *tamas*. The example of a solar eclipse is given here when Rāhu, the ascending node, covers the Sun on the no-moon day. On the no-moon day the moon comes in between the sun and the earth but on each no-moon day solar eclipse does not happen. Only when sun, moon and earth are in a particular axis called Rāhu and Ketu, the ascending node and the descending node, then only the moon covers the sun. But in actuality the sun is not covered by the moon, only the moon covers our vision from the earth. In context of our body, moon represents the mind and sun represents eyes; *candramā manaso jātascaḥṣoḥ sūryo ajāyata* (YV, 31.12), from mind of the Virāṭa Puruṣa the moon manifested and from His eyes manifested the sun. The Sun or the eye represents the power of vision, i.e., the power of consciousness, the Self. It is due to the moon in contact with Rāhu, the sun appears to be covered. Rāhu symbolizes the covering power, *tamas*. So it is *tamas* quality of the mind, the "I thought," which covers the Self. According to mythology, Rāhu has only head and no body, so covering or swallowing by Rāhu is only temporary. This "I thought" or Rāhu is just a big cut head; this is the quality of darkness of the mind. When the effulgent and pure Self is covered by the qualities of darkness then one is deluded. Due to this delusion a human adopts the body and the mind as the self, which is non-self. That is ego. Then the desires, anger, greed, cravings, hatreds and such other qualities named as turbulence and are the creations of the powerful *rajas* give much pain. Those are causes of the bondage. These qualities are called *guṇa-s*, and *guṇa* means a rope that binds.

From the above discussions it is clear that the mind is the cause of the world and mind takes shape according to the three qualities of the Nature, *prakṛti*. The Nature is the main performer. Lord Vāsudeva says,

prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ,
ahamkāravimūḍhātā kartāhamiti manyate. (Ś. Bg., 3.27)

All the actions, *karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ*, are done by the qualities of the nature, *prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ*, but a person deluded by the ego, *ahamkāra-vimūḍhātā*, thinks that he is the doer, *kartāhamiti manyate*.

The ego or *ahamkāra* is the identification of the self with the body, senses and mind. We are deluded by this ego, which is a product of *tamas*. In the Nature, *prakṛti* (also called as *pradhān*), the three qualities, viz., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* are in a state of equilibrium. But for us, who are deluded by the ego or covering qualities of *tamas*, the equilibrium is lost and the activities of *rajas* in the form of turbulence create cravings and aversions.

In *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* it is said again,

*sattvaṁ rajastama iti guṇāḥ prakṛtisambhavāḥ,
nibadhnanti mahābāho dehe dehinamavyayam.* (Ś. Bg., 14.5)

The *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* qualities, *sattvaṁ rajastama iti guṇāḥ*, are born of the Nature, *prakṛtisambhavāḥ*. Oh great-armed one, *mahābāho*, these bind, *nibadhnanti*, the un-eroded embodied being, *dehinamavyayam*, to the body, *dehe*.

*Guṇa*s are said to be the nature of the ignorance, so they bind the Knower who is the embodied being, *dehi*, in a individual body. This is delusion.

The Ego must be Finished: So for that delusion to be eradicated the ego must be finished. Ego is a part of the greater mind, *citta*, and it is just a volition of mind identifying with body-mind interactions as the self or in simple words one can say this is “I thought” as explained before. This is stopped only at the *niruddha* state of mind where all volitions of mind are completely halted. Ṛṣi Patañjali says, “*tadā draṣṭuḥ svarūpevasthānam*” (*Ygs.*, 1.3), then the visionary establishes himself in the Self, in his own form. This is transformation from “limited I thought” to “Vast I Consciousness” or establishment in the only One, *kaivalyam svarūpapraṭiṣṭhā*, without having any desires or hankerings. Here the manifestations of (three) qualities of the Nature are stopped, *guṇānām pratiprasavaḥ*, and (what remains there is) only the Power of Consciousness, *cittiśaktiḥ iti* (*ibid.*, 4.34). Even in *ekāgra* or concentrated state of mind where there is only preponderance of noble qualities and calmness, *sattvaguṇa*, there still exists the ego. So that is not the highest state. This ego or world of “I and mine” is the cause of all our problems and sufferings. It is said,

*aham brahmeti niyatam mokṣaheturmahātmanām,
dve pade bandhamokṣhāya nirmameti mameti ca,
mameti badhyate janturnirmameti vimucyate.* (*Mh.U.*, 4.72)

One who is ever convinced that “I am the Brahman,” *aham brahmeti niyatam*, this becomes the cause of liberation of such great souls, *mokṣaheturmahātmanām*. There are two for bondage and liberation, *dve pade bandhamokṣhāya*, (one is) “I and mine” and (the other is) to be “free from I and mine,” *nirmameti mameti ca*. Due to “I and mine” a being is trapped in a bondage, *mameti badhyate jantuh*, being “free from I and mine” a being is liberated, *nirmameti vimucyate*.

This ego or “I and mine” is the center of our *citta*. The *citta* exists due to this. This is the cause of all desires and the cause of bondage and sufferings. Once

that is merged in vastness, in the Transcendental Self or the Brahman then it is named liberation. Only after reaching the highest state of merging the individual self with the Transcendental Self, and that means being established in the state of Śiva one can sing like Bhagavadpāda Śri Saṅkarācārya,

*manobuddhyahamkārācittāni nāham
na ca śrotrajihve na ca ghrāṇanetra,
na ca vyomabhūmirna tejo na vāyuh
cidānandarūpaḥ śivoham śivoham.*

I am not, *nāham*, the mind, *manah*, not the intellect, *buddhiḥ*, not the ego, *ahamkārah*, not the sub-consciousness, *cittah*; not the ears or the tongue, *na ca śrotrajihve*, not the nose or the eyes, *na ca ghrāṇanetra*; not even the ether or the earth, *na ca vyomabhūmiḥ*, not the fire, *na tejah*, not the air, *na vāyuh*; I am the form of Consciousness and Bliss, *cidānandarūpaḥ*, I am Śiva, *śivoham*, I am Śiva, *śivoham*.

Here negation of the body, the five sense-organs, the five organs of action, the mind, the intellect, the ego, the sub-consciousness and the five elements, viz., earth, water, etc., and contemplating on the Consciousness and Bliss as Śiva or the Pure Existence is shown as the way. Śiva means Bliss, removal of misery, Śiva means Truth, the Pure Existence, and the principle that called the Self. Śiva means the Pure Consciousness, the Knowledge. The yogic way of this negation is named *samādhi*, and this is inhibition of all the actions of the mind-stuff, *citta*. Then there are no cravings and aversions, and that is equanimity.

Control of the Mind is the Precondition again: But to achieve this state of Śiva as advanced in this discussion, control of the mind along with control of the sense-organs is the precondition. This we have discussed under the heads "Control of the Sense-organs and the Mind" (*supra*, p. 29) and "Possible through a Mind at Rest" (*supra*, p. 31). We will be discussing this time and again. Again,

*manaso nigrahāyattamābhayaṃ sarvayoginām,
duḥkhakṣayaḥ prabodhaścāpyakṣayā śāntireva ca. (G. Ka., 3.40)*

By control of the mind, *manaso nigrahāyattam*, all the yogis, *sarvayoginām*, attain fearlessness, *abhayaṃ*, removal of misery, *duḥkhakṣayaḥ*, knowledge of the Self, *prabodhaḥ*, and everlasting, *akṣayā*, peace, *śāntireva ca*.

The seat of fear is only in our mind, miseries are only in our mind, the ignorance is only in our mind, and turbulences and disturbances are only in our mind. So the mind should be controlled to overcome these. In Upaniṣads it is said,

*cittameva hi saṃsārastatprayatnena śodhayet,
yācittastanmoya bhavati guhyametatsanātanam. (ŚU, 3; Mai. U, 4.3f.)*

This mind is the world, *cittameva hi saṃsārah*, so purify it with care, *tatprayatnena śodhayet*, so that the mind should be merged with That, *yācittastanmoya bhavati*. This is the secret, *guhyametata*, and this is eternal, *sanātanam*.

So the purification of mind, *cittaśuddhi*, is nothing but merging the mind, *manolaya*, with the Un-eroded Principle, *avyaya tattva*. Then there is eternal peace and this much is the secret.

The Self should be Taught after Purification: From the above discussions we understand that the identity with the body-mind interactions is named as the ego, which is a product of the ignorance and is the cause of bondage. This identity results in the enjoyment of various sense objects and gives pain and pleasures, but when one transcends that and sees the Self in all manifestations then he becomes established in the Knowledge and Bliss. But for this to happen, cleaning the senses and the internal organ named mind are of utmost necessity because without these the concept of unity of the individual self with the Cosmic Self or the Transcendental Self is not possible and if done so without cleaning the mind then there is danger of misperception of the body as the Self being strengthened to a highest degree. Such a practitioner can become like that of a king of demons and thinks himself as if the lord of others without the lordly qualities, and he does greater harms to himself and the society. So it is said as an advice to the spiritual teachers,

*saiṣā cidamalākārā nirvikalpā nirāspadā.
ādau śamadamaṅprāyairguṇai śiṣyaṃ viśodhayet,
paścatsarvamidam brahma śudhastvamiti bodhayet.
ajñasyārdhaprabuddhasya sarvaṃ brahmeti yo vadet,
mahānarakajāleṣu sa tena viniyojitaḥ.* (Mh. U, 5.103–5)

That Self, *saiṣā*, is the Consciousness, *cit*, without any impurities (or pure), *amalākārā*, without second or any alternatives, *nirvikalpā*, and independent, *nirāspadā*. At first, *ādau* (the teacher should) clean the disciple, *śiṣyaṃ viśodhayet*, with the qualities like control of the mind and control of the organs, *śamadamaṅprāyairguṇai*, and then, *paścāt*, should give the understanding, *bodhayet*, that all everything is the Brahman, *sarvamidam brahma*, that is the Pure Existence and you are That, *śudhastvamiti*. One who is ignorant and half mature (without the discriminating intellect) to him, *ajñasyārdhaprabuddhasya*, one who speaks, *yo vadet*, all everything is the Brahman, *sarvaṃ brahmeti*, he (that teacher), *sa*, engages, *viniyojitaḥ*, him (to the disciple), *tena*, to the large net of hell, *mahānarakajāleṣu*.

Prāṇa holds the Key to purify the Mind: Then how to purify the mind, how to keep the mind at rest, and how the actions of mind are halted? To know that we have to understand the principle in which the mind is absorbed.

We have already thrown a question to find out a term that nearly describes the Brahman, because that was one by which the mind is comprehended, *yenāhurmanomatam*; know that to be the Brahman, *tadeva brahma tvam viddhi* (*vide supra*, p. 30). That term is called *prāṇa*. The *prāṇa* is the Life-force, Śakti or the cosmic energy. The *prāṇa* is also called as the Hiraṇyagarbha, the sum total of all

the power of actions and all the power of knowledge. These are all synonyms. The *prāṇa* is not simply the vital force in the body, but the vital force in the body named *prāṇa* is the base to understand it. How?

athādhyātmaṁ prāṇo vāva samvargah sa yadā svapiti prāṇameva vāgapyeti prāṇam cakṣuḥ prāṇam śrotram prāṇam manaḥ prāṇo hyevaitānsarvānsamvṛikta iti. (Ch. U, 4.3.3)

Now we deliberate spiritual science, *athādhyātmaṁ*. *Prāṇa* involves everything, *prāṇo vāva samvargah*. When a person sleeps, *sa yadā svapiti*, the speech merge in the *prāṇa*, *prāṇameva vāgapyeti*, the eyes merge in the *prāṇa*, *prāṇam cakṣuḥ*, the ears merge in the *prāṇa*, *prāṇam śrotram*, and the mind merge in the *prāṇa*, *prāṇam manaḥ*. The *prāṇa* engulfs everything in it, *prāṇo hyevaitānsarvānsamvṛikta iti*.

This is the description of the fate of the senses and the mind in a deep-sleep. But in the deep-sleep all these happen in a state of ignorance. One has to do the same in meditation with full consciousness to have the knowledge. Since every modifications of the mind can merge into the *prāṇa*, when the mind with its activities is merged, then the Self is reflected there on. Again,

sa yathā śakuniḥ sūtreṇa prabaddho diśam diśam patitvānyatrāyatānamalabdhvā bandhanamevopāśrayate evameva khalu soumya tanmano diśam diśam patitvānyatrāyatānamalabdhvā prāṇamevopāśrayate prāṇabandhanam hi soumya manaḥ (Ch. U, 6.8.2).

Oh, the good-looking one, *Soumya*, as a bird that, *sa yathā śakuniḥ*, is bound by a thread, *sūtreṇa prabaddho*, after flying in many directions without getting a place to settle, *diśam diśam patitvānyatrāyatānamalabdhvā*, returns to the place of its bondage, *bandhanamevopāśrayate*, similarly, *evameva*, that mind, *tanmano*, after flying in many directions without getting a place, *diśam diśam patitvānyatrāyatānamalabdhvā*, returns to the *prāṇa*, *prāṇamevopāśrayate*. Oh good-looking one, the mind is surely under the *prāṇa*, *prāṇabandhanam hi soumya manaḥ*.

This *prāṇa* is our Life-force. The mind is bound to the Life-force. After complete absorption of the mind with its actions in meditation what remains is *Prāṇa* the Self. One can say, here in the above verse the term *prāṇa* refers to the Life-force as the Unmanifest, *avyakta*, which is the Primordial Nature with its threefold qualities involved within it whereas in the mind the threefold qualities of the Nature are evolved and the mind is under their control. One can argue the Self is One from which the Primordial Nature or Unmanifest comes out as His nature, so the *prāṇa* cannot be the Self if it is His nature. Now accepting it as Unmanifest, let us proceed with the discussion though there is no difference between the Consciousness and the Power of Consciousness. Why this point arises to compare the *prāṇa* with the Unmanifest, because in the previous example (*Ch.U, 4.3.3*) we have described the state of a person in a deep sleep, *svapiti*, where the organs

along with the mind merge in the *prāṇa*. Here also in the preceding text (*Ch.U*, 6.8.1) it is said that when a person sleeps, *svapīti*, he is in the Truth, *sat*, that is why this is called *svapīti* because at that time he attains, *apītaḥ*, the Self, *sva*. In deep sleep there is no action of the sense-organs, the mind, the intellect and the subconscious. The ego is also not there. Only *sva* or the Self is there. But the person could not bring that Knowledge as he is under the influence of *tamas*, the covering quality of the Nature (or Unmanifest) that covers the Self. So it is said that the person attains the Unmanifest. And since only the *prāṇa* exists in deep sleep, the *prāṇa* is compared with the Unmanifest. Again here an argument is that the *prāṇa* is manifested here in deep sleep, but since this manifestation is not for the person in the deep sleep as he is not aware of the existence of the *prāṇa*, this argument is not considered. Though the vital energy and the Unmanifest imply the same, this understanding is not so easy, because the term *prāṇa* is referred as the Brahman, then as the Nature, then the Lord, the vital energy and also referred even as the senses like smell etc. Generally people refer it as the vital force. These are not contradictory, because the *prāṇa* is everything.

It is the one power named *prāṇa* that has dichotomized as the vital force and the conscious elements like mind and intellect, etc. According to Bhagavān Ramaṇa Maḥarṣi, *cittavāyavaś cītkriyāyutāḥ, śākhayordvayī śaktimūlakā* (*US*, 12), the mind and the vital energy, *cittavāyavaś*, are endowed with the consciousness and the activating power, *cītkriyāyutāḥ*; they are two branches of, *śākhayordvayī*, the one basic energy, *śaktimūlakā*. Even after the dichotomization, in the vital force there is consciousness and in the consciousness there is vital force, there is no watertight compartment to separate them. Even plants that were believed to have only the vital force also have the consciousness and the scientist Shri Jagdish Chandra Basu proved that long back. This consciousness is embedded in the vital force. In medical sciences there are examples of organ transplantation to a patient reviving the strong painful memories of the donor. These examples, though rare, helped even police to solve the crime committed on the donor; who was no more. Also there is an example of heart transplantation bringing to the recipient the horrible memories of the donor who was found to be a murderer. And there was a comedy based love story in Hindi cinema on a heart transplantation reviving the memory of the donor in the recipient. This means organs other than the nervous system that are just containing the vital force also contain a bit of the consciousness. We cannot reject these as exceptions or aberrations. Our body cells and organs are certainly smarter than we believe them to be. This is the reason vegetarianism is preferred because animal cells are more smarter than those of plants according to their position in the evolution of consciousness and an animal flesh as diet will bring unnecessary impressions of sex, violence, fear, etc. of the animal killed or died to our body system thereby interfering with our process of evolution. Lord Buddha believed that each part

of our body contains the impressions of our past actions in the form of pain and pleasures, etc., and there is a popular technique of meditation practiced by Theravāda Buddhists to feel these and this technique is known as Vipassanā. Yogis believed in similar techniques, viz., *yoganidrā* and *vyāna vīkṣaṇā* in feeling the *vyāna vāyu*, the vital energy, throughout the body as vibrations, *spandana*. Even reference to this is found in Śīva Sūtras and Śaiva Sidhānta, the lineage of Siddhas also follow it; and in *tantra* this technique is known as *nyāsa* and it is done along with seed sound vibrations both in *tantra* and in yoga systems. Another aspect is that after departure of the Life-force, or you can say the soul from the body, when a person is declared dead still then there remains life in the organs for a period, so the organs are used for transplantation. Of course after a period those organs also die after consuming the vital energy stored in them in the dead person since the withdrawal of the Life-force does not create or transmit further vital energy in them. That means the vital energy for maintenance of the physiological process in a body and the Life-force are not same things, and the life or the vital energy is dependant on the Life-force. On the other hand we find autosuggestions, the suggestions given to hypnotize a person; commands given by some saints to persons suffering from diseases in some cases cure the diseases. This is a positive mental energy that corrects a negative mental energy mostly at the subconscious level and thereby correcting the vital body. That means the mental energy also acts on the vital energy. This is like a father influencing a son and again the son influencing the father or you can say a brother influencing a brother.

THE PRĀṆA PRINCIPLE

The purpose of all these discussion is to understand the principle called prāṇa. *Prāṇa* is not simply the power performing physiological activities in the body but is the conscious power behind the body, the senses and the mind. So we can say the Life-force in a body is both the vital energy and the mental energy combined and the vital energy is at the base or at the foundation.

Prāṇa is the Mother Nature, Aditi: So often in scriptures main prāṇa, *mukhya prāṇa*, and secondary prāṇa, *gauṇa prāṇa*, terms are used, because the mind being a product of the *prāṇa* is also a *prāṇa*, the senses are also *prāṇa*-s, but these are secondary *prāṇa*-s. The *prāṇa* term is verily used for the Mother Nature, *prakṛti*; this is called the Un-manifest, *avyakta*; this is also called the *Śakti*, the Energy, the Power or the Force; again called as *Māyā*, the trifold power of the Lord having three qualities, viz., *sattvagūṇa*, *rajogūṇa* and *tamogūṇa*. Here the three qualities are involved in the Prime Nature. This energy in its Prime Nature is called Aditi, *yā prāṇena sambhavatyaditiḥ* (*Ka. U.*, 2.1.7), one that has manifested as the *Prāṇa* is Aditi; here the Prime Nature has manifested as the Active Nature. She is one, so Aditi. Aditi is beginningless, *anādi*, unborn: “*aditerdakṣo ajāyata*

dakṣādaditi parī” (RV, 10.72.4), from Aditi the Able-one, *Dakṣa*, was born and again from the Able-one Aditi was born. Therefore Aditi is the *prāṇa*, the Prime Nature that gave birth to the *Īśvara*, the Lord of creatures who is the Able-one. He is the first-born. The Prime Energy, which is manifestation of the Knowledge by activities of the Knowledge, conceives the Knowledge and gives birth to the Lord, the sum total of all the powers of knowledge and all the powers of action. Now this Lord *Dakṣa* again gives birth to Aditi. This second Aditi is *ādi* or *ādyāśakti*, the First Power, the power of the First Born and it is tri-fold in its nature having the three qualities, viz., *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* that start working now. Both the first and second Aditi are one. And this second Aditi gave birth to gods,

aditirhyajanīṣṭa dakṣa yā duhitā tava;
tām devā anvajāyanta bhadrā amṛtabandhavaḥ.

(RV, 10.72.5 and Das., 13)

Oh *Dakṣa*, your, *tava*, daughter, *duhitā*, Aditi became ready to deliver, *aditirhyajanīṣṭa* and many noble immortal, *bhadrā amṛtabandhavaḥ*, gods took birth, *tām devā anvajāyanta*.

The gods are the powers of illumination. This is in the context of the Universe, and the same is also applied to our body. In context of our body the gods are the sense organs and the mind, and the sense organs and the mind are a product of the vital energy, *prāṇa*. Again it is said,

yā prāṇena sambhavatyaditirdevatāmayī;
guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantī yā bhūtebhirvyajāyata; etaddhai tat.

(Ka. U, 2.1.7)

One who, *yā*, is Aditi, who comprises of all gods, *aditirdevatāmayī*, is manifested as the *Prāṇa*, *prāṇena sambhavati*. This has entered into the cave, *guhām praviśya*, (the cave of intellect) and stays there, *tiṣṭhantī*, and has manifested with the elements, *bhūtebhirvyajāyata*. Know that to be the Principle, *etaddhai tat*.

So the *Prāṇa* is the Principle be it the activities of knowledge, *jñāna kriyā*, or the activities of action, *karma kriyā*. This *prāṇa* is Aditi and takes birth as *Prāṇa*, the *Hiraṇyagarbha*. This is activated as the vital energy and this also stays as the Knowledge in the cave of intellect. Aditi means, due to which there is *adana*, means we know or enjoy the senses like sounds etc., that energy is the Aditi. Word *Aditi* is composed of *a* and *diti* means “uninterrupted power of consciousness.” This Aditi or the *prāṇa* is everything and this Aditi also means one that is not divided or cut into parts, that Aditi is one and not even two. This one has become many; this one has become all the gods. Aditi is the mother of *Vāmana*, the Dwarf One. This Dwarf One is the Lord; He is the *aṅguṣṭhamātrah puruṣaḥ*, the Being of the size of a thumb, *antarātmā*, the indwelling Self, *sadā janānām hṛdaye sanniviṣṭaḥ*, He is ever seated in the hearts of men, inside the cave of heart (Ka. U, 2.3.17). This Lord *Vāmana* is none but Aditi and this is the

Prāṇa as it is said; *guhām praviśya tiṣṭhantī*, this has entered into the cave, *guhām praviśya*, (the cave of intellect) and stays there. One who is the Transcendental Self, the same is the Nature and the same is the Lord or the Cosmic Self. That is the *prāṇa*. Aditi is the mother of Indra, the king of gods. Indra means Idandra since He has seen the *idam* or “This” as the Supreme Self; He has realized This (Brahman), *idamadarśamitī* (*Ai. U.*, 1.3.13), oh, I have realized this. It is said, “*tasmādidandro nāmedandro ha vai nāma. tamidandram santamindra ityācakṣate parokṣeṇa*” (ibid., 1.3.14), so His name is Idandra, He is verily known as Idandra; although He is Idandra, they (gods) call Him indirectly as Indra. He has entered the body by splitting up the farthest point at the crown where hair is parted; *sa etameva sīmānam vidāryaitayā dvārā prāpadyata* (ibid., 1.3.12), He having slit up this very end entered through this gate. Then He sat inside the cave of the intellect. Lord Indra is one who is ever awake, one who never slept; so He has thousand eyes. Eye represents the sun, the vital power. In the body context when all the gods, viz., the senses, the sense-organs, the organs of actions, the mind and the intellect fall asleep during the deep-sleep, only one who awakes is the *prāṇa*; the vital power, *prāṇa*, awakes through thousands of nerves. So it is said that Indra has thousands of eyes, *sahasralocana*. This Lord Indra is none but Vāmana, who sits in the space of heart in mid-point of the brain. This individual *prāṇa* and the cosmic *prāṇa* is one. This is Aditi and this is the Brahman.

The Knowledge is Gained through the Grace of Umā Haimavatī: This Lord Idandra, the Cosmic Self knows His own form from the beginning; He has never been deluded by the ignorance. But for Indra, the legendary king of the gods who is deluded due to his ignorance, in gods’ victory against the devils that was the victory of the Brahman, became elevated, as the story goes on in *Kenopaniṣad*, thinking of the victory as theirs’ (gods’). His ignorance was eradicated by the grace of Umā Haimavatī, the Divine Mother, *sā brahmeti hovāca* (*Ke. U.*, 4.1), She said, it was the Brahman; *tato haiva vidāncakāra brahmeti* (ibid.), from that (utterance) to be sure (Indra learned) that it was the Brahman. Therefore Indra did excel the other gods. From this we learn that for the Knowledge to descend the grace of the Divine Mother is essential. We cannot know Him through the gods, i.e., through the senses, the organs and the mind; though these all are *prāṇa*-s, we can know Him through the Great Prāṇa, *mahāprāṇa*, through the Divine Mother. She is Haimavatī, the golden effulgence, the form of knowledge in ever association with the Omniscient Lord, She is *citti śakti*, the Power of Consciousness and She is in the form of the power of action, *kriyā śakti*.

Gopis achieve Śrīkr̥ṣṇa by Worshiping Kātyāyanī: The story from *Śrīmad-bhāgavata-mahāpurāṇa* about achieving Śrīkr̥ṣṇa as theirs’ Lord by the Gopis also teaches the same,

*kātyāyanī mahāmāye mahāyoginyadhīśvarī,
nandagopasutam devī patim me kuru te namaḥ. (SBM, 10.22.4)*

Oh Kātyāyanī, *kātyāyanī*, Oh Mahāmāyā, *mahāmāye*, Oh Mahāyoginī, *mahāyoginī*, Oh Adhīsvarī, Goddess of all, *adhīsvarī*, Oh Devī, *devī*, you please make my Lord, *patim me kuru*, the son of Nanda Gopa, *nandagopasutam*, I bow down to you, *te namaḥ*.

She is Kātyāyanī since She has manifested as the collective power of all the gods at the ashram of Sage Kātyāyana who has compiled the *Kātyāyanasūtra*, and She is regarded as his daughter. Sage Kātyāyana belongs to the family of Sage Kata but Her (Divine Mother's) ancestry is not known; it is not possible to know Her ancestry since She is beginningless. Kātyāyanī is prayed as,

*etatte vadanam soumyam locanatrayahūṣitam,
pātu naḥ sarvabhūtibhyaḥ kātyāyanī namostute.* (Sds., 11.25)

Oh Kātyāyanī, we bow down to you, *kātyāyanī namostute*. Let your this beautiful peace radiating face, *etatte vadānam soumyam*, decorated with three eyes, *locanatrayahūṣitam*, save us from all the fears, *pātu naḥ sarvabhūtibhyaḥ*.

Kātyāyanī saves us from all the fears. Due to Her worship the practitioner develops the third eye, develops the discriminating intellect, *viveka khyāti*, and knows the eternal and non-eternals. Her internal worship is the practice of *prāṇakarma*, and then the practitioner does not develop cravings for non-eternals thereby removing all fears. Again She is Mahāmāyā, the Great Illusory Power, She is cause of the ignorance with all Her manifestations, and deluding all the beings by the way of desires. So it is said,

*jñānināmaṇi cetāmsi devī bhagavatī hi sā.
balādākṛṣya mohāya mahāmāyā prayacchati.* (Sds., 1.55.56)

That goddess Bhagavatī, *devī bhagavatī hi sā*, the great power of delusion, *mahāmāyā*, pulls by force, *balādākṛṣya*, minds of the wise-ones, *jñānināmaṇi cetāmsi* and makes them deluded, *mohāya prayacchati*.

She is the cause of the mind-stuff, *citta*, which is subjected to volition by Her three qualities, viz., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. Due to the action of *rajas* on *tamas* all the cravings and aversions appear deluding all the beings, hence She is Mahāmāyā. Even the knowledgeable persons versed in scriptures are deluded. And only Her bliss is the cause of removal of the ignorance. If we worship Her, worship to that Mahāyoginī, the Great Yoginī, the great practitioner of yoga then only we shall be liberated. She only is the practitioner, and only She does all our spiritual practices. She brings union with the Supreme Self by removing the ignorance. Gopi signifies one who protects the inner light or effulgence, a spiritual practitioner. And a Gopi prays to Devī for the son of Nanda, Nanda is the Bliss and Nanda is one who sings His glory, and he belongs to Gopapura, the house where He is saved. But who can save the Saver Śrīkrṣṇa ? We only save our inner self by devotion to Him and merging the inner self with the Self become the Self. He is to be made our *pati*, one who saves. For that we need the help of Mahāyoginī

i.e., His great yogic power. She is Mahāyoginī and Śrīkṛṣṇa is Mahāyogeśvara, the great lord of yoga. Śiva is also called Mahāyogeśvara since the principle named Śiva and Śrīkṛṣṇa is same. She is Adhīśvarī, the inner ruler.

*evam māsam vratam ceruḥ kumāryaḥ kṛṣṇacetasaḥ,
bhadrakālīm samānarcurbhūyānnandasutaḥ patih. (SBM, 10.22.5)*

In this way, *evam*, all these virgins whose mind was merged in Kṛṣṇa, *kumāryaḥ kṛṣṇacetasaḥ*, worshiped Goddess Bhadrakālī, *bhadrakālīm samānarcurḥ*, for a month with resolve that, *māsam vratam ceruḥ*, the son of Nanda be our Lord, *bhūyānnandasutaḥ patih*.

All spiritual practitioners are regarded as Gopis; they are all feminine. Only Kṛṣṇa, the Lord is masculine. When we are either in the senses or in the body or in the mind and even if with all the noble qualities, *sattvaguna*, we are feminine. Only Self the Kṛṣṇa is masculine, He only is the Puruṣa. And all the yoginīs, *prāṇa*-s, have to take the shelter of that Mahāyoginī, the *mahāprāṇa* to achieve Him. All the yoginīs are virgins. One who remains in *prāṇa* becomes the *prāṇa*; and the *prāṇa* is always virgin, our vital breath is always virgin. Body and mind loose their virginity but the *prāṇa* can never loose its virginity. These yoginīs have to take bath in River Yamunā. Yamunā is related to Yama, the lord of death. According to mythology she is the sister of Yama. The lord of death is also named Kāla or time. Hence Yamunā is also called Kālindī. To take bath in Yamunā means to observe righteousness, *yama*. This is to control the senses, to control the desires, to control the actions of mind. In other words the spiritual practitioner has to do breath practice, *prāṇakarma*, since this is the way to halt the actions of mind. Once the actions of the mind are halted then time would be finished, one is beyond the time. Yamunā is the river where the *prāṇa* flows; because she is daughter of the Sun. The Sun is manifested as the *prāṇa* and the *prāṇa* flows in Yamunā. Here the descending *prāṇa* ascends from Mulādhārā to Ājñā by a spiritual practice, *prāṇakarma*. That is the bathing in Yamunā. They have to play water-sports; since water is life, *prāṇa* the vital power, and they have to do *prāṇakarma* to achieve Lord the Self. This sport of *prāṇa* with devotion has to go at least for a month, one complete lunar cycle. The ascending *prāṇa* is the bright fortnight from Mulādhārā to Ājñā and the descending *prāṇa* is the dark fortnight from Ājñā to Mulādhārā. Though one kriyā-breath completes one lunar cycle but still then one month of practice was the minimum need for the physical body to be enabled to cope with the vital power. This one-month duration was for the highest spiritual practitioners like Gopis who were great yogis in their past lives. But for those like us who are in the lower ladder in spiritualism, the time span depends on our position in the spiritual evolution. Gopis practiced this worship in *hemante prathame māsi (SBM, 10.22.1)*, in the first month of Hemanta, the late autumn, i.e., Kārttika. The solar month starts when the sun enters Libra, here the sun is descending at Anāhata, i.e., at the ego center; and the lunar month starts with

the moon entering Aries, here moon is ascending at Mañipūra, i.e., at the mind centre. The Sun is the life-force and the moon is the mind. Though the mind ascends from the mind center signifying noble resolve for the spiritual practices but the Libra sun being the debilitated sun, self-confidence is down. Descending sun influences the mind to be extrovert and strengthening material desires. But by their worship of the *prāṇa*, Gopis made the descending *prāṇa* to move in the ascending order along with the ascending mind to meet the Prāṇakṛṣṇa at *kuṭastha*, and at the end of the month the divinity was established both to the ego center and the mind center. Again this inner practice continued till the next autumn when the sun came to Viśuddha. Viśuddha center represents the ether element and here Prāṇakṛṣṇa makes *rāsa*, i.e., manifestation of bliss, *ānanda*; and ending with *mahārāsa*, the great sport of the Divine. The son of Nanda becomes the source of bliss, *ānanda*. At the beginning for one month it was the internal worship, *antarpūjā*, associated with external worship, *bahirpūjā*, as it is said, *kṛtvā pratikṛtīm devīm* (SBM, 10.22.2), by making the statue of the Devī. Then for next eleven months till the next autumn it was only the internal worship. This is the way; we have to start with external worship, then external worship with internal worship and then only internal worship. For achieving the Transcendental Self in *mahārāsa* we have to worship that Goddess Bhadrakālī. Kālī is Śakti, the coiled power at the base of the spine, Mūlādhāra, and *Bhadra* is Her form which is gentle, benedictory, blissful, kind, favorable and giving prosperity. We pray to Bhadrakālī,

juvālākarālamatyugramaśeṣāsurasūdanam,
triśūlam pātu no bhīterbhadrakālī namostu te. (Sds., 11.26)

Oh Bhadrakālī, we bow down to you, *bhadrakālī namostu te*, due to extensive fire, you appear furious, *juvālākarālamatyugram*. Your trident should save us from fear, *triśūlam pātu no bhīte*, which kills all the demons, *śeṣāsurasūdanam*.

She is the form of fire, and the fire is *prāṇa* and the knowledge (*vide supra*, "The Knowledge, the Fire," p.17). The Knowledge eradicates the ignorance of identification with the body and the mind as the self, so it appears furious since this looks like loosing our identity; and for this reason it is said here that the benedictory form of Devī appears furious. The trident of Devī is her three qualities, viz., *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, with this trident She kills the demons and with this trident She saves Her devotees. That gentle form of *prāṇa* is to be worshiped with devotion, with the mind integrated to the *prāṇa*; simply doing *prāṇakarma* mechanically will not do. On the fourteenth day of this month of Kārttika falls the event of Deepavali, the light festival and the worshiping day of Mahākālī Lakṣmī, Kālī in the form Lakṣmī giving bliss and prosperity. But the day is also called Naraka-caturdaśī, the fourteenth day of hell, as both the sun and the moon are in Libra, means both descending at Anāhata signifying a devil like ego full of desires that is nothing but hell, complete darkness. Here a spiritual practitioner has to convert that day to the day of divine, to the day of light by

worship of Mahāprāṇa Bhadrakālī. When the worship of Gopis materialized Śrīkṛṣṇa says to them,

*na mayyāvesītadhīyām kāmahaḥ kāmāya kalpate,
bharjitā kvathitā dhānā prāyo bijāya neṣyate.* (SBM, 10.22.26)

One who has engaged his/her mind in me (Śrīkṛṣṇa), *mayyāvesītadhīyām*, his/her desires are finished, *na kāmahaḥ kāmāya kalpate*, as a fried seed does not germinate, *bharjitā kvathitā dhānā prāyo bijāya neṣyate*.

Śrīkṛṣṇa is Prāṇakṛṣṇa. Once mind is completely merged in Him by *prāṇakarma*, then one shall be free from a desire, which is *nirvāṇa*.

Mahākālī is Mahāprāṇa: Mahākālī is perhaps the first Goddess human civilization ever started worshiping, so it is natural that there are many myths and misconceptions developed regarding the principle, *tattva*, mode of worshiping, rites and rituals involved there in. It is unfortunate that among all these, the principle of spiritual practice is masked and in the medieval era it gave rise to many false beliefs and blind practices. Now it is the time, the spiritual world should know the reality of *Śaktipūjā*, worship of the *prāṇa*, and we believe it is doing so since the Kriyā-yoga tradition started afresh from Yogirāj Śyāmācaraṇa Lāhiḍi Mahāśaya and enriched by the work of Swāmī Śrīyukteswar Giri Mahārāj and propagated by Paramahansa Yogānanda. Also the works of many other saints of different lineages viz. Āgamācāryas following Samayācāra tradition, Kashmiri Śaivas, lineages of Siddhas and many other yogic lineages who have worked and are working in this manner are revealing the principle.

Mahākālī, the Mother Divine is the symbol of *prāṇa*, the Life-force. The lord of death is named Kāla, and *kāla* means time. When letter-ī, “*ī-kāra*,” is added to Kāla then it is Kālī. The *ī-kāra* is energy, *Śakti*. So Kālī is the power of time, and *Mahākāla* is the Great Time, beyond the time. The power of Mahākāla is Mahākālī. When we remain in our mind, in thoughts either we are in past or in future. So we are in the time subjected to death. But if we remain in our *prāṇa*, for simple understanding in breath, then we are not in mind. This means we are not in time, not in death; we are in the great time, beyond the time and we are only with the life. Since we are not in mind we are not subjected to delusion. That Life-force is called Mahākālī, the cosmic energy. The deity of Mahākālī is standing on Śiva, the *Mahākāla*, because she is the power, *Śakti*, of Śiva.

But in our prayer we say that She is *Śavārūdhā*, means standing on a dead body. Here the meaning is our body is a dead body without the life-force. So it is the life-force, which is standing on this dead body that is why this dead body is working. With the life-force or *prāṇa* it is Śiva and without the life-force it is a dead body. This is in context of the body. Śiva, the Transcendental Self is also called as *Mahādeva*, the Great God or the great power of illumination and the power of this Great God is *Mahādevī*, the Great Goddess, i.e., Mahākālī. Who are

then *devas* or the gods? In our body the sense-organs and the mind are gods since we have our knowledge through them. But their existence is subjected to the existence of the *prāṇa*. So *prāṇa* or the life-force is the Great God, and this is also the Great Goddess. This is both masculine and feminine; hence Lord Śiva is called as *Ardhanārīśvara*, half-male and half-female. If we look into the image of the Mother Divine we shall find one foot of the Mother Divine is on the chest of Lord Śiva and another is out. This means the inhalation and the exhalation are two feet of the vital power, *prāṇa*, the inhalation entering and the exhalation leaving. The Mother Divine is naked, because energy is always naked; there is nothing that can cover energy. The garland of heads, *muṇḍamālā*, symbolizes fifty basic seed sounds (the Sanskrit alphabets) that are root to the creation. In one hand the Mother Divine is holding a sword that has an eye. What is the need of an eye in a sword that is meant to cut heads? Since this is the knowledge sword, *jñānakhaḍga*, there is an eye; this eye is the discriminating intellect. In another hand She is holding a cut head, *muṇḍa*, the discriminating intellect cuts the manifestations, *samsāra*, the manifestation of desires. If we remain in our *prāṇa* whose feet are our breath then we will develop the discriminating intellect to cut our hankering. Then the other two hands of the Mother are showing us fearlessness, *abhaya*, and boons, *vara*. We will not be afraid of the death, and we will develop creativity. The emerging tongue, *lolajihvā*, symbolizes taste, the water element and life. The third eye symbolizes wisdom. All these are possible if we worship Mahākālī. This is not a sectarian one since She is the Life-force, our own *prāṇa*. She is the sum total of all the life-forces in individual bodies of the universe. To worship her we have to hold her two feet, the inhalation, *apāna*, and the exhalation, *prāṇa*; She is our breath. This is the non-sectarian Kriyā-yoga meditation technique.

Prāṇa is Bhubaneśvarī: She is *Bhubaneśvarī*, goddess of the universe. She is the soul of the universe, *viśvātmikā*, She is beyond the universe, *viśvātītā*, She is the form of the universe, *viśvarūpā*, She is within the universe, *viśvagatā*, She is form of the individual, *vyāṣṭirūpā*, and She is within the individual, *vyāṣṭigatā*. That one energy principle named *prāṇa* has become many. She is residing in the lotus of our heart. We pray,

*hr̥tpuṇḍarīkamadhyasthām prātaḥsūryasamaḥprabhām,
pāsāṅkuśadharām soumyām varadābhayahastakām,
trinetrām raktavasanām bhaktakāmadudhām bhaje. (Das., 21)*

We sing her glory, *bhaje*, who resides in the space of the heart, *hr̥tpuṇḍarīkamadhyasthām*, whose effulgence is like that of a morning sun, *prātaḥsūryasamaḥprabhām*, who is holding a trap and a hook, *pāsāṅkuśadharām*, who is beautiful and radiating peace, *soumyām*, showing boon and fearlessness by Her hands, *varadābhayahastakām*, having three eyes, *trinetrām*, wearing blood-red cloth, *raktavasanām*, who is like a wish fulfilling cow to Her devotees, *bhaktakāmadudhām*.

Our spiritual practice starts with Her *vyāṣṭirūpa*, the individual form within us. Without knowing Her form, which is within us, we cannot know Her forms those are within the universe and beyond the universe. She is sitting inside the lotus of our heart; She is the form of the Knowledge inside the cave of our intellect. In our physical body the space within heart is above the Ājñā *cakra*, physically it corresponds to the third ventricle of brain. This does not refer to the heart that pumps blood. Because in the physical body, brain is the seat of consciousness and in yogic practices the vital power ascends from the base of the spine to the point between the eyebrows; *bhruvornadhye prāṇamāveśya samyak* (Ś. Bg., 8.10), having fixed the *prāṇa* between the eyebrows. This refers to the point between the pituitary and the pineal. In *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* it is said, the nerves of the heart are a hundred and one, *śataṁ caikā ca hṛdayasya nādyah*, of them one passes through the crown, *tāsām mūrdhānamabhiniḥṣṭaikā* (*Ka. U.* 2.3.16). This is the northern route, *uttarāyaṇa mārga*, according to yogic scriptures, and this refers to the route from Ājñā to Sahasrāra. This point is even made clearer in *Prāśnopaniṣad*.

This Self is surely in the heart, *hṛdi hyeṣa ātmā*. There are a hundred and one nerves, *atratādekaśataṁ nāḍīnām*, each of them has hundred branches, *tāsām śataṁ śatamekaikasyām*, again each branch is divided into seventy-two sub-branches, *dvāsaptaṭīrdvasaptatiḥ pratiśākhānāḍīśahasrāṇi*, Vyāna moves among them, *bhavantyaśu vyānaścarati* (*Pr. U.* 3.6).

This makes clearer that this heart spoken in the scriptures is not the heart pumping the blood as some commentators put. This heart is the brain. The total number nerves, as per this scripture is $101 \times 100 \times 72,000 = 7,27,200,000$ which comes approximately to the number of nerves found in our body. In some other scriptures the number mentioned as just 72,000. Human brain is the seat of the Consciousness in the body and this is regarded as the seat of Hiranyagarbha, the Cosmic Self in the individual body. So if we say Hiranyagarbha, Vāmana, Bhubaneśvarī or Prāṇa, these all mean the same. This space of heart is the seat of Prāṇa Bhubaneśvarī. This Consciousness or Prāṇa appears as the individual self due to identification with the individual body and mind, and that is nothing but the ignorance; but even if with that ignorance this principle is not mutated or degraded from its own form. From this seat moves the *vyānavāyu*, the vital energy performing physiological functions throughout the body via nerves. That Power of Consciousness, *citti-śakti*, has become our mind and intellect; again is the Nature with its three attributes *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, and that is our causal body. As the Consciousness or the Knowledge that is the Self. That Bhubaneśvarī or the Power of Consciousness is beautiful and radiating peace, *soumyā*, Form of Knowledge is always *soumyā*, and this reflects in our *citta* when the actions of *citta* are halted in *samādhi*, when desires are finished. Her effulgence is like that of a morning sun; She is *Uṣā Devī*, the Goddess of Morning. *R̥gveda* says, “*niru*

svasāramaskṛtoṣaṁ devyāyatī. apedu hāsate tamah” — when the Goddess of Night, *Rātri Devī* comes She establishes Her sister the Goddess of Morning, *Uṣā Devī*; She (*Uṣā Devī*) destroys the darkness (*RV*, 10.127.3). The Goddess of Night is none but *Mahākālī*. She brings Her sister the Goddess of Knowledge, *Uṣā*. When the knowledge appears the darkness of ignorance disappears. If we resort to *Kriyā*, do *prāṇakarma* then that will clean our *citta* resulting in eradication of the ignorance and emergence of the Knowledge therein.

She is holding a trap and a hook. Since She is sitting in the cave of intellect, this intellect or *citta* is Her expansion. Due to *rajas* and *tamas* She moves us in the way of desires and binds us, which is her trap, *pāśa*; this desire is bondage, this is death. With Her *sattva* qualities by developing the discriminating intellect within us She controls us in the way of desires, which is Her hook, *aṅkuśa*; She engages us in activities sanctioned by the scriptures and takes us away from the forbidden activities. Those who perform activities sanctioned by the scriptures to them She gives the results and the enjoyments as described in the scriptures; that is Her hand showing us boons, *varada hasta*. Taking us away from the way of desires by developing the discriminating intellect and engaging in the way of renunciation She gives us fearlessness, liberation and immortality; that is Her hand showing us fearlessness, *abhaya hasta*. She is having three eyes, *trinetrā*. Two eyes are the sun and the moon, which are the vital power and the mind power, representing the way of renunciation and the way of desires according to the scriptural sanctions. The third eye is the form of fire, and this is the fire of Knowledge. *Bhagavān Vāsudeva Śrīkṛṣṇa* says,

*yathaidhāmsi samiddho'gnirbhasmasātkurute'rjuna,
jñānāgniḥ sarvakarmāṇi bhasmasātkurute tathā. (Ś Bg., 4.37)*

As, *yathā*, the blazing fire, *samiddho'gniḥ*, turns, *kurute*, pieces of wood to ashes, *edhāmsi bhasmasāt*, Oh *Arjuna*, *arjuna*, like that, *tathā*, the fire of knowledge, *jñāna agniḥ*, reduces, *kurute*, all actions, *sarva karmāṇi* into ashes, *bhasmasāt*.

This implies the Knowledge or the enlightenment makes all actions and their results non-functional thereby resulting in liberation and not causing further lives after the end of the present life. But how this Knowledge of fire will be lighted? This process is *kriyā rūpa* or form of actions. That is the reason this Goddess of Knowledge is clad with blood-red cloth, *raktavasānā*. Now we are coming to the action, *kriyā*, of the gross-*prāṇa* or the vital power in our bodies. Due to the actions of exhalations, *prāṇa*, and inhalations, *apāna*, our blood is blood-colored. This means the actions of *prāṇa* and *apāna* is the cloth of *Devi Bhubaneśvarī*. By performing this action of *prāṇa*, *prāṇakriyā*, a breath technique, we shall enter into our subtle-*prāṇa*. We shall leave all the forbidden activities, will perform the scriptural activities, increase our discriminating intellect, and then there would be renunciation of actions (results of actions), *karma samnyāsa*.

The actions of the mind would be halted and then in the cave of the intellect we shall see the Goddess of Knowledge. The subtle-prāṇa will ascend and stay in the lotus of heart at the brain between Ājñā and Sahasrāra. This is worship of Devī, this is the practice of yoga, and this is the spiritual practice.

Aditi is Everything: She is Aditi, the uninterrupted power of consciousness. In Vedas, Aditi is described as everything.

*aditidauraditirantariḥsamaditirmātā sa pitā sa putraḥ;
viśve devā aditiḥ pañca janā aditirjātamaditirjanitvam.*

(RV, 1.89.10; YV, 25.23; AV, 7.6.1)

Aditi is the heaven, *dauḥ*, Aditi is the intermediate space, *antarikṣam*, Aditi is the mother, *mātā*, he is the father, *sa pitā*, he is the son, *sa putraḥ*, (she is both masculine and feminine) all the gods, *viśvedevā*, are Aditi, the five persons, *pañca janā*, are Aditi means Brahmins (the priest class), Kṣatriyas (the warriors), Vaiśyas (the businessmen), Śūdras (the serving class), and Niṣādas (the forest-dwellers); also *devas* (the gods), gandharvas (the demigods fond of singing and dancing etc.), *yakṣas* (the demigods guarding the secret wealth), *asuras* (the demons), and *rākṣasas* (the devils)—here gods and others are also five types of humans according to possession of qualities; also the five elements, viz., ether, air, fire, water, and earth; the five senses, viz., sound, sensation, vision, taste, and smell; also the five sense-organs, viz., ears, skin, eyes, nose, and tongue; also the five organs of action, viz., speech, hands, legs, organ of procreation, and organs of digestion and focal excretion; whatever born, *jātam*, and whatever will be born is Aditi and Aditi is eternal, *nityam*.

Śrīdevyatharvaśirṣam says: *sarve vai devā devīmuḥpatasthuh kāsi tvam mahādevīti*, all the gods went near the Devī and asked, Oh Mahādevī, who are you? (*Das.*, 1). Then the Devī replies, “*sābravit aham brahmasvarūpiṇī. mattaḥ prakṛtipuruṣātmakam jagat. śūnyam cāśūnyam ca,*”—She said, I am the one with the Brahman; from me manifests the world of Prakṛti and Puruṣa, whatever exists and does not exist (*Das.*, 2). She is one with the Brahman. She is the Transcendental Nature, *parāprakṛti*. The Cosmic Self, *Puruṣa*, and the Nature, *Prakṛti*, proceed from Her. All the manifestations and the non-manifestations are from Her only.

From the above discussions we understand that the Divine Mother who is called as Prakṛti or the Nature of the Transcendental Self (named as the Brahman) is one with the Brahman and is not separate from it, and the Divine Mother Aditi is everything. She is the Prāṇa, *yā prāṇena sambhavatyaditiḥ* (*Ka. U.*, 2.1.7), She who has manifested as *prāṇa* is Aditi.

Whose Nature is This? This Aditi or Śakti is the *prāṇa*. Since this *prāṇa* is a term representing from the Brahman up to the sense-organs, this is the only term that nearly represents the Truth, Knowledge and Infinity. But according to scriptures in the Brahman, action is not possible, only it is possible from the Nature, *prakṛti*, onwards. That Nature is also called the Main, *pradhān*. But again it is whose

nature? This is the nature of the Brahman and it is not separate from the Brahman as heat is not separate from the fire and we cannot say that this is a cold fire. There is no difference between Śakti and the owner of the Śakti, *Śaktimān*. This Śakti arises from the Śiva. Śiva is the static form of Śakti. Śakti is not the result of Śiva. Śakti is the nature of Śiva, inherent in Śiva. Śakti as His nature first arises as the Power of Will, *icchā-śakti*, and then She takes forms of the Power of Knowledge, *jñāna-śakti*, and the Power of Action, *kriyā-śakti*. Since mutation is not possible in the Brahman or Śiva, Śakti cannot be said to be a mutated form of the Brahman. In the discussions between knowers of the Brahman that which is the cause of this universe, *kiṃ kāraṇaṃ brahma*, from where we are born, *kutaḥ sma jātā*, etc., as described in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (1.1), they also found that it is one *devātmaśakti*, the Power of God the Self.

*te dhyānayogānugatā apaśyan
devātmaśaktim svaguṇairnigūḍhām;
yaḥ kāraṇāni nikhilāni tāni
kālātmayuktānyadhitiṣṭhatyekah. (Śv. U, 1.3)*

They saw, *te apaśyan*, by the yoga of meditation, *dhyānayogānugatā*, that the Power of God the Self, *devātmaśaktim*, is being covered by own qualities, *svaguṇairnigūḍhām*, and who alone is the cause of, *yaḥ kāraṇāni nikhilāni tāni*, all the other causes named from time to the individual self, *kālātmayuktānyadhitiṣṭhatyekah*.

In the preceding text (*Śv. U, 1.2*) of the Upaniṣad discussion was centered on time, *kāla*, inherent nature of elements, *svabhāva*, fate or the result of good and bad actions, *niyati*, sudden events, *yadrccā*, elements, *bhūtāni* (ethers to earth), and the individual self, *puruṣa*; whether any one of these or their combination is the cause of the universe or not, and was found that since all these are under the Self or the Brahman and are not independent, any of these or their combinations cannot become the cause of creation, dissolution and maintenance. The individual self though one with That but due to the ignorance it appears deluded, hence this is not independent and is under the cause of happiness and sorrow, i.e., results of noble and forbidden actions. So this is also not the cause. By meditation or concentration of the mind they knew that this is the Power of God the Self. Since the Self or the Brahman is the static one and no action is possible according to scriptures, this is neither cause nor no cause, not also both nor different from both, not material cause nor causal cause. We cannot express any thing by words about the Transcendental Self. Then what is the cause, it is the Power of God the Self, *devātmaśakti*, it is His Power. Here Self, *ātman*, God or the Power of Illumination, *deva*, and the Power, *śakti* are one. Here the Śakti or Prakṛti is not different from the Śiva. And this Power or Śakti is covered by its own qualities, *viz., sattva, rajas, and tamas*. In *Śnīdurgāsaptasatī*, the gods prey to Her,

*tvam vaiṣṇavī śaktiranantavīryā
 viśvasya vījam paramāsi māyā,
 sammohitaṁ devi samastametat
 tvam vai prasannā bhuvi muktihetuḥ. (Sds., 11.5)*

You are, *tvam*, Vaiṣṇavī Śakti, the power of Lord Viṣṇu, *vaiṣṇavī śaktiḥ*, full of infinite vigor, *anantavīryā*, the seed (cause) of the universe, *viśvasya vījam*, the greater illusion, *paramāsi māyā*, *paramāsi māyā*. Oh Goddess, *devi*, you have deluded all these worlds, *sammohitaṁ samastametat*, when you verily be kind, *tvam vai prasannā*, then be the cause of liberation, *bhuvi muktihetuḥ*.

That Pure Existence and Infinite Vastness is named Lord Viṣṇu and She is His power and not separate from Him. Infinite vigor, *anantavīryā*, verily denotes to the vital energy, this is Prāṇa the Power of Action, *kriyā śakti*. As *māyā* she is the *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* qualities deluding the world and as *paramā māyā* or greater *māyā*, She is *sattva* based, her three qualities are not like the three qualities found in ordinary mortals who are deluded, hence She is the cause of the universe. And by Her worship, which is in the form of action, *kriyā rūpa*, a worshiper develops the *sattva* quality and hence the discriminating intellect and such worship becomes the cause of liberation. Then the hidden Knowledge will descend. It is said in *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*,

*māyāṁ tu prakṛtiṁ vidyānmāyinaṁ tu mahēśvaram,
 tasyāvayavabhūtaistu vyāptam sarvamideṁ jagat. (4.10)*

Know the Nature as *māyā* (illusion), *māyāṁ tu prakṛtiṁ vidyān*, and Maheśvara (the Great Lord) as the possessor of *māyā*, *māyinaṁ tu mahēśvaram*. This entire world, *sarvamideṁ jagat*, is spread, *vyāptam*, as His appendages, *tasyāvayavabhūtaistu*.

The Prakṛti or Nature of the Supreme is known as *māyā*. This is the illusion; this exists and does not exist. This has taken all names and forms, and this deludes the beings by identifying the beings with names and forms. But the Supreme is the possessor of this illusion. So the whole world is His appendages, by virtue of being possessor of the Prakṛti, the appendages of the Prakṛti are His appendages.

This Prakṛti of Parama Puruṣa or the Brahman is the Prāṇa and is not different from the Brahman. However commentators put the Brahman as *paramabrahman*, the Superior Brahman and the *Prāṇa* as *aparabrahman*, the Inferior Brahman. The only reason intellectuals make a difference between the Brahman and the *Prāṇa* referring the *prāṇa* as the inferior Brahman, *aparabrahman*, because of the reason that in the *prāṇa* actions are carried out. But in different modern day commentaries this distinguishing appears sometimes as word jugglery and sometimes correct. Since the Brahman has manifested Himself into various names and forms through the actions of *māyā*, same as the Unmanifest, *avyakta*, the Nature and Śakti, and at the various stages of manifestation the same term *prāṇa*

is used, then referring it as Inferior Brahman at different stages of manifestation from the Un-manifest to different objects of manifestation for our intellectual understanding of processes of creation is not incorrect.

The Supreme Brahman is the Prāṇa: But where the *prāṇa* is referred as the Brahman establishing unity with the Brahman we should refer it as the Brahman, not as Inferior Brahman. So everything is *prāṇa*. From the *prāṇa* all everything have emerged. As it is said,

*yadidam kim ca jagat sarvaṃ prāṇa ejati niḥsṛtam;
mahadbhayaṃ vajramudyatam ya etadviduramṛtāste bhavanti.*

(Ka. U, 2.3.2)

The whole universe, *jagat sarvaṃ*, that there is, *yadidam kim*, emerges from the Prāṇa and moves because of the Prāṇa, *prāṇa ejati niḥsṛtam*. This is a great terror, *mahadbhayaṃ*, like an uplifted thunderbolt, *vajramudyatam*. One who knows this, *ya etadviduḥ*, becomes immortal, *amṛtāste bhavanti*.

So this whole principle is called Prāṇa the Brahman. Due to the spinning of the Prāṇa (activation of the power of the Brahman), the universe has emerged. Again the supremacy of the Prāṇa is affirmed in the next verse,

*bhayādasyāgnitapatī bhayāttapatī sūryaḥ;
bhayādindraśca vāyuśca mṛtyurdhāvati pañcamah.* (Ibid., 2.3.3)

From fear, *bhayāt*, of Him, *asya*, the Fire burns, *agniḥ tapati*, from the fear shines the Sun, *bhayāttapatī sūryaḥ*, and from the fear run Indra the Air, *bhayādindraśca vāyuḥ*, and Death the fifth, *ca mṛtyurdhāvati pañcamah*.

With a ruler named Prāṇa having an uplifted thunderbolt in his hand controls all the mighty sub lords, viz., the Fire, the Sun, the Indra, the Air and the Death; and they work in a regulated manner. So it is clear that here the Supreme Brahman beyond name and form is referred as the *Prāṇa*. This Rudra is Prāṇa the Supreme and has given birth to Prāṇa the Hiranyagarbha (*vide infra*, Śv. U, 3.4, and "The *Prāṇa* is Born from the Supreme," p. 60). Since activity is denied in the Supreme Brahman according to scriptures and activity is implied in the *prāṇa*, we can say the source of all activities as the Supreme Brahman, which is singled out as the *prāṇa*. Means the *prāṇa* is the energy form, Śakti of the Supreme Brahman; or the Lord form of the Supreme Brahman, i.e., Īśvara or Hiranyagarbha, and hence referred as the Supreme Brahman. We can say the *prāṇa* is the cosmic form of the Supreme Brahman and the Supreme Brahman is the transcendental form of the *prāṇa* beyond the cosmos. It is the Supreme Brahman that has become the *prāṇa* and hence is not different from the *prāṇa*. And from spiritual practice point of view there is no differences between the Supreme Brahman, the Nature and Īśvara. Why we say so? Because the individual self is to be merged into the Cosmic Self, Īśvara, then when the individual self is not there our practice is finished to go beyond the Cosmic Self to the Transcendental Self. That is automatic.

We have already discussed that the Nature is the power of the Brahman and hence not different from That. Bhagavān Ramaṇa Mahārṣi says, *idamaham padā-bhikhyamanvaham, ahami līnake-pyalaya sattayā* (US, 21); This Self (ibid.) is indicated by the word “I” (the individual self, i.e., *aham*) *idamaham pada ābhikhyam*, following the merger of “I,” *anvaham*, the Cosmic Self also merges, *ahami līnake api*; (then the Self shines due to) its indestructible nature, *alaya sattayā*. The individual self, the Cosmic Self and the Transcendental Self are one principle. It is the ignorance, i.e., the ego or the awareness that “I am body-mind combination,” or in other words we can say absence of real awareness of the Self is the cause of the individual self. The concept of the Cosmic Self exists only with reference to the individual self. So with the dissolution of the individual self the Cosmic Self also merges. Whether the individual self is merged in Īśvara or in the Prakṛti, it is same. Then after merger of the individual self there is no further spiritual practice, it is only one intellectual perception to understand the Pure Existence called Truth even after the dissolution of the cosmos. That Pure Existence is not different from the Cosmic Self since that has remained as such even after being manifested as the Cosmic Self because the Pure Existence is never mutated. The Nature is the power of the Cosmic Self and the cosmos is the physical manifestation, Virāṭa. These three viz., the Transcendental Self, the Cosmic Self and the Nature are one principle in different modes of expression. The same principle is also the individual self but due to “I thought” or the ego it seems to be separate though not separate and recognizes itself with the body and the mind; and that is the ignorance. Or we can say that the Prāṇa referred to in the above verse is sum of all *prāṇa*-s in its transcendental form beyond all actions and is known as the Supreme Brahman, and its active form by the actions of the Nature in the entire cosmos is known as Īśvara, the Lord or Hiraṇyagarbha, while the power of its activity is known as the Nature, *prakṛti*, or Śakti. So to return to that *Prāṇa* beyond all actions or pure form (though it is always pure) we have to do *prāṇakarma*, the activities of *prāṇa*, it is just reversing the process, this is to reverse the involution of the Brahman to the ego by a process of evolution from the ego to the Brahman, or in simple words it is to eradicate the ignorance. By doing the activities of *prāṇa* or the practice of vital airs, we have to merge the activities of the senses, the mind, the intellect and also the vital airs in the *prāṇa*. Then only wisdom will reflect on that mind and the ignorance will be finished.

Since every thing is the Brahman and everything is the *prāṇa*, names and forms are just illusions, we should know that the *prāṇa* is the Brahman. When we talk about the Brahman, we have an abstract idea; but when we talk about the *prāṇa* we have some idea that depends on our state of understanding. So from the secondary *prāṇa* at the lower level of our understanding, our understanding increases further to the higher levels of *prāṇa* and finally culminates at the highest level, the chief *prāṇa* or *mukhya prāṇa* only through the practice. The similar process can be applied here as that one nicely described on the Bhṛgu’s

Enlightenment (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, pt. III, chap. Bhṛguvalli). The knowledge was imparted to Rṣi Bhṛgu by his father Varuṇa and on step by step by the practice of meditation Bhṛgu first realized the food, i.e., *Vīrāṭa*, the Great Cosmic Body as the Brahman. The sphere of his enlightenment increased gradually to the vital energy, the cosmic mind, the knowledge and finally to the Bliss as the Brahman. In the same manner our understanding of the *prāṇa* increases from the sense-organs and the breath to further higher levels ending with *sat*, *cit*, and *ānanda*; the Truth, Consciousness, and Bliss.

Let us come to the explanation of the Brahman in *Kenopaniṣad*. It is said,

*śrotrasya śrotam manaso mana yad,
vāco ha vācam sa u prāṇasya prāṇah,
cakṣuṣaścakṣuratimucya dhīrāḥ
pretyāsmāllokādṁṛta bhavanti. (1.2)*

The Brahman is Ear of the ear, *śrotrasya śrotam*, Mind of the mind, *manaso mana*, Speech of the speech, *vāco ha vācam*, and Life of the life, *prāṇasya prāṇah*, and Eye of the eye, *cakṣuṣaścakṣuḥ*. So the intelligent ones, on renunciation of desires, *atimucya dhīrāḥ*, become immortal, *amṛta bhavanti*, after departing from this world, *pretyāsmāllokāt*.

Can our ears function without the Life-force, *prāṇa*, can our eyes see without the Life-force, can a speech possible without the Life-force, can our minds think without the Life-force. So the Life-force, *prāṇa*, is Ear of the ear, Mind of the mind and so on. Now the argument is why it is said as Life of the life, *prāṇasya prāṇah*? Here the life, *prāṇa*, means the physiological functions of life or the vital activities; so Life of the life is the Life-force, *prāṇa*, it is the chief *prāṇa*. The Life-force, *prāṇa*, being Life of the life and Mind of the mind, it is just the Brahman or we say the power of the Brahman, the *citti śakti*. Here in this verse the life, *prāṇa*, refers to the life sheath, *prāṇamaya kośa* and the mind, *mana*, refers to both the mind sheath, *manomaya kośa* and the knowledge sheath, *vijñānamaya kośa*, whereas the chief *prāṇa*, the Life-force is the Brahman. We should not confuse the Life-force with the life sheath, the life sheath only proceeds from the Life-force and since it is evolved from the Life-force it is also the Life-force or the vital energy. Our gradation of the vital power, *prāṇa*, and the mind or the mental power, *mana*, is a secondary aspect of the *prāṇa* though normally we refer the *prāṇa* as the vital power and *cit* or the consciousness as the mental power but that is after dichotomisation of one greater power called the *Prāṇa*, and that is same as *cit*, Consciousness. During *samādhi* when only the *Prāṇa* or the Power of Consciousness remains we find that there are no vital activities as the breath is suspended or with minimum vital activities and even there are no mental activities at all. As we should understand that the *prāṇa* or the Life-force is not same as the life sheath or the vital activity, similarly we should understand that the Consciousness is not same as the reflections of consciousness or the limitations

of consciousness, viz., the mind, the intellect, the ego and the subconscious. So there is little difference between the chief *Prāṇa* and the Consciousness, *cit*. These are much broader terms than the normal understanding. Again in a different place it is said,

prāṇasya prāṇamuta cakṣuṣaścakṣurta śrotasya śrotram manaso ye mano viduḥ. te nicikyubrahma purāṇamagrāyam. (Br. U, 4.4.18)

One who is life of the life, *prāṇasya prāṇamuta*, eye of the eye, *cakṣuṣaścakṣurta*, ear of the ear, *śrotasya śrotram*, mind of the mind, *manaso mano*, know, *viduḥ*, that to be surely, *te nicikyuh*, the Brahman, *brahma* that is the ancient, *purāṇam*, and the forerunner one, *agrāyam*.

We have already discussed this while discussing *śrotrasya śrotram* (*Ke. U, 1.2*) and found that the two words, the Brahman and the *Prāṇa* mean the same; still then the argument is why the Brahman beyond name and form, the Transcendental one be compared with the *prāṇa* where there is activity. We have already discussed this part while dealing with *yadidaṁ kim ca jagat sarvaṁ prāṇa ejati niḥśṛtam* (*Ka. U, 2.3.2*) as there is little difference between still and kinetic form and since the kinetic form arises from the still form such comparison is logical and according to scriptures. Again the Brahman is said to be the ancient and the forerunner. As the Cosmic Self and being the ruler and source of all the activities of the universe, the *Prāṇa* is the forerunner and ancient to all the beings and all the elements as pointed in, *prāṇo hyeṣa sarvabhūtairvibhāti* (*Mu. U, 3.1.4*), it is the *prāṇa* which is shining in all the beings. But for an intellectual perception we accept that the Supreme Brahman is the ancient and the forerunner to the *Prāṇa* since the kinetic form proceeds from the still form, and this is also according to the scriptures, *ātmana eṣa prāṇo jāyate* (*Pr. U, 3.3*), this *prāṇa* is born from the Self; *sa prāṇamasṛjata* (*ibid., 6.4*), He created the *prāṇa*, and so on. This is not denied.

Here it can be said that due to the absolute un-manifestation nature of that Principle called the Supreme Brahman, the Buddhists has described that as the void and liberation, *śūnya nirvāṇa*, whereas the same is spoken by the Vedāntins as the Pure Existence and liberation, *brahma nirvāṇa*. This is beyond the manifestation and the unmanifestation, beyond the truth and the untruth, the uneroded, this cannot be compared with anything, cannot be given a name, beyond the comprehension of the mind and the intellect, the subtle of the subtlest, immovable, without any vibrations and one can have a glimpse of That only at the state of *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Since the intellect fails to comprehend the Still Form of That, meditation and worshiping of That is possible only with the Qualities of That, when that spins as the Śakti and then takes the form of Īśvara. That active form is the *Prāṇa*; the still form or beyond the active form known as the Brahman can be said as the static *prāṇa* only for the sake of our understanding. Since That is the cause of the *prāṇa*, the scriptures have used the term *Prāṇa* for that.

The Prāṇa is Born from the Supreme: We studied that from the Transcendental Self, the *prāṇa* has born as the Cosmic Self (*vide supra*, Pr. U, 3.3 and 6.4). As again,

*etasmājjāyate prāṇo manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca;
kham vāyurjyotirāpah pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī.* (Mu. U, 2.1.3)

From That, *etasmāt*, [Here *etasmāt* means from the Transcendental Being or *amūrtah puruṣah* as per the preceding verse, and He was *aprāṇah* and *amanāh*, without the vital force and the mind. This refers to His static form not ready for creation (Mu. U, 2.1.1)] originates the *prāṇa*, the vital energy, *jāyate prāṇo*. Then the mind, *manaḥ* and all the organs, *sarvendriyāṇi*, also, *ca*, the ether, *kham*, the air, *vāyuh*, the fire, *jyotiḥ*, the water, *āpah*, and the earth, *pṛthivī*, which supports the world, *viśvasya dhāriṇī*, are created.

This is the description of the Supreme, the formless, the birthless and the ancient one, which is forerunner to the *Prāṇa* as per the above discussion, and this is the Pure Consciousness. Here in this verse the *Prāṇa* represents the cosmic vital energy including the cosmic intelligence that contains the cosmic mind within it. This *Prāṇa* is the Lord, Īśvara the Hiraṇyagarbha. From that *Prāṇa* is created *manaḥ*, and here the *manaḥ* represents the cosmic mind. And then the five elements and the worlds are created in successive order.

Again in a different context it is said that this Transcendental Self, *rūdraḥ* has given birth to the Cosmic Self, the Hiraṇyagarbha.

*yo devānām prabhavaścodbhavaśca
viśvādhipo rūdro maharṣiḥ
hiraṇyagarbham janayāmāsa pūrvam
sa no buddhyā śubhayā saṁyunaktu.* (Śv. U, 3.4)

The *Rūdraḥ*, the Great and Furious One, means where everything is merged, who is the cause of the manifestation and the exaltation of the gods, *yo devānām prabhavaścodbhavaśca*, the lord of the world, *viśvādhipah*, and the omniscient, *maharṣiḥ*, and the one who has first given birth to the Hiraṇyagarbha (*Prāṇa* the Cosmic Self), *hiraṇyagarbham janayāmāsa pūrvam*, let He give us the good will, *sa no buddhyā śubhayā saṁyunaktu*. A similar verse is also found in the same text (Śv. U, 4.12).

The Prāṇa is Īśvara the Hiraṇyagarbha: Again in the process of creation it is said,

*tapasā cīyate brahma tato'nnamabhijāyate,
annātprāṇo manaḥ satyam lokāḥ karmasu cāmṛtam.* (Mu. U, 1.1.8)

By austerities, *tapasā*, the Brahman becomes gross, *cīyate*, and from it food, *tataḥ annam*, is born, *abhijāyat*. From the food, *annāt*, the *prāṇa* is created, and then from the *prāṇa*, the mind, *manaḥ*, the truth, *satyam*, the worlds, *lokāḥ*, and the karmas as immortality, *karmasu cāmṛtam*, are formed.

An ordinary reading of this verse gives one sort idea about the *prāṇa* and an analytical reading gives another. The ordinary reading says the Brahman by austerities created the food, *annam*. From the food the vital energy or vigor, *prāṇa*, is manifested which conducts the physiological functions of the body. Then from that the mind is evolved. This is the way of thinking of the physical and the biological sciences, which is just a half-knowledge. The spiritual science does not deny this, this happens in later periods of evolution. Since everything was involved in the Brahman according to the spiritual science, the Brahman that is Truth, the pure existence performed austerities. Here the austerities means through knowledge, because all the knowledges are involved in the Pure Existence since it is said, “*yaḥ sarvajña sarvavidyasya jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ,*” he who is omniscient (in general) and all knowing (in detail) and his austerity is constituted by knowledge (*Mu. U.*, 1.1.9). Since action is denied here in the Brahman according to the scriptures the austerities performed are the form of knowledge. By the knowledge He created the food, *annam*. This food is the Unmanifest, *avyakta*. This is the cosmic energy and this is beginningless, *anādi*, since this is the power of the Brahman. So how this was created? This means the Pure Knowledge in which action was involved or in dormant form now started evolving, this is the *tapaḥ* or the activities of knowledge. This is activation of the dormant will power, *icchā-śakti* in the Prime Unmanifest. The Prime Unmanifest is beyond the three qualities, *triguṇātīta*. So its creation only refers that it is now ready for the process of evolution, in other words for creation of names and forms. Rather one can say this as an involution. This Unmanifest (the Nature, Energy or *māyā*) has three qualities, viz., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. This Unmanifest evolves into the *Prāṇa*, i.e., *Īśvara* the *Hiraṇyagarbha*, this means the golden womb of the Unmanifest, by engulfing the Consciousness in it. But here in *Īśvara* or the chief *Prāṇa*, the three qualities are under His control means “the Supreme I-Consciousness” is there whereas in ordinary beings “I thought” or the ego is prevalent and this ego-being is controlled by the three qualities. This *Īśvara* is the seed of all beings. The *Īśvara* is Lord Viṣṇu. In *Rgveda* it is said,

*yasya trī pūrṇa madhunā padānyakṣīyamāṇā svadhayā madanti,
ya yu tridhātu pṛthivīmuta dyāmeko dādihāra bhuvanāni viśvā.*

(*RV*, 1.154.4)

His three feet are like nectar, *yasya trī pūrṇa madhunā padān*, and by His power of sustaining He gives bliss, *yakṣīyamāṇā svadhayā madanti*, and with his three qualities, *ya yu tridhātu*, He is holding the earth and the heaven, *pṛthivīmuta dyāmeko*; He only is the foundation of the worlds, *dādihāra bhuvanāni viśvā*.

His three feet represents the three worlds, viz., the earth, the intermediate space and the heaven. These three worlds combinedly are known as the cosmic physical body, *Virāṭa*. His three qualities are *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. By his power of sustaining He is holding the earth and the heaven and He is the foundation of

all the worlds. This is Prāṇa the Hiranyagarbha. This Hiranyagarbha is Lord Brahmā, the Lord of creations. This is *Sūtrātmā*, the thread *ātmā* or the Thread Self-continuing in all the beings. This is the Prāṇa, the sum total of all the powers of action, all the powers of will and all the powers of knowledge; or we can say the cosmic subtle body made up of total vital, mental and intellectual energies. This is Hiranyagarbha, the cosmic subtle body and this Hiranyagarbha is the most accurate definition of the *Prāṇa* according to Upaniṣads. Hiranyagarbha means all the Great Three, viz., Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Maheśa; three is one. Then from the Prāṇa or Hiranyagarbha is evolved the cosmic mind, *mana*, this is *Prajāpati*, the lord of creatures. Again in other words we can say the Unmanifest, *prakṛti*, is the cosmic energy and *mana* or *viśvamana* is the cosmic mind; in between there is Īśvara (Lord), the Hiranyagarbha (Brahmā) or the Prāṇa. The Prāṇa is the creator of the cosmic mind. From the cosmic mind truth, *satyam* is evolved. This is not referred as the Truth, the pure existence; but since the basic principle is the Pure Existence this truth is also apparent pure. Here the truth referred is the five elements, viz., the ether, the air, the fire, the water, and the earth. So this truth is *Virāṭa*, the cosmic physical body. Here it may be mentioned that in some texts Īśvara is described as different from Hiranyagarbha. Īśvara is described as the Consciousness and the causal world or the Nature combined; and Hiranyagarbha is described as the Consciousness and the subtle world or cosmic mind combined; and *Virāṭa* is described as the Consciousness and the gross world made up of the five elements combined. These differences are only presenting the same in different expressions. Then *lokāḥ* or the worlds are created from these five elements. This also includes succession of different beings including humans. Since it is said, “*tasmādetadbrahma nāma rūpamannam ca jāyate*” (*Mu. U.*, 1.1.9), from this Brahman, as derivative of the Brahman is Brahman, evolved name, form and food. This is the evolution our physical and biological sciences deal. This results in actions, *karmas* and finally *amṛta*, immortality. Here immortality is a relative term since the results of actions are unending and goes in a cyclic order of creating again actions and results, under the purview of the ignorance. So to reverse it we have to have the Knowledge but our spiritual practice is up to Prāṇa the Hiranyagarbha and rest is automatic, because our individual existence or the ego finishes at the Hiranyagarbha.

The meaning of *Hiranyagarbha* is golden womb. According to *Amarakośa* this is, *hiraṇyam niraṇyamayaṃ aṇḍam yasya garbha iva*, whose womb is like an egg of golden light or full of effulgence. Here the golden light refers both the light as a physical energy and as the Power of Consciousness, which are the vital energy (*prāṇa*) and the knowledge (mind-stuff); and again the physical energy is also involved in the Consciousness. We can say that the Hiranyagarbha is the cosmic energy holding the universe in seed form and ready for creation, or we can say this as the Lord or Īśvara holding the Power of Consciousness now ready for

creation by branching His powers as the power of action and the power of knowledge.

Hiraṇyagarbha is Sūtrātmā: In the above we mentioned that the Hiraṇyagarbha is *sūtrātmā*, the thread *ātmā* or the Thread Self continuing in all beings. This point has been elaborated in *Prasnopaniṣad* (4.8); The earth and the essence of earth (smell), the water and the essence of water (taste), the fire and the essence of fire (vision), the air and the essence of air (sensation), the space and the essence of space (sound), eyes and the object of vision, ears and the object of hearing, nose and the object of smell, tongue and the object of taste, skin and the object of touch, speech and the content of speech, hands and the object given, organ of sex and the enjoyment, organ of excretion and the excreta, feet and the distance walked, mind and the things thought, intellect and the subjects understood, ego and the content of egoism, subconscious and the impressions gathered in it, heat or lustre of the body and the objects revealed by it, all is *prāṇa* and all is held by *prāṇa*.

So *prāṇa* is called *sūtra*, the string or the thread that holds together everything. The entire spectrum of the body and the organs along with the elements and their attributes are strung together by the Hiraṇyagarbha. The same string is holding all everything, viz., the plants, the animals, the insects, the humans, the gods, the devils, the elements, the moving and non-moving objects. The Supreme Self has born as *prāṇa* and it is Prāṇa the Hiraṇyagarbha that is combining everything and is extended everywhere. And since activity is denied in the static form, i.e., the Supreme Self, it is the active form, the Hiraṇyagarbha, is of importance in a spiritual practice, as we need actions that would be the cause for generating the Knowledge. Of course the Knowledge is never generated; this always exists. When we say the Knowledge is generated, this means eradication of the ignorance. We need actions of *prāṇa*, *prāṇakarma*, spiritual practices based on the vital energy to eradicate the ignorance since the mind is absorbed in the *prāṇa*.

Hiraṇyagarbha-sūkta: Let us come to the description of the Hiraṇyagarbha in the *Rgveda* (10.121).

*hiraṇyagarbhaḥ samavartatāgre bhūtasya jātaḥ patireka āsīt,
sa dādāhāra pṛthivīm dyāmutemām kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema. (1)*

In the beginning the Golden Womb (*Hiraṇyagarbha*) existed everywhere, *hiraṇyagarbhaḥ samavartatāgre*, which is Lord of all the manifested beings, *bhūtasya jātaḥ patireka āsīt*. That is holding the earth, the heaven and the intermediate space, *sa dādāhāra pṛthivīm dyāmutemām*, we should worship that God (what ever it may be) by oblations, *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*.

Here it is the description of the Lord Hiraṇyagarbha before the manifestation of the universe. That Golden Womb is the form of Consciousness holding the universe in seed form. From That all the elements like ether, air, etc. and all the

living beings are created. We can say it is the cosmic energy that gave birth to the universe. When we discuss from the angle of the physical sciences we have an idea of energy that is physical in nature but the spiritual science describes it as the Power of Consciousness, *citti-śakti*, in which the physical energies are also involved. So the spectrum of the spiritual science is much broader than that of the physical sciences. This is Aditi and this Aditi or Śakti is described here as Īśvara the Hiranyagarbha, this is the collective *prāṇa*. By denoting the term *kasmai devāya* or to which God means He is the only God to whom we should offer our oblations. *Kasmai* also means “*ka asmaī*” or one that is represented by the syllable *ka*, the first consonant; and the first consonant represents the beginning of manifestation. *Ka* is both *kāma bija* and *Śiva bija*. *Bija* means seed sound and *kāma* is desire. Here Śiva, the Transcendental Self by His Power of Will, *icchā-śakti*, is now being desirous of the creation, took the form of Īśvara or the Lord Hiranyagarbha. Again *ka* denotes, *om kaṅkāra sarvaviśahara kalyāṇaprada* (AU, 5), the syllable *ka* removes all the poisons and is benedictory. This is the quality of Bhagavān Śaṅkara, *śaṅkaram lokaśaṅkaraḥ*, Śaṅkara gives happiness to all beings; Śaṅkara is one who removes all poisons and gives joy. So the Hiranyagarbha is the form of all *prāṇa*-s combined that fulfils the desires of beings and gives happiness to them on the basis of their *karmas*. This principle is also the form of bliss, the greater happiness, when That principle is realized by a spiritual practice. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says, “*prāṇo brahma kaṁ brahma khaṁ brahmeti*” (4.10.4), *prāṇa* is the Brahman, *ka* is the Brahman, *kha* is the Brahman. Here unity is shown between the *prāṇa*, the syllable *ka* and the syllable *kha*. The *prāṇa* is ordinarily understood as the vital airs, *ka* as the form of bliss and *kha* as the ether; and here unity of the three is shown as the Brahman. Again it is said, *te hocuryadvāva kaṁ tadeva khaṁ yadeva khaṁ tadeva kamiti prāṇam ca hāsmāi tadākāśam cocuḥ*, they (the fires) said, surely the one, which is *ka* that is *kha*, and the one which is *kha* that is *ka*. In this way they said about the *prāṇa* and its ether (Ch. U, 4.10.5). Ether here is the ether element where *prāṇa* is established. Since life is dependant on the vital airs one can understand the vital airs as the Brahman, but here it is not said referring to only to the vital airs as *prāṇa*. This *prāṇa* is also *ka*, the form of happiness and also *kha*, the space. And again *ka* is *kha* and *kha* is *ka*; this means happiness is space and space is happiness. This is the space that is the form of happiness and the happiness is quality of the space. The Brahman is bliss, the greater happiness, so *ka* and the Brahman is space, so same as *kha*. But here in the above text as *ka* and *kha*, the *prāṇa* and its space have been advised: *prāṇam ca hāsmāi tadākāśam cocuḥ*. This means in the individual body when the *prāṇa* ascends and stays in the space of heart above the Ājñā *cakra* then it is the form of happiness. Though the Brahman as the *prāṇa* always exists in space of heart in an individual body, this refers to our spiritual practice when the mind is merged and the individual consciousness remains as a witness in the space of

heart. For that to happen, we should offer our oblations in the form of inhalation and exhalation to that Lord. The real oblations in spiritualism are sacrificing the exhalation, *prāṇa*, and the inhalation, *apāna*; and Lord Vāsudeva has also said this, *apāne juhvati prāṇam prāṇe-pānam tathāpare* (Ś Bg, 4.29), one should oblate *apāna* into *prāṇa* and *prāṇa* into *apāna*. Though other types of oblations are also mentioned, viz., sacrificing materials, austerities, concentration, study and the practice of knowledge etc., *dravyayajñāstapoyajñā yogayajñāstathāpare, svādhyāyajñānayajñāśca* (ibid., 4.28), and one can perform these according to his status in the spiritual ladder; the special emphasis was given by the Lord to offer the vital airs, viz., the exhalation and the inhalation.

*ya ātmadā baladā yasya viśva upāsate praśiṣam yasya devāḥ,
yasya chāyāmṛtam yasya mṛtyuḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.* (2)

He who is the cause of the Knowledge (or the Self), *ya ātmadā*, the giver of strength, *baladā*, to whom the whole universe worships, *yasya viśva upāsate*, and all the gods obey whose command, *praśiṣam yasya devāḥ*; Whose shade is the form of nectar or the immortality, *yasya chāyāmṛtam*, the death is also under Him, *yasya mṛtyuḥ*, and we should worship that God by oblations, *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*.

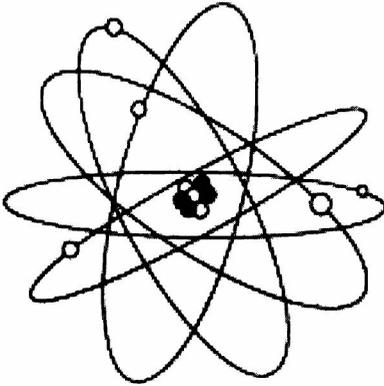
Here the *Prāṇa* or the Hiraṇyagarbha is described as *ātmadā* and *baladā*. The consciousness is represented by term *ātmadā* and the vital energy by term *baladā* since That is both the power of knowledge and the activating power. So the whole universe, all the beings and all the gods worship Him. All the gods obey his command. From fear of Him the Fire burns, from the fear shines the Sun and from the fear run Indra, the Air and Death the fifth (*vide supra, Ka. U, 2.3.3, p. 56*). In the context of gods, each god is a power center controlling a particular faculty and derive strength from the source Hiraṇyagarbha, i.e., all the power of knowledge and all the power of action. In the context of the body, gods are the sense organs that also owe their power to the *prāṇa*, the Life-force residing in the body. Immortality lies under His shade, that energy cannot meet any death and death is under His control since manifestations emerge from Him and also merge in Him. The Knowledge of That is the immortality, and the ignorance of That and the identification with the limited adjuncts like name and form is death. We should worship that God by oblations, by *prāṇakarma*.

*yaḥ prāṇato nemiṣato mahityaika idrājā jagato babhūva,
ya īśe asya dvīpadaścatuspadah kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.* (3)

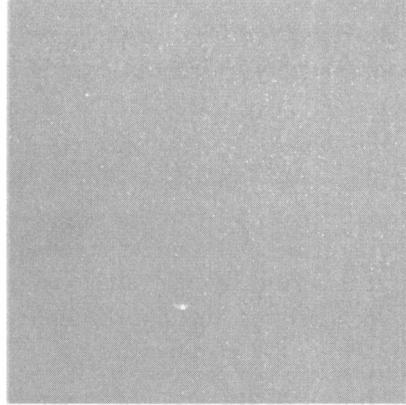
One who is full of the life-force, *yaḥ prāṇato*, movements and time, *nemiṣato*, and full of greatness, *mahityaika*, who is the owner of the whole manifested worlds, *idrājā jagato babhūva*, who is the ruler of two-legged and four-legged beings, *ya īśe asya dvīpadaścatuspadah*, we should worship that God by oblations, *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*.

That Hiranyagarbha is the Life-force; this includes the vital energy and the consciousness. That is the cause of movements and time. *Nimiṣa* is blinking of eyes signifying the movements, the vibrations or the throbs. This is the cause of the creation. At each moment the whole creation is changing, vibrating or humming with the energy and the matter. The Hiranyagarbha also signifies the first throb, the Big Bang. The singularity now expands. Here the science and the philosophy speak in the same voice. Before that first throb, it was the Transcendental Brahman beyond time and space, or we can say it was the still form of Śakti, i.e., Śiva. When it became ready for creation, it was named the Hiranyagarbha. Śakti now starts working, and the still form becomes the motion form, the potential becomes the kinetic. Then this Hiranyagarbha by constant throbbing becomes the universe, the energy converts into the matter and vice versa. This constant conversion and re-conversion between the matter and the energy is the maintenance of the worlds. According to the formula of Einstein $E = mc^2$ and matter (m) and energy (E) are interchangeable, c is the speed of light and this is considered to be a constant value since for the most part this does not change its speed; it is a measure of time or *kāla*. According to the scriptures *nimiṣa* or blinking of eyes is a unit of time. In *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it is described as 15 *nimiṣa*-s make a *kāṣṭhā*, 30 *kāṣṭhā*-s make a *kalā*, 30 *kalā*-s make a *ghaṭī*, 2 *ghaṭī*-s make a *muhūrta* and 30 *muhūrta*-s make a day and night, *ahorātra*. From this we understand that time is a product of movement, throb or spinning. Before the First throb where was the time? Then there was no time. It was *Mahākāla*, the Great Time; it was Śiva. So the Life-force, Śakti or the Cosmic Energy is the cause of vibrations, time and the space. For physicists this time is marked by the speed of light whereas for spiritual scientists this is marked by the *prāṇa*, the movements of the vital energy. If the $c = 1$, then there is no difference between matter and energy and if $c = 0$, then so does E and m . The same principle of the physical energies is also applicable in case of the *prāṇa*. This *prāṇa* is both the consciousness and the vital power, and both are nothing but energy. When energy converts into matter it takes the form of atoms. Atoms at the center are tightly packed protons and neutrons called as nucleus, and are encircled by very small and fast moving electrons. In comparison to their size the distance between nucleus and electrons is a vast empty space. So when we feel something or see something, we are just touching or seeing a vast empty space. We can say the smallest unit of space is an atom and it is a product of spinning of energy, Śakti. If we consider it as per relativity then the existence of space is relative to the existence of matter. When there was only dormant energy in the static form and no matter, or even the subatomic particles are not formed, and then the idea of space does not exit. Only when energy converted into matter by formation of subatomic particles then the distance between nucleus and electrons becomes the unit of space. So when even the idea of space was not there, there exists the Transcendental Lord, the Pure Existence. That is the Truth Principle, the Self. From That, which is the Self, was born the space, *tasmāddā etasmādātmana ākāśaḥ sambhūtaḥ* (*Tai. U*, 2.1.1).

When we move from Dalton's atom to the atom of Quantum physicists we find that atoms are made up of vortices of energy that are constantly spinning. So every material structure be it human beings or any objects are just a unique energy pool, a wave during the time and the space.



Dalton's atom



Quantum atom

Fig. 2.3. Dalton's atom and Quantum atom

Now if we can revert this time and space, we are again in the Hiranyagarbha, in our cosmic source. Even we can go beyond the Hiranyagarbha, to the Transcendental Self, the Brahman, or to the stillness beyond the manifestation. The spiritual scientists called *ṛṣi*-s long ago have discovered this. For that first we have to learn to move at a same speed with the time, not to lag behind the time as often we are. That is what we learn from the mythological story of baby Hanumān becoming a disciple of the Sun-god and moving at the same speed with the Sun-god to learn and to have the knowledge from him. The Sun-god symbolizes the Hiranyagarbha in our solar system, and Hanumān is our *prāṇa-vāyu*, the breath, he is son of the Air-god. Hunumān is the vital energy and he is qualified to have knowledge as he can move with the Sun and then there is no night. That is our spiritual practice. Even we can stop the time, can make $c = 0$, then everything is still and we are in the Transcendental Self, the Brahman. This is what yoga means. This is the state of *nirvikalpa samādhi* within our body. This is the greatness of *prāṇa*, the ruler of all the beings. We should pour our oblations to Him; offer our exhalations and inhalations to Him one after other.

yasyeme himavanto mahitvā yasya samudraṁ rasayā sahāhuḥ,
yasyemāḥ pradiśo yasya bāhū kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema. (4)

By whose glory all the snow-clad mountains are manifested, *yasyeme himavanto mahitvā*, whose greatness is sung by the rivers and the seas, *yasya samudraṁ rasayā sahāhuḥ*, all the main directions are whose hands, *yasyemāḥ pradiśo yasya bāhū*, we should worship that God by oblations, *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*.

Here, this verse reaffirms the creation of the elements from the ether to the earth from the same principle called the Hiraṇyagarbha and their arrangements for manifested worlds. Directions represent the ether element, the rivers and the seas represent the water element and the mountains represent the earth element of creation.

*yena daurugrā pṛthivī ca dṛlhā yena svaḥ stabhitam yena nākaḥ,
yo antarikṣe rajaso vimānaḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.* (5)

Who has fixed with excellence the high space and the earth on their own places, *yena daurugrā pṛthivī ca dṛlhā*, one who has stabilized the heaven, *yena svaḥ stabhitam yena nākaḥ*, one who has placed Suns or the glowing bodies in the intermediate space, *yo antarikṣe rajaso vimānaḥ*, we should worship that God by oblations, *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*.

Here, it describes all the solar systems, the stars and the planets those are working in a proper and coordinated manner according to that one energy principle, *Prāṇa* the Hiraṇyagarbha.

*yaṁ krandasī avasā tastabhāne abhyaiksetām manasā rejamāne,
yatrādhi sūra udito vibhāti kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.* (6)

Due to whom the heaven and the earth cry (or show signs of sound), are fixed and glow for the preservation and contemplate whose glory, *yaṁ krandasī avasā tastabhāne abhyaiksetām manasā rejamāne*, under whose shelter the Sun rises and shines, *yatrādhi sūra udito vibhāti*, we should worship that God by oblations, *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*.

Cry signifies birth and this is birth pang. Also after the birth a baby cries, so also every element that takes birth. The deviation from ones present position to a new one is always associated with crying. The birth of the space or the ether is associated with crying in the form of sound. Then formations from the ether to the earth and creations of beings up to humans are all associated with crying since the ether element is involved in all. Crying represents sound vibrations. This is the first form of energy for creation. Birth, preservation and maintenance of the celestial bodies, the worlds and the creatures are due to the same principle called the Hiraṇyagarbha or the *Prāṇa*. The celestial worlds and the earth are in their orbits due to the same energy principle; they work for the preservation of their inhabitants due to the same principle and by that they contemplate His glory. The Sun rises and shines under His shelter and this Sun has got the title of Hiraṇyagarbha for our solar system. From the Hiraṇyagarbha was born Sun the Hiraṇyagarbha. The *Prāṇa* gave birth to the *Prāṇa* and works under the shelter of the *Prāṇa*.

*āpo ha yad bṛhatīrviśvamāyan garbham dadhānā janayantīragnim,
tato devānām samavartatāsurekaḥ kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.* (7)

In the beginning the Greater Water has covered the whole universe, *āpo ha yad bṛhatīrviśvamāyan*, which conceived and gave birth to the Fire, *garbham dadhānā janayantīragnim*. From that God the First Born manifested, *tato devānām samavartatāsurekaḥ*, we should worship that God by oblations, *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*.

This verse describes the beginning of creation. The Greater Water, *bṛhatī āpaḥ*, is the main principle, the chief *prāṇa* or the Unmanifest. This is the activation of the static principle called the Brahman or Śiva. This activation is greater water or Śakti, which is now ready for creation. This Śakti conceived Śiva, conceived by Śiva and gave birth to the Fire, the Lord or Īśvara the Hiranyagarbha. This is combination of Śiva and Śakti. And from Him the First God, *Prājapati* or the Lord of creatures, i.e., the cosmic mind manifested. Or if we take the First God as Hiranyagarbha the Prāṇa then Greater Water is the Śakti before activation and here Śakti remains with Śiva in inactivated form. Then the Fire is the activated form of Śakti or activated Unmanifest, *avyakta*. This Fire gave birth to Īśvara the Hiranyagarbha, which is the manifestation holding the creation in seed form. These are presenting the same in different modes. However at each stage the term *prāṇa* is used.

*yaścīdāpo mahinā paryapaśyat dakṣam dadhānā janayantīryajñam,
yo deveṣvadhi deva eka āsit kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.* (8)

The Lord who has seen, *paryapaśyat*, the birth of the Great Fire Ceremony, *janayantīryajñam*, which is able to hold, *dakṣam dadhānā*, the creation from the Greater Water, *yaścīdāpo mahinā*, at that time as the form of God that One God was existing, *yo deveṣvadhi deva eka āsit*. We should worship that God by oblations, *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*.

The Great Fire Ceremony, *yajñam*, is the Great Sacrificial Fire. It is the great sacrifice of the Divine Mother to be activated and take the form of creations. Here this is the description of Prāṇa the Hiranyagarbha before the creation of the Hiranyagarbha. In the previous verse the birth of First God Hiranyagarbha was described. Here it is said that the Lord who has seen the birth of the Great Fire Ceremony from the Greater Water, at that time in the form of God that One God existed. This means Hiranyagarbha was there even before His birth in the form of the Static Supreme Brahman, in the form of the Static Unmanifest and in the form of the Activated Unmanifest. All these are one principle. *Bhagavatī Śruti* describes all these steps only for our understanding. However never there is any creation; it is only appearance of creations since the Prime Principle is never deviated from its own form with all these creations.

*mā no himsījjanitā yaḥ pṛthivyā yo vā divam satyadharmā jajāna,
yaścāpaścandrā bṛhatīrjajāna kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema.* (9)

One who is the sustainer of righteousness or the nature of the Truth, *yaḥ satyadharmā*, who is holding the earth and is creator of the heaven, *pṛthivyā yo vā*

divam jajāna, He who is full of bliss and is creator of the water in abundance, *yaścāpaścandrā bṛhatīrjajāna*, He should not make us violent, *mā no hiṁsījanitā*. We should worship that God by oblations, *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema*.

Here is the prayer of the seeker to the Lord Hiraṇyagarbha not to have volitions in our minds, to have the bliss and a state of equanimity. This is possible if we resort to *prāṇa*, Prāṇa the Life-force. Since He is holding the righteousness, only by following Him we can have righteousness in our life. If we follow our mind, this is not possible. Here “water in abundance” represents the water element in the context of universe as due to this life is sustained, plants, herbs, and food are created and the creatures are happy. But in the context of the body here water represents the vital energy and that is full of bliss, because that can absorb the mind along with desires. We should worship that God by oblations; we should pour our exhalations and inhalations to Thee.

prājāpate na tvadetānyanyo viśvā jātāni pari tā babhūva,
yatkāmāste juhumastanno astu vyaṁ syāma patayo rayiṇām. (10)

Oh Lord of creatures, *prājāpate*, other than You there is none, *na tvadetānyanyo*, in the universe, *viśvā*, who is able to cover all the created beings in past, present and future, *jātāni paritā babhūva*. With the aspiration of which virtues we offer our oblations to Thee, *yatkāmāste juhumastanno astu vyaṁ*, let us be the owner of those prosperities, *syāma patayo rayiṇām*.

Here the Hiraṇyagarbha is addressed as Prājapati, the Lord of Creatures or the cosmic mind, since the Hiraṇyagarbha is both the cosmic mind and the cosmic vital power. This verse is the prayer for the results we seek from the worship of Prāṇa the Hiraṇyagarbha; this is a noble desire, because there is no principle other than this to whom we can pray.

Adhyātma Prāṇa, the Prāṇa in the Context of Body: Now let us understand the *prāṇa* in the context of body, i.e., *adhyātma prāṇa*. The Lord of creatures, Prājapati, created the actions, (here action) means the instruments (organs) for it. Then there was competition between them. The speech decided to speak non-stop, the eyes decided to see non-stop, and the ears decided to hear non-stop and similarly the other organs. Then the death, which in the form of tiredness entered into them and stopped them from performing the activities. But the tiredness could not enter the *prāṇa*, the vital power. Then the organs decided that surely this is superior among us because whether moving or non-moving it is not affected, so we must take its form; and took the form of *prāṇa*. Then onwards they are referred as *prāṇa* (*Br. U*, 1.5.21). (Also refer *supra*, *Ch. U*, 4.3.3; 6.8.2 in the head “Prāṇa holds the Key to purify the Mind,” pp. 40–41)

Adhidaiva Prāṇa, the Prāṇa in the Context of Gods, it is Air: Again let us understand the *prāṇa* in the context of gods, i.e., *adhidaiva prāṇa*. Once the Fire-god performed austerities that he would burn non-stop. Similarly, the Sun-god

decided to produce heat non-stop and the Moon-god decided to reflect light non-stop. Like the *prāṇa* in the context of body, it is God the Air in the context of gods. All the gods set down but not the air. (*Br. U.*, 1.5.22)

This God the Air is the *prāṇa*. The sun rises in it and sets in it. It rises in the *prāṇa* and sets in the *prāṇa*. And the gods are following this rule. (*Ibid.*, 1.5.23.) It is the air, which engulfs or involves everything. When the fire sets it merges in the air. When the sun sets it merges in the air and when the moon sets it merges in the air (*Ch. U.*, 4.3.1). When the water dries it merges in the air. It is the air, which engulfs all these waters. This is in the context of gods (*ibid.*, 4.3.2). There are two that engulfs. It is air among the gods and the *prāṇa* among the organs (the sense-organs and organs of action) (*ibid.*, 4.3.4). God the Air is the soul of all the gods, *sarveṣāmu haiṣa devānāmātmā yadvāyuh* (*Śa. Br.*, 9.1.2.38).

Here in the above the Air is not said only in the context of our atmosphere around the earth, this atmospheric air is involved in the Air. The Air means the *prāṇa*, the air element, i.e., the gaseous state. This is the Life-force of the Puruṣa, the Cosmic Self; *prāṇādvāyurajayata* (*RV*, 10.90.13), from the *prāṇa* of the Puruṣa the Air was created. This gaseous state is created after the ether element, *akāśadvāyuh* (*Tai. U.*, 2.1.1). Since air is holding the Life-force, the Lord Air is prayed in the following way: *uta vāta pitāsi na uta bhrātota naḥ sakhā, sa no jīvātave kṛdhi* (*RV*, 10.186.2), Oh Air, you are like our father, like our brother and friend; you please bring us the life-giving medicines. *Prāṇa* the Air is being our creator is our father, it is also our brother because we are made up of the same principle. Being sustainer of our life it is helpful like our friend. Since it is also life of the plants, the herbs and the medicines, we pray the Air for the life-saving medicines, also for the food that is like a medicine for the disease called hunger. Again we pray, *yadado vāta te grheu mṛtasya nidhirhitah, tato na dehi jīvase*, Oh Air that moves everywhere, you have abundant nectar that gives immortality. Give that for our life (*ibid.*, 10.186.3). Here nectar symbolizes *Prāṇa* the Life-force. This is the cause of life, and again as the vital energy the same is also the cause of immortality in the form of knowledge by absorbing the actions of mind into it.

Vibration, the Cause of Creation is Inherent in Air: Actions or creations are due to vibrations. Vibration created the air element and in the air element there is vibration. This vibration or throb is called as *spandana* in scriptures. The universe is created due to vibration. The Big Bang is nothing but exuberance of vibration. The world sustains due to constant throbbing and humming, and also dissolves due to throbbing. Sensations are nothing but vibrations, thoughts are nothing but vibrations, and various forms of energies are nothing but vibrations or waves. Sun rises and sets in the above-mentioned text (*Ch. U.*, 4.3.1), do not mean what we generally understand as the sunrise and the sunset; has it been so then what about the fire-rise and the fire-set. Sun rises and sets in the air means

the formation and dissolution of suns or so to say stars in the cosmos is due to the gaseous element called God the Air here, and we all know that the sun is in a gaseous state. So the air element is the immediate *prāṇa* so far the creation of the universe is concerned. Similarly, all other gods be it the fire or the moon are created from and dissolved in the air element, and that is the *prāṇa*. Vibrations are also the basic quality of the vital energy.

Air is the Thread, Sūtra: It is air, which like a string binds everything. Air is the next subtle element after the ether and it holds all the other elements up to the earth. It is the material of the manifestations both living and nonliving. It is the vital air that holds the impressions of actions in the form of vibrations, which are the cause of creation of the new body after the death of the old one. That is the reason it is said; He (Yājñavalkya) said, *sa hovāca*, Oh Gautama, the air is the thread, *vāyurvai gautama tat sūtram*, Oh Gautama by the string called air this world and the world beyond this, and all the beings are strung together, *vāyuna vai gautama sūtrenāyam lokāḥ paraśca lokāḥ sarvāṇi ca bhūtāni sandṛbdhāni bhavanti*, Oh Gautama, that is the reason it is said for a dead person that the body (body parts) has faded away, *tasmād vai gautama puruṣam pretamāhurvyasram siṣatāsyāṅgānīti*, Oh Gautama, these are (the body and the organs) hold together by the thread called air, it is like this, *vāyunā hi gautam sūtreṇa samḍṛbdhāni bhavantītyevamevaitad* (*Br. U.*, 3.7.2). This *vāyu* or the air is holding the material manifestation and holding the living beings as the vital airs, *prāṇavāyu*.

The Inner Controller: But here in the next deliberations (*Br. U.*, 3.7.3–23) there is description of the inner controller, *antaryāmī*, who is even the inner controller of this thread named Air. It is said that the inner controller of all these in the context of elements, *adhibhūta*, viz., the earth, the water, the fire, the intermediate space, the air, the outer space, the sun, the directions, the moon, and the stars, the ether, the darkness, the light; and in the context of body, *adhyātma*, viz., the beings, the nose, the speech, the eyes, the ears, the skin, the mind, the intellect and the seeds, is the Immortal Self. A little insight into this clearly indicates this Immortal Self is none but Prāṇa the Hiraṇyagarbha, the energy-principle or the sum total of all the powers of action and all the power of knowledge. This is the Active Brahman, and it should be kept in mind that the Supreme Brahman has not deviated from its position being activated as the Active Brahman.

The Prāṇa as the Sense-organs: “*prāṇo vai grahaḥ so’pānenāti-grāhena gṛhīto’pānena hi gandhān-jighrati*” (*Br. U.*, 3.2.2), the *prāṇa* is the receiver and it receives the smell that was brought by inhalation. Here the *prāṇa* refers to the organ of smell and again in “*yatprāṇena na prāṇīti yena prāṇaḥ prāṇīyate*,” (*Ke. U.*, 1.9); here the *prāṇa* means smell and the organ of smell; that by the organ of smell, *prāṇena*, a man does not comprehend the smell, *na prāṇīti*; but by which the organ of smell functions, *prāṇaḥ prāṇīyate*, that is the One.

Prāṇa the Life-force: What is that by which the organ of smell functions? That is the Brahman, the Self; and that is also Prāṇa the Life-force. Here with the above discussions even if one does not agree with the concept that the *prāṇa* is the Supreme Brahman only with the argument that in the Brahman activities are denied, one must have to agree that the *prāṇa* is *aparabrahman*, the sub-Brahman starting from Śakti or the *Prakṛti* and Īśvara onwards to the sense-organs like nose etc. One can say the *prāṇa* is all. The *prāṇa* is just next to the Supreme Brahman; you can call it Īśvara or even Śakti. Since we cannot comprehend the Brahman or the Self as it cannot be perceived, cannot be grasped (*vide supra*, “Parā Vidyā, the Superior Knowledge,” p. 24); we have to know that through the *prāṇa* only, because our approach is up to the *Prāṇa*. Since all our senses, sense organs, actions, organs of action, the mind, the intellect, the ego and the vast subconscious along with their actions are absorbed into the *prāṇa*, and then we are not there with our “I thought” to understand something as the Brahman or the Self, we only go up to the *prāṇa* and the rest is automatic. So the *prāṇa* is our immediate God.

The Life-force is to be Worshiped: So this *prāṇa* is the God to be worshiped to find the unity with the God in the final state. We learn from, *sa evāgniḥ salile samniviṣṭah*, that is the Fire among the water, that as the Fire within the ocean of world, also as the fire within the individual body of water; that God is the God within, our Inner God. That is called *prāṇa*, the Thread Self; the *hamsa*, Swan the Divine Bird. Previously we have said that *hamsa* is the Knowledge. Now we say that it is *prāṇa*, the Life-force. Is it different? No, it is all the same, only expressions in words are different. We have already discussed that *prāṇa* is the sum total of all the powers of knowledge and all the powers of actions. So power is the common factor here be it in the form of knowledge or in the form of action and it is one power; and the power is always *kriyārūpa*, in the form of activity. Let us further discuss.

The Worship of the Prāṇa results in Ṛtambharā Prajñā: We have already discussed that when the actions of mind, *citta*, are halted then one is established in the Self, *svarūpevasthanam*. This is “no thought state;” this is the state of *nirvicāra*. Ṛṣi Patañjali says, “*nirvicāravaiśāradye-dhyātmaprasādah*,” when one becomes specialized in “no thought state;” he attains the bliss of the Self (*Ygs.*, 1.47), gets the result of the spiritual practice. *Adhyātmaprasādah* is the pure state of mind without any dirt, which is the state of bliss, and this is bliss of the Self. Thoughts are dirt, when you are in “no thought state;” it is your transparent state of mind where the Self is reflected. In other words you are only in the *prāṇa*, because the mind absorbs in to the *prāṇa* only, *prāṇabandhanam hi soumya manaḥ* (*Ch. U*, 6.8.2). One has to become specialized, *vaiśāradya*, in “no thought state.” Again and again one should attain this. And this pure state should be prolonged. This is the state of remaining in the *prāṇa*. And this results in, “*ṛtambharā tatra prajñā*”

(Ygs., 1.48), and then his knowledge holds the Truth. This means he is in the Knowledge, in wisdom. The knowledge of illusion, that is called the ignorance, *avidyā*, finishes and the knowledge of the Truth, the knowledge of the Self establishes. This happens when one is established in the *prāṇa*, and not in the mind. So the *prāṇa* is the Knowledge. This *prāṇa* is not simply the vital *prāṇa*, but by doing the activities of *prāṇa*, *prāṇakarma*, we transcend both the vital *prāṇa* and the mind, *manah*, to remain in *Prāṇa* the Life-force, and that is the Knowledge. If we say *hamsa* is the Knowledge and *hamsa* is *Prāṇa* the Life-force, it is all the same. The Truth experience is *ṛta*, when we hold the truth in our experience then it is *ṛtambharā*. That is the knowledge, *prajñā*, and this knowledge is nothing but to remain in the *prāṇa*, in the Life-force, in the pure Consciousness without the volitions of mind, and without any hankerings. This is the cosmic energy, the cosmic energy within our body-mind interactions ruling the system, and this cosmic energy is named as the Consciousness in scriptures.

Knower of *Prāṇa* does not Become a Tall Talker: That verily is *prāṇa*, the Life-force as it is said,

*prāṇo hyeṣa yaḥ sarvabhūtairvibhāti
vijānan vidvān bhavate nātivādī,
ātmakrīḍa ātmaratiḥ kriyāvāneṣa
brahmavidām variṣṭhaḥ.* (Mu. U, 3.1-4)

The Life-force, *prāṇa*, is the one that glows in all beings, *hyeṣa yaḥ sarvabhūtairvibhāti*. Knowing this a wise one, *vijānan vidvān*, does not become, *bhavate na*, a tall talker, *ativādī*. He sports in the Self, *ātmakrīḍa*, engages in the Self for his pleasure, *ātmaratiḥ*, and becomes a *kriyāvān*, a practitioner of *kriyā* means engages in *prāṇakarma* or actions of *prāṇa*. He is the chief, *variṣṭhaḥ*, among the knowers of the Brahman, *brahmavidām*.

So the Brahman is the *prāṇa*, the Life-force, Life of the life. Whether it is grasses, plants, lower animals, humans, gods or Hiranyagarbha the Brahman, it is all the *Prāṇa*. One who knows this Vital Force he does not become a tall talker. Simply reading scriptures, having the intellectual knowledge and by then giving sermons one becomes a tall talker, *ativādī*. They are not called Wiseman, *jñānī*; rather they are called persons having knowledge of words, *śabdajñānī*. To become a Wiseman, *jñānī*, one has to become a spiritual practitioner, *kriyāvān*. He is one who is doing *prāṇakarma*, actions of *prāṇa* or work of *prāṇa*. This *kriyāvān* disports in the Self, delights in the Self and becomes chief among the knowers of the Brahman. Here the term *kriyāvān* is used, meaning there by a practitioner of *kriyā*. Though *kriyā* generally means actions, but special references is made here to the *kriyā* of all *kriyā*-s, or to the activity of all activities, i.e., *prāṇakarma*; and without this *prāṇakarma* no other activity can go on.

This *prāṇa* is glowing in all the beings, in all the elements, *prāṇo hyeṣa yaḥ sarvabhūtairvibhāti*; the *prāṇa* as the sun gives energy to our solar system, as wind

it blows, as fire it gives heat and light, as rain it showers, as ocean it tides, as earth it exists in material objects, as food it holds the vital energy, as the vital energy it performs the physiological functions of a body, as hand it works, as legs it walks, as speech it utters, as nose it smells, as tongue it tastes, as eyes it sees, as skin it feels, as ears it hear, as mind it recognizes and thinks, as intellect it determines, as subconscious it stores impressions of actions in mind, as ego it revolves in “I thought,” as the *prāṇa* it manifests all these and absorbs all these. This is the *sūtra*, the string holding everything. The *Prāṇa* is the activity of the Lord, both the conscious activity and the vital activity; and it is the *prāṇa* that manifests as bliss. This *prāṇa* is called *hamsa* the Knowledge, *hamsa* the Sun, and also *hamsa* the breath.

Prāṇa hamsa is Sun in Our Solar System: Let us come to description of Hamsa in other places. It is said,

*hamsaḥ śuciśadvasurantarikṣasaddhotā vediśadatithirduroṇasat,
nṛṣadvarasadr̥tasadvomasadabjā gojā ṛtajā adrijā ṛtam bṛhat.*

(Ka. U, 2.2.2)

He is *hamsa* means one who moves, the meaning of root *ham* is to move. As the Sun, *hamsa* moves in the heaven, a pure dweller, *śuciśat*, dwells in the great ether. He is one who provides a dwelling, *vasu*. He is a dweller in the intermediate space, *antarikṣasat*, or the air, *vāyu*. He is the fire, *hotā*, and remains in the earth, *vediśat*. He is a guest, *atithi*, resides in a pot or house, *duroṇasat*. He resides among men, *nṛṣat*, resides among the honorable ones, *varasat*, resides in the truth, *ṛtasat*, resides in the sky, *vyomasat*, born in the water, *abjāh*, born in the earth, *gojāh*, born in the truth, *ṛtajāh*, born from mountains, *adrijāh*, truth the pure existence, *ṛtam*, and the great one, *bṛhat*.

The *hamsa* is the all-pervading Self or the *prāṇa* of all and it is the Sun. Here the Sun is taken in context of our solar system. In our solar system it is the solar energy that is everything. This solar energy has manifested into all the beings, so the Sun is the *prāṇa*, the Life-force. By the help of physical sciences we can also understand that everything in our world is the Sun, the solar energy is plants, the solar energy is food, the solar energy is animals, the solar energy is the vital force within all living beings. The only difference between the physical sciences and the spiritual science is that the spiritual science accepting the physical nature of the solar energy also knows it to be the form of consciousness, this energy is also our mind and intellect. The Sun is said to be the soul of the world, *āprā dyāvāprthivī antarikṣam sūrya ātmā jagatastasthuśaśca*, the Sun is the soul of the whole world both moving and nonmoving and rises with its own effulgence in the heaven, the earth and the intermediate space (*RV*, 1.115.1); and again, the Sun is the soul of all the gods, *sūryo vai sarveṣām devānāmātmā* (*Śa. Br.*, 14.3.2-9). The Sun is also called as the Hiraṇyagarbha or the *prāṇa* for our world as again it is said, *prāṇaḥ prajānāmudayatyeṣa sūryaḥ*, it is the *prāṇa* that rises as the sun,

that is the life of all beings (*Pr. U*, 1.8). The Sun also represents all the solar systems in the cosmos. The Sun symbolizes the all-pervasive Consciousness, *anantamanyadruśadasya pajah kṛṣṇamayaddharitaḥ saṁ bharanti*: His rays fill the infinite world with light and consciousness from one side and darkness from the other side (*RV*, 1.115.5). The *Prāṇa* is the Sun; the Sun is also called *Āditya*, one of the sons of Aditi, *aṣṭayoniraditiraṣṭaputrāḥ*, Aditi has given birth to eight sons (*AV*, 8.9.21). The number eight is symbol of infinity, beyond the seven worlds. The Suns or *Ādityas* are sustaining the whole universe, *dhārayanta ādityāso jagatsthā* (*RV*, 2.27.4). This *Prāṇa* the Sun possesses a thousand rays and exists in hundred forms, *sahasraraśmiḥ śatadhā vartamānaḥ* (*Pr. U*, 1.8). One is manifested into many. In *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* also both the *Prāṇa* and the Sun are said to be same, “*samāna u eva āyam cāsau coṣṇo, yamusṇo, sau svara itīmamācakṣate svara iti pratyāsvara ityamum tasmaddhā etamimamamum codgīthamupaśita*” (1.3.2), both the *Prāṇa* and the Sun are the same, *samāna u*, the *prāṇa* is in the form of heat, *uṣṇaḥ*, the Sun also is the form of heat. The *prāṇa* is said to be *svara*, one that ascends and the Sun is also said to be *svara*, one that ascends and *pratyāsvara*, one that returns back. So worship the elevated one, *udgīthaḥ*, as the *Prāṇa* and the Sun. Also it is said, *prāṇena viśvatovīryam devaḥsūryam samairayan* (*AV*, 3.31.7), gods addressed the all-capable Sun as *prāṇa* of the world. That is the reason to describe the Supreme Brahman; the example of the Sun is given in the scripture for easy comprehension,

*vedāhametaṁ puruṣaṁ mahāntaṁ
 ādityavarnaṁ tamasah parastāt,
 tameva viditvā-timṛtyumeti
 nānyaḥ panthā vidyāte ayannāya. (YV, 31.18)*

Vedas speak about that Great Puruṣa, the Supreme Self, *vedāhametaṁ puruṣaṁ mahāntaṁ*, which is same like the Sun, full of light and beyond the darkness, *ādityavarnaṁ tamasah parastāt*. When that is known one crosses the death, *tameva viditvā-timṛtyumeti*. There is no route other than this for liberation, *nānyaḥ panthā vidyāte ayannāya*.

Here again the Knowledge of that Supreme Self is emphasized as the route for liberation and that Supreme Self is compared with the Sun. Though the Sun is source of physical light and eradicates darkness, but the implied meaning here is the consciousness and eradication of the ignorance. The Sun here symbolizes all pervading Consciousness and is addressed as *Āditya* or the son of Aditi, representing the *prāṇa*, both the vital energy and the knowledge. So the Sun is the *hamsa* for our solar system and by understanding the principle called *Hamsa* the Sun we will understand the principle of *Hamsa* the Supreme Self, and again it is said, *brahma sūryasamaṁ jyotiḥ*, the Brahman is full of light (knowledge) like the Sun (*YV*, 23.8). For that we have to know the *Prāṇa*, *prāṇaḥ prajānāmudayatyēṣa*

sūryaḥ, it is the *prāṇa* that rises as the sun, that is the life of all beings (*Pr. U*, 1.8). Within our individual bodies the Life-force is the Sun.

Prāṇa is the All-Pervading Consciousness in its Kinetic Form: However in the next verse of *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* it was made clear to eradicate any misconception that may arise due to use of the term *hamsa* as one may understand the *prāṇa* as simply the vital airs, inhalations and exhalations, or the Sun representing physical energy according to a materialistic view, since the *prāṇa* is a greater term.

ūrdhvaṃ prāṇamunnayatyapānaṃ pratyagasyati;
madhye vāmanamāsīnaṃ viśvedevā upāsate. (*Ka. U*, 2.2.3)

The Dwarf One, *vāmana*, who is sitting in the middle (inside the heart), *madhye āsīnam* and who pulls the exhalation upward, *ūrdhvaṃ prāṇamunnayaty*, and pushes the inhalation downward, *apānaṃ pratyagasyati* to Him all other gods of the world, *viśvedevā*, worship, *upāsate*.

This is the Self, the Brahman, the Sun or the *Prāṇa*, the active form of the Brahman as described before. That is the Knowledge; it is called the Dwarf One as it is sitting inside the heart. This means it shines in the cave of intellect, like the size of a thumb, *aṅguṣṭha pramāṇa*, in the cranium inside the brain from the point between eyebrows up to fontanel; this is the focal point of the Power of Consciousness. Due to this *prāṇa*, the exhalation, *prāṇa*, and the inhalation, *apāna*, work so that body is sustained. To this deity named *Prāṇa*, the gods or the organs as eyes, ears etc. worship by carrying him presents in the form of perception. A perception is recognized by the mind and determined by the intellect, and both the mind and the intellect work due to the *prāṇa* so also exhalations and inhalations. So this Dwarf One is the all-pervading consciousness in its kinetic form, which is nothing but the *prāṇa*. Let us see further.

The Couple for Creation, the Vital Power and the Mind: In *Praśnopaniṣad* dealing with creation it is said,

“prajakāmo vai prajāpatiḥ sa tapo’ tapyata sa tapastaptvā sa mithunamutpādayate, rayīm ca prāṇaḥ cetyetau me bahudhā prajāḥ kariṣyata iti.” (*Pr. U*, 1.4)

The Lord of creatures, *prajāpatiḥ*, being desires of creatures, *prajākāmah*, performed penance, *tapah atapyata*, and conceiving by that knowledge, *tapastaptvā*, created a couple, *mithunamutpādayate*, viz., *rayi* and *prāṇa*, under the idea that these two will produce creatures, *prajāḥ kariṣyata*, for me in many ways, *bahudhā*.

The Lord as *Prajāpati* is same as *Īśvara* or the *Hiraṇyagarbha* who is the chief *prāṇa*. He with his knowledge since He is sum total of all the powers of knowledge (*sattvaguna*) and all the powers of action (*rajoguna*) being desirous (*tamoguna*) of creating all moving and non-moving beings, viz., plants, animals and all everything of the creation did penance. This means He deliberated on knowledge (*vide supra*, head, “The *Prāṇa* is *Īśvara*, the *Hiraṇyagarbha*,” p. 60), and created a

couple that is instrumental to creation. This very couple is *rayi* and *prāṇa*, the food and the eater of the food. Who are they?

ādityo ha vai prāṇo rayireva candramā rairvā etat sarvaṃ yanmūrtam cāmūrtam ca tasmānmūrtireva rayiḥ. (Pr. U, 1.5)

The sun is surely the *prāṇa*, *ādityo ha vai prāṇaḥ*, and the food, *rayiḥ*, is the moon, *candramā*. Everything, *etat sarvaṃ*, is food whatever is manifested, *yanmūrtam* (means gross) and whatever is unmanifested, *cāmūrtam* (means subtle). The gross, *mūrtiḥ*, is verily the food, *rayiḥ*, of the subtle.

So from the chief *Prāṇa*, *prāṇa* the sun and *rayiḥ* the moon are created and the chief *prāṇa* is identified with them, this is dichotomisation to produce a pair necessary for the creation. As this is for our solar system, the same is also for our body system. The sun is the vital power and the moon is the mind power as it is said, *candramā manaso jātaḥ* (YV, 31.12; RV, 10.90.13). The existence of the moon is dependant on the sun, *candramā asyāditye śritāḥ* (Tai. Br., 3.11.1–12), and *sūrya-ekakī carati candramā jāyate punaḥ*, the Sun moves alone but the moon manifests again and again (YV, 23.11, 46). This shows the eternity of the *prāṇa*, the Sun, and mutability and impermanence of the mind, the moon. Since the moon is dependant on the Sun and again, *candraḥ prāṇena saṁhitāḥ*, the moon is attached to the *Prāṇa* (AV, 3.31.6); it is the *prāṇa* that is most important than the mind. The mind power is the food of the vital power.

The Vital Power, *prāṇa*, Overpowers the Mind and the Senses: Since the mind is the food of the vital power, that is the reason our spiritual practice is chiefly based on the vital power and not with the mind power though use of the mind power in a spiritual practice is not denied, but we have to remember that the Knowledge will reflect on the mind when the actions of mind are halted. Since one chief *prāṇa* is dichotomized to the vital power, *prāṇa* and the mind power, *mana*, the effect of the mind power on the vital power is also not denied but the vital power overpowers the mind power. Both gross and subtle is food means all the physical manifestations and the mental manifestations are food of the vital power, *prāṇa*. Again gross is the food of subtle means our physical body and sense-organs are food of our mind. This is the reason the mind seems so powerful. So the moon and our physical body and the mind are same, and the sun and our vital energy is same. This vital energy is *haṁsa*, because it moves. This moves as *vyāna vāyu* creating vibrations in the body, carrying out the physiological functions and as *samāna vāyu* giving nutrition to the body by digesting and assimilating the food eaten, this is also a movement. As *udāna vāyu* this ascends from the body and also as the exhalation, *prāṇa vāyu*, and the inhalation, *apāna vāyu*, carrying out the breathing. Again it is said,

tadyathā makṣikā madhukararājānamutkrāmantam sarvā evotkrāmante tasmimśca pratiṣṭhamāne sarvā eva pratiṣṭhanta evaṃ vānmanaścaḥṣuḥ śrotram ca te pri-tāḥ prāṇaṃ stuvanti. (Pr. U, 2.4)

As all the bees, *tadyathā makṣikāḥ sarvā*, fly following flight, *utkrāmantaṃ evotkrāmaṃ te*, of the king (queen) of bees, *madhukararājānam*, and all settle down, *sarvā eva pratiṣṭhanta*, following his (her) settlement, *tasmim̐śca pratiṣṭhamāne*, similarly the speech, the mind, the eyes, the ears, etc. behave, *evam vānmanaścakṣuḥ śrotraṃ ca*; being happy they, *te prītāḥ*, praise the vital power, *prāṇaṃ stuvanti*.

The greatness of the Prāṇa, the vital power over the senses and the mind has been described in the Prāṇasamvādabrahmaṇa of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, i.e., the first part of the sixth chapter and in the first part of the fifth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, it is the same story in both the scriptures. The story is as follows. Once these *prāṇa*-s, meaning thereby the organs, quarreled among themselves about the supremacy and each claimed that it was the supreme, *vasiṣṭha*, among them. *Vasiṣṭha* means which sits and makes others sit. Then they went to the Prajāpati Brahmā to decide on the issue and the Lord advised them that after the departure of the particular one among you from the body, the body would look most sinned that one is the supreme among you. At first the speech departed from the body and returned back after a year and asked, how did you live without me? Then they replied; as a dumb lives without speaking through the mouth but breathing, seeing through the eyes, hearing through the ears, knowing through the mind and procreating through semen (here semen is intended to the procreating organ), we lived like that. Then the speech entered the body. Then the eyes departed, returned after a year and asked the same question. The other *prāṇa*-s replied; as a blind lives without seeing but breathing, speaking through the speech, hearing through the ears, knowing through the mind and procreating through semen, we lived like that. Then the eyes entered the body. Then the ears departed, returned after a year and asked the same question. The other *prāṇa*-s replied; as a deaf-person lives without hearing but breathing, speaking through the speech, seeing through the eyes, knowing through the mind and procreating through semen, we lived like that. Then the ears entered the body. Then the mind, the internal organ departed, returned after a year and asked the same question. The other *prāṇa*-s replied; as a mentally retarded lives without understanding but breathing, speaking through the speech, seeing through the eyes, hearing through the ears and procreating through semen, we lived like that. Then the mind entered the body. Next the semen (representing organ of procreation) departed, returned after a year and asked the same question. The other *prāṇa*-s replied; as a neutral gender lives without procreating but breathing, speaking through the speech, seeing through the eyes, hearing through the ears and knowing through the mind, we lived like that. Then the semen entered the body. But when the *prāṇa*, the life-force started departing, as a best breed horse from the Land of Sindh uproots the stumps that bind it, in the same manner it started uprooting all other *prāṇa*-s. Then they prayed, Oh Lord, do not depart, we cannot live without you. Then the other *prāṇa*-s offered their title to the Prāṇa. The speech said; the supreme, *vasiṣṭha*, that I am you become

that. The eyes said; the establishment, *pratiṣṭhā*, that I am, you become that. The ears said; the wealth, *samṣad*, that I am, you become that. The mind said; the foundation, *āyatana*, that I am, you becomes that. The semen said; the species, *prajāti*, that I am, you become that. That is the reason the speech, the eyes, the ears, the mind etc. are also said to be the *prāṇa*. All these are verily the *prāṇa*.

This is the reason why *prāṇa* is so important in a spiritual practice and higher than all organs and even the mind. And this *prāṇa*, the vital power is born from the Self, the Supreme Brahman, “*ātmana eṣa prāṇo jayate*” (*Pr. U*, 3.3); this means the *prāṇa* is the active form of the Supreme Brahman born from His transcendental form. Then this manifests into the world and all the beings.

Prāṇa, the Vital Power is Aṅgīrasa and Vṛhaspati: “*taṁ haṅgīrā udgīthamupāsāmcakra etamu evāṅgīrasaṁ manyante-ṅgānām yadrasaḥ.*” (*Ch. U*, 1.2.10)

Ṛṣi Aṅgīrā has worshiped to that chief *prāṇa* as the elevated one, *taṁ haṅgīrā udgīthamupāsāmcakra*, that is the reason people take this as the juice of the body (*aṅgīrasa*), *etamu evāṅgīrasaṁ manyante*, since it is the essence of all the body parts, *aṅgānām yadrasaḥ*. Aṅgīrasa is the essence of the body, i.e., the *prāṇa*.

Again,

tena tamha vṛhaspatirudgīthamupāsāmcakra etamu eva vṛhaspatiṁ manyate vāgdhi vṛhatī tasyā eṣa pati. (*Ch. U*, 1.2.11)

Guru Vṛhaspati has worshiped that chief Prāṇa as the elevated one, *tena tamha vṛhaspatirudgīthamupāsāmcakra*, that is the reason people respect that as Vṛhaspati, *etamu eva vṛhaspatiṁ manyate*, since the speech is the great one, *vāgdhi vṛhatī*, and this (Prāṇa) is lord of the speech, *tasyā eṣa pati*.

In this way the Life-force is praised in the Upaniṣads. For this worshipping Guru Vṛhaspati became the Master of gods. In the context of body, Vṛhaspati is the *prāṇa*, the vital force and the gods are the sense-organs. Among the organs of action the speech is the great one, *vṛhatī* and the lord of speech is the Life-force, *prāṇa*. Guru Vṛhaspati is also named as *jīva* in astrology and *jīva* means the life. He belongs to the ancestry of Ṛṣi Aṅgīrā, Aṅgīrasa *gotra*. The essence of body is named *Aṅgīrasa*.

Sixteen Parts of the Brahman, Prāṇa is the First One: The Puruṣa or the Brahman has sixteen parts. Among the sixteen parts which particular one having risen up from the body I shall become raised and which being established I remain being established? (*Pr. U*, 6.3). The answer given is,

sa prāṇamasṛjata prāṇācchrādhām kham vāyurjyotirāpaḥ pṛthivīndriyaṁ manaḥ, annamannādūrīyaṁ tapo mantrāḥ karma lokā lokeṣu ca nāma ca.

(*Pr. U*, 6.4)

He created the Prāṇa, *sa prāṇamasṛjata*. This is the Hiraṇyagarbha. This is sum total of all the *prāṇa*-s. This is the name by which the Puruṣa or the Brahman

is individualized, this is all the knowledge and all the vital energy, this is the soul of all, and this is Īśvara. This is the total Life-force before being coupled into the vital energy and the mental energy. From the *prāṇa* He created faith, *śraddhām*, *prāṇācchraddhām*; this is the cosmic noble mind. From the faith He created the ether, *kham*; the air, *vāyuh*; the fire, *jyotiḥ*; the water, *āpah*; and the earth, *ṛthivī* in succession. These are the elements for creation. Then the organs, *indriyam* (the sense organs and the organs of action including the entire body made from the above five elements), the mind or *manaḥ* (this is the lord of the organs) are created. After the creation of the elements physical body is created from the gross elements and the mind from the subtle elements. Then food, *annam*, is created; and from food emerges the vigor, *vīryam*. Food and from food ability or *vīryam*, these are for sustaining the body and the mind, this vigor or *vīrya* is normally referred as the *prāṇa* since this carry out the physiological activities. Then came the austerities or the self-restraint, *tapah*; this is for purification of the mind and the organs as along with the mind its volitions like doubts etc. as impurities started. Then created in succession are the means of the scriptural activities, mantras, *mantrāḥ*, this is the scriptural knowledge; rites or the activities, *karma*, starting from the noble deeds and rituals up to *prāṇakarma*, action of *prāṇa* to absorb the mind; and the worlds, *lokā*, different worlds are the results of the activities performed. And then from the worlds the names are created, *lokeṣu ca nāma ca*, the names of the worlds and the beings.

Our Spiritual Practice is to be Established in the Prāṇa: In the next verse of the *Prāṇopaniṣad* (6.5) it said that as flowing rivers merge in the sea all the sixteen parts have their goal in the Puruṣa, the Self. But our spiritual practice is to merge only fifteen parts and to be established in the *prāṇa*, the Hiraṇyagarbha only.

*gatāḥ kalāḥ pañcadaśa pratiṣṭhā
devāśca sarve pratidevatāsu,
karmāṇi vijñānamayaśca ātmā
pare'vyaye sarva ekībhavanti. (Mu. U, 3.2.7)*

One has to be established, *pratiṣṭhā*, beyond the fifteen parts, *gatāḥ kalāḥ pañcadaśa*, the gods are to be merged in their respective gods, *devāśca sarve pratidevatāsu*. Actions, *karmāṇi*, with their results along with the intellect, which is appearing like the soul, *vijñānamayaśca ātmā*, all are to be unified with the Un-eroded, *pare'vyaye sarva ekībhavanti*.

In the next verse here also it is mentioned that as the rivers merge in the sea giving up their names and forms, so also persons having the knowledge be free from the name and the form after reaching the Self, Puruṣa, which is superior than the superior, i.e., Nature the Unmanifest (*Mu. U, 3.2.8*). Why then it was said that one has to be established beyond fifteen parts means to be established

in the *prāṇa*, the Hiraṇyagarbha? Because our practice can go only up to that and in the sum *prāṇa* that is called the Hiraṇyagarbha, our individual *prāṇa* loses identity and what to talk about our ego. When you as an individual are not there and you have become the sum total how you will practice *kriyā* or actions for further annihilation, if any (*vide supra*, US, 12, p. 42). This is also applicable to the believers in the practice of knowledge and even if they do not believe in the practice of vital energy, since the practice of knowledge is dependant on the vital energy. If there is anything else to be merged than it is the work of Nature the Unmanifest or that of Īśvara the Hiraṇyagarbha, we as a spiritual practitioner do not be worried for that. That is guaranteed.

While in the process of merging the fifteen parts into the *prāṇa*, the Hiraṇyagarbha, all the gods are merged to their respective gods. The gods in our body are the organs and the mind. They merge in their gods for examples the ears merge in the directions or the ether, the eyes merge in the sun or the fire, the skin merge in the air and so on, the mind merge in the moon or the cosmic mind. Here when we say the ears or the eyes etc. we mean the subtle ears or the subtle eyes. Then actions along with their results and the intellect that is appearing like the individual soul, since the ego is the corollary of the intellect, all merge in the Uneroded, the pure existence called the Truth. So merging in the Truth or the Self is automatic after annihilation of the ego and only merging the fifteen parts into the chief *prāṇa* does this. That is the reason the *prāṇa* is praised as below.

Everything as Spokes of the Chariot-wheel is Fixed in the Central Hub, *Prāṇa*:

yathā vā arā nābhau samarṣitā evamasmin prāṇe sarvaṃ samarṣitam. prāṇaḥ prāṇena yāti. prāṇaḥ prāṇam dadāti. prāṇasya dadāti. prāṇo ha pitā prāṇo mātā prāṇo bhrātā prāṇaḥ svasā prāṇa ācāryaḥ prāṇo brāhmaṇaḥ.

(Ch. U, 7.15.1)

As the spokes of a chariot-wheel are fixed to its hub at the center, *yathā vā arā nābhau samarṣitā*, in the same way everything is fixed on the *prāṇa*, *evamasmin prāṇe sarvaṃ samarṣitam*. The *prāṇa* moves through the *prāṇa*, *prāṇaḥ prāṇena yāti*, the *prāṇa* gives to the *prāṇa*, *prāṇaḥ prāṇam dadāti*, and gives for the *prāṇa*, *prāṇasya dadāti*. The *prāṇa* is the father, *prāṇo ha pitā*, the *prāṇa* is the mother, *prāṇo mātā*, the *prāṇa* is the brother, *prāṇo bhrātā*, the *prāṇa* is the sister, *prāṇaḥ svasā*, the *prāṇa* is the teacher, *prāṇa ācāryaḥ* and the *prāṇa* is the priest, *prāṇo brāhmaṇaḥ*.

So all the actions, their causes and the results are nothing but the *prāṇa* and merge in the *prāṇa*. The *Prāṇa* is the Lord, the *prāṇa* is the energy, the *prāṇa* is activity, be it the activity of knowledge as done in the mind and the intellect, or the activity of action as done by the vital force in the sense organs, in the organs of action and in the body. The *prāṇa* is the body, the organs, the mind, the intellect and everything. Here it is the description of the chief *prāṇa* within the

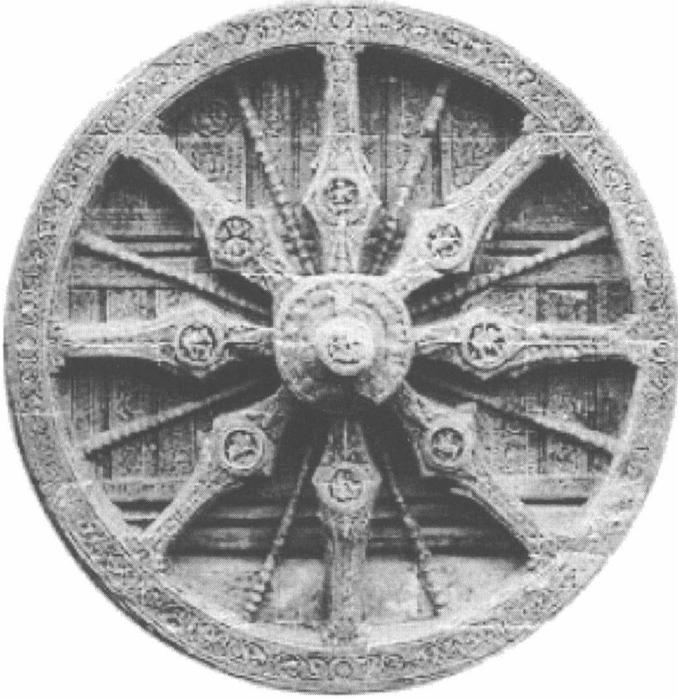


Fig. 2.4. A chariot wheel. Everything as spokes of the chariot-wheel is fixed in the central hub, *prāṇa*.

body and it is unified with the *prāṇa* that is everywhere; that is Thread the Self, named as the Hiranyagarbha. But for the spiritual practitioner he has to start with his individual *prāṇa*, i.e., the vital power as exhalations and inhalations.

Tall Talking with the Knowledge by Experience: Further Bhagavān Sanatkumāra in the next texts teaches to Devarṣi Nārada,

prāṇo hyevaitāni sarvāṇi bhavati. sa vā eṣa evaṃ paśyannevaṃ manvāna evaṃ vijānannativādi bhavati. taṃ cedbruyurativādyaśītyativādyaśmīti bruyānnāpahruvīta.
(Ch. U, 7.15.4)

Everything is the *prāṇa*, *prāṇo hyebaitāni sarvāṇi bhavati*, one who sees like this, *sa vā eṣa evaṃ paśyanna*, thinks like this, *evaṃ manvāna* and knows like this is a tall talker, *evaṃ vijānannativādi bhavati*. To him if someone says, *taṃ cedbruyuh*, you are a tall talker, *ativādyaśīth*; he should say, yes, I am a tall talker, *ativādyaśmīti*, and should not hide this, *bruyānnāpahruvīta*.

After having this knowledge by experience due to meditation that everything, which is moving and nonmoving is nothing but the *prāṇa*, such a person becomes a tall talker. This means he can speak about everything starting from a name and a form up to the Hiranyagarbha, the Nature and the Lord; and such a person

who knows the Self as the Lord to him if someone addresses as a tall talker he should accept it. Here the meaning of *ativādī*, a tall talker, is different from that as expressed in, *prāṇo hyeṣa yaḥ sarvabhūtairvibhāti* (*Mu. U.*, 3.1.4, *vide supra* in head, “Knower of *Prāṇa* does not Become a Tall Talker,” p. 74) since the tall talking here is an expression of the knowledge acquired by the experience, not simply the knowledge of words without experiencing the Truth.

Seekers Enquiry ends with the *Prāṇa*: After this knowledge was imparted to Devarṣi Nārada, he did not ask any further question to Bhagavān Sanat Kumāra. This indicates the end of personal efforts by the seeker. Sanat Kumāra on his own imparted the rest of the knowledge on *Bhumā*, the Supreme Brahman to Devarṣi Nārada.

The *Prāṇa-sūkta*: The glory of the *prāṇa* has been sung in the *Prāṇa-sūkta* of *Atharvaveda* (11.4).

*prāṇāya namo yasya sarvamidaṁ vaśe,
yo bhūtaḥ sarvasyeśvaro yasminsarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam. (1)*

We bow down to the *Prāṇa*, *prāṇāya namo*, all these (the whole universe) are under whose control, *yasya sarvamidaṁ vaśe*, which is the Lord of all beings, *yo bhūtaḥ sarvasyeśvaro*, and everything is established in whom, *yasmin sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam*.

Here the *Prāṇa* is prayed as *Īśvara*, the Lord of all, *sarvasyeśvaraḥ*, the ruler, the founder and the sustainer of the universe. The *Prāṇa* as *Īśvara* the *Hiraṇyagarbha* is the creator, the ruler, and the sustainer. This is the active form of the Supreme Brahman; this is the form of *Śiva* (the Transcendental Lord) and *Śakti* (His Nature) combined engaged in the creation.

*namaste prāṇa krandāya namaste stanayitnave,
namaste prāṇa vidyute namaste prāṇa varṣate. (2)*

Oh *Prāṇa*, we bow before you, *namaste prāṇa*, you are the cause of sounds, *krandāya*, you roar among the clouds, *stanayitnave*, and we bow. We bow to the *Prāṇa* in the form of lightning, *namaste prāṇa vidyute*, and we bow to the *Prāṇa* that rains, *namaste prāṇa varṣate*.

The *Prāṇa* is prayed here as the cause of sounds, means the cause of the creation. It is the first throb that gave rise to sound and the ether, and then the sensation and the air, the vision and the fire, the taste and the water, the smell and the earth in succession. *Krandāya* means crying, which signifies the birth of creation. The *Prāṇa* roars from the clouds mentions the cause of life, creations of plants and animals in the earth. *Vidyut* or electricity in the form of lightning is the energy principle called the *Prāṇa* that is transmitted from the clouds to the rain, the soil, the plants, the food and to the creatures. Roaring represents exuberating of the energy principle engaged in creations, this is continuous

vibration for active creativity. *Vidyut* also represents the electric energy, the sun and the fire. The Prāṇa as the rain or pouring of water means it is the life energy poured in to the earth.

*yat prāṇa stanayitnunābhikrandatyośadhīḥ,
pra vīyante garbhān dadhate'tho bahvīrvi jāyante.* (3)

When the Prāṇa roars through the clouds intending towards the medicines, *yat prāṇa stanayitnunābhikrandatyośadhīḥ*, then the medicines become powerful, *pra vīyante*, and by conceiving become many, *garbhān dadhate'tho bahvīrvi jāyante*.

That energy principle called Śakti or the Prāṇa through roaring or further activation is transmitted to the medicines. Hunger is the disease and the food is the medicine, *ḥṣudhā vyādhiḥ annam auśadhīḥ*. Here the medicines mean both the plants producing the food grains and the herbs giving us the life-saving drugs. This same principle of the life-energy multiplies the plants and herbs.

*yat prāṇa ṛtāvāgate'abhikrandatyośadhīḥ,
sarvam tadā pra modate yat kim ca bhūmyāmadhi.* (4)

When the Prāṇa roars during the rainy season intending towards the medicines, *yat prāṇa ṛtāvāgate'abhikrandatyośadhīḥ*, then everyone becomes happy, *sarvam tadā pramodate*, who ever is there on the earth, *yat kim ca bhūmyāmadhi*.

This Prāṇa is the cause of happiness in all beings as the life is dear to each one.

*yadā prāṇo abhyavarṣid varṣeṇa pṛthivīm mahīm,
paśavastat pra modante maho vai no bhaviṣyati.* (5)

When the Prāṇa rains, *yadā prāṇo abhyavarṣid*, and irrigates the vast landmass, *varṣeṇa pṛthivīm mahīm*, all the animals become happy, *paśavastat pra modante*, now that we will attain growth, *maho vai no bhaviṣyati*.

The inherent tendency of each organism is to become immortal because the basic principle called the Prāṇa is immortal. Due to ones identification with the physical body, one implies immortality to the physical growth and multiplication or progeny; this is the animal nature. Since the Prāṇa as rain is the cause of that growth, that becomes the happiness for animals, *paśavaḥ*. The use of term *paśavaḥ* signifies the animal qualities that identify growth with the physical growth and progeny.

*abhivṛṣṭā auśadhayoḥ prāṇena samavādiran,
āyurvai naḥ prātītarah sarvā naḥ surabhīrakah.* (6)

Being irrigated by the Prāṇa, *abhivṛṣṭā prāṇena*, the medicines engage in a dialogue with the Prāṇa, *auśadhayoḥ samavādiran*, you please enhance our longevity, *āyurvai naḥ prātītarah*, and make us all full of fragrance, *sarvā naḥ surabhīrakah*.

This is happiness of the plants and the herbs being irrigated with the life energy and prayer to attain height through fragrance. This shows the process of

evolution in each being even in plants and attaining the highest state. The highest state according to the development of consciousness in case of the plants and the herbs is to be full of fragrance, *surabhī*.

*namaste astvāyate namo astu parāyate,
namaste prāṇa tiṣṭhata āsīnāyota te namaḥ.* (7)

Oh Prāṇa, we bow down to you while coming, *namaste astvāyate*, bow down to you while going, *namo astu parāyate*, bow down to the Prāṇa while staying, *namaste prāṇa tiṣṭhata*, bow down while sitting, *āsīnāyota te namaḥ*. We bow down to you in all the states.

The Prāṇa is the cause of the creation, the existence and the dissolution of the universe, all the elements, all manifestations, all the beings be it plants, herbs, animals, birds, humans, celestial beings, gods or even the Hiraṇyagarbha (Lord Brahmā). These are done by coming, going, staying and sitting of the Prāṇa, by different states of activities of the Prāṇa. So we bow down before that one-energy principle called the Prāṇa, in all Her/His modes of activities or even when in inertia.

*namaste prāṇa prāṇate namo astvapānate,
parācīnāya te namaḥ pracīcīnāyate namaḥ sarvasmai ta idaṁ namaḥ.* (8)

Oh Prāṇa, we bow down to you for the action of exhalation, *namaste prāṇa prāṇate*, bow down for the action of inhalation, *namo astvapānate*, bow down for your action of moving forward, *parācīnāya te namaḥ*, bow down for your action of moving backward, *pracīcīnāyate namaḥ*, we bow down to you for everything, for all your activities, *sarvasmai ta idaṁ namaḥ*.

Here the vital activities of the Prāṇa in our bodies are explained in details as inhalations and exhalations, etc. Moving forward and backward represents other modes of vital airs like *vyāna*, *udāna*, *samāna*, and others; this also suggests the physical movements of walking and working. These are activities of the life sheath, *prāṇamaya kośa* and are foundations for the manifested life. Again the movements of the vital airs are also the cause of movements of the mind.

*yā te prāṇa priyā tanūryo te prāṇa preyasī,
atho yad bheṣajam tava tasya no dhehi jīvase.* (9)

Oh Prāṇa, the body (here the body refers to the body carrying the physiological activities) that is dear to you, *yā te prāṇa priyā tanūh*, and your beloved vital power, *yo te prāṇa preyasī*, and also those herbs or medicines of yours, *atho yad bheṣajam tava*, give those to us for our longevity, *tasya no dhehi jīvase*.

This is prayer for the foundation of life, i.e., *prāṇamaya kośa*, the life sheath. The physical body, *annamaya kośa*, is dear only because this holds the vital power or the *prāṇa*. This vital power is the sweet beloved, *preyasī*, of the lover the Prāṇa Īśvara, the energy principle of life. Prayer for the herbs or the medicines is for a

long life as this is the foundation for further evolution for a human culminating in the realization of the Truth.

*prāṇaḥ prajā anu vaste pitā putramiva priyam,
prāṇo ha sarvasyeśvaro yacca prāṇati yacca na. (10)*

As a father stays with the dear son, *pitā putramiva priyam*, the king Prāṇa remains with its citizens, *prāṇaḥ prajā anu vaste*. The Prāṇa is the Lord of all, *prāṇo ha sarvasyeśvaro*, those who hold the *prāṇa* (means living beings) and those who do not (non-living objects), *yacca prāṇati yacca na*.

The affectionate relation between a father and a son is cited here between the Prāṇa and His citizens, *prajā*. Though by *prajā* we normally mean citizens but *prajā* is related to procreation, *prasrjan*. The children of *praja* are *prajā*. *Praja* means a husband or one who enters inside the wife and takes birth, *praviśya jāyāyām jāyate*. It is the static Prāṇa, Śiva, which enters inside His wife, the kinetic Prāṇa, Śakti; and then takes birth as His *prajā*, or the creation. Since everything is created from the Prāṇa, all are *prajā* or the children of the Prāṇa. In the context of the body the citizens are the mind, the intellect, the five sense-organs, the five organs of action and the body. These all owe their existence due to the father Prāṇa, the life energy. The Prāṇa is also the lord of all, both the living beings and the non-living objects, because all is Prāṇa. In the non-livings it is the Prāṇa involved whereas in the living beings it is the Prāṇa evolved.

*prāṇo mṛtyuḥ prāṇastakmā prāṇam devā upāsate,
prāṇo ha satyavādinamuttame loka ā dadhat. (11)*

The Prāṇa is death (the cause of death), *prāṇo mṛtyuḥ*, the Prāṇa is diseases (the cause of diseases), *prāṇastakmā*, and the gods worship the Prāṇa, *prāṇam devā upāsate*. It is the Prāṇa, *prāṇo ha*, that establishes, *ā dadhat*, the truthful persons, *satyavādinam*, in an elevated world, *uttame loka*.

Even the Prāṇa is described as the death and the diseases, and their cause. Any disturbances or loss of equation in the energy structure in the Prāṇic body results in different diseases and culminates in the death of the physical body. The Prāṇa is also the cause of the death or dissolution of the universe as it is the cause of creation. *Prāṇa krandāya* in second verse not only means the creation but also the dissolution. The gods are powers of illumination or different energy centers governing different faculties in the creation, and rule over and give boons to the creatures. They also worship the Prāṇa, as they owe their existence to the Prāṇa. Truthful persons or those performing righteousness in their lives are placed in the elevated worlds, viz., heaven etc. as a result of their truthfulness by the Prāṇa; this shows that Prāṇa is the Īśvara who grants the results of actions performed to the beings in accordance with their actions, *karmas*. This Prāṇa is the Collective Principle.

*prāṇo virāt prāṇo deṣṭrī prāṇam sarva upāsate,
prāṇo ha sūryaścandramāḥ prāṇamāhuḥ prajāpatim. (12)*

The Prāṇa is Lord Virāṭa, *prāṇo virāt*, the Prāṇa is the force behind or the cause of all actions, *prāṇo deṣṭrī*, and everybody worships the Prāṇa, *prāṇam sarva upāsate*. The Prāṇa is the Sun and the moon, *prāṇo ha sūryaścandramāḥ*, the Prāṇa is called as the Lord of creatures, *prāṇamāhuḥ prajāpatim*.

The Prāṇa is said here to be *Virāṭa*, the Cosmic Gross Body; this is the sum total of all physical manifestations, the part of cosmic energy manifested as cosmic matter during time and space. The Prāṇa is also the force behind all actions; we can say Śakti. And all beings worship this Prāṇa, we may be worshipping any name or form but that is a worship of the Principle named Prāṇa. This Prāṇa is the Sun and the moon in the creation, and in the context of the body this is the vital energy and the mind. The Prāṇa is *Prajāpati*, the Lord of creatures. This can be said as Īśvara, or this can be said as *Manu*, the cosmic mind.

*prāṇāpānau vrīhiyavāvanānvān prāṇa ucyate,
yave ha prāṇa āhito apāno vrīhirucyate. (13)*

The *prāṇa* and the *apāna* are rice and paddy, *prāṇapānau vrīhiyavaḥ*, the Prāṇa is said to be load-carrying bull, *anānvān prāṇa ucyate*. Paddy is said to be the *prāṇa*, *yave ha prāṇa āhito*, rice is said to be the *apāna*, *apāno vrīhirucyate*.

The vital airs like *prāṇa* and *apāna* are used in scriptures in various ways. Sometimes *apāna* as inhalation and *prāṇa* as exhalation but normally *prāṇa* refers to in-taking or holding process of life energy whereas *apāna* is said to be the life activities responsible for excretory processes. We can understand that the *apāna* also holds the *prāṇa*, means *prāṇa* is the refined energy and *apāna* is in crude form and hence may be the comparison of *prāṇa* with paddy and *apāna* with rice. But the main Prāṇa is said here to be load-carrying bull, *anānvān*, carrying *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *samāna*, *vyāna*, and *udāna*, also the senses, the organs, the body, the mind and the intellect. The main Prāṇa is carrying the entire universe, all the manifested beings. Bull, *vṛṣa*, means water and water is life. Water is carrying the manifested life. Bull, *vṛṣa*, also means land for the purpose of building a house. In this way the Prāṇa is the foundation piece for the house of creation. Bull also represents the sexual energy and desires. The Prāṇa is the cause of procreation and the desires, the Prāṇa fulfils the desires and it is the Prāṇa that takes one beyond the desires; hence the comparison of Prāṇa with the load carrying bull. Bull is the vehicle of Lord Śiva; it carries Śiva. Śiva is the static aspect of Prāṇa whereas bull is the kinetic aspect.

*apānati prāṇati puruṣo garbhe antarā,
yadā tvam prāṇa jinvasyatha sa jāyate punaḥ. (14)*

The person (individual soul), *puruṣaḥ*, starts the processes of *apāna* and *prāṇa*, *apānati prāṇati*, inside the womb, *garbhe antarā*. Oh Prāṇa, when you send the person, *yadā tvam prāṇa jinvasyatha*, he again takes birth, *sa jāyate punaḥ*.

Here it is said that the processes of *apāna* and *prāṇa*, the inhalation and the exhalation, starts inside the womb. Though the manifestations of inhalations

and exhalations are only after the birth but the processes start inside the womb, as all the cells of a fetus inhale and exhale inside the womb. *Apāna* is said to be the inhalation and *prāṇa* is said to be the exhalation. But it should have been said otherwise because *prāṇa* is life-holding process and *apāna* is movement of vital air for excretory processes. Then on the outer manifestations of breath *prāṇa* is the inhalation and *apāna* is the exhalation but for the advanced practitioners of *prāṇāyāma*, *apāna* is the inhalation and *prāṇa* is the exhalation because their concentration is not with the outer breath but with the inner breath, i.e., the movement of the breath inside the spine. Simultaneous with the outer inhalation the prāṇic energy ascends from base of the spine, Mūlādhāra to Ājñā or Sahasrāra, so it is called *apāna*, and with the outer exhalation the prāṇic energy descends from Ājñā or Sahasrāra to Mūlādhāra, so it is called *prāṇa*. This inner process of movements of the vital airs are just reverse of the outer process of breath, and this inner process is always there. Mother Nature is doing this inner process for the fetus, so it is said that *puruṣaḥ* starts the processes of *apāna* and *prāṇa*, the inhalation and the exhalation, inside the womb. It is the Prāṇa that sends the person to take birth. The exultation of the Prāṇa from the body along with the senses and the mind with its impressions is known as death, and the Prāṇa sending a person to take birth is just the reverse of the process of exultation of the Prāṇa from the body, and this happens inside the womb. The life-force enters into the fetus inside the womb. We earlier discussed that the Prāṇa is Īśvara and it is the sum total of all the powers of action and all the powers of knowledge. This Īśvara grants the results of actions, *karma-s*, to persons and places in different worlds in accordance with their *karma-s*. After the results of actions are finished the Prāṇa Īśvara sends them to take birth in the present world.

*prāṇamāhurmātariśvānam vāto ha prāṇa ucyate,
prāṇo ha bhūtam bhavyam ca prāṇe sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam. (15)*

The Prāṇa is named *mātariśvā*, *prāṇamāhurmātariśvānam*, the air is called the Prāṇa, *vāto ha prāṇa ucyate*, the Prāṇa is past and future, *prāṇo ha bhūtam bhavyam ca*, and everything is established in the Prāṇa, *prāṇe sarvaṁ pratiṣṭhitam*.

The Prāṇa is said *mātariśvā*. *Mātari* is the intermediate space, one which moves in the intermediate space is *mātariśvā*, i.e., air. *Vātaḥ* means one that moves, i.e., air, here air as *vāta* is said in context of the body, the vital airs. The Air God is also named as *Vāta*. These all are the Prāṇa, it is one principle. This Prāṇa is the past and the future, and the Prāṇa is also the present period. This is implied from the saying that everything is established in the Prāṇa. The Prāṇa is the time. When the energy principle named as the Prāṇa was in its static form, i.e., Śiva, then there was no time, it was beyond time or the Great Time, the *Mahākāla*. Once the movement or *spanda* started in it, i.e., Śakti, it becomes the time, *kāla*,

and the space (*vide supra*, “Hiraṇyagarbha-sūkta,” v. 3, p. 65). So the Prāṇa is said as the past, the present and the future. Everything is established in the Prāṇa implies everything is established in the space, *ākāśa*. This *ākāśa* is the Prāṇa and this *kāla* is the Prāṇa.

*ātharvaṅgīrāṅgirasīrdaiṅvīrmanuṣyajā uta,
auśadhayaḥ pra jāyante yadā tvam prāṇa jinvasi.* (16)

Oh Prāṇa, when you fill through rain, *yadā tvam prāṇa jinvasi*, then the medicines manifest, *auśadhayaḥ pra jāyante*, those are formulated by Ṛṣi Atharvā from the ancestry of Ṛṣi Aṅgīrā, made by the gods and cultivated by the humans, *ātharvaṅgīrāṅgirasīrdaiṅvīrmanuṣyajā uta*.

Though this verse seems to be repetitions of meanings implied in vv. 3, 4 and 6, but the mention of Ṛṣi Atharvā and Ṛṣi Aṅgīrā indicates towards special types of medicines utilized in prāṇic healing. Ṛṣi Atharvā is believed to be a seer and a priest worshipping Agni, the Fire-god and Soma, the Moon-god. In the context of body, the Fire means the vital energy and the Moon means the mind. Soma also means water or life. Ṛṣi Atharvā belongs to the lineage of Ṛṣi Aṅgīrā, one of the seers who knew the *Prāṇavidyā*, the science of life-energy. Since Ṛṣi Aṅgīrā worshiped the Prāṇa, the Prāṇa is said to be *āṅgīrasa*, the juice or the essence of the body.

*yadā prāṇo abhyavarṣid varṣeṇa pṛthivīm mahīm,
auśadhayaḥ pra jāyante atho yāḥ kāśca vīrudhaḥ.* (17)

When the Prāṇa rains in the rainy season, *yadā prāṇo abhyavarṣid varṣeṇa*, on the vast landmass, *pṛthivīm mahim*, then only after that, *atho yāḥ kāśca vīrudhaḥ*, the medicines manifest, *auśadhayaḥ pra jāyante*.

This verse is almost a repetition of vv. 3 and 4.

*yaste prāṇedaṃ veda yasmimścāsi pratiṣṭhitaḥ,
sarve tasmai balim harānamuṣmīlloka uttame.* (18)

Those who know the glory of the Prāṇa as narrated; *yaste prāṇedaṃ veda*, in whom (the wise ones) this (the Prāṇa) is established, *yasmimścāsi pratiṣṭhitaḥ*, all (the gods) give him gifts, *sarve tasmai balim*, in the form of immortality and better worlds (heavens), *harānamuṣmīlloka uttame*.

Those who know the glory of the Prāṇa as narrated does not mean the intellectual knowledge. One can have the intellectual knowledge by study but he does not know the Prāṇa or the Truth Principle by experience. So it is said that in whom, the wise ones, this Prāṇa is established, *yasmimścāsi pratiṣṭhitaḥ*, this establishment comes through the practice of *Prāṇakarma*, the meditation based on breath. Then one who knows the Prāṇa with experience as a result of spiritual practice, this knowledge is the real knowledge and by virtue of that knowledge he becomes one with the Prāṇa. Depending upon the status of the practice one gets the better worlds and when his practice culminates in the Knowledge or

unity with the principle called the Prāṇa (same as the Brahman) then it is immortality.

*yathā prāṇa balihṛtastubhyam sarvāḥ prajā imāḥ,
evā tasmai balim harān yastvā śṛṇavat suśravah. (19)*

Oh Prāṇa, as all these citizens, *yathā prāṇa sarvāḥ prajā imāḥ*, bring gift for you, *balihṛtastubhyam*, similarly they bring gifts for him (the wise one or the knower of the Prāṇa), *evā tasmai balim harān*, one who listens your glory, *yastvā śṛṇavat suśravah*.

All the citizens, the children or the procreated ones of the Prāṇa bring gift for the Prāṇa. These are the gods, the elements, the humans, the creatures, the senses and the mind. The mind and the senses are the gods in the context of the body. Eyes bring gift for Prāṇa, the Life-force, in the form of vision; nose gives gift on the form smell, similarly all other organs. The mind gives gift in form of recognition of the perceptions received. In the context of world, humans and other creatures both static and moving worship the Prāṇa. Whatever offerings are made to whichever god or goddess are only offerings to the Great Deity Prāṇa. The gods also owe their existence to the Prāṇa and bring offerings to that Rudra with an uplifted thunderbolt in His hand (*vide supra, Ka.U, 2.3.3, p. 56*). The elements, from the ether to the earth, all work due to the Prāṇa and work for the Prāṇa. One who listens to the glory of the Prāṇa, here listening does not mean the normal listening process that we understand, it is inner listening by practice; to him they bring gifts, the mind and the senses are under his control. Gods also bring gift to him. Since he knows the Prāṇa, becomes the Prāṇa and he is now the Prāṇa of the gods due to the identification with the principle. This is the glory of the knower of the Prāṇa as *Bhagavatī Śruti* speaks.

*antargarbhaścarati devatāsvābhūto bhūtaḥ sa u jāyate punaḥ,
sa bhūto bhavyam bhaviṣyat pitā putram pra viveśā śacībhiḥ. (20)*

That only moves inside the womb, *antargarbhaścarati*, which is the form of gods (the Prāṇa), *devatāsvābhūto*, that element (principle) again takes birth (manifests), *bhūtaḥ sa u jāyate punaḥ*, that is the past, the present and the future (the Prāṇa has entered into all beings and all things of all the times), *sa bhūto bhavyam bhaviṣyat*, as the father enters into the son along with all his powers, *pitā putram pra viveśā śacībhiḥ*.

This describes the process of entire creation. That Prāṇa moves inside the womb, from the womb of the Mother Nature, Aditi, to the wombs of individual creatures; it is the Prāṇa that moves. The Primordial Energy, Śakti, holds the principle Śiva in her womb. This is the beginning of creation starting with the Hiraṇyagarbha. From that to the individual beings conceived in their mothers' womb, it is the one principle named the Prāṇa. So it is said that the Prāṇa is the form of the gods. Aditi who gave birth to the gods are none but the Prāṇa. The

Prāṇa takes birth again and again; the same principle in the process of creation is taking birth as individual beings. The Prāṇa is the past, the present and the future; the Prāṇa is time as it is cause of the time. With the static Prāṇa, *Mahākāla* or the Great Time, there was no time; it was beyond time. Once the spinning started in it then it is the birth of time, *Kāla*. Our earth is spinning, so we have a time in our earth as a day and a night. Our earth is revolving on its orbit, so we have a time called a year. The moon is encircling our earth; so we have a time called a lunar month. All celestial bodies are spinning and/ or revolving, giving rise to the times of their own. If we leave our solar system and do not enter into any other solar system, what time would there be for us; but still then there may be a time in the form of the speed of light. But before the first throb (*vide supra*, “The Hiraṇyagarbha-sūkta,” v. 3, p. 65), the Big Bang, what time was there? There was no time, no space, no light and no darkness; the light was created only after the activation of the Prāṇa. So time is a creation of the Prāṇa with its first throb and the same Prāṇa has entered into all the beings in all the ages as a father enters into the son with all his powers. It is the Father that has become the son, taking birth from the womb of His Nature.

*ekam pādām notkhidati salilāddhamṣa uccaran,
yadaṅga sa tamutkhidennaivādya na śva syānna rātrī nāhaḥ
syānna vyucchet kadā cana. (21)*

Haṁsa or a swan while elevating from the water, *salilāddhamṣa uccaran*, does not lift its one leg, *ekam pādām notkhidati*. Oh dear ones, if it would lift the other limb, *yadaṅga sa tamutkhidennaivādya*, then there would not have been today, tomorrow, day, night, light and darkness, *na śva syānna rātrī nāhaḥ syānna vyucchet kadā cana*.

The example of the bird swan, *haṁsa*, elevating from the water is cited here. While elevating it lifts one leg, not both the legs at a time. The Prāṇa *Haṁsa* does not lift both the legs. In context of the body the legs are *ham* and *saḥ*, the exhalation and the inhalation; one of the legs is always in contact with the body i.e., water as referred in the text. If both legs are withdrawn then it is the death. In context of the universe, it is one leg or one part, *pāda*, which has become the universe. It is the active or the kinetic part of the Prāṇa *Haṁsa*, this is the *saguna* part of the Brahman, the Nature that holding the qualities, viz., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. This part is with the world or the water. The other part, i.e., the *Nirguṇa* Brahman or Śiva is lifted from the water, *salila*. Once the Prāṇa *Haṁsa* would lift the other limb, the *saguna* or *śakti* part, then there would not have any today, tomorrow, day, night, light, and darkness (*vide supra*, p. 15). It would be the *mahāpralaya*, the great dissolution; it would be only the *bṛhat āpaḥ*, the Great Water, the primordial energy that was there before the creation.

*aṣṭācakram vartata ekanemi sahasrākṣaram pra puro ni paścā,
ardheṇa viśvaṁ bhuvanam jajāna yadasyārdham katamaḥ sa ketuḥ. (22)*

One axle with eight wheels moves, *aṣṭācakram vartata ekanemi*, to the front and back, *pra puro ni paścā*, with thousand letters (the uneroded ones), *sahasrākṣaram*. With half part this forms the worlds in the universe, *ardheṇa viśvaṁ bhuvanāṁ jajāna*, the other half that remains is whose symbol, *yadasyārdham katamaḥ sa ketuḥ?*

This is the description of the Prāṇa-Brahman transcendental to the three qualities of the Nature, viz., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. The Prāṇa moves with eight wheels. The eight wheels are the earth, the water, the fire, the air, the ether, the mind, the intellect, and the ego. This is eightfold nature of the Lord, *bhūmirāpo-nalo vāyuh kham mano buddhīveva ca, ahaṁkāra itiyam me bhinnā prakṛtirāṣṭadhā*, My nature is divided to eightfold, the earth, the water, the fire, the air, the ether, the mind, the intellect, and the ego (Ś Bg., 7.4). The whole creation is made up of these eight. The subtle elements of the earth etc. by their combinations called *pañcikaṛaṇa*, the mixing of fives, formed the five gross elements. These five gross elements are the materials of the material world. Here the mind is the cosmic mind or *Prajāpati* and the intellect is the cosmic intelligence, it is *mahāt* or the Hiraṇyagarbha. And the ego is the Unmanifest, *avyakta*, with its power of will, *icchā-śakti*, or we can say this is Śakti with quality of *tamas* being desirous of creation. And all these are strung in Me (the Transcendental Self) like pearls in a string, *mayi sarvamidam protam sūtre maṇigaṇā iva* (Ś Bg., 7.7); this is *aṣṭācakram ekanemi*, the eight wheels fixed on one axle.

Coming to the next step, the Prāṇa as the Active Brahman or Śakti, then the eight wheels are Īśvara the Hiraṇyagarbha, Prajāpati the cosmic mind, Virāṭa the cosmic physical body and the five subtle elements, viz., ether, air, fire, water, and earth. Coming to the next further step, i.e., the Prāṇa as Īśvara the Hiraṇyagarbha, the eight wheels are the threefold power of Īśvara the Hiraṇyagarbha; this is Śakti the second Aditi (daughter of Dakṣa) (*vide supra*, RV, 10.27.5, p. 44), then Prajāpati, Virāṭa and five subtle elements.

Now coming to the context of the body, the *Adhyātma Prāṇa*, the eight wheels are the five senses, the mind, the intellect and the ego. In the context of the body, can the eight wheels of Prāṇa be compared with the energy centers or *cakras*? The seven *cakras* are Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Maṇipūra, Anāhata, Viśuddha, Ājñā, and Sahasrāra (Fig. 2.5). There is unanimity on these seven. These seven are in brain and spinal cord or in the central nervous system (*vide infra*, The Energy Centers, *cakras*, p. 195). The eighth center according to some is the heart center or Hṛdaya *cakra*, not Anāhata, and that is the cardiac plexus of the peripheral nervous system. Others believe Hṛdaya *cakra* to be in between Ājñā and Sahasrāra in mid brain and some refer this as *Guru Parvat*, Mount of the Master. Some believe Hṛdaya *cakra* and Ājñā *cakra* as one. Some advocate about Nābhi *cakra*, the solar plexus or the gastro-intestinal plexus as the eighth one; this is not same as Maṇipūra. Some believe the eighth center as Ardha-sahasrāra, in perineum

or *kāṇḍa*. It is the bunch of nerve fibers leaving spinal cord, encircling the anus and then going towards the sexual organ, and in the place between anus and sexual organ in case of males and around the cervix in case of females. Some believe *lolak tālu* or uvula near soft palate as the eighth center. One can even say the eighth center is beyond the body. Or one can say the eight centers are the seven centers and rest of the body as one center. Some believe in nine centers. Centers in body can be twenty-four, thirty-six, fifty or fifty-one. Some expound thirteen major and twenty-one minor centers, some speak of one hundred forty-four centers, *carkas*. But these differences do not make any problem in understanding the principle. It is the Prāṇa, the Life Energy, controlling our body-mind mechanism through the energy centers and the number eight has taken as a symbol of infinity; since the Prāṇa is infinite any product of it is also infinite and limitations are only creations of the ignorance. Taking the energy centers, as wheels also do not conflict with the view that the five senses, the mind, the intellect and the ego as eight wheels. (For the wheels or energy centers in body and also to five elements, five senses, sense-organs, mind, intellect, etc., refer *infra*, pp. 195–217.)

Now let us come to the description of the eight types of the Prāṇa Brahman in the Sākalyabrāhmaṇa of the Yājñavalkyakāṇḍa, i.e., ninth Brāhmaṇa of the chapter three in the *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad*, in a dialogue between Sākalya and Yājñavalkya from text 10 to 17. This is the description of the Prāṇa Brahman in the total body context, *sarvasyātmanah parāyaṇam*, as per the cause and effect relations, *kāryakaraṇasaṃghātavān*. Here the Prāṇa Brahman relates to the appearance of life and forms, which is the result of the quality of *tamas* or the ignorance and it is only a reflection (*vide infra*, *Bṛ. U.* 3.9.14–15). But these are all one God; that is, *prāṇa iti. sa brahma tyadityācakṣyate* (*Bṛ. U.* 3.9.9), the Prāṇa is that Brahman and this has been said as That. Since the Prāṇa is the form of all gods, it has been said indirectly as That.

First type of the Prāṇa Brahman (*Bṛ. U.* 3.9.10): One, who knows the person with total the spiritual context whose foundation is the earth, world is the fire and light is the mind, is the knower. That is Person the Body, *śārīrah puruṣaḥ*. The foundation is the earth means this person is made up of earth; our body is made up of food, the earth element. The world or *loka* is the fire, *loka* means through which it sees, *lokayati*; it is vision, our vision is due to the fire element. The mind is the light or *jyoti* means through the mind he works, makes resolves and thinks of alternatives. That is the living person with a physical body. And the god of such a person is *amṛta*, immortality. Here the immortality is a relative immortality and it means the essence of food, which comes to this body from the body of the father through semen and from the body of the mother through the process of ovulation. Since this process is unending generation after generations this is called as immortal.

Second type of the Prāṇa Brahman (Br. U, 3.9.11): One, who knows the person with total spiritual context whose foundation is desires of sex, world is heart or the intellect and light is the mind, is the knower. Here the intellect or *buddhi* does not mean the discriminating intellect, *viveka*; it is *citta*, the mind stuff having impressions of actions, *karmas*. That is Person the Lust, *kāmamayaḥ puruṣaḥ*. He sees through the mind stuff, *citta*, and determines through the mind. And the

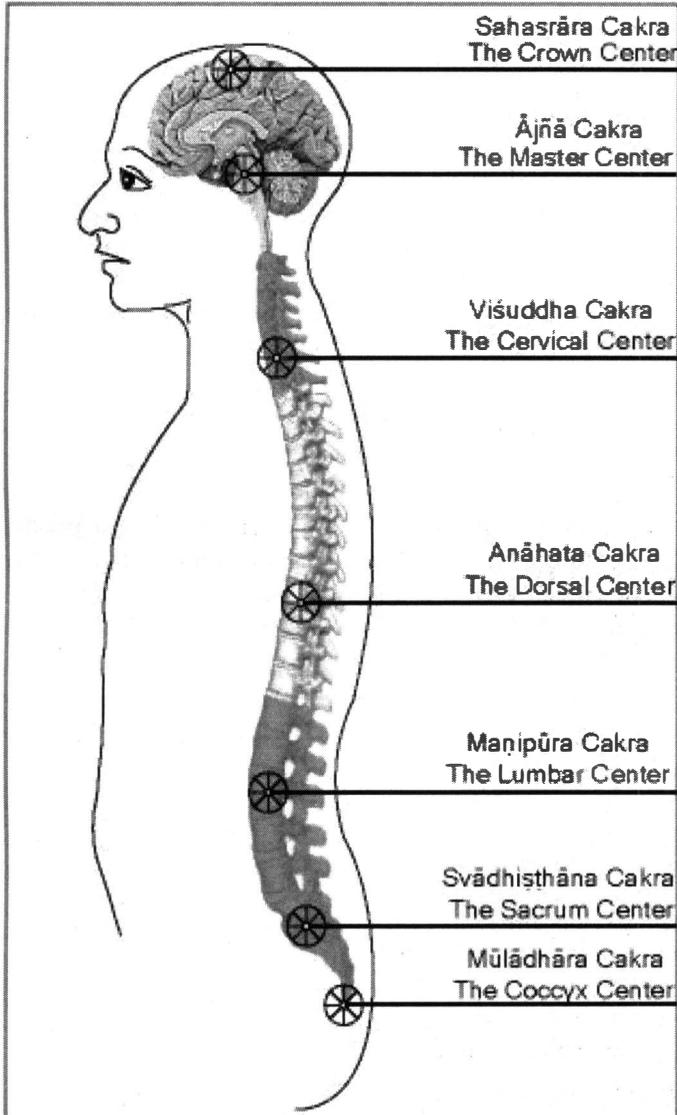


Fig. 2.5. The seven wheels, *cakra*-s, in the human body.

god of such a person is *striya*, women. Here woman represent the embodiment of lust; be it a male body or a female body, the body is always woman.

Third type of the Prāṇa Brahman (Br. U, 3.9.12): One, who knows the person with total spiritual context whose foundation is the form, *rūpa*, world is the eyes and light is the mind, is the knower. That is the Person in the Sun, *yaḥ evāsāvādītye puruṣaḥ*; this person is the mind determining the vision. The cause of all the manifested forms in our world is the Sun. It is the Sun that has manifested into all the beings. The Sun is the eye of all the beings. We see the forms through the eyes and determine them through the mind. The faculty of mind related to vision is described here. And the god of such a person is truth, *satya*. Here the truth is the eye of the world, the Sun.

Fourth type of the Prāṇa Brahman (Br. U, 3.9.13): One, who knows the person with total spiritual context whose foundation is the sky, world is the ears and light is the mind, is the knower. That is the Person that listens, *pratiśrutkaḥ puruṣaḥ*; this person is the mind determining the sound. He listens through the ear and determines them through mind. And the god of such a person is direction, *diśā*. Here the directions mean the ether element whose subtleness is the sound.

Fifth type of the Prāṇa Brahman (Br. U, 3.9.14): One, who knows the person with total spiritual context, whose foundation is the darkness, i.e., quality of *tamas*, world is the heart and light is the mind, is the knower. Here the heart refers to *buddhi* or *citta*. That is the Person in the form of shadow, *chāyāmayāḥ puruṣaḥ*; this person is the person in ignorance. This is the ego, a product of *tamas*, identifying itself with the body-mind interactions. This is shadow of the True Self. He sees this shadow self through the mind stuff, *citta*, and determines through the mind. And the god of such a person is death, *mṛtyu*. Such person attains the death again and again.

Sixth type of the Prāṇa Brahman (Br. U, 3.9.15): One, who knows the person with total spiritual context whose foundation is the form, world is the eyes and light is the mind, is the knower. That is the Person that who is inside the mirror, *evāyamādarśe puruṣaḥ*; this is the reflection, our form is just a reflection of Puruṣa the Supreme. This person sees through the eyes and determines through the mind. And the god of such a person is the *prāṇa*, the vital energy, *asu*.

Seventh type of the Prāṇa Brahman (Br. U, 3.9.16): One, who knows the person with total spiritual context whose foundation is the water, world is the heart and light is the mind, is the knower. That is the Person in water, *evāyamapsu puruṣaḥ*; this is the water-bodies like wells, ponds, lakes, rivers, etc. And the god of such a person is God the Rain, Varuṇa.

Eighth type of the Prāṇa Brahman (Br. U, 3.9.16): One, who knows the person with total spiritual context whose foundation is semen, world is the heart and light is

the mind, is the knower. That is the Person in the form of son, *putramayah puruṣaḥ*. And the god of such a person is the Lord of Procreation, *Prajāpati*.

These eight are eight wheels of the Prāṇa fixed to the axle, that one God, Prāṇa. Through these eight the life-cycle is going on.

The wheels are moving front and back; this indicates the spinning of the energy principle called the Prāṇa. The thousand letters, *sahasrākṣaram*, represent the sounds. The sounds are *akṣara*-s, fifty alphabets of the Sanskrit language are the basic sounds; *akṣarāṇāmākāro'smi* (Ś. Bg., 10.33), the Lord says, I am letter-*a*, *akārah*, of the letters, *akṣarāṇām*. Though there are only fifty basic sounds, they combine and multiply to create thousands. The sound vibrations are the first creations and the rest follow in succession. Thoughts arise in form of the subtle sounds in the mind, then the speech and the actions manifest. The whole manifested world is nothing but sounds: *vācārambhaṇam vikāro nāmadheyam* (Ch. U, 6.4.1), mutated forms or derivatives are only names to be spoken. So everything manifested is just a name, a sound but the principle is one. That one god is the Prāṇa; *katama eko deva iti. prāṇa iti. sa brahma* (Br. U, 3.9.9), which is the one God; it is the Prāṇa, that is the Brahman. There are thousands manifestations in the form of thousand sounds, *akṣara*-s. So it is the Prāṇa with one axle and eight wheels moves to and fro with thousand letters. This is the half part on which the universe is created and the question is whose symbol is the other half. The other half refers to the static Prāṇa, the Supreme Brahman. This is the Infinity, *ananta*, which is the vastness, the Lord Viṣṇu. Or else, we can say the other half as *ananta vāsuki*, the legendary snake. Or the infinite unmanifested energy holding the manifested Lord, Viṣṇu, the Vastness.

*yo asya viśvajanaṁ iśe viśvasya ceṣṭataḥ,
anyeṣu kṣipradhanvane tasmai prāṇa namastute. (23)*

We bow down to that Prāṇa, *tasmai prāṇa namastute*, which is (the cause and the sustainer of) many births in this universe, *yo asya viśvajanaṁ*, who is the lord of the moving universe, *iśe viśvasya ceṣṭataḥ*, and enters into others (bodies) in a fast speed, *anyeṣu kṣipradhanvane*.

Here in this verse the Prāṇa is referred as Īśvara. This is the cause and sustainer of many births with its eight parts maintaining the life cycle as described above. This is the lord with one axle and eight wheels moving to and fro with thousand letters and entering in a fast speed into the manifested bodies that are nothing but reflections. We bow down to that active Prāṇa, Īśvara the Hiranyagarbha.

*yo asya sarvajanaṁ iśe viśvasya ceṣṭataḥ,
atandro brahmaṇā dhīraḥ prāṇo mānu tiṣṭhatu. (24)*

Which is the form of all births here, *yo asya sarvajanaṁ*, who is lord of the evolving universe, *iśe viśvasya ceṣṭataḥ*, let that Prāṇa remain with us, *prāṇo mānu tiṣṭhatu*, that is without doubt the form of knowledge of the Brahman, *atandro brahmaṇā dhīraḥ*.

Here mention of the Prāṇa as the form of all births and the lord of the evolving universe is just a repetition of meanings from the previous verse, and then the prayer to the Prāṇa Īśvara to remain with us for our long life and the purpose of such a long life prayed is for knowledge. That is the reason the Prāṇa Īśvara is described as the form of Knowledge without doubt. Once we understand this principle that is *sūtrātmā*, the Thread Self or the string binding all or we can say the *sarvātmā*, the Self of All, then only we can eradicate our ignorance or the ego that identifies with the body as the self.

*urdhvaḥ supteṣu jāgāra nanu tiryāṅ ni padyate,
na suptamasya supteṣvanu śusrava kaścana.* (25)

When the beings sleep you remain awake for their protection, you never sleep, *urdhvaḥ supteṣu jāgāra nanu tiryāṅ ni padyate*, no one ever heard, *śusrava kaścana*, about sleep of that (the Prāṇa) on the sleep of those (beings), *na suptamasya supteṣvanu*.

The state of deep sleep is described here when the physical body, the five sense organs and the five organs of action, the mind and the intellect, all fall asleep and only the Prāṇa remains awake. All are merged in Prāṇa and take rest in the Prāṇa. The Prāṇa has never slept. After dissolution of the manifested worlds, it is the Prāṇa the static energy that remains awake.

*prāṇa mā mat paryāvṛto na madanyo bhaviṣyasi,
apām garbhamiva jīvase prāṇa badhnāmi tvā mayi.* (26)

Oh Prāṇa, please do not be adverse to us, *prāṇa mā mat paryāvṛto* and do not be of others than us or do not leave us, *na madanyo bhaviṣyasi*. As we hold the fire within our body, *apām garbhamiva jīvase*, similarly we also hold you the Prāṇa, *prāṇa badhnāmi tvā mayi*.

We pray here to the Prāṇa, not to leave us. The Prāṇa has never left us, that is always awake and holding us as it is said in the previous verse. When our subtle body departs the gross body it is the Prāṇa that takes away the subtle body. Then why we pray the Prāṇa not to leave us or not to be adverse to us? We are holding the fire in our body means we are holding the Prāṇa in our body, and then we say similarly we also hold you the Prāṇa. What is the meaning of such sayings? We are holding Prāṇa the fire or the vital energy no doubt and this Prāṇa is always awake in us even during the deep-sleep state. But that does not transcend into the Knowledge of Prāṇa because we are in *tamas*. So we are not able to eradicate the ignorance, i.e., the identification of the body as the self. We pray here to Prāṇa the Knowledge, the string holding all the bodies, the basic principle of the creation, the Self of All, and also to the other half of the Prāṇa that is beyond the manifested worlds for the Knowledge. We want to hold that Knowledge and pray for that.

To reach the chief Prāṇa we have to start with our *prāṇavāyu*, the inhalation and the exhalation. Our exhalation is *ham* and inhalation is *so*. So this is also called *hamsa* (*vide infra*, head, “The Form of Hamsa,” p. 279). The practice of this breath technique leads to a state when all the modifications of mind are merged with the vital energy, and this happens consciously. So this state is a conscious sleep. In a sleep, we are not aware of our state though the mind is merged in the vital energy. Now in a meditative state achieved by a breath technique we are aware of our thoughtless state and this translates into the knowledge.

Prāṇakarma makes Our Body a Temple and Life a Worship: *Proper Attitude.* Our life is a worship and our body is a temple, we should have this belief. Then only there shall be peace in our life. As we keep the deity room or the meditation room in our house clean, our temples clean similarly we have to keep this body temple that is a real one clean; then only the God will sit there. We have to leave all the forbidden actions and have to surrender ourselves before the God. And for that we have to make our internal subtle organ, the mind, very pure. When we talk about our body this implies our gross and subtle bodies because what ever we shall do we do through them only and the causal body does not come under the purview of our normal action, it counts only in the deep sleep and in the deep meditation (*vide infra*, “Three Bodies,” p. 179). By subtle body we mean our mind, intellect, ego and subconscious. The work of our gross or physical body is controlled by our subtle body, that is why it is very important to clean it otherwise how we shall make our God to sit there. In *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* (5.13) it is said, *navadvāre pure dehī*, the owner of the house resides in the house with nine doors. The house with nine doors is our gross body with nine openings, viz., two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, one mouth, organ of procreation and anus. The Marathi saints sang, *nau darvāje khūdikyā tyāta murti basvali*, the deity is sitting inside the temple of nine doors and windows. In each Indian languages we find such types of songs. We have to keep this body clean and that is subjected to a cleaned internal organ or the mind. Our internal organs, viz., the mind, the intellect, the ego and the subconscious form the interior-dias of the body temple for the Inner Deity. If that is unclean how can we worship our Inner God there?

The Divine and the Demonic Properties: The problem with us is that though we want the light but we prefer to remain in the darkness. We are living in hypocrisy. How self-surrender and selfishness can go together? Greed and charity, cruelty and kindness, adultery and being faithful to your partner, ego and broadness, illusion and reality, to these entire set how can we keep together at the same time? But we behave like that, we want nobleness but prefer bad qualities and this is the reason we fail in our spiritual life. If we want to ride over this situation we have to leave the demonic qualities within us. We have to learn what the divine properties are and what are the demonic properties (*vide supra*, “Two Types of Humans,” *Devas* and *Asuras*, p. 22).

The Path of Returning: If we analyze then we shall find that all these demonic and divine properties are qualities of the mind, so we have to make our mind pure. This is rules, *yama*, and regulations, *niyama*, described in the yogic scriptures. The rules are five viz., nonviolence, truthfulness, non-stealing, sexual restraint, and reducing wants to minimum (*vide infra*, p. 133) ; and the five regulations are cleanliness, contentment, austerities, study of scriptures, knowing the God (*vide infra*, p. 106). All the divine properties come under these five rules and five regulations. They also come under the six-assets described in Advaita Vedānta in general and control of the mind, *sama*, and control of the senses, *dama*, in particular. This is the foundation of a spiritual practice and without observing these we will simply end with a failure in our spiritual life. This is the path of returning, *nivṛtti mārga*, while the sense enjoyments and following the desires of our mind is the path of desires, *pravṛtti mārga*. (*vide supra*, pp. 27, 29, 39)

The Mind is the Cause of Bondage and Liberation: Since both control of the senses and control of the desires are dependent on the control of the mind, the main instrument of our spiritual practice is the mind. And according to the yogic scriptures:

*mana eva manuṣyāṅām kāraṇam bandhamokṣayoḥ,
bandhāya viśayāsaktam muktai nirviśayam smṛtam.*

(*Bb. U.*, 2; *ŚU*, 1; *Mai. U.*, 4.3ff.)

Mind, *mana*, is the cause, *kāraṇam*, of the bondage and the liberation, *bandhamokṣayoḥ*, for humans, *manuṣyāṅām*, the mind attached to sense objects is the bondage, *bandhāya viśayāsaktam*, and the detached mind is the liberation, *muktai nirviśayam smṛtam*.

All the seers and the teachers of yoga are saying this. To this Ṛṣi Patañjali says that when the actions of mind are halted is called as yoga, this is *samādhi* and in this state the practitioner knows his own Self, knows God the Cosmic Self. Here the qualities of the Nature are merged in the God, the Puruṣa, and he is established in the seat of Only One, *Kaivalyapada*.

Breath Techniques clean the Mind: The techniques that we do for this is known as Kriyā-yoga, that is Kaivalya-yoga, that is Rāja-yoga. The breath technique, *prāṇakarma*, is its main basis. This has been referred in Upaniṣads as *prāṇopāsana*, worshipping the vital force.

If we do the breath technique, if we worship our *prāṇa* then our mind will be cleaned. We shall be able to obey the rules and the regulations; we shall be able to control the sense-organs and the mind. We will receive the divine properties. Then on the process of *pratyāhāra*, withdrawal, *dhāraṇā*, concentration, *dhyaṇa*, meditation and *samādhi*, we will attain the Only One, *kaivalyam*. Our entire life will be worshipping and our body will become a temple of God. This breath technique is based on the scriptures and one has to learn it from a master. Then

by practicing one has to become an expert on it. This knowledge of the *prāṇa* is known as *Kriyā-yoga*. To this Lord Vāsudeva said in *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* as,

*apāne juhvati prāṇam prāṇe'pānam tathāpare;
prāṇāpānagatī ruddhvā prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ.* (Ś Bg., 4.29)

One has to oblate, *juhvati*, the act of exhalation, *prāṇam*, into that of inhalation, *apāne*, and the act of inhalation into that of exhalation, *prāṇe'pānam tathāpare*. By that when the movements, *gatī*, of the exhalation and the inhalation, *prāṇāpāna*, are stopped, *ruddhvā*, one becomes an expert in breath practice, *prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ*.

This technique is described by the Lord in the chapters four, five and again in details in the chapter six of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. This is the yoga of meditation. In the words *Bhagavatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya* this is the internal practice for the Knowledge.

Burning Desires and Attaining Liberation through *Prāṇakarma*: *Wise Does Not Pray for the Mortal Objects*: Desires are bondage and if you have no desire then it is the liberation, only this much is to be understood. These desires are the impurities of the mind, *mano mala*. When these impurities become thin and new impurities are not created in the mind than the person moves towards the liberation, and that is *nirvāṇa*. This is the teaching of Lord Buddha. *Bhagavatī Śruti*, the Vedas, also teach this to us. The Lord of Death, *Yama*, while teaching to *Naciketā* says,

*parācaḥ kāmānanuyanti bālāḥ
te mṛtyoryanti vitatasya pāśam;
atha dhīrā amṛtatvaṁ viditvā
dhruvamadhruveṣviha na prārthayante.* (Ka. U, 2.1.2)

Ignorant man follows his desires, *kāmānanuyanti bālāḥ*, he is extrovert, *parācaḥ*, and he is caught in the vast trap of death, *te mṛtyoryanti vitatasya pāśam*. So the intelligent ones, *atha dhīrā*, knowing the immortality, *amṛtatvaṁ viditvā*, the eternal, *dhruvam*, among the mortal objects does not pray for anything here, *adhruveṣviha na prārthayante*.

The natural tendency of our mind is to be extrovert, for that reason we are always trapped in thirsts, desires. To such men like us *Bhagavatī Śruti* is addressing as *bālāḥ*, child, or the ignorant ones whose discriminating intellect has not been developed. This is the reason we wish to enjoy the objects like sounds, touches, etc., and again fall to the trap of death. One who desires the mortal things becomes mortal. In the words of Ṛṣi Patañjali, “*ṛttisārūpyamitaratra*” (Ygs., 1.4), ones form appears as according to ones mental tendency. When the seer is not established in the Self, at that time his form appears according to his tendency. Since all our mental attitudes are running after the impermanent objects even if it is the post of the King of gods, *Indrapada* (may be this post is in this world),

our existence that finds its own form in those impermanent objects attains to death again and again. The net of this death is very large since the objects are many. This is the reason we are not attaining the peace of mind, equanimity. But one who is intelligent, has discriminating ability, whose knowledge is holding the Truth by experience; he only knows the immortality, knows his Own Form, he separates the eternal from the non-eternals. He knows that the ignorance, the desires and the actions arising out of the ignorance are the form of world, are the form of death. For that reason he does not fall on the trap of desires. Lord Vāsudeva Śrīkr̥ṣṇa has also said this,

*labhante brahmanirvāṇamṛṣayaḥ kṣīṇakalmaṣāḥ;
chinnadvaidhā yatātmānaḥ sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ. (Ś Bg., 5.25)*

The seers, *ṛṣayaḥ*, whose sins have been thinned out, *kṣīṇakalmaṣāḥ*, whose doubts has been eradicated, *chinnadvaidhā*, whose senses and mind are under control by the Knowledge of the Self, *yatātmānaḥ*, who are engaged in the benefit of others, *sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ*, they achieve, *labhante*, liberation in the form of the Brahman, *brahmanirvāṇam*.

*kāmakrodhaviyuktānām yatīnām yatacetasām;
abhito brahmanirvāṇam vartate viditātmanām. (Ibid., 5.26)*

The wise men, *yatīnām*, whose minds, *yatacetasām*, are free from lust and anger, *kāmakrodhaviyuktānām*, those who know the Self, *viditātmanām*, they are absorbed, *vartate*, by the liberation in the form of the Brahman, *brahmanirvāṇam*.

For liberation the sins and the doubts must have to be thinned out, one should be free from lust and anger. These require burning the desires, control of the organs and control of the mind. This would lead to liberation in a process of purification of the mind, attainment of knowledge and renunciation of actions or fruits of actions.

Only this much is the knowledge, to know the Self that has no desires, no volitions of the mind, not to engage the mind on the sense objects. But how this will happen? We read this, listen this, knew this in our mind and intellect but are not established in this. Some spiritual practitioners say, “we read and analyze the content of the scriptures, we receive the knowledge but this does not last long.” What is the meaning of such sayings? Meaning is this knowledge is on the surface of our mind; this has not gone deep within and that is the reason this knowledge does not last long, because we are not practicing this in a proper way. Then what is the proper way?

Worshipping the Prāṇa is the Way: Lord Vāsudeva has said,

*sparsāṅkṛtvā bahīrbāhyāṁścaḥśuścaivāntare bhṛuvoh;
prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā nāsābhyan taracāriṇau. (Ibid., 5.27)*

One has to shut all the sense objects like sound etc., *sparsāṅkṛtvā bahīrbāhyām*, the gaze is to be fixed in the place between the eyebrows, *caḥśuścaivāntare bhṛuvoh*,

and the exhalation and the inhalation are to be balanced, *prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā*, that are moving within the nose, *nāsābhyantaracāriṇau*.

So all the sense-objects or all the desires for enjoyments are to be shut down, such thoughts are not to be contemplated in the mind. How? By fixing the gaze between the eyebrows means one has to practice the concentration in *Ājñā cakra*, in the place between the pituitary and the pineal, the life-force is to be fixed in that place. That again, how? By balancing the exhalation, *prāṇa* and the inhalation, *apāna*, within the nostrils means inside the body. This technique one has to learn and practice. This is the way to control the sense-organs and the mind, this is the way to sharpen the intellect, and this is the way to be free from the desires, the anger and the fear. This is known as *prāṇavidyā*, the knowledge of the *prāṇa*; this is known as *prāṇopāsanā*, worshipping the *prāṇa*. This is *Karma-saṁnyāsa-yoga*, yoga of renouncing the actions and their results. This is *Kriyā-yoga*, by doing this action, *kriyā*, one shall be renounced from the actions. By doing this breath technique the practitioner will know his *prāṇa*, know the *Īśvara* who is the First Born, the *Hiraṇyagarbha* that is the sum total of all the powers of knowledge and all the powers of action.

*yaḥ pūrvam tapaso jātamadbhyaḥ pūrvamajāyata;
guhām praviśya tiṣṭhanta yo bhūtebhirvyapaśyata. etadvai tat.*

(*Ka. U.*, 2.1.6)

One, *yaḥ*, who knows, *yaḥ vyapaśyata* the First Born, *pūrvam jātam* (i.e., *Hiraṇyagarbha*), that was born, *ajāyata*, from austerities, *tapasaḥ*, (from the Brahman whose austerities are knowledge) and before, *pūrvam*, water, *adbhyaḥ*, (means before the five elements, viz., the ether, the air, the fire, the water and the earth) and is existing, *tiṣṭhanta*, in the cave, *guhām*, of the heart in the midst of the body and the sense-organs, *bhūtebhiḥ*, after having entered there, *praviśya*, he knows the Brahman, the Self. It is like that, *etadvai tat* (*vide supra*, “*Prāṇa* is *Īśvara* the *Hiraṇyagarbha*,” p. 60).

Again it is said, One who knows the *Aditi*, who is the form of gods, who takes birth as the *Hiraṇyagarbha*, who is born in association with the elements and who is seating in the cavity of heart after entering there he knows the Brahman, the Self. It is like that (*Ka. U.*, 2.1.7) (*vide supra*, “*Prāṇa* is the Mother Nature, *Aditi*,” p. 43). *Aditi* means due to whom there is *adana*, means we know, we enjoy the objects like sounds, visions, etc. This is the Brahman that has manifested itself as *Aditi*, and again as the *Hiraṇyagarbha* and along with the five elements, viz., the ether, the air, the fire, the water, and the earth expressed itself as the world. Then that has entered into the cave of the heart; that is the Consciousness. *Aditi* means only one uninterrupted consciousness; even if being manifested as the world, taking thousands names and forms this is one. This is the *Prāṇa* and this is the Self. *Aditi* is the form of gods, the mother of all the gods. Lord *Indra* and all other divine powers are born from Her, the earth and all other elements

is also Aditi. Aditi is also the sense-organs, the mind and the vital power in the context of body.

If everything is one then for what there is attachment, for what there is hatred? If everything is the Self, the *prāṇa*, then whom to fear, to be angry upon whom, delusion for what, what are to be gained and what are to be lost?

yasminsarvāṇi bhūtānyātmaivābhūdvijānataḥ;
tatra ko mohah kaḥśoka ekatvamanuṣyataḥ. (Īś.U, 7)

When the spiritual practitioner attaining knowledge or one who knows, *yasmin vijānataḥ*, sees all the elements, all the beings, *sarvāṇi bhūtāni*, as his own Self, *ātmaivābhūt*, then for such a person believing in one principle, *ekatva manuṣyataḥ*, where is the delusion and where is the sorrow, *tatra ko mohah kaḥ śoka*. Because the delusion and the sorrow are the results of the ignorance and not for the one who has the knowledge of unity, the knowledge of the Self.

To achieve that state one needs to be established in the Self, in own form, i.e., *brāhmīsthiti*, establishment in the Brahman, or establishment in the *mahāprāṇa*, the Great Prāṇa. This happens when the tendencies of the mind are inhibited, when the mind no more creates attachments and aversions. To enter into the Great Prāṇa, the Hiraṇyagarbha one should first know the individual *prāṇa* within his body and that we can know through the help of our breath, *prāṇavāyu*. According to Ṛṣi Patañjali, “*pracchardana vidhāraṇābhyām vā prāṇasya*” (Ygs., 1.34). This means we have to practice the technique of the exhalation and the inhalation. *Pracchardana* means the exhalation in an extended manner, and here we have to exhale long and deep with a rhythm. Similarly *vidhāraṇa* is the inhalation in a special manner. Some say *vidhāraṇa* is to hold the air outside the body after the exhalation but it is not like that. The way we exhaled, in the same way we have to inhale. This is the way of balancing the exhalation and the inhalation. We have to pour the exhalation in the inhalation and the inhalation in the exhalation. This is the first lesson on breath technique. Even if by *vidhāraṇa* one understands it as holding of breath then it is not to hold the breath by force. In that case we have to understand that the process of exhalation, *pracchardana*, involves the process of inhalation. By practicing this process of long and deep exhalations and inhalations with rhythm a state will arrive when automatically the breath of the practitioner shall stop, that is called *kevala kumbhaka*, holding of the breath automatically, that can be said as *vidhāraṇa*. That is Kriyā-yoga (*vide infra*, heads, “The Kriyā Technique,” p. 303; “*Prāṇāyāma*,” p. 306). One has to learn the technique from a master. Since the motion of our mind is under the motion of our breath, the motion of the mind will be inhibited when the motion of the breath is inhibited. Then mind, *citta*, attains tranquility, the turbulences of the mind are finished.

The practitioner who has attained the state of stillness of mind by practicing it again and again makes the desires thin. As a result he attains *sabīja samādhi*, in

this *samādhi* desires remain in seed form, but due to this *samādhi* he holds the knowledge by experience. Then practicing again and again he attains *nirbīja samādhi*, this is the state of all everything of the mind being halted. Now even the impressions of the previous knowledge are finished. First through knowledge or the discriminating intellect gained due to regular practice of the *sabīja samādhi* impressions of desires of mundane world are burnt, then again in the final state of *samādhi* even the impressions of that knowledge is halted and one is established in *kaivalya*, the only One. This is the path of yoga. Those practitioners who believe in the way of the practice of knowledge can practice mental analysis, *manana* and contemplation, *nididhyāsana* only after having a stable mind, *ekāgra citta*, or after reaching the state of *sabīja samādhi*. This is what Bhagavatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya has taught us. We should acquire the last asset of the six assets, *samādhāna*, a tranquil state of mind free from desires. Then only the mental analysis and the contemplation can give us the desired results. By the mental analysis and the contemplation one can eradicate the feeling of world and be established in Brahman the Self but before that the process of cleaning the mind is same. That is *prāṇakarma*, the breath technique. By practice of the breath technique the desires will be burnt and this is the process for liberation. We have to remember that, *ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyo* (Br. U, 4.5.6), only the *Ātman* (the Self) is to be seen, listened, analyzed and contemplated; here it is said that first the Self is to be seen. Then come the listening, the mental analysis and the contemplation. If we leave the first step, i.e., to see the Self and then proceed to rest then it is like building a palace without a foundation; and the Self can be seen only in *samādhi* achieved through *prāṇakarma*. So yoga becomes the basic foundation for the knowledge, *jñāna*.

3

Understanding the Principles and the Practices of Kriyā-yoga

CORE-PRACTICES OF THE OBSERVANCES, *NIYAMA-S*, ARE KRIYĀ-YOGA

Normal understanding on the Kriyā-yoga is that this is a meditation technique. The knowledge and the meditation are described as, *abhedadarśanam jñānam dhyānam nirviṣayam manaḥ* (MU, 2.2), to see “no difference” is the knowledge and a mind free from the thoughts of objects is the meditation. The aim of practicing the Kriyā-yoga is to make our minds free from objects and that would further lead to see “no difference.” All the different desires and thought waves of the mind must finish. The root cause of these desires is the ego, i.e., “I and mine.” Once this ego is finished then for the practitioner there is no difference between the individual self, the world and the Cosmic Self. That is the state of knowledge and this Knowledge emerges from the meditation. We reach to that state of meditation step by step. For that we take the support of our breath and there are certain breath practices which we have to follow. These practices are named as the Kriyā-yoga. Ṛṣi Patañjali has described austerity, self-study and surrender to or knowing God as the Kriyā-yoga in the first sūtra of the practice part of his treatise, “*tapasvādhyāyēśvarapraṇidhānāni kriyāyogaḥ*” (Ygs., 2.1). This has been mentioned *supra*, p. 5 (under the head “Theme”). These three have been further elaborated into the eight limbs of yoga. Again he says, “*śaucasantoṣatapaḥsvādhyāyēśvarapraṇidhānāni niyamāḥ*” (ibid., 2.32); cleanliness, contentment, austerity, self-study and knowing God are *niyama-s* or the observances. While the *yama-s*, viz., non-violence, truth, etc. are restraints to be practiced, the *niyama-s* can be said as observances where the *yama-s* exhaust themselves in their fulfillment. Practices of the *niyama-s* help us in practice of the *yama-s*. We can say the *yama-s* as rules and the *niyama-s* as regulations. While the three observances, *niyama-s*, beginning with the austerities etc. forms the core of the Kriyā-yoga, two more, viz., cleanliness and contentment have been added to the observances before those three; this shows that these two are preparatory in nature and form the basement. These all along with the restraints, *yama-s*, can be categorized as self-discipline leading to the Knowledge.

Here it can be mentioned that Ṛṣi Patañjali has described eight limbs of yoga, viz., restraints, *yama*, observances, *niyama*, postures, *āsana*, breathing practices, *prānāyāma*, withdrawal, *pratyāhāra*, concentration, *dhāraṇā*, meditation, *dhyaṇa*, and transcendental state, *samādhi* (*Ygs.*, 2.29) where as some other texts describe only six limbs. They do not include the first two, viz., the restraints, *yama* and the observances, *niyama*. But we see that these first two form the foundation and the second one, observances, holds the core (austerity, self-study and knowing God) of the practice part of yoga, which is known as the Kriyā-yoga. The rest six (from postures to the transcendental state) are only elaborations and result of the process named as the Kriyā-yoga. It can also be said that the restraints, the observances, the postures and the breathing practices form the methodologies and withdrawal of the senses, concentration of the mind, meditation and the transcendental state are results of the Kriyā-yoga. In those texts, where there is non-inclusion of restraints and observances, this does not mean their exclusion rather these two limbs are taken granted as precondition or as the foundation so that they are not mentioned along with the other six manifested limbs. Unfortunately some modern day so-called yoga teachers deliberately neglect or drop the first two or even mention them as unimportant to please their so-called modern disciples. Such persons do not want to leave sense enjoyments and even like to use yoga techniques for better sensual gratification. We have nothing to say against them but for respect of the tradition and knowledge, better sense should prevail in them, and they should not use the term *yoga*. The purpose of performing these eight limbs has been said as, *yogāṅgānuṣṭhānādsuddhikṣaye jñānadīptirāvivekakhyaṭeḥ* (ibid., 2.28), when impurities are destroyed by practice of the limbs of yoga so that Light of Knowledge descends up to the discriminating intellect culminating in enlightenment. Discriminating intellect is called *viveka buddhi*. When this discriminating intellect comes to its culminating point that results in enlightenment and is called *viveka khyāti*. That leads to “Knowledge that holds the Truth,” *ṛtambharā prajñā*. The practice of limbs of yoga leads to destruction of impurities in mind that results in *viveka khyāti*, which is the cause of manifestation of the Knowledge. So the main work is to eradicate the impurities of mind, rests are the results. Lord Vāsudeva Śrīkrṣṇa has also said this; *labhante brahmanirvāṇamṛṣayaḥ kṣīṇakalmaṣāḥ* (*Ś Bg.*, 5.25), the seers whose sins have been thinned out, they achieve liberation in the form of the Brahman. The sins or impurities are wrong knowledge, actions both physical and mental done under the influences of wrong knowledge and the impressions of these actions in our mind-stuff, *citta*. Physical actions are preceded by the mental actions known as *vṛtti*-s. So control of *vṛtti*-s is the practice that would lead to *savīja samādhi*, *samādhi* with seed, and then further practice to *ṛtambharā prajñā*, knowledge that holds the Truth. The core-part for such a spiritual practice is austerity, *tapah*, self-study, *svādhyāya* and knowing the God, *īśvara-praṇidhāna*, which includes all the

eight limbs of yoga and named as the Kriyā-yoga. Another two practices, cleanliness, *śauca*, and contentment, *santoṣa* are added to these to form the observances. Some commentators put Kriyā-yoga as the preparatory yoga where as Ṛṣi Patañjali has mentioned only the term “Kriyā-yoga” in his entire treatise and the practice part begin with description of the Kriyā-yoga. However in later days, other seers to glorify the tradition used terms like Rāja-yoga, Kuṇḍalinī-yoga, etc. This Kriyā-yoga is the practice portion; super-normal powers and the Knowledge are results and one need not and cannot practice them. If we consider only the outer practices of *tapah*, *svādhyāya* and *īśvarapraṇidhāna* and not the inner practices of these three, then we can say these as the preparatory yoga. We will discuss and see that the core practices of *tapah* alone include restraints, observances, postures, breath practices, withdrawal of senses, concentration, and meditation. However, cleanliness, *śauca*, and contentment, *santoṣa* are preparatory in nature so they are not included in defining the Kriyā-yoga, and are added only as the observances.

Cleanliness, Śauca: *Śauca* means “cleanliness leading to purity.” This can be divided into external cleanliness, *vāhya śauca*, and internal cleanliness, *ābhyantara śauca*. Under the external cleanliness comes keeping the surroundings clean so that physical body does not suffer from diseases and an aesthetic sense is developed, and also the body purification processes leading to a healthy body suitable for long spiritual practice. The internal cleanliness is the cleanliness of our internal organ, i.e., the mind. Hence it is said, *snānam manomalatyāgaḥ śaucamindriyanigrahaḥ* (MU, 2.2), cleaning the mind from its impurities, *manomalatyāgaḥ*, is bath, *snānam*, control of organs, *indriyanigrahaḥ*, is cleanliness, *śaucam*.

EXTERNAL CLEANLINESS

- a. *Food and Drinks:* It is important to mention that we should possess healthy body and healthy sense-organs not for enjoying sensuality but for our spiritual practice. Practice of the restraints like nonviolence, sexual restraints, etc. help in cleanliness and practice of cleanliness helps in observing the restraints. Effect of animal flesh as food can generate sensuality and sedative feelings. This also brings unnecessary animal metabolites to our body system those become a burden on our body to clean them. Again these bring the impressions of sex, violence, fear, etc., of the animals killed for food to our vital sheath and interfere with the evolution of our consciousness. So restraint in food habit is related to growth in yoga. Three types of food, viz., *sāttvika*, *rājasika*, and *tāmasika* are described in *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. The spiritual practitioners should take *sāttvika* foods. This is described as,

*āyuh satvabalārogyasukhaprītivivardhanāḥ,
rasyāḥ snigdhaḥ sthīrā hṛdyā āhārāḥ sātvikapriyāḥ.* (Ś Bg., 17.8)

Foods, *āhārāḥ*, which increase, *vivardhanāḥ*, longevity, *āyuh*, steadiness of mind, *sattva*, strength, *bala*, health, *ārogya*, happiness, *sukha*, and delight, *prīti*, and that are juicy, *rasyāḥ*, bland, *snigdhaḥ*, substantial, *sthirā*, agreeable, *hr̥dyā* are dear to persons with noble or *sattva* qualities, *sāttvikapriyāḥ*.

Whereas *rājasika* foods are described as bitter, acidic, salty, very hot, pungent, dry and burning types, and which cause pain, sorrow and sickness (Ś Bg., 17.9) and *tāmasika* foods are described as improperly cooked, the essence is lost, putrid and stale and which is left out (by someone after eating) and impure (ibid., 17.10). Persons eat the type of food according to their nature. Often this question is asked in spiritual field is that what should be eaten and what should not. Here it should be remembered that food behavior is not the core of spiritualism. In India it had gone to such extreme extent in mediaeval ages that if a person from one particular caste touched then the food was not taken by another caste considered to be higher. This has nothing to do with spiritualism. Food should be taken according to climate, age and work habit. But for yogis or spiritual practitioners it is the *sāttvika* food. Whether onion and garlic should be taken or not, is a very common question asked. Onion and garlic have no doubt medicinal properties but the question is not asked for medicinal purpose, if required as a medicine then one should take these. Since these are sensual or arousing in nature these are denied to young ascetics, and denied to all ascetics since they must learn to control the taste, and they should not be after taste satisfaction.

Alcohol and drugs etc. are simply titillating to our senses and also have drowsy, depressive, hallucinating or exulting actions on our nervous system retarding our evolution. Persons smoking or using certain drugs can sit for a long period and feel that they are meditating with various hallucinating effects, but that is not meditation. Intoxications never bring steadiness and their mind is out of control. Āyurveda and modern medical sciences also advocate against drug addiction and alcoholism. So they are strictly to be avoided.

- b. *Body Cleansing Techniques*: These are elaborately dealt in a branch of Haṭha-yoga known as *śuddhikaraṇa kriyā-s*, cleansing activities. We find some yoga teachers teach these as Kriyā-yoga though these are not taught under the Kriyā-yoga meditation. Ofcourse these are *kriyā-s* for cleaning the physical body, help in keeping the body healthy, and thereby help in spiritual practice, so everyone should learn the required portions according to needs of their bodies. Otherwise with obsession to these one will stay only at the physical health level and would be doing these techniques throughout his life. These *śuddhikaraṇa kriyā-s* are total six in nature, viz.,

Dhauti, Vasti, Neti, Nauḷi, Trāṭaka, and Kapālabhātī. One should learn them from one expert in the field and details about these are available in all the standard books of Haṭha-yoga. One can go through books, viz., *Goraṅṅa Samhitā, Gheraṅṅa Samhitā, and Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā* for details of these yogic techniques. Since the details about these would become a booklet, the author refrains here from going into details, simply it is mentioned here in general to give an idea.

Dhauti is the cleansing of intestinal tract up to the stomach and there are three main types, viz., *Jala Dhauti, Vastra Dhauti, and Daṅḍa Dhauti.* *Jala Dhauti* is cleaning stomach by luke-warm saline water; here saline water is drunk and then vomitted to clean the stomach, and this also cleans cough etc. This technique is also known as *Vāri Dhauti, Vaman Dhauti, and Kuñjara Kriyā,* and is of common practice. In *Vastra Dhauti* about six centimeters wide and seven meters long soft cloth without stitches is used for cleansing upper gastrointestinal tract. In *Daṅḍa Dhauti* a rubber tube of one-centimeter diameter and one meter long is used to expel out the saline water drunk from the stomach. However, Ṛṣi Gheraṅṅa spoke about four types of *Dhauti,* viz., *Antardhauti, Dantadhauti, Hṛddhauti, and Mūlasodhana* (*Gh. S, 1.13*). Again, *Antardhauti* is of four types (*ibid., 1.14*), viz., *Vātasāra,* this is cleansing through air, also known as *Kāki Prāṅyāma* (*ibid., 1.15–16*); *Vārisāra;* here saline water taken through mouth and passed out through anus (*ibid., 1.17–18*), this is also known as *Śāṅkha Prakṣāḷana Kriyā; Vahnisāra,* also called as *Agnisāra* (*ibid., 1.19–20*), this is movement of the abdominal wall in *Uḍḍiyāna Bandha;* and *Bahiṣkṛta,* this is galloping and holding the air inside the stomach for a period and then expelling through anus (*ibid., 1.21*). These should be tried with the help of a competent guide. *Danta Dhauti* is also of four types, viz., cleansing the base of teeth, *Dantamūla Dhauti,* cleansing the base of the tongue, *Jihvāmūla Dhauti,* cleansing the ear hole, *Karṇarandhra Dhauti,* cleansing the palate, *Kapālarandhra Dhauti* (*ibid., 1.26–35*). All traditional Indian mothers used to do these for their children. *Hṛddhauti,* cleansing heart (actually stomach) is of three types, viz., *Daṅḍa Dhauti, Vaman Dhauti, and Vās Dhauti.* In *Daṅḍa Dhauti* a soft stick of turmeric plant or banana plant etc. is used for cleaning to remove cough etc., nowadays these techniques are followed rarely, and one should rather practice *Kuñjara Kriyā* and *neti* to remove cough etc. *Vaman Dhauti* is cleaning mouth thoroughly after a meal; every Indian does this from childhood. *Vās Dhauti* is mentioned above as *Vastra Dhauti* (*ibid., 1.36–42*). In *Mūlasodhana,* a soft root or finger cleans rectum and ghee or mustard oil is applied then, this helps to remove constipation (*ibid., 1.43–45*).

Vasti is cleansing the rectum and the large intestine, i.e., lower gastrointestinal tract, sending water through a pipe; nowadays, clinical enema has taken its place. Practice of *Aśvinī mudrā* is also known as *Vasti* (*Gh. S.*, 9.49). However, the *Śāṅkha Prakṣāḷana Kriyā* is best for cleaning the entire gastrointestinal tract. This *kriyā* comes under *Dhauti* also. Here luke-warm saline water is taken and some postures and exercises are done so that complete bowel-wash is done and then the entire gastrointestinal tract is washed with water. The exercises and postures normally followed are walking on toes, stretching and twisting in *Tādāsana*, *Bhujāṅgāsana*, *Aśvasāṅcālānāsana Kriyā*, *Ardhamatsyendrāsana*, *Pavanamuktāsana Kriyā*, *Udara Karṣaṅāsana*, and *Cakrāsana*. One can also select another set of exercises, which cause the inner movements of abdomen. Everybody should learn this from an expert and practice this *kriyā* once in three months or at least once in six months. This removes laziness and corrects chronic disorders of large intestine. Moreover this *kriyā* is very much useful as a pre-meditation technique since this helps *prāṇa* to ascend from the *Mūlādhāra* to the *Ājñā* during *prāṇakarma*. Though this technique is not taught under the *Kriyā-yoga*-meditation but this is very much helpful for the practitioners of *Kriyā-yoga*. This is from the personal experience of the author that *prāṇa* ascends smoothly during *prāṇakarma* in few weeks when first-*kriyā*-proper technique is practiced after the *Śāṅkha Prakṣāḷana Kriyā*.

Neti is cleansing the nasal passage. This is mainly of three types, viz., *Jala Neti*, *Sūtra Neti*, and *Kapāla Neti*. The *Jala Neti* is a popular form and a *Neti Pot* is used to clean the nasal passage by saline water. Here the water passes through the nostril in contact with the *neti* pot, and comes out through the opposite nostril. This is very common and often practiced. In *Sūtra Neti* a cotton-thread or a soft rubber catheter is used to clean nasal passage. *Kapāla Neti* is like *Jala Neti* only with the difference that water comes out of mouth instead of opposite nostril. These techniques help in removing congestion, headache, sinusitis, bronchitis, etc. and help in breathing practices, *prāṇakarma*. One who is practicing *prāṇakarma* does not suffer from nasal congestion etc. normally other than periodical viral infections, and even those infections to such a person are rare. But if one is suffering from nasal congestion, sinusitis or bronchitis etc. then he should practice *Jala Neti* or *Kapāla Neti* for a period to be cured and then resort to deep breathing exercises.

Nauḷī Kriyā is seen in high esteem by the *Hāṭha-yogins*, and here the abdominal muscle, *rectus abdominis*, which forms the front linear wall of the abdominal cavity is contracted, isolated and rolled. First *Uḍḍiyāna Bandha* and *Agnisāra Kriyā* are practiced and then Middle *Nauli*, Right

and Left Nauli, and then Nauli Movements are practiced. These have benefactor and curing effects related to abdomen, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, pancreas, liver and other abdominal organs. This technique is also taught in some disciplines as Nābhi Kriyā.

Trāṭaka is cleansing of eyes and is also a concentration technique. Normally gazing to a candle flame without blinking of eyes is practiced starting from ten seconds and gradually duration is increased followed by relaxation or defocusing and palming the eyes. This is normally done in evening, in night or in a dark room. This activates tear glands and purifies visual system. Since will power is used to gaze for a longer period, this strengthens will power and promotes concentration. *Trāṭaka* has many varieties like gazing to a point in a wall, to a symbol, on the tip of the nose, the moon, stars or the sun in early morning. All these help in increasing concentration and can be practiced, but in the Kriyā-yoga one learns to do inner-trāṭaka, *antar-trāṭaka*, when the kriyā-practitioner concentrates in the energy centers, *cakra*-s, within the body. Once *antar-trāṭaka* is learned then there is no meaning in continuing with outer-trāṭakas, *bahir-trāṭaka*. The present author is practicing inner-trāṭaka from 1994 and found that this concentration on *cakra*-s also has cleansing effects on eyes as tears roll down during meditation in early days of concentration. Tears can also come in meditation due to emergence of sorrowful past impressions and/or emergence of emotional devotion, *bhāva*, during meditation. An old practitioner is able to differentiate these from the former. Here it may be mentioned that a sudden desire appeared in the mind of the present author to practice outer-trāṭaka on candle flame before the festival of Dīpāvalī in 2002 in his master's ashram at Rishikesh and he practiced this for more than fifteen days continuously. Though he knew about the procedure to be followed but due to excessive interest and strong will he gazed to the flame for a long period. For three/four days before the day of Dīpāvalī this was for a stretch of ten to fifteen minutes continuously. Then from the day of Dīpāvalī this was increased for a period of thirty minutes at a stretch and then further increased to about one hour, then with an interval of ten minutes in-between this was practiced twice for about twenty minutes in each time. This sudden practice for a long duration resulted in blackening the area around the eyes and this took about three to four months to have complete normal skin around eyes. So one should not follow such a sudden long duration practice, which is damaging to body. May be this long gazing was possible on my part due to previous long practice of inner-trāṭaka. This gave the experience that tears flow strongly in outer-trāṭaka and strengthens will power. This is a good medium of concentration and mind is gradually absorbed in the flame but this can

also be hallucinating if one is interested in enjoying changes in the flame like expanding, contracting, increasing in number and taking various forms. The inner-trāṭaka is of a superior type of concentration than flame gazing and once one learns this there is no need of outer-trāṭakas. But those persons with a restless mind and not established in inner-trāṭaka should first try with outer-trāṭaka or flame gazing of small durations starting with ten to thirty seconds and gradually increase the duration. Then they should further shift to the inner-trāṭaka, i.e., concentration on an energy center, *cakra*.

Kapālabhāti is a technique to stimulate the brain cells and removing the lethargy. It also cleans lungs, respiratory tracts and abdominal organs. This can be practiced as a preparatory practice for the Kriyā-yoga meditation. Sitting in a meditative posture one can practice this, and then exhaling with force followed by passive inhalation. This process is repeated in quick succession. Breath tiredness is brought after a period of practice, then there will be no urge for breathing for few seconds and one may experience a state of inner silence. The first step of Nābhi Kriyā technique taught as a preparatory technique for Kriyā-yoga meditation by some masters is a simpler modified form of Kapālabhāti.

Other body cleansing techniques involves Āyurveda, Physiotherapy, Naturopathy, viz., use of soil, water, sunlight, etc., autosuggestion and use of will power etc.

Ṛṣi Patañjali says, “*śaucātsvāṅgajuguṣā parairasamsargah*” (Ygs., 2.40), by practice of purification one develops aversion towards his own body that extends the contact with other bodies. This is very much helpful in practicing continence. When one is under the body purification process he recognizes the imperfections, impermanence and transitory nature of his body, and looses attachment and develops distaste towards attachment for the body. That knowledge about own body extends to all other bodies, and sensuality developing from attraction towards a body disappears. Knowledge from external purification also develops internal purification, and then one recognizes that he is not the body-self and dislike develops towards enjoying sense objects. But there are always some demons those use a limb of yoga for sense enjoyment since they have that mindset from the beginning and their evolution is still with the level of animalism. So techniques alone do not work without devotion, *śraddhā*, along with proper understanding.

Internal Cleanliness or Purity: Cleansing the mind from its impurities like anger, greed, hatred, jealousy, cruelty, etc. are called *antarśauca* or *ābhyantaraśauca*. These impurities are afflictions and turbulences of the mind. This internal cleanliness is the whole spiritual practice, by this practice one gets rid from actions of *rajas* and *tamas* and establishes in *sattva*. One gets established in yoga

when one is beyond the three qualities but before that by practice of *ābhyantaraśauca* one is in *sattva* based qualities. The practices for these are austerity, *tapah*, self-study, *svādhyāya* and knowing the God, *īśvara* *prāṇidhāna*. Training our mind with contemplation of friendship, kindness, contentment and indifference etc. “*maitrīkaruṇāmuditopekṣānām* (Ygs., 1.33) helps in achieving a state of mental bliss. But such a mental contemplation should stem up from practice of one principle, *ekatattvābhyaśa* (ibid., 1.32) and is most effective when that one principle is *Prāṇa*, i.e., *Īśvara*; *īśvara* *prāṇidhānadvā* (ibid., 1.23), by the practice of *Īśvara*. So this is to be based on vital energy with devotion, since vital practices makes the desires thin and develops discriminating ability helping us to get rid of the vices. For this first we have to do the breath technique, *prāṇakarma*, the technique of exhalation and inhalation, “*pracchardana* *vidhāraṇābhyām vā prāṇasya*” (ibid., 1.34).

The subsequent virtues those develop due to observance of purity are, *sattvaśuddhisaumanasyaikāgryendriyajayā-tmadarśanayogyatvāni ca* (ibid., 2.41); purification of the mind, *sattvaśuddhi*, this is the discriminating ability and “Pure I-Sense” when all everything becomes the Self that lead to delightfulness of the mind, *saumanasyā*, resulting in one-pointedness of the mind, *ekāgrya*, and one-pointedness helps in winning over the sense-organs, *indriyajayā*, thereby leading to the ability for Self-realization, *ātmadarśanayogyatvāni*. So both external and internal cleanliness are foundations for Self-realization.

Here we should remember that cleanliness, *śauca*, is a positive quality of *Mūlādhāra* whereas uncleanliness, *aśauca*, is a negative quality. *Mūlādhāra* means basic foundation and cleanliness is the basic foundation of yogic practices. We have to eradicate impurities of our body and mind, i.e., feeling of ego. Our ego or “I-sense” is deep founded within our body as a feeling of “body as the self.” This feeling is based on body at *Mūlādhāra* and extends up to intellect identifying itself with “I sense” in *Anāhata*. More we minimize this “narrow I-sense” then more is the expression of delightfulness in the mind at *Viśuddha*.

Contentment, *Santoṣa*: A yoga practitioner should learn never to be dissatisfied. Contentment develops from non-acceptance, *aparigraha*, and non-acceptance develops to contentment. We should learn to know our limitations. Contentment is a mental attitude; it has nothing to do with physical possessions. One may possess the property of the whole world but can remain ever a mentally poor, so the real poverty and feeling of poverty are different things. Once the feeling of poverty is eradicated then there is contentment and the feeling of poverty is not eradicated by gathering many; one needs a pair of shoes to walk, need not try to cover the whole earth with canvas. Contentment is also to be established in all situations and all facets of life, not simply with material possessions. Results of our works always may not be according to our expected lines, again sometimes situations may suddenly become unfavorable but one has learned to be contented

in all spheres of the life. Contentment gives us happiness and dissatisfaction leads to sorrow. Eradicating hankerings from the mind is contentment. But we should remember that developing lethargy and thereby remaining satisfied is not contentment.

Ṛṣi Patañjali says, *santoṣādanuttamasukhalābhaḥ* (Ygs., 2.42), from contentment is gained unsurpassed happiness. The pleasures enjoyed by enjoying sense objects and even the enjoyments in heaven or in a different world are not comparable to the transcendental happiness arising from the contentment. This is an inner satisfaction. This generates from the positive effect of Svādhiṣṭhāna, the sacrum center and culminates in the bliss of the Self at Viśuddha, the cervical center. Svādhiṣṭhāna is the center of taste, not only the sense of taste but also the inner sense of taste of the mind. Since this is the center for desires negative effect here generates appetites like sexual urges, obsession with possessiveness, etc. that are never satisfied in our life and positive effect develops to the inner satisfaction.

THE KRIYĀ-YOGA

Now let us discuss the inner three circles of Kriyā-yoga described as austerity, self-study and knowing the Inner God.

Austerity, *Tapah*: Performing self-disciplines by which the desires in the mind decrease are called austerities. This is to develop capability to tolerate hardships in life, to tolerate opposites like pain and pleasure, heat and cold, etc. A long range of performances comes under austerities. Various types of penances and inflictions on the body are also termed as austerities but these have not been said with an intention to torture the body. The austerity we talk about should not cause any physiological or pathological disturbances. If someone resorts to some extreme penance only as a correcting measure then this can be accepted as *tapah*, but it should be kept in mind that *tapah* must not be harmful to our body and senses and should lead to a state of bliss at the end. It should start with simple practices like rolling tongue up, *khecari mudrā*, keeping the spine straight and breath awareness. *Tapah* is the performance of righteousness and duties, and *tapah* is the activities undertaken to eradicate the wrong knowledge thereby paving way for the Knowledge.

After the deliberation of the Brahman in the entire *Kenopaniṣad* beginning with “He is ear of the ear etc.” and ending with *tadvanam*, His Adorable, since as the indwelling Self that is adorable to all, again the question was asked to speak about the Upaniṣad, the secret knowledge though the knowledge was already imparted. Then it was answered, “*tasye tapo damaḥ karmeti pratiṣṭhā vedāḥ sarvāṅgāni satyamāyatanam* (Ke.U, 4.8), its foundations are, *tasye pratiṣṭhā*, austerity, *tapah*, control of sense organs, *damaḥ*, and actions, *karmeti*; all the limbs are the Vedas, *vedāḥ sarvāṅgāni*, truth is the abode, *satyamāyatanam*. This much is the secret of the whole spiritual practice. The foundation has three pillars, viz.,

austerity, control of sense-organs and actions from rites up to *prāṇakarma*, but later two also come under austerity. Though the Knowledge of Brahman was already imparted it was not possible on part of a disciple to comprehend because of lack of eradication of sins or desires as expounded in a story in chapter eight of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* where Virocana miscomprehend the body as the Self. So first condition is mind must be purified by *tapah*. Beginning from practice of all five restraints, *yama*-s, viz., non-violence, truth, etc. and all five observances, *niyama*-s, cleanliness, contentment, etc. up to postures and breath practices, *prāṇakarma*, all come under *tapah*. *Tapah* is also withdrawal of mind from the sense-objects and practice of the trio, i.e., concentration, meditation and *samādhi*. *Tapah* demands resolve or determination to perform them along with faith, *śraddhā*. This demands tolerance, self-imposed discipline, control of sense-organs, control of organs of action and control of the mind. This needs one-pointedness. *Praśnopaniṣad* emphasizes *tapah* again and again; *athottareṇa tapasā brahmacaryeṇa śraddhayā vidyayātmānamanviṣyā, dityambhijayante* (*Pr.U*, 1.10), again, *atha*, by moving through the Northern Route, *uttareṇa*, they conquer, *abhijayante*, the sun, *ādityam*, by searching, *anviṣyā*, the Self, *ātmānam*, through austerity, *tapasā*, through continence, *brahmacaryeṇa*, through faith, *śraddhayā*, and through knowledge (of meditation), *vidyayā*. Here the clue to *tapah* is given. *Tapah* means heat, this is the inner heat generated by breath practice, *prāṇakarma*, this destroys all the sins of the mind. Here it is said they conquer the sun, the sun is *prāṇa*, they knew that “I am Prāṇa that is the Sun.” Unity of individual *prāṇa* with that of the Cosmic Prāṇa is established. For that they perform austerity, *tapah*, this is control of organs and control of the mind. Continence, *brahmacaryeṇa*, though comes under *tapah* but this is emphasized separately. Then faith, *śraddhā*, is associated with it, without faith *tapah* is lifeless. These lead to meditation, *vidyā*, which is resulting in eradication of the wrong knowledge and manifestation of the Knowledge. All these are done by practice of moving through the Northern Route. The Northern Route is the Ascending Prāṇa from Mūlādhārā to Sahasrāra. This breath practice of Ascending Prāṇa with *śraddhā* and *brahmacarya* is *tapah*, and this *tapah* is known as the Kriyā-yoga. Austerity, continence and faith are further emphasized in *Praśnopaniṣad*, text 3, chap. 5.

Ṛṣi Patañjali says, *kāyendriyasiddhiraśuddhikṣayāttapasaḥ* (*Ygs.*, 2.43), practice of austerities brings perfection of the body and the organs by destruction of impurities. Austerities destroy impurities of body, sense-organs, organs of action and mind. The main form of austerity is the breath practice that generates inner heat and burns impurities of the mind. Now the mind learns to be unaffected by cravings and aversions, also learns to be unaffected by bodily limitations. Practice of restraints and observances along with steady posture for practice of concentration etc. accompanied by the breath practices brings perfections of the body, both gross and subtle, along with the perfections of organs. *Tapah* emanates from the Maṇipūra, the lumbar center related to the fire element and the mind

sheath. This mind center, Mañipūra, is the seat of desires and these desires are to be burned through the *prāṇakarma*. *Prāṇakarma* when done with *śraddhā* becomes *prāṇopāsanā*, worshipping *prāṇa*.

Self-study, Svādhyāya: *Svādhyāya* is the self-study. Normally it refers to repetition of *Aum* etc., and study of scriptures dealing with the Knowledge and emancipation. Here *Aum* represents also all other scriptural syllabi and hymns. *Svādhyāya* is not merely an intellectual treatise as often understood by many, then the study of philosophy or even mathematics or history can be *svādhyāya*; rather this is the self-contemplation, this is reading of the Inner Self. Studies of scriptures only help this giving an intellectual understanding, so this is an outer appendage of *svādhyāya*. *Svādhyāya* is our inner reading, reading of laws of the Nature and Īśvara within our inner organ, *antaḥkaraṇa*, called *citta*. The *hamsa sādhanā* technique of Kriyā-yoga helps us in reading our own Self. *Ham* is exhalation and *sa* is inhalation. This is natural sound of our breath. Our breath is always repeating *hamsa, soham*; this inner repetition of non-repetition, *ajapā japa*, is going on from birth to death without our knowledge. This has to be brought to our knowledge; breath awareness is the key. That would help in inhibiting the actions of *citta* thereby reflecting the Self. *Hamsa* means “I am That” and *soham* means “That is me;” a mental contemplation with “That Principle” along with the breath awareness helps the practitioner in rapid progress in initial days. This is practicing unity with the personal God, the Cosmic Self, *Īśvara*, or the Truth Consciousness Principle according to the state of the practitioner. With mental contemplation and establishing unity with the Principle along with breath this becomes best form of “*ahamgraha upāsanā*,” and without mental contemplation simply watching the breath and thereby watching actions of *citta* this becomes practice of equanimity. The *Aum* Technique and the repetitions of single-syllable sounds with feeling of vital energy in each petal of the *cakras* are also *svādhyāya*. These all are taught in Kriyā-yoga, and *svādhyāya* is fulfilled in *īśvara-praṇidhāna* leading to *samādhi* resulting in attaining ones own form.

Ṛṣi Patañjali says, “*svādhyāyādiṣṭadevatāsamprayogaḥ*” (*Ygs.*, 2.44), from self-study communion with the sought deity is established. It is normally said that if one repeats the mantra or sacred syllabi of his Personal God and reads the scriptures related to that God (means specific Purāṇa dealing with the god) then communion with the desired deity is established. This is the way in the path of devotion, and here emotion plays a greater role. One accepts a particular deity be it Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Durgā, Śiva, Buddha, Ṛṣabha, Nānak, Maria, Jesus, or Gurudev as the desired deity according to ones own nature and liking. The devotee with full faith and devotion thrusts “total godliness,” *īśvaratva*, on that deity, this is called *adhyāropa*. This should not be misunderstood that the particular deity is not God or Īśvara and only

the qualities of Īśvara are applied upon. Any deity can be Īśvara if our worship is without any desire, if it is for total love and knowledge and to get rid of our sins. Whereas having the intellectual knowledge of Īśvara according to scriptures but we if worship for fulfillment of our desires then that Īśvara is a god of a department concerning the faculty of our desire, and fulfils that desire. Say for examples, if we pray Īśvara to be cured from our physical illness then Īśvara becomes Aśvinikumāra, and if we pray Īśvara for wealth then Īśvara becomes Kubera. Coming to our discussion of the sought deity, *iṣṭadeva*, this love and attachment to the desired deity inhibits all other desires or passions; a special type of *vṛtti* called love to the Personal God halts all other actions, *vṛtti*-s, of mind. This type of meditation is named as meditation based on love or affection, *mamatānubandhi*, and this is attachment-based meditation. Though ordinarily on repetition of mantra thoughts are not fixed on its meaning when *svādhyāya* is established then it is one-pointedness; chanting, meaning, concentration and earnest love all merge and appearance of the desired deity happens. This can do many miracles also. God is within us and He manifests according to the nature of our form of concentration, *dhyyākāra vṛtti*. This is the manifestation of our own *citta*. This is the way of devotees and easier to practice. The Kriyā-yoga techniques help in this to those kriyā practitioners who are devotees in nature. A kriyā practitioner can be a devotee, may be at the beginning with an emotional devotion as most of us start with but he has to ascend through the sense of equanimity to the true devotion based on the knowledge of the Self. Here we have to remember that yoga is a way of practicing equanimity, this is meditation based on state of equilibrium, *samatānubandhi*, here attachment or aversion to any particular kind of *vṛtti* is not desired, the practitioner establishes himself as a seer of the *vṛtti*-s. As at the final stage in yoga all the *vṛtti*-s are inhibited, not a single *vṛtti* is hold or possessed by the practitioner; then whatever reflects on a transparent *citta* is the real form, *svarūpa*, of the practitioner. But at the stage of *svādhyāya*, a yogi is not yet established in his real form. By practice of *soham* breath, he improves in the way of understanding the Self, *sva*. At this stage if his mind still rolls around a Personal God then he has vision of that deity or else he has vision of his forefathers, gods, goddesses, heavenly beings, sages, siddhas, celestial beings and gurus of his and other traditions. In many cases a practitioner could not understand the law behind these and enjoys. These all visions are truth but not the final Truth. This is the Principle reflected from a drop of consciousness, i.e., his own *citta* to take various glowing forms. One should know that he is progressing but should not struck at that level. Later

at the final stage of *samādhi* he understands that all these including his own form are nothing but the Self. We should know that our desired God, *iṣṭadevatā*, is our Inner Father, and this is our Prāṇa the Īśvara. We have discussed about Prāṇa the Īśvara under the head, “Prāṇa is Īśvara the Hiraṇyagarbha” (*supra*, p. 60) and it is further in discussion in the next head, “Knowing the God, *Īśvarapraṇidhāna*.” Since *svādhyāya* is related to the special knowledge, *vijñāna*, it stems up from the Anāhata, the dorsal center.

Knowing the God, *Īśvarapraṇidhāna*: *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is the Kriyā-yoga. Most of the commentaries put *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* as devotion and surrender to God. This is partly correct when our understanding of devotion is simply emotion. This depends on our understanding of *Īśvara* and *praṇidhāna*. For those devotees or the Kriyā-yogis believing in a Personal God like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa or Kālī, *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is surrender to that God and this stems up from the emotional structure of the devotee’s *citta*. This helps in spiritual growth, warding off prohibitory deeds and developing virtues. Of course this much can make the world a heaven, but if the total unity with Īśvara as the Cosmic Self or with the Principle called Truth is not established, and if that Personal God is a separate entity from the practitioner and also a separate entity from Personal Gods of others, either superior, inferior or at the same scale, then this God is not “Īśvara the Cosmic Self.” *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* term comes four times in Yogasūtras: (1) *Īśvarapraṇidhānadvā* (*Ygs.*, 1.23), from *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* also (one attains *samādhi*); (2) “*tapahsvādhyāyēśvarapraṇidhānāni kriyāyogaḥ*” (*ibid.*, 2.1), *tapah*, *svādhyāya*, and *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* are Kriyā-yoga; (3) “*śaucasantoṣatapahsvādhyāyēśvarapraṇidhānāni niyamāḥ*” (*ibid.*, 2.32), cleanliness, contentment, austerity, study and knowing God, *īśvarapraṇidhāna*, are the observances; (4) *samādhisiddhirīśvarapraṇidhānāt* (*ibid.*, 2.45), *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* leads to attaining *samādhi*. So *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is core practice; of the Kriyā-yoga, *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is one of the observances, and *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is twice emphasized as means of attaining the transcendental super-conscious-state called *samādhi*.

So it becomes most important to understand *Īśvarapraṇidhāna*. This is a special technical term in Kriyā-yoga, not simple surrender as ordinarily understood. *Praṇidhāna* means contemplation, also *praṇidhāna* means practice. So *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is contemplation or practice of God. This is a special form of devotion. This is feeling the existence of the God in innermost core of our heart and to merge all everything existing within our inner makeup to the God. *Nidhāna* means to determine or to know with certainty, when prefix *pra* is added this, it becomes *praṇidhāna*; here the first “n” in *nidhāna* becomes “ñ” due to addition

of prefix *pra*. The meaning of *prañidhāna* becomes to know something in totality when nothing more is left to know on that. So *Īśvara**prañidhāna* is to know God the *Īśvara* in totality by the practice of *Īśvara*. This is knowledge.

God the *Īśvara*: Now we have to understand *Īśvara* or the God to understand *Īśvara**prañidhāna*. We have already discussed it under the head, “*Prāṇa* is *Īśvara* the *Hiraṇyagarbha*” (*supra*, p. 60). About *Īśvara*, Ṛṣi Patañjali says, “*kleśa-karmavipākāśayairaparāmṛṣṭa puruṣaviśeṣa īśvaraḥ.*” (*Ygs.*, 1.24.) *Īśvara* is a special person (*Puruṣa*), *puruṣaviśeṣa īśvaraḥ*, unaffected by, *aparāmṛṣṭa*, affliction, *kleśa*, deed or action, *karma*, result of action, *vipāka*, or the inherent impressions thereof, *āśayaiḥ*. In Sāṅkhya Philosophy twenty-five principles are described whereas in Yoga Philosophy there is description of twenty-six principles, the *Īśvara* is the twenty-sixth one. This *Īśvara* Principle is made distinct in the Philosophy from *Puruṣa* Principle and *Prādhāna* (Nature) Principle. Though *Īśvara* is same as *Puruṣa* but distinction is made between *Puruṣa* and a Special *Puruṣa* *Īśvara* because Individual *Puruṣa* (*jīvātmā* or indwelling self) is imagined to be experiencing afflictions and deeds etc. In actuality afflictions etc. are attributed to the nature of *citta*, but due to indiscrimination between *citta* and Individual *Puruṣa*, the behaviors of *citta* are applied upon the Individual *Puruṣa*, this is the ignorance. The Special *Puruṣa* *Īśvara* is unaffected by the enjoyments of pains and pleasures. An Individual *Puruṣa* unties the bondage and attains liberation by eradication of the ignorance but *Īśvara* had no such bondage in past nor will have in future. *Īśvara* is the Cosmic Self and Individual *Puruṣa* is the individual self and this is one Principle; but the individual self is ignorant about its totality whereas preeminence of *Īśvara* due to omniscience etc. is eternal. *Īśvara* is free, ever liberated. The same *Īśvara* resides in each body as the Indwelling Self. That Principle is same before the body, inside the body, after the body and in all the bodies. That is our Life-force, *Prāṇa*. He is *Vāsudeva*, the God who sits in each being; *vāsanādvāsudevasya bāsitaṁ bhuvana trayam*, from the desire of Lord *Vāsudeva* the three worlds come into existence, *sarvabhūtanivāso'sti vāsudeva namo, stute*, we bow down to *Vāsudeva* who dwells in all beings. Once the problems or afflictions of *citta* are mitigated then *citta* does not reflect ego, the enjoyer, on the Indwelling Self. Then *Puruṣa* and Special *Puruṣa* are same. How is that Self the *Īśvara*? The *Īśopaniṣad* says,

sa paryagācchukramakāyamavaraṇa-
masnāviraṁ śuddhamapāpavidham,
kavirmanīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhūryā
thātathyato'rthān vyadadhācchāśvatībhyah samābhyah. (Īś. U, 8)

He, *sa*, has come from all sides (omnipresent), *paryagāt*, is the bright, *śukram*, the bodiless, *akāyam*, the woundless, *avaraṇam*, the sinewless, *asnāviraṁ*, the pure, *śuddham*, not pierced by sin, *apāpavidham*, the seer of all, *kaviḥ*, the ruler of

mind, *manīṣī*, the transcendent, *paribhūḥ*, the self-existent, *svayambhūḥ*; He has distributed, *vyadadhāt*, the divine properties, *arthān*, in the proper way, *yāthātathyataḥ*, to the eternal years (to the *Prajāpatīs* or creators), *śāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ*.

Such is the quality of the Lord. He is all pervasive like space, then bright and bodiless, thus even without a subtle body, i.e., mind, intellect, ego, and subconscious. Woundless and sinewless means without a physical body, the pure means not even affected by the three qualities of Nature, so not pierced by sin. He is the seer of all, omniscient and the ruler of the mind, i.e., the ruler of individual minds in all beings and the cosmic mind. He transcends all and self-existing, never created and never met an end. He has distributed the duties to the Cosmic Mind, the Cosmic Gross Body and to different gods. He is *Īśā*, the Supreme Ruler and the Supreme Self. He is the *Prāṇa*, the sum total of all the powers of will, all the powers of knowledge and all the powers of action. It is said, *yadidaṁ kiṁ ca jagat sarvaṁ prāṇa ejati niḥsṛtam* etc. (*Ka. U.*, 2.3.2), the whole universe emerges from *Prāṇa* and moves because of *Prāṇa*, this is the great terror like an uplifted thunderbolt and he who knows this becomes immortal.

The other attributes of *Īśvara* as described in *Yogasūtras* are: *tatra niratīśayaṁ sarvajñavījam* (*Ygs.*, 1.25), the seed of omniscience in Him cannot be exceeded. He is all knowing, the knowledge how vast and deep may be within a being, element or god, cannot exceed Him; a part cannot exceed the total. He is sum total of all the knowledge. His knowledge is not like that of latent impressions in a *citta*, but a *citta* can reflect His knowledge by extinguishing the latent impressions, *smṛtīparīśuddhi*, thereby bringing the discriminative enlightenment, *viveka khyāti*. Again He is, *pūrveṣāmapī guruḥ kālenā-navacchedāt* (ibid., 1.26), the teacher of the formers not limited by the time. *Īśvara* is former to the formers, viz., *Brahmā*, the Lord of Creation etc. since He is not bound by time, He is *Mahākāla*. He is ancient and forerunner to all everything that is manifested. He is the seed from which manifestation of trinity, Lord of Creation, Lord of Sustention and Lord of Dissolution, and the manifested worlds with beings appeared and in whom all is merged. That is the Principle named Truth and Consciousness activated intending creation. That Activated Principle is *Mahāprāṇa*, and that is *Īśvara*, whereas the Inactivated Principle is the Transcendental Brahman in which activity is denied as per scriptures. This *Īśvara* can be named as follows, *tasya vācakaḥ praṇavaḥ* (ibid., 1.27); the word designating Him is *Praṇava*. This is the mystic sound *Aum*, the word by which the glory of *Īśvara* is sung. *Aum* is *Īśvaraḥpraṇidhāna*, practicing *Īśvara*. So, *tajjapastadarthabhāvanam* (ibid., 1.28), repeat That and contemplate the meaning. This much is *Īśvaraḥpraṇidhāna*.

Understanding *Īśvaraḥpraṇidhāna* Technique: Now let us come to the technique of *Īśvaraḥpraṇidhāna*. What is that *Aum* designated as *Īśvara*, how to repeat That and how to contemplate on the meaning? The cause of creation is vibration or

throb. And that throb is sound. *Aum* or *Praṇava* is the first causal sound. It is impossible to pronounce the real *Aum*. *Aum* is composed of three letters, viz., *a*, *u*, *m* and a half letter, *ardhamātrā*. The three letters *a*, *u*, and *m* can be pronounced but not the *ardhamātrā*. So it is said, “*ardhamātrāsthītā nityā yānucāryā viśeṣataḥ*” (Sds., 1.74), (Oh Goddess Bhagavatī Mahākālī, you are) eternally established as *ardhamātrā* that cannot be pronounced specially. With *a*, *u*, and *m*, this covers all the range of sounds, viz., articulate utterance, murmurings and visual/observed utterance. All the creations are covered by these three. Three worlds earth, heaven and intermediate space are covered. Manifested world, subtle world and causal world are covered. Three states of awake, dream and deep sleep are covered. But most important is the fourth one that is beyond everything, the form of Knowledge only. That is the transcendental part of *Aum*. Though this *Aum* is not possible to chant, but a beginner starts with chanting verbally; this is no chanting only stepping into chant process. Then he starts with mental chant but with the mental chant mind can roam from objects to objects, which is also no chant. So it is said, “*yadānudyāyate mantram gātrakampotha jāyate*” (YSU, 70), when a sacred syllable is meditated upon vibrations occur in the body. Here it should be kept in mind that, a psychic situation can create vibrations due to emergence of moods like fear, anger etc. as most of the performers do, and even some persons performing black magics manipulate people with these, but we are not talking here about such situations. This vibration we talk about is a natural feeling of vital energy, so this is the vibration of our *prāṇa* in the body called *vyāna vāyu*. This comes from *prāṇakarma*. This is “Aum Technique” in Kriyā-yoga. Then mind slowly merges in the vital energy. This further develops to listening to the inner sounds, *nāda śravaṇa*; all the inner sounds are *Aum* only. One can also practice *nāda śravaṇa* by closing the ear holes by thumbs and concentrating at *Ājñā*, but *prāṇakarma* does this automatically. The normal *prāṇakarma* without any effort is *hamsa*. So it is said, *aum kauśala hamsa sādhanā*, the Aum Technique is the practice of *hamsa*. Our exhalation is *ham* and our inhalation is *sa*. This is naturally going on from birth to death. By practice of *hamsa*, the breath awareness, a state comes when there is no inhalation or exhalation, no *ham* or *sa*. Only the *ardhamātrā* remains, which is the state of bliss without any afflictions, *kleśāḥ*, and that is *Īśvara*. Since this is the state of bliss this practice stems up from *Viśuddha*, the cervical center.

Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā: For success in State of *Īśvara*, the basic foundation technique in Kriyā-yoga in addition to above discussed “Aum Technique” and “Hamsa Sādhanā” is the Kriyā Proper Technique of first Kriyā. Though various names have been given like Kriyā *Prāṇāyāma*, Kriyā *Kuṇḍalīni Prāṇāyāma*, etc., but this is called *Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā*, Kriyā of practicing *Īśvara*. The *Īśvara* is composed of syllabi viz. *ī*, *ś*, *v*, *a*, *r* and *a*. The letter-*ī* represents energy, *śakti*; this letter-*ī*, *ī-kāra*, makes the speech pure without dirt, *omīnkāra vākprasādakara nirmala* (AU, 5). Speech is a result or *prasāda* of inhalation, and pure speech is a result of

pure inhalation, i.e., complete inhalation, long and deep. So *ī* means long and deep inhalation, that gives energy, *śakti*; so it is said, *ī-kāra śaktidāyaka*, inhalation i.e., letter-*ī* or *ī-kāra* gives energy. Again *ī-kāra* also includes *i-kāra* within it. This *i-kāra* is, *ominikāra pustidākṣobhakara* (AU, 5), giver of nutrition and wards off mental instability. This is *prānakarma*, the breath technique. Breath gives nutrition to body and mind, and by absorbing fluctuations of mind, wards off from mental afflictions. Now *ś*, *v* and *a* together form *śva*. The letter-*ś*, *ś-kāra*, is *sarvaphala-prada pavitra* (AU, 5), one who grants all the results (of actions) and pious; this is the quality of *Īśvara*, the Lord. The letter-*v*, *v-kāra* is *sarvāpyāyanakara nirmala* (ibid., 5), one which serves or nurtures all and pure. The letter-*a*, *a-kāra* is *mṛtyuñjaya sarvavyāpaka* (ibid.), one that wins over death and spreads everywhere. Again *a-kāra* means one that has no form, one that spreads everywhere like space cannot have a form. If we combine *ś*, *v* and *a* then this is the Self, *śva*, the Brahman. The letter-*r*, *r-kāra* is *dāhakara vikṛta* (ibid.), burning and furious, not in proper form; this is fire and this is manifestation. Exhalation is fire and exhalation is *vikṛta*, not in proper form while inhalation is *kṛta*. *Kṛta* also means that which is done, we do inhale but exhalation is not done, it is the result, so *vikṛta*. This *r-kāra* combines with *a-kāra* to make *ra*. The Principle of no-form, *a-kāra*, now takes the form, the Self that manifests into *ra* or light, *prakāśa*. Light is the world, light is manifestation when we are in the ignorance and light is the knowledge when we are realized. In our body *ī* is inhalation and *ra* is exhalation, *śva* is in between inhalation and exhalation and is our true Self. The first-kriyā breath technique with deep inhalation and deep exhalation is called *īśvara-pranīdhāna kriyā*. We do *ra* and *ī* but *śva* is automatic. This takes to the state of breathlessness and mind becomes tranquil without any thought. Here all the afflictions are halted and due to non-manifestation they gradually become thin.

Afflictions: We discussed that *Īśvara* is not affected by afflictions whereas the individual being is affected by these. The afflictions, *kleśāḥ*, are, *avidyā-smitārāgadveśā*, *bhiniveśāḥ kleśāḥ* (Ygs., 2.3), ignorance, *avidyā*, egoism or “I sense,” *asmitā*, attachment, *rāga*, aversion, *dveṣa*, and inherent involvements, *abhiniveśāḥ*. All these five afflictions are named as afflictions because these are the causes of all afflictions in our life. All these five are wrong cognitions hence the source of catastrophes. But the ignorance or *avidyā* is the main wrong cognition, this is delusion and this is absence of the Knowledge of Truth or *vidyā*, and is common to all other afflictions. This is the mother of all other afflictions. So it is said, *avidyā kṣetramuttareṣām prasuptatanuvicchinodārāṇām* (ibid., 2.4), the rest (four) belong to the field of ignorance, *avidyā kṣetramuttareṣām*, and remain in dormant, *prasupta*, attenuated, *tanu*, interrupted, *vicchinna*, or active, *udāra*, forms. The ignorance is the dark forest, the safe breeding ground to generate four wild species of afflictions that are howling at each moment and again each species exists in four states, viz., dormant, attenuated, interrupted and active. In dormancy

state an affliction is latent and is not manifested, so untraceable. This can manifest in contact with its objects or in receiving desired stimuli. Here it is in seed form with potency to germinate on a favorable climate. An attenuated affliction is a thinned one by the practice of Kriyā-yoga but not yet reached to complete annihilation state. An interrupted affliction is a suppressed affliction for the time being due to manifestation of some other affliction. An active affliction is one that is presently working.

The Ignorance, *Avidyā*: The nature of ignorance, *avidyā*, has been described as, *anityā-śuciduḥkhā-nātmāsu nityaśucisukhā'tmakhyātiravidyā* (Ygs., 2.5), the ignorance, *avidyā*, is accepting, *khyātiḥ*, transients, *anityā*, impious, *aśuci*, miseries, *duḥkha*, and non-self, *anātma*, as everlasting, *nitya*, pious, *śuci*, happiness, *sukhā*, and Self, *ātma*, respectively. All the manifested worlds and beings even the sun or stars are impermanent, what to talk about humans, their wealth, positions and power. But accepting them as everlasting and behaving accordingly is false knowledge. Taking body as the pious and hence attraction and attachment towards own body and body of opposite sex is accepting impious as pious. The same is also towards the subtle body, i.e., mind with all vices and trying to fulfill them. Similarly those activities, physical or mental, which are impious in nature, say for violence, greed, etc., accepting them as right actions and performing them are the ignorance. Enjoying sense objects as happiness that ultimately turn to be misery is also the ignorance. These miseries or sorrows has further been classified as suffering in consequence or enjoyments bringing sufferings as a result, *pariṇāma duḥkha*, afflictive experience sufferings intensifying attachments, *tāpa duḥkha*, latent sufferings or impression of experiences as subconscious desires, *samskāra duḥkha*, and sufferings due to contrary nature of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* qualities, i.e., preponderance of a particular state is contrary to the other states, *guṇavṛttivirodhaḥ duḥkha*, and it was shown that every enjoyment is a suffering for a person with the discriminating intellect (ibid., 2.15). In all enjoyments are associated with one or more kind of these four sufferings. Enjoyments are done due to “I sense” and that is the ignorance. So also accepting non-self as the Self, whether it is body, mind, objects or individuals, is the ignorance. This is “I” and “mine.” So the ignorance or *avidyā* is just lack of the discriminating intellect. The ignorance is an erroneous knowledge due to unreal modification by the mind.

The ignorance is spread out all over our body and mind. *Vidyā* or the Knowledge is situated in a higher plane only in the House of Brahman, *brahmaṇḍa*, above the *Ājñā cakra*, which is the divine field, *dharmakṣetra*, in our body. That divinity or *vidyā* is to be attained there at *brahmaṇḍa* during meditation and then to be brought down all over the body and the mind.

“I Sense,” *Asmitā*: The ignorance, *avidyā*, to rule over her empire gives birth to the prince named “I sense,” *asmitā*. This is the second cause to all afflictions, the first cause to afflictions being the *avidyā*. However this “I Sense” is explained as,

dr̥gdarśanasaktyorekātmatevā-smītā (Ygs., 2.6), the seemingly identification, *ekātmatā eva*, between Visionary Puruṣa, *dr̥g śakti*, with vision intellect, *darśana śakti*, is “I Sense,” *asmītā*. The *dr̥g śakti* or the Power of Seer is same as the Seer; it is *Draṣṭā Puruṣa*, the Absolute Awareness, the Pure Consciousness or the Self. The *darśana śakti* is the cognitive principle; this is *buddhi* or intellect, in other terminology this is called *citta*, and this is the reflection of the Consciousness. A sense object is contacted through sense organs by the mind and the intellect determines the nature of the object and impression there of is stored in the sub-consciousness. The intellect is not the Knower, and it is only the final cognitive principle. The Consciousness beyond these psychic principles, viz., mind, intellect, and subconscious is the Knower. Now due to appearance of similarity between the Consciousness and the intellect due to non-discrimination gives rise to ego or “I Sense.” This is wrong identification of Puruṣa with body and mind interactions, or in other words “Infinite I” appears to be contracted into “Narrow I.”

Attachment, *Rāga*: “I Sense” gives rise to attachment and aversion. Attachment, *rāga*, is a desire, a passion, a hankering or a thirst. This is said as, *sukhā’nuśayī rāgaḥ* (ibid., 2.7), that is attachment, *rāgaḥ*, which follows the pleasure, *sukhā’nuśayī*. This is born from remembrance of a pleasure that is in subconscious as latent impressions. Once a pleasure enjoyed due to “I Sense” this remains as impression in subconscious and raises up to the surface of mind as a desire. Now in a longing to obtain the same pleasure again becomes an affliction if not obtained or else in process of obtaining it again right or wrong sense is lost resulting in afflictions.

Aversion, *Dveṣa*: This is a desire to resist something, to be reactive. This is said as, *duḥkhānuśayī dveṣaḥ* (ibid., 2.8), that is aversion, *dveṣaḥ*, which follows the pain, *duḥkhānuśayī*. “I want this” is attachment, *rāga* and “I do not want this” is aversion, *dveṣa*. In aversion there is fear and/or anger towards the object producing pain or misery. Similar to attachment, here also “I Sense” is the cause of aversion and this arises from the memory of latent impressions. Aversion takes the form of depression, hatred, cruelty, and vindictiveness.

Inherent Involvements, *Abhiniveśaḥ*: This is the characteristic with which one is born, a natural instinct. This is described as, *svarasavāhī viduṣo’pi tathārūḍho, bhīniveśaḥ* (ibid., 2.9), that which springs naturally, *svarasavāhī*, even among the learned ones like an ignorant, *viduṣo’pi tathārūḍho*, is called inherent involvement, *abhiniveśaḥ*. But this does not refer here to the natural instincts like suckling of milk by a newborn, a duckling moving towards water or a turtle moving in the direction of sea after hatching. It is the fear of death; even after knowing the Principle intellectually the learned ones still have the fear of death like an ignorant. This spontaneous anxiety is afflictive in nature and is seen from lower animals to intellectual humans. This is a result of identification of body with the Self and the fear of death arises from the threat of loss of that identity though the Self is ever

immortal. This comes from the experience of deaths in past lives. So the cause of inherent involvement is the long possession of “I sense” over many births.

Need of Kriyā-meditation: It has been discussed *supra*, under the head, “Kriyā-yoga for Happy-life,” (p. 9), besides this subject remained on discussion throughout time and again (*vide supra*, “Prāṇakarma Makes . . .,” p. 99; “Burning Desires . . .,” p. 101). We find that Īśvara is not affected by afflictions whereas the individual beings are subjected to afflictions. So *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* becomes the means to get rid of afflictions. *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* along with *tapah* and *svādhyāya* is practiced for, *samādhībhāvanārthaḥ kleśatanūkarāṇārthaśca* (Ygs., 2.2), for success in samādhi, *samādhībhāvanārthaḥ*, and thinning the afflictions, *kleśatanūkarāṇārthaśca*. The results of Kriyā-yoga are two; it takes to the state of samādhi and minimizes the afflictions. The impurities of mind are burnt, the actions of *rajas* on *tamas* are blocked, and the mind turns towards samādhi. A state of thoughtlessness, *nirvicāra*, is observed, the actions of mind, *vṛtti*-s, are halted. This leads to the thinning of afflictions; afflictions are nothing but special impurities of mind or aggravated form of *vṛtti*-s. Here it is said that the afflictions will be thinned, not said that they will be destroyed. Destruction is done when there is development of *viveka khyāti*, the discriminating knowledge leading to enlightenment. The process for that is Kriyā-meditation. That is why it is said, *te pratiprasavaheyāḥ sūkṣmāḥ* (ibid., 2.10), those, *te*, thinned ones, *sūkṣmāḥ*, are to be destroyed, *heyāḥ*, by the cessation of their birth (in the mind), *pratiprasava*. *Pratiprasava* is a process against the *prasava* or birth. *Vṛtti*-s take birth again and again in our mind, the process that stop these births is *pratiprasava*. This happens after practice of *samādhi* again and again. So it is said, *dhyānaheyāstadvṛttayah* (ibid., 2.11), by practice of meditation, *dhyānat*, those actions of mind, *tadvṛttayah*, are to be abandoned, *heyāḥ*. We said that the actions of mind or *vṛtti*-s and afflictions are same. The later is the condensed form of the former. By practice of austerity, self-study and *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* Kriyā these become thinner. But we have to annihilate them completely. These kriyās are also practices for *samādhi*. But this is not the final *samādhi* when the Knowledge manifest. This *samādhi* is *samādhi with seeds*, *tā eva sabījaḥ samādhiḥ* (ibid., 1.46), those are verily samādhi with seed. The seed of afflictions or actions of mind remains in samādhi to germinate later. But since this is a state of thoughtlessness, *nirvicāra*, being purified again and again by practice this leads to the state of bliss, *nirvicāravaiśāradye’ dhyātmaprasādaḥ* (ibid., 1.47), on becoming specialist in the state of thoughtlessness, *nirvicāravaiśāradye*, the bliss of spiritualism dawns, *adhyātmaprasādaḥ*. *Adhyātma* is related to our inner body, though in English we translate it as spiritualism or in the context of body/self, here in this sūtra the actual meaning is the discriminating intellect, *viveka*, *buddhi*. This discriminating intellect becomes pure, that is *adhyātmaprasādaḥ*, which is the form of bliss. That has been clarified in the next sūtra, *ṛtambharā tatra praññā* (ibid., 1.48), in that state, *tatra*, the knowledge,

prajñā, is filled with the truth, *ṛtambharā*. The meditations at these stage is spoken as *dhyānaheyāstadvṛttayah* (Ygs., 2.11), by practice of meditation those actions of mind are to be abandoned. This means here the meditation takes the form of Knowledge. This Knowledge is the cause of destruction of all afflictions. This Knowledge is not an intellectual one; this is the real Knowledge. This burns the seeds of *vṛttī*s and they loose the power to germinate. Now they are unproductive. Then the final dissolution occurs at *nirbījah nirvikalpaḥ samādhi*, samādhi without any seed and without any alternative. That has been said in other words as,

*bhidyate hṛdayagranthiśchidyante sarvasamśayāḥ,
kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare.* (Mu. U, 2.2.8)

When the knot of the heart, *hṛdayagranthiḥ*, is pierced or untied, *bhidyate*, all the doubts, *sarvasamśayāḥ*, are cut off, get solved, *chidyante*, and one's, *cāsya*, actions, *karmāṇi*, become dissolved or finished, *kṣīyante*, when that, *tasmin*, both beyond and here, *parāvare*, is seen, *dṛṣṭe*.

The realization of That One, the omniscient, omnipotent and transcendent is the realization of *parā*, the one beyond the comprehension of the intellect. When That all power of knowledge and all power of action is realized along with the effect, *avara*, from the intellect and ego to the body onwards, then all the doubts are solved. Then actions are no actions means not binding in nature because the small "I sense" is lost. That realization is piercing the knot of the heart; this knot is the cause of indiscrimination of the Self from nonselves. The process of piercing the knot is the Kriyā-yoga; this starts with actions of *prāṇa* to end with the Knowledge.

SUCCESS IN HIGHEST GOAL IS THROUGH THE SELF-EFFORT

Goals of a Man: Yoga is based on self-effort; Kriyā-yoga is self-effort only, *upāya pratyaya*. A rare soul who is a *siddha* in his previous life, either a disembodied yogi, *videha*, or a yogi merged in Nature, *prakṛtilaya*, for him samādhi is automatic, *bhavaḥpratyayaḥ* (Ygs., 1.19), but for majority of us it is the self-effort. Even for such *siddha*s it is their self-effort in previous lives. One becomes great only through the self-effort; one has to work out by him. Trying on his own, man can untie the knot called world, *samsāra*. This self-endeavor is called *puruṣārtha*, goal of a man, because this is the tool to achieve the goal. All the four goals of a man, viz., nobility, *dharma*, money or wealth, *artha*, fulfillment of desires, *kāma*, and liberation, *mokṣa*, are only achieved when we work by ourselves. Whatever a man, *puruṣa*, wants to achieve is his goal, *puruṣārtha*, and a man wants thousands of things but if we group them they are divided into the above four categories. If we analyze the goal of a man, *puruṣārtha*, it is said, "*puruṣeṇāthyarte prāthyarta iti puruṣārtha*," whatever a man prays or wants is called *puruṣārtha*. And man wants happiness. Nobody likes sufferings. For happiness he wants nobility, money,

fulfillment of desires and liberation. Here by *puruṣa* or man we must understand man and woman both. One who resides in *ṣura*, the house called body is a *puruṣa*, man. Body is feminine, be it a male body or female body. Here by *puruṣa* or man what we understand is not the Brahman as described in the Vedānta, or the *ātman*, the Self, as described in Sāṅkhya philosophy of Kapila Muni, because that *Puruṣa* is ever fulfilled. It is ego, which accepts the body-mind interactions as the self. This ego only wants happiness; this only wants nobility, wealth, fulfillment of desires and liberation since the bondage is due to ego.

Bliss is Never Eroded: Everyone wants that happiness should be forever; none wants that it should be for a short period of time and then be vanished. But all the happiness of the world vanish, only the happiness of the Self is eternal. Wealth and fulfillment of desires give us worldly happiness only whereas nobility is said to give heavenly happiness, as its span is longer in comparison to other two. Our desires whether those are approved by the scriptures or against the scriptural sanctions, their fulfillment gives us pleasure for sometime while the desires and actions that are against the scriptural sanctions bring disaster in our life and make our life a hell; we wanted happiness but the temporary sensual pleasure became the cause of misery and loss of harmony. While the desires and actions that are approved by the scriptures give us happiness and mental peace but once its span, be it short or long, is over it does not stay with us. For success in desires approved by the scriptures, we need the help of nobility and wealth, and for the success in desires barred by the scriptures, we also need the help of wealth. But all these three nobility, wealth and desires are only temporary in nature but the fourth one which is the main goal, i.e., liberation is eternal and for its success we need the help of nobility. That is the reason we need to do actions approved by the scriptures and we need nobility since these marks good impressions in our mind and this prepares us for the final goal. Again if we put the wealth for nobility and actions approved by the scriptures then this will also be beneficial for our growth. But we have to remember that all these three are temporary since they exhaust after giving their desired results. Even if we acquire the position of Lord Indra, the king of gods, by our noble deeds, then that too will come to an end one day. So intelligent ones consider this happiness as sorrow because even during the period of happiness there remains a fear of its end. Again without attachment and ego we cannot enjoy the happiness and also this is stored in our inherent nature as involvement; again aversion is always there with the attachment and ignorance is the mother of all these four. These are described as sufferings. According to Rṣi Patañjali, “*avidyā’smitārāgadveṣā’bhīniveśāḥ kleśāḥ*” (Ygs., 2.3), ignorance, ego, attachment, aversion, and inherent involvement are called sufferings. So only the fourth goal is the only goal, which is never eroded and is a state of bliss.

None Other will do: But how one will achieve the chief human goal that liberate us from the worldly bondage. This also requires self-effort like the other three. In the words of Bhagatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya,

*uddharedātmanātmānam magnam saṁsāravāridhau,
yogārūḍhātvaśādhyā samyagdarśananiṣṭhayā.* (Vkc., 9)

Save, *uddharet*, the self, *ātmanam*, through own effort, *ātmanā*, that has drowned, *magnam*, in the ocean of world, *saṁsāravāridhau*; attaining, *śādhyā*, the state of being established in yoga, *yogārūḍhatvam*, by sticking to equal vision (discriminating intellect and detachment), *samyagdarśananiṣṭhayā*.

The self-effort, the discriminating intellect, the detachment and by then being established in yoga is shown as the way for attaining the liberation. Again he says,

*ṛṇamocana kartārah pituḥ santi sutādayaḥ;
bandhamocanakartā tu svasmādanyo na kaścana.* (Ibid., 53)

Sons and others, *sutādayaḥ*, are there, *santi*, to repay the loan taken, *ṛṇamocana kartārah*, by the father, *pituḥ*, but to liberate from the bondage of world, *bandhamocanakartā tu*, there is no one other than the self, *svasmādanyo na kaścana*. Again he is telling,

*pathyamauśadhasevā ca kriyate yena rogiṇā;
ārogyasiddhirdrṣṭāsya nānyānuṣṭhita karmaṇā.* (Ibid., 55)

The patient, *rogiṇā*, by whom, *yena*, the prescribed diets, *pathyam*, and, *ca*, medicines, *auśadhasevā*, are taken, *kriyate*, it is seen he, *drṣṭāsya*, only is cured, *ārogyasiddhiḥ*, this is not done by the work of others, *nānyānuṣṭhita karmaṇā*.

So intelligent ones should benefit themselves by their self-efforts. Whether one wants ultimate human goal or other desires, self-effort is a must. So it is said,

*udyamena hi sidhyanti karyāṇi na manorathe,
na hi supta śimhasya praviśyanti mukhe mṛgā.*

The Works are done (aims are achieved), *sidhyanti karyāṇi*, only through the efforts, *udyamena hi*, not simply through desiring, *na manorathe*. The animals don't enter, *na hi praviśyanti mṛgā*, into the mouth of a sleeping lion, *supta śimhasya mukhe*.

Lion, the king of animals and all powerful among them if simply sleeps then it has to remain hungry, for its food it has to hunt the animals that are of lesser strength. Similarly, a capable person has to work for his goal, simply inner ability will not lead to success without efforts.

Ṛṣi Vaśiṣṭha Praised the Self-effort: One of the scriptures seen in high esteem for having the Knowledge is *Yogavāśiṣṭha* that contains discourses between Lord Rāma and his master, *guru*, Ṛṣi Vaśiṣṭha. The second chapter dealing in the context of behaviors of those seeking liberation, *mumukṣavyavahāra-prakaraṇa*,

the self-effort is praised and advised from *sarga-s* 4–9 (pts. 4–9), and this should be read by those seekers of liberation, *mumukṣu-s*. Some of the teachings from the scripture for ready references are as follows:

(i) When a person loosens the efforts as prescribed by scriptures then he falls to such a low state of suffering from poverty, diseases and bondage that for him a drop of water also becomes scarce. But one who acts according to the scriptures he attains such a high state per excel to his efforts that a kingdom of vast landmass covered by seas, mountains, cities and islands are not considered being enough. (ii) If a person wants something only in mind but not through the activities sanctioned by the scriptures his efforts are like that of a mad man; and takes him to the delusion, not to the success in human goals. (iii) When the results of past actions (of past lives), good or bad, are ready to yield fruits then it is called fate, *daiva*. (iv) The self-effort stemming from scriptural knowledge and association of noble beings should be such that it must win the bad effects, *prārabdha*, of past lives. (v) With positive self-efforts the negative effects of negative self-efforts of past lives should be won. (vi) Positive self-efforts give positive results and negative self-efforts give negative results. Other than the results of positive and negative self-efforts, there is nothing-called fate, *daiva* or *prārabdha*. (vii) One must save his soul from the ocean of world by eradicating the belief, “I am under the control of my fate and am not free to act” by the practice of scriptures and association with noble ones. (viii) The (negative) self-effort of the past life, *prārabdha*, and the (positive) self-effort of present life, *puṣārtha*, fights with each other, and the one, which is powerful, wins. (ix) Those who wait depending upon fate, such idle ones are their own enemies. They destroy their own four goals, viz., nobility, wealth, fulfillment of desires and liberation. (x) The self-effort is the form of efforts done by intellect, mind and organs of action (body), these attain goal. (xi) Guru Vṛhaspati is the master of gods due to the self-effort and Guru Śukrācārya is the master of demons due to the self-effort. (xii) This great sage Viśvāmitra has discarded the fate since long and became a Brahmin (one who knows the *brahman*) by self-effort and not through anything else.

Some Hold Only the Philosophy and Leave the Practice: Some persons versed in scriptures argue that what one can gain through actions since action is the cause of bondage. Veda says, “*jñānādeva tu kaivalyam*,” the One and Only State is achieved through the knowledge; “*ṛte jñānānna muktiḥ*,” without the knowledge there is no liberation.

Of course this is the final truth and this is not denied since the cause of all sufferings is the ignorance and the ignorance is eradicated through the Knowledge, but these are said in a higher state of spiritual practice. If we remain in lethargy, become inactive, idle, develop qualities of darkness, *tamas*; then do we receive knowledge? No. Sometimes a person is deluded to consider the inactiveness that is a result of qualities of darkness, *tamas*, as real noble qualities, *sattva*, since

apparent calmness is seen in inactiveness. We have to remember that lethargy is not calmness. Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *jñānam labdhvā parām śāntimacireṇādhiḡacchati* (Ś Bg., 4.39), achieving, *labdhvā*, the Knowledge, *jñānam*, one attains, *adhiḡacchati*, soon indeed, *acireṇa*, the Supreme, *parām*, Peace, *śāntim*. So the Knowledge is to be achieved. This needs the self-effort. But those who study Vedānta without being qualified for it, without having four practices that are preconditions for studying the Vedānta, they do this mistake. Such type of knowledge is not regarded as wisdom, *jñāna*, but as false appearance of knowledge, *jñānābhāsa*. These seekers hold only the philosophy and leave the practice.

Emergence of the Knowledge is Kriyārūpa: How the Knowledge emerges? It is said, “*jñānāmutpadyate puṁsa kṣayātpāpasya karmaṇaḥ*,” when the actions of evil deeds are finished then the Knowledge appears, and through knowledge there is success in the final human goal, liberation. Again, “*dharmeṇa pāpamaḡpunadati*,” through noble actions the evil deeds, results of evil deeds, are countered. That is the reason for success in achieving liberation we have to resort to performance of noble deeds, and for this we need self-effort.

Only through the knowledge, the bondage of world loosens, and success in knowledge is based on the form of activities, *kriyārūpa*. This is known as activities of action, *karmakriyā* and activities of knowledge, *jñānakriyā*. By doing this activity, *kriyā*, the practitioner will enter into the Golden-womb of Unmanifest, the Hiraṇyagarbha, the Īvara. Hiraṇyagarbha is chief *prāṇa*. This is the sum of all the powers of knowledge and all the powers of action. This is Thread the Self, *sūtrātmā*, found in all beings.

Without knowing Thread the Self, *sūtrātmā*, we cannot counter our body since we have our wrong identity, i.e., identifying our form with body. Again without countering the body we cannot counter the world, the outer visions; and without countering the world, *samsāra*, we cannot be established in the Principle that we are. So to have the knowledge from our experience we must know Thread the Self, *sūtrātmā*, that is within everybody and continuous. Bookish knowledge will not give us this knowledge, only we know intellectually. Through intellectual knowledge one can become an expert in arguments, can be able to arrange a livelihood, this may even be luxurious but he will not be established in the Principle. Knowing Thread the Self is the form of action, *kriyārūpa*, and that is the Kriyā-yoga. We may speak it in any other names but we have to do the same, it is Worship of the Prāṇa, *prāṇopāsanā*. We can reach up to Thread the Self, *Prāṇa*, and this (Prāṇa) is also the first title of Brahman the Beyond. Brahman the Beyond that is without any title is not known to our mind and intellect, which has no name, *anāma*. Only to give us understandings, the scriptures have given That a name; we cannot describe That. By practice of yoga when our intellect holds the truth in our experience called *ṛtambharā prajñā* then only we can know the Self. And all these happen only through the self-effort. Whatever is spoken,

as fate is only the result of our past self-efforts, whether our fate is good or bad, is according to the results of our own actions. If we resort to noble actions now, we can counter the effects of our sinful activities done in past lives and for this we need very strong self-effort. None shall do it for us, only one can show us the way, we have to walk on our own.

KRIYĀ-YOGA HELPS IN FOLLOWING RIGHTEOUSNESS

Present Scenario: If we follow the righteousness then our life will be simple, nice and happy; peace, prosperity and goodwill will be established in our society. But it is a matter of regret that in the present day society we feel a decline in the performance of righteousness and unholy activities are found increasing everywhere. Some want to earn money through corruptions, bribery and black-marketing. A mass of young generation is being deviated from its path being addicted to alcohol, smoking ganja, bidi, and cigarettes, chewing tobacco and other types of drugs. The big cities of our country are blindly following some wrong behaviors of western pattern, and not their positive work culture. Unfortunately some television channels glorify adultery, sex and violence that are opposed to Indian culture and human civilization, and these are directly reaching Indian villages through these channels. State administration has no control over these, may be the laws are there but these are ineffective due to non-implementation. Sensitive people are in frustration and in tension. For a large mass of the present young generation, Śrīrāma, Śrīkr̥ṣṇa, Mahātmā Gāndhī, Bhagavān Buddha, and Swāmī Vivekānanda are not taken as ideals whereas film stars, cricketers and present day corrupt politicians have become role models. Here only the glamour counts, and we all are responsible for these situations. If we want to save our society and rich cultural heritage we must change this situation. We have to leave the actions that are not approved by the scriptures and obey the rules and regulations according to our socio-cultural and religious practices, not dogmas and doctrines but those are of eternal moral values. The solution to the present problems lies in yoga. We know what is right and what is wrong but we fail to perform the righteousness, we come under the grasp of allurements. This is the reason we need control over our mind. By practice of yoga we can do that. The same is also applicable to the all other parts of the globe as human beings are made with the same principle.

Equanimity through Prāṇākarma: In *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* (2.48) the Lord has said, “*samatvaṁ yoga ucyate,*” the equanimity of mind is called yoga. When a mind does not create cravings and aversions on a person, thing or place then the mind remains in equanimity. To bring the mind to that state the practices we practice are known as the Kriyā-yoga, many other names are also given but names does not matter. Our eyes see, ears hear, tongue tastes, nose smells and skin receive sensations. Similarly we speak by mouth, work by hands and walk on legs

and all these activities are controlled by our mind, the mind also thinks and analyses. The thoughts of our minds are approved and determined by our intellect. But all these activities whether it is physical or mental are based on the activities of our *prāṇa*, the vital energy, run by the vital energy and will be stopped if the vital activities are stopped. So it is said that action of all the actions are the action of the life-force. Yoga means to perform this action of the life-force in a proper manner, and hence according to *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* (2.50), “*yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam.*” But how we shall know our *prāṇa*, the vital power? For that we have to take the help of our breath, *prāṇavāyu*; we have to take the support of our inhalation and exhalation. To perform this action in correct manner is called *prāṇāyāma*. This is the process of merging the exhalation, *prāṇa*, in the inhalation, *apāna*, and the inhalation, *apāna*, in the exhalation, *prāṇa*; and by practicing this activity when the movements of exhalation and inhalation are stopped then the practitioner becomes expert in the breath practice, *prāṇāyāma parāyana*. At that time the movements of mind are also halted, mind becomes devoid of thoughts and there are no attachments and hatreds. This is the state of *cittavṛtti nirodhaḥ*, no thought state. This is called samādhi with alternatives, *savikalpa samādhi*, because the seeds remain, when again breath starts moving, the movements of mind also start, and again the mind starts creating attachments and hatreds. But the impressions of this “no thought state” remains in sub-consciousness and we have to attain such no thought states again and again by our practice. Rṣi Patañjali said, “*nirvicāravaiśāradye’adhyātmaprasādaḥ*” (*Ygs.*, 1.47), when the practitioner becomes a specialist in no thought state he receives bliss of the Self. Then only his intellect can hold the Truth by experience, he has wisdom, and his discriminating intellect becomes sharp. Doubts and delusions will not be there in the mind and then he will enter into the state of seedless samādhi without alternative, *nirvīja nirvikalpa samādhi*. He gets success in yoga, and attains equanimity. This is the highest state of yoga.

The First Step is Righteousness, Yama: But the first step in yoga is performance of rules, restraints or righteousness known as *yama*. The performance of *yama* is a must for all the sections of human civilization irrespective of *jāti*, viz., religion, caste, color, language, age, and sex; *deśa*, country; and *kāla*, era, and this is the great austerity covering all sections of humans; “*jātideśakālasamayā, nvacchinnāḥ sārvaḥoumā mahābratam*” (*ibid.*, 2.31). The five restraints are nonviolence, *ahimsā*, truth, *satya*, non-stealing, *asteya*, sexual restraint, *brahmacarya*, and not to gather many or coveting things, *aparigraha*.

Nonviolence, Ahimsā: Nonviolence means to give up violence, not to injure or kill, the ancient form of violence is to feed with the flesh of animals by killing them. But nonviolence is a boarder term, this means not to give pain to anybody by the activities of body, mind and speech, and not to find fault with others. This is developing a feeling of amity towards all. When someone harms other by

killing or injuring this is violence, also motivating for or approving such actions done by others is also violence. The degree of violence depends on the degree of cruelty involved in the act, may be the conspirator or planner of a violence is much more cruel than a less educated executer. The root to violence in animal nature is related to food and body, which has come to humans. Since it is related to *annamayakośa*, the food sheath basically, the negative effect of our Mūlādhāra *cakra*, the coccyx center, is violence and positive effect is nonviolence. Though basically violence is a negative effect of Mūlādhāra, since cruelty is involved here and cruelty is a negative effect of Mañipūra, the lumber center, which is related to fire element, so violence also has relation with Mañipūra. This negative effect of coccyx center also spreads to other centers, at Svādhiṣṭhāna, the sacrum center this becomes adultery; at Mañipūra this becomes theft and at Anāhata, the dorsal center, this becomes jealousy. When we use harsh words, defame someone or speak untruth this is also violence and this has its effect on Svādhiṣṭhāna, the sacrum center, and Viśuddha, the cervical center. If we have ill will in our mind against anyone this violence affect all the lower five centers. The coccyx center is related to the earth element and the food sheath. This controls our life related to food, medicines, longevity, finance, vehicles, and the material world. The effect of violence here disturbs our life to the above-related matters though we may be having wealth and continuing a luxurious life. In animals we find collection of food, protection of body, fear and competition for sex are the cause of violence however the humans are holding those characteristics still today and even enlarged the arena of violence for name, fame and power. This is the reason our life is becoming a hell; a little mental imbalance within us is giving rise to violence. Due to it we become the enemy of others later but first we become our own enemy, we become the enemy of our life and life-force. Till we have not established nonviolence in our coccyx center we will be under the influence of our enemies within. Ṛṣi Patañjali says, “*ahimsāpratiṣṭhāyām tatsannidhau vairatyāgaḥ*” (Ygs., 2.35), being established in nonviolence results in cessation of hostility. Our inner love creates love in the surroundings and our inner hatred creates hatred in the surroundings. This is the eternal rule be it matter or the mind, every action or feeling has equal and opposite reaction. So one who is established in nonviolence, all other beings approaching him cease to be hostile towards him. Such a person is established in deep love. He has feeling of oneness with everybody. This state arises after attaining seedless samādhi. One has to practice all the steps of yoga, not that one has to practice restraints first and then breath practices etc. All the steps help in growth of each other; they are both complementary and supplementary to each other. This success of others being non-hostile is the culmination of results of nonviolence but before that the practitioner gets the bliss of inner peace, and the inner enemies do not attack him. Since violence is the cause of mental disturbances, one becomes his own enemy. Once inner stability

is established in us then we do not create inner enemies. Since stability is the quality of the earth element, and Mūlādhāra *cakra* and its seed sound are related to the earth element, meditation at Mūlādhāra *cakra* helps the practitioner to overcome violence. If we obey nonviolence in totality then automatically the four other restraints will be performed as this influences other restraints in higher centers. Similarly we have to understand the positive and negative effects of sacrum center, lumbar center, dorsal center and cervical center for truth, non-stealing, sexual restraint and contentment with minimum respectively, and their influences from one center to others. In short we can say controlling our ego makes us observing the five rules successfully.

Effect of One Center Influences the Other: Here a question arises, how the positive or the negative effect of one center influences the other centers? Our physical body is made up of five elements, viz., earth, water, fire, air, and ether, these are gross elements. The subtle ones are their essences, viz., smell, taste, vision, sensation and sound and these are the five objects on which our mind wanders. For this we have five types of actions of our mind, viz., proof, *pramāna*, catastrophe, *viparyaya*, alternative, *vikalpa*, sleep, *nidrā*, and memory, *smṛti*. Out of these actions of our mind, the five mains that are not painful they are nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, sexual restraint and contentment and the five mains that are painful are violence, falsehood, stealing, adultery, and wants. We have to counter the painful actions of mind with those of non-painful ones. Then our extrovert mind will become introvert. And the places of these fives are in our spinal column in the energy centers, viz., coccyx, sacrum, lumbar, thoracic and cervical. But our body is not made up of pure elements since each of these five elements are mixed with the other four called a process of mixing of the five, *pañcikaṛaṇa*. That is the reason in the coccyx center though influence of the earth element is more there are also influences of other four elements. Similarly in the sacrum center though the influence of the water element is more there are also influences of other elements. In this way we have to understand the division for influence of sense-organs, sense objects, actions of mind, *virtis*, rules (restraints), *yama-s*, and regulations (observances), *niyama-s*.

Truth, Satya: Under the purview of truthfulness comes not to speak lie, not to deceive others, speaking truth, speaking righteousness that is pleasant to others and do not create anxiety in others, and not to speak in a way that generates quarrelling. Truth should be learned from the scriptures, from the *ṛṣis*, and not from fictions nor from the so-called social engineers who have a selfish motive. Truth should be learned by contemplation and by developing the discriminating intellect. It is truthfulness that makes our relations strong, it is very important to understand the unity of our life force with that of others then only the establishment of truth is possible. The sacrum center, Svādhiṣṭhāna, is full of life, water is life, it is the life sheath, the negative effect of this center develops into falsehood and

the positive effect strengthens truth. The sacrum center is related to the water element so the actions of mind related to this center are fluid and more sensitive in nature. This is related to love, affection, emotion, sex and human relations and this is the reason the truth is a must here. One, who resorts to cheating in relations, it may be between husband and wife, between brothers or between friends, the cheater pushes his life into furious darkness of frustration. To be established in truth we have to meditate at the sacrum center. Svādhiṣṭhāna is related to water element that is soothing, and truthfulness is soothing since it establishes love. Upaniṣads say, *satyameva jayate nānṛtam, satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ* (*Mu. U, 3.1.6*), truth alone wins, not the untruth, the path of *devayāna* is laid by truth. Truth is the path of *devayāna*, vehicle to the world of gods or immortals. This is called the Northern Route, *uttarāyaṇa mārga*. In yogic practices when the life-force ascends from the Mūlādhāra to the Ājñā *cakra*s and establishes in cavity of the heart in the house of Brahman, *brahmaṣurī*, above Ājñā *cakra* then that ascending is called the northern route. One remains in *prāṇa*, not in the mind that is subjected to falsehood. For that one has to practice the *kriyā* proper technique of the first *kriyā*. Another aspect is that when one speaks more there are chances of speaking untruth, so for practice of truthfulness one should speak less. The practice of *khecari mudrā* taught in the Kriyā-yoga is best for this. This helps in preservation of the life energy and observing truthfulness. Truthfulness in speech is related to Viśuddha *cakra*. *Khecari mudrā* and meditation at the Viśuddha corrects this. Ṛṣi Patañjali says, *satyapraṭiṣṭhāyām kriyāphalāśrayatvam* (*Ygs., 2.36*), once truthfulness is attained the results of *kriyā* manifests (manifests truth in words). Results of the spiritual practice or *prāṇakarma* are to be established in the life-force, *prāṇa*. The Prāṇa is the Truth and this is a homogeneous principle, not separate from one individual to other. This manifestation results in materialization of a noble wish or the words pronounced since such a person cannot utter untruth, will power of such a person is conveyed in his speech and resulting in fructification of words by blocking the contrary thoughts there.

Non-stealing, Asteya: Not to steal others property and money, not to make an income by deceiving others and by unfair means like bribery, black marketing, evading taxes, taking commission from the work for which you are paid or it is a moral obligation for you; all these come under non-stealing. One should not make an income violating laws, so violence and stealing are same. This is also untruth. Even the law of a country may permit such an activity but this is not allowed by the scriptures and against morality. Also one has to become truthful in his dealings and should not deceive in any means. Even having greed in mind for others property and wishing to have relation with other's husband or wife is also stealing, one should not develop such thoughts in mind, and then it is non-stealing. The negative effect of the lumbar center, Maṇipūra, develops into stealing and positive effect helps in non-stealing. This center is full of mind, this is mind

sheath and the mind is always quick, unstable; it does not want to stick to one object. Like a thief it slips away from one object to other, then to third and fourth. First it creates desires and when dissatisfied in fulfilling it, it creates anger. The negative effect of the fire element here makes the anger powerful and steals the discriminating intellect. Then our mind steals everything from us. That is the reason we have to establish non-stealing here, otherwise our mind will always rob us and we will always remain in mental imbalances. We have to meditate at the lumbar center to eradicate these mental illnesses. Since greed is involved in stealing this is a negative effect of the coccyx center. So meditation at Mañipūra along with meditation at Mūlādhāra helps. Rṣi Patañjali says, *asteyaḥpratiṣṭhāyām sarvaratnopasthānam* (Ygs., 2.37), once non-stealing is established all the jewels appear. Jewel is best of everything. Ordinarily we see that people feel fortunate to offer all their material needs to the yogis. That is an ordinary achievement. Meaning of Mañipūra is house of jewels. Jewels are in our mind. Once mind is in harmony, we receive so many jewels in the form of peace, bliss, knowledge, creativity and so many things. Mind is absorbed in the *prāṇa* losing its fluctuations, so we have to do the *prāṇakarma*.

Sexual Restraint, Brahmacharya: This is also called continence. There are eight types of coupling described, viz., remembering or thinking, *smaraṇa*, foreplay or even joking, *keli*, singing the glory or talking about, *kīrtana*, approaching or looking with intention, *parokṣana*, speaking or secret talk, *śuddha bhāṣana*, making a vow or resolve, *saṅkalpa*, trying or attempt, *adhyavasāya*, and the act or execution, *kriyā*; one should avoid all the eight modes of sex, this means by body, mind and speech one should perform sexual restraint, *brahmacharya*, though often *brahmacharya* is translated as celibacy. One should not see the scenes that arouse sexual passion, should not listen to such talks, should not read such literature, should not bring such type of thoughts in the mind and should not take drugs or other things that are responsible for arousal. Before marriage one should not have sexual life and those leading a family life should be faithful to their partners and should have sex as per the sanction of the scriptures. The scriptures have given relaxation to the married persons so that they can have sex for procreation (not for pleasure). Also in some scriptures, a man is allowed to have sex once in a month to respect the monthly cycle of his wife, and such married persons are regarded as *brahmacārī* (one who observes continence). But for those who are in ardent pursuit of Knowledge for them strict abstinence is required. This is not a forced abstinence rather this abstinence is due to strong desire for the Knowledge. In *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* it is said, “*satyena labhyastapasā hyeṣa ātmā, samyagjñānena brahmacharyeṇa nityam*” (Mu.U, 3.1.5), the Self is attained verily through constant practice of the truthfulness, austerities, adequate knowledge and continence. This means all the restraints are to be practiced along with truthfulness and sexual restraint. The negative impact of Anāhata, the thoracic center gives rise to

sexual exuberance whereas the positive impact helps in sexual restraint. This center is the seat of intellect and hence also the throne of ego. The real *brahmacarya* will be established when we shall put our Divine Self in the place of ego, since *brahmacarya* means performing the Brahman. Here at this center the extrovert effect of air element establishes the ego and the introvert effect establishes the Lord. For that reason we have to take the help of our breath. The preponderance of this ego or "I thought" is the father of violence, falsehood, stealing, sexual exuberance and wants. So we have to resort to practices that balance our breath. We have to meditate at the dorsal center, Anāhata. This has been said in a broader prospect of *brahmacarya*, but only for sexual restraint there is also the effect of Svādhiṣṭhāna since the sexual organs are related to this center. Ṛṣi Patañjali says, *brahmacaryapraṭiṣṭhāyām vīryalābhah* (Ygs., 2.38), once continence is established, vigor is acquired. Practice of sexual restraint prevents loss of vitality and vigor is achieved. This restraint is a pure state of mind, hence accumulates the vital energy and thereby enhancing physical strength to various powers of mind ending with the Knowledge. The Vedas sing the glory of a *brahmacārī* in various ways,

*pūrvō jāto brahmaṇo brahmacārī dharmam vasānastapasodatiṣṭhat,
tasmājātam brāhmaṇa brahma jyeṣṭham devāśca sarve amṛtena sākam.*

(AV, 11.7.5)

Before being a Brahmin (one who knows the *brahman* is a Brahmin), *pūrvō jāto brahmaṇo*, the spiritual practitioner is a *brahmacārī*, celibate, ascends above with austerities and righteousness, *dharmam vasānastapasodatiṣṭhat*. Then he becomes a Brahmin, *tasmājātam brāhmaṇa*, and remains in the company of the Supreme Brahman and all the immortals, *brahma jyeṣṭham devāśca sarve amṛtena sākam*.

*brahmacaryeṇa tapasā devā mṛtyumapādhnata,
indro ha brahmacaryeṇa devebhyah svaśrābharat.* (Ibid., 11.7.19)

By the austerities in the form of continence, *brahmacaryeṇa tapasā*, gods countered the death, *devā mṛtyumapādhnata*. Indra verily by the continence, *indro ha brahmacaryeṇa*, is able to give effulgence (kingdom of light) to the gods, *devebhyah svaśrābharat*.

*brahmacārī brahma bhrājat bibharti tasmin devā adhi viśve samotāḥ,
praṇāpānau janayannād vyānam vācam mano hṛdayam brahma medhām.*

(Ibid., 11.7. 24)

A *brahmacārī* holds the Glowing Brahman (or Knowledge), *brahmacārī brahma bhrājat bibharti*, so on him involved are all the gods of the universe, *tasmin devā adhi viśve samotāḥ*, he manifests exhalations (*praṇa*), inhalations (*apāna*) also, *praṇāpānau janayannād*, vital activities in the body, *vyānam*, speech, *vācam*, mind, *manaḥ*, knowledge, *hṛdayam brahma*, intellect, *medhām*.

Non-Acceptance (Contentment with Minimum), *Aparigraha*: To reduce our wants and not to collect more items of enjoyment is known as *aparigraha*, we should be satisfied with minimum needs. This will help in proper distribution of items in the society and this will give us satisfaction, a person will be ornamented with quality to donate. Not to waste the things, not to spend lavishly, accepting that everyone even the animals have a right to the resources of the nature are also *aparigraha*. The same is also for our mental needs. This is the real version of socialism profounded by our sages much before the existence of the idea of socialism in western world. The negative effect of the cervical center gives rise to wants and the positive effect reduces the wants. There is influence of the ether element on the cervical center, Viśuddha, and here reducing wants gives rise to bliss whereas wants give rise to delusion. Wants give only temporary pleasure; this is delusion that leaves us in the ocean of sorrow and frustration in the next moment. We have to meditate at the cervical center for contentment. Rṣi Patañjali says, *aparigrahashairye janmakathantāsambodhaḥ* (Ygs., 2.39), once non-acceptance is established the knowledge of past and future existences are achieved. With practice of non-acceptance detachment towards sense-objects and detachment towards body develops in a practitioner. This finally results in inner enquiry of “Who am I?” “What was I?” “What is this body?” “What shall be I in future?” This inner enquiry along with the practice of *prāṇakarma* results in the Knowledge at samādhi. He goes beyond the fifth energy center and even beyond the sixth energy center. He knows the inner rule of the creation.

Non-addiction: Here I will like to speak another thing. That is not to be addicted to alcohol, smoking and/or any drugs like marijuana, opium, hashish, cocaine, and tobacco, etc. These things kill our humanity, suppresses our consciousness and we are not able to take right decisions. An addicted person can resort to violence, falsehood, stealing, adultery and all bad things like a machine run by a devil. Our human evolution is based on the further development of consciousness and the seat of this consciousness is our central nervous system, viz., brain, spinal cord and nerves. The drugs have a very bad impact on them, viz., drowsiness, depression, exuberance, hallucination and so on, and it takes us back to animalism. Therefore to perform righteousness one should not touch these and if attached to these then he has to leave such drugs forever. It is a matter of regret that many of the present day masters of different traditions including some of the Kriyā-yoga tradition are not campaigning for *yama* and *niyama* among their disciples.

Learn to Walk in the Path of Righteousness: If we meditate at Ājñā *cakra*, the place between pituitary and pineal, along with the meditation at lower five *cakras*, we will be able to perform all the five rules. This meditation is based on *prāṇakarma*. This meditation technique is taught in Kriyā-yoga. First we have to make a resolve to observe the five rules and then we have to learn the Kriyā-yoga

meditation technique and practice it with faith and devotion so that we will be able in following the rules. Along with the practice of *prāṇākarma* and meditation, another important aspect is contemplating on opposite thoughts of the inhibitors. Ṛṣi Patañjali says, *vitarkabādhane pratipakṣabhāvanam* (Ygs., 2.33), when inhibited by perverse thoughts the opposites should be contemplated. It is natural that due to earlier habits of past lives perverse thoughts supporting violence etc. can emerge in the mind from time to time and if not controlled will lead into such actions. In that case opposite thoughts should counter these. We should find faults with those violence etc. and see that how they take one to hell and make our life full of misery and discard them. Then our life will be successful and our society will transform into a heaven. We shall learn to walk in the path of righteousness.

KRIYĀ-YOGA IS SELF-RESTRAINT, SAṂYAMA: THE SPIRITUAL PATH
IS FROM SELF-RESTRAINT TO SELF-RESTRAINT

The “da” Syllable in Upaniṣad: I was a school student by that time; it was 1975 and I was staying in the school hostel of a government run school in the state of Odisha (Orissa). The Superintendent of our hostel was Śrī Nityānanda Nāyak. He was a teacher who loved the students and was loved by the students, and in him all the qualities of a good teacher was present. One day to the inhabitants of the hostel he told one story, “The three sons of Lord Prajāpati, the lord of creatures, viz., gods, humans, and demons went to him and stayed there with austerities. Then gods requested the Father to teach them and to them Lord Prajāpati said the syllable, “*da*” and enquired if they understood it or not. Gods answered in affirmative and replied that the Father asked them for *damana*, to have control over the sense-organs. Since gods are fond of enjoying they understood it as control over sense enjoyments. In the same way humans and demons also asked for teaching and the same syllabi “*da*” was taught to them. Humans understood it as *dāna*, to donate; since humans are greedy by nature they understood it to leave their greed and develop quality to donate. Demons understood “*da*” as *dayā*, to be kind; since demons are cruel by nature they understood it to develop kindness. In this way the same syllable was understood differently according to the mental tendencies.” This is the story from the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, pt. II, chap. 5, “Prajāpatyabrāhmaṇa.” In *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* (16.21) it is said,

*trividham narakasyedam dvāram nāśanamātmanah;
kāmaḥ krodhastathālobhastasmādetat trayam tyajet.*

There are three gates to the hell, *trividham narakasyedam dvāram*, to ruin our soul, *nāśanam ātmanah*, they are desires, anger, and greed, *kāmaḥ krodhaḥ tathā lobhaḥ*, and therefore one should leave these three, *tasmāt etat trayam tyajet*.

Samyama: After the above story our teacher said us, “Like the Lord Brahmā I shall pronounce one word for you, you understand according to your state. The

word is 'samyama,' the self-restraint." We do not have much understanding about *samyama* during those days. Since as students our work was to study, we understood to counter the mental hindrances in our study as *samyama*, the self-restraint. One who was lazy and was passing time in sleeping, he understood it to leave lethargy, and one who was fickle in nature and talkative, who was after the other boys, he understood it to leave these, to be stable and concentrate on study. Since we all had stepped into our early adolescence we understood *samyama* as *brahmacarya*, the sexual restraint. The atmosphere in the hostel was like this. All the inhabitants are practicing some yogic postures, *yogāsana*-s, and some breath techniques, *prāṇāyāma*. Everyday we used to recite one chapter from *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*. Some are attached with some spiritual organizations and were practicing the way of worshiping of that according to understanding of their age and were reading literatures thereon. To whichever organization one may be attached to but for everyone at that age Swāmī Vivekānanda was the hero. Since this was a government school hostel, these are not mandatory for our daily routine, but still then such was the atmosphere. In those days our understanding of *samyama* was *brahmacarya* and understanding of *brahmacarya* was to retain the semen.

In spiritual practice, *samyama* is of utmost importance. Even for the peace in our family life and for elevation in social life we need self-restraint. Let us understand what *samyama* is. *Samyama* is combination of *sam* and *yama*; *sam* means alike, similar. So which is similar to *yama* is *samyama*. *Samyama* and *yama* have similar meaning. *Yama* means to control, it is self-restraint. The "da" syllabi told to gods, humans and demons by the Lord Prajāpati was self-restraint in real sense; to control the desires were *damana*, to control the anger was *dayā* and to control the greed was *dāna*. Everything that is related to control the evil tendencies of our mind is self-restraint. According to *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* (16.6), *dvau bhūtasargau loke-smindaiva āsura eva ca*, in this world there are only two types of humans, gods and demons. Humans with the divine qualities are called gods and humans with the demonic qualities are called demons. In *Īsopaniṣad* (3) it is said, *asuryā nāma te lokā andhena tamasā-vṛtāḥ*, those worlds of demons are covered by blinding darkness; here gods, humans and demons are all referred as demons. One who is in duality, who is in the ignorance, is called *asura*, a demon. In this logic the aforesaid gods, humans and demons are all demons. All the humans are initially demons, when we would establish ourselves in non-duality, in the Self and would be free from the ego then only we would call ourselves as God. For that we have to leave the demonic properties and acquire divine properties as a first step. That is *yama*, which is *samyama*.

Yama: The first *samyama* is *yama*. This is the first limb of the eight limbs of the yoga illustrated by Rṣi Patañjali. This is, *ahiṃsāsatyāsteyabrahmacaryā-parigrahā yamāḥ* (*Ygs.*, 2.30), nonviolence, truth, non-stealing, sexual restraint and contentment with minimum are said to be *yama*-s. According to Rṣi Yājñavalkya the *yama*-s are ten, they are,

*brahmacarya dayā kṣāntirdānaṁ satyamakalkatā,
ahiṁsā-steyamādhurye damaśceti yamāḥ smṛtā. (Ya. S, 3.313)*

Sexual restraint, *brahmacarya*, kindness, *dayā*, forbearance, *kṣāntiḥ*, charity, *dāna*, truth, *satya*, purity, *akalka*, nonviolence, *ahiṁsā*, non-stealing, *asteya*, sublime rhythm, *mādhurya*, control of organs, *damaḥ*, these are called *yama*-s in scriptures, *ca iti yamāḥ smṛtā*.

Whether these are ten or five, it is all the same. In the five the ten is included and the ten is the expansion of the five. The first *yama* is to perform these *yama*-s. As per *Amarakośa*, *śarīra sādhanāpekṣam nityam yatkarma tadyamaḥ*, that action is *yama*, *yatkarma tadyamaḥ*, which is expected to be performed by body, *śarīra sādhanāpekṣam*, regularly, *nityam*. Here body also includes the subtle body, i.e., the mind.

Samyama is Control of the Senses: How shall we acquire this *samnyama*? Lord Vāsudeva has explained the process,

*śrotrādīnīndriyāṅyanye samyamāgniṣu juhvati,
śabdādīnviṣayānyanya indriyāgniṣu juhvati. (Ś Bg., 4.26)*

Others offer their senses of hearing etc., *śrotrādīnīndriyāṅyanye juhvati*, into the fires of self-restraint, *samyamāgniṣu*. Some others again offer objects of perception like sound etc., *śabdādīnviṣayānyanya juhvati*, into the fires of senses, *indriyāgniṣu*.

Here the self-restraint or *samyama* is the sacrificial fire, and we have to sacrifice the five senses of perceptions, viz., ears, skin, eyes, tongue, and nose into that fire. Again it is said in to the fire of senses; we have to oblate five objects of perception, viz., sound, touch, vision, taste, and smell. First we have to control over five sense-organs, and then we shall be able to offer five senses into them that are already in control. This means we shall only intake those objects of senses that are acceptable according to the scriptures and shall not accept those prohibited ones. For example, we shall accept the sounds those are soothing to the mind, and reject the ones those create disturbances and hankerings; this means we shall leave attachments to those sounds that are detrimental to the harmony of mind. Here in the above verse by restraint of senses of hearing etc. though we understand the control of five sense-organs, this also includes the control of five organs of actions, viz., speech, hands, legs, organ of procreation and organ of digestion and fecal excretion. And again the control of the eleventh organ, i.e., the mind is of utmost importance; this was spoken in the next verse. All these are to be restrained. Then only we shall be able to observe the five *yama*-s described by Ṛṣi Patañjali, viz., non-violence, truth, etc.

Samyama is Developing the Discriminating Intellect: Nowadays people often talk about freedom and rights etc., and some understand these as a license to do anything and everything they want. But we have to understand that we all are bound within a boundary, this boundary is human values, viz., scriptural values,

social values and family values. If we break these values we shall encroach into others, rights, we shall harm the freedom of others. Even if the harmed ones tolerate these but still then these would produce counter effects on us. Sir Isaac Newton's law on matter that every action has an equal and opposite reaction is also applicable in case of the subtlest matter, i.e., the mind. It may so happen that we may not recognize it on that moment but later it is recognized. Even some person with a dull intellect, here dull intellect means not mentally retarded but a strong ego bound personality, may not be able to recognize this in his life times but is there any greater shock than this that he is unable to overcome this ignorance. Again Lord Vāsudeva says,

*sarvāñīndriyakarmāṇi prāṇakarmāṇi cāpare,
ātmasaṁyamayogāgnau juhvati jñānadīpīte. (Ś Bg., 4.27)*

Others, *apare*, sacrifice, *juhvati*, all the functions of their organs, *sarvāñīndriyakarmāṇi*, and the functions of vital airs, *prāṇakarmāṇi ca*, into the fire of yoga named self-restraint, *ātmasaṁyamayogāgnau*, lamped by the knowledge, *jñānadīpīte*.

This is the next advanced state than that described in the preceding verse. Self-restraint is called the fire of yoga, *yogāgni*; this is the form of yoga. This fire is kindled by the knowledge, i.e., the discriminating intellect. For the fire of self-restraint, the discriminating intellect is the sacrificial ghee, the butter oil. To this fire one has to offer all the works done by the sense-organs, organs of actions, the mind and the intellect, and also the activities of vital airs, means all the physiological processes going on in the body. This means all our physical actions, physiological actions, and perceptions by senses, mental and intellectual actions are to be offered in the fire of self-restraint. All these actions are to be controlled by the discriminating intellect and depending upon the status of the practitioner this will go up to the merger of all actions in the Self when all the activities of vital airs and the mind are stopped and only the Self remains. This indicates to the steps of *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*.

Saṁyama is Control of Vital Airs, i.e., Prāṇakriyā: The Lord is describing these offerings as *yajña*. From the offerings of material objects, *dravyayajña*, to the practice of knowledge, *jñānayajña*, though all comes under the category of *yajña* (Ś Bg., 4.28), the Lord specifically explains the *yajña* named as *prāṇakarma* or *prāṇāyāma* in the next verse.

*apāne juhvati prāṇam prāṇe-pānam tathāpare,
prāṇāpānagatī ruddhvā prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ. (Ś Bg., 4.29)*

Others, *apare*, pour, *juhvati*, the act of exhalation into that of inhalation, *apāne prāṇam*, and the act of inhalation into that of exhalation, *prāṇe-pānam tathā*. When the motion of inhalation and exhalation is halted, *prāṇāpānagatī*

ruddhvā, then they become established in control of the vital airs, *prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ*.

These offerings of act of exhalation and act of inhalation are referred as *recaka* and *pūraka*. In Buddhism similar technique is mentioned as *ānāpāna sati*, yogis said this as *prāṇāpāna smṛti* and *prāṇa vikṣaṇā*. In English this is said as breathing awareness. But here in this verse what has been aimed by offering the act of exhalation and offering the act of inhalation, the *prāṇāpāna smṛti* or *ānāpāna sati* is the second part of it. In this second part the practitioner practices as an observer. He keeps attention on breath, the breath is neither made long nor short, nor the speed of the breath is accelerated or decreased. But here we have to remember that the Lord has used the term *juhvati*, He is asking us to offer or sacrifice the exhalation and the inhalation. This means we have to do it actively, as a doer. First we have to do this as a doer and secondly as an observer, so first we have to do the act of exhalation and inhalation. We have to draw and expel our breath. To this Ṛṣi Patañjali has said as, *pracchardana vidhāraṇābhāyām vā prāṇasya* (Ygs., 1.34), this is *pracchardana* and *vidhāraṇa* of breath. Extended exhalation in one rhythm is called *pracchardana*. Though commentators put *vidhāraṇa* as holding out breath after exhalation but this is not so, *vidhāraṇa* is automatic holding of breath. Here *pracchardana* or extended exhalation includes extended inhalation and doing so the practitioner attains breathless state. This is the kriyā-proper technique of first-kriyā in the Kriyā-yoga. Some say this as *kuṇḍalinī prāṇāyāma*, *kriyākuṇḍalinī prāṇāyāma*, *ujjayī prāṇāyāma*, prāṇic breathing, and cobra breathing etc., but all these are though similar but not same. There are some differences and a minor difference changes the form of *kriyā*. One has to learn this from his master or pathfinder. By doing the action of breath as a doer one will come to the state of an observer and then one will come to the state of witness. That is the state of being established in breath mastery, *prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ*. Here the motion of exhalation and inhalation is halted, the mind is also halted, and this is the state of *kevala kumbhaka*, automatic holding of the breath. To this Ṛṣi Patañjali says, *tasmin sati śvāsapraśvāsayorgativicchedaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ* (ibid., 2.49), after perfection in that (referring to perfection of postures here), *tasmin sati*, the motion of exhalation and inhalation being halted, *śvāsapraśvāsayorgativicchedaḥ*, is called *prāṇāyāma*. This is suspension of movement of outgoing and incoming breaths.

Again the Lord says, *apare niyatāhārāḥ prāṇānprāṇeṣu juhvati* (Ś Bg., 4.30), others having regulated their diets, *apare niyatāhārāḥ*, pour their vital airs into the vital airs, *prāṇānprāṇeṣu juhvati*. From this it is understood that to become an expert in the breath mastery, there are different stages of breathing techniques, *prāṇakriyā*. This refers to higher *kriyā* techniques. One has to learn these from his master, *guru*, and practice. All these are called *yajña*, the sacrifices, and the fire of these sacrifices is self-restrain. Here the Lord has not said no to the material sacrifices, *dravyayajña*; a person has to choose the practice according to his state.

A student studying in primary school is a student and one engaged in research is also a student but there are a lot of differences. Again, all these actions totally culminate in knowledge, *sarvaṁ karmākhilam pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate* (Ś Bg., 4.33). The purpose of all these offerings is the Knowledge, i.e., Knowledge of the Self, *svarūpa jñāna* or *ātmajñāna*, Knowledge of the Brahman, *brahmajñāna*, establishing in ones own form, *svarūpe sthiti*, One and only One, *kaivalyapada*.

But to reach up to that stage, one has to walk a long distance. This starts with *saṁyama* and ends with *saṁyama*, and in-between there is *saṁyama*.

Yama is Lord of the Death: The Lord of the Death is also named Yama. This Yama is the son of the Sun-god; this Yama is *Kāla*, this is time. The Sun is the Lord of our universe and his son Time engulfs us. If we perform *yama*-s, then we shall be established in our own form; otherwise Lord Yama will fix us in the death trap and we shall not be able to know immortality. The vital force of our solar system is the Sun; this is Hiraṇyagarbha for our solar system. The Sun we see in the intermediate space is the physical form, *ādhibhautika rūpa*, and as a sum total of all the Power of consciousness the Hiraṇyagarbha is its god form, *ādhidāivika rūpa*. This is sum of total power of will, *icchā śakti*, total power of knowledge, *jñāna śakti* and total power of action, *kriyā śakti*, in our solar system. These three powers are one. Our Prāṇa within our body is its spiritual form, *ādhyātmika rūpa*. Again these three forms viz., *ādhibhautika rūpa*, *ādhidāivika rūpa*, and *ādhyātmika rūpa* are one. But we have to do our practice with our individual Prāṇa. And to know our individual Prāṇa we have to take the help of our *prāṇavāyu*, the breath. Our mind is absorbed into Prāṇa and this control of mind is *yama*. For this reason the controlled breathing is also called *yama*. This is the second *saṁyama*. To pull the breath, to lengthen the breath or to spread the breath is *saṁyama*; higher techniques will follow later.

Yama is to keep the Spine Straight: Here it is important to mention one thing. Lord Yama is called *daṇḍadhārī*, holding the *daṇḍa*. In our body the spinal column is the *daṇḍa*. To observe the *yama*-s we have to hold our spinal column means we have to keep our spine straight, sit straight. Practicing to keep straight our spine is a big *yama*. The Lord says, *samaṁ kāyaśirogṛivam dhārayannacalam sthiraḥ* (Ś Bg., 6.13), holding the body, head and neck straight and steady, and remaining firm, this is the posture for the breath practice. To keep the neck and the head straight we have to gently press our chin on the throat.

Saṁyama is Three Forms of Meditation: Now let us come to the third and final *saṁyama*. Rṣi Patañjali says, *trayamekatra saṁyamah* (Ygs., 3.4), these three together is called *saṁyama*. These three are concentration, *dhāraṇā*, meditation, *dhyaṇa* and *samādhi*. By concentration, contemplation and merging with the object of concentration and contemplation we will have knowledge of the object, here these three forms a chain and is called *saṁyama* and the object is the Self. When

we succeed in *saṁyama* then, *tajjayāt prajñālokaḥ* (Ygs., 3.5), winning that is the world of Knowledge. Now the practitioner attains the world of Knowledge, he is established in the Knowledge, all doubts in the mind are eradicated; the fluctuations of the mind are finished. He attains the goal, knows the Self. The Lord says,

yā nisā sarvabhūtānām tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī,
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni sā nisā paśyato muneh. (Ś Bg., 2.69)

Which is night to all beings, *yā nisā sarvabhūtānām, saṁyamī* (the practitioner of *saṁyama*) remains awake in that, *tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī*. In which the beings are awake, *yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni*, that is night to the seer, *sā nisā paśyato muneh*.

The Knowledge of the Self or the Principle is like a night to all ordinary beings, because they remain in the ego, in identity with the body and live in the world of "I" and "mine." They don't know the Self, don't know the Principle which is inside the knowledge sheath, which is the Thread Self, *sūtrātāmā*, in all beings, they don't know their Prāṇa, the Hiraṇyagarbha. But the *saṁyamī*, who started from the control of senses, breath practice and succeeded in concentration, meditation and samādhi, he remains awake to the Self. He knows the Principle. To which all other ordinary beings are awake, viz., desires, enjoyment of objects, remaining in fluctuations of mind and in illusory world, these are like nights to the *saṁyamī*. The *saṁyamī* is a Yogī and *saṁyama* is the yoga.

KRIYĀ-YOGA TEACHES HOW TO KEEP EQUANIMITY OF THE MIND

One of Most Extreme Aspects of Unequanimity: It was 26 October 2009. Kriyā-yoga camp was going on at Kālībāḍī, Pauldauna. This is in Amgaon tehsil of Gondia district of Maharashtra state. On the day one reporter from a TV channel came and asked me, "Swāmījī, I ask you a question. This year in Vidarbha, one lakh farmers has committed suicide. What yoga can offer? What do you say about this?" I have not expected such a question. Since last eight years I have neither watched TV nor read newspapers regularly. Sometimes I see a newspaper if I get one but the number of times watching TV is almost zero. I imagined the seriousness of the problem from the question. Though the number was debated and may be exaggerated, and even if all the deaths recorded may not be suicides as some sources claim but it was a fact that there were a large number of suicides in Vidarbha followed by Andhra Pradesh which is shocking and alarming. My reply was, "Whatever may be the economical, social and political aspects of this problem, certainly the economists, sociologists, and politicians must be analyzing this and are trying to solve the problem. I don't have to say anything on that. But as I have seen India from my childhood, the situations of 1960s–70s are not prevailing today in the country. I can remember the type of poverty was prevailing in the days of 1971–75, i.e., in my childhood days, and then I was a school student. Ninety per cent of population of my village where I was born didn't have meals

two times a day, even one time a day during the months of August to November. Some were forced to begging out of hunger. There were no works for them and there were deaths out of hunger. In those days there was no electronic media, the print media was not that effective as today, so the publication of news of deaths due to hunger in villages were rare. But in those days no one was committing suicide. Today there is no such situation in the country; no one is dying out of hunger but the farmers are committing suicide. Simply economic angle is not the cause. The mental state we require to fight with the difficult situations and to confront the problems we face has been lost. In these thirty years we lost our power to keep mental equilibrium in adverse situations, and the solution to this is there in yoga since keeping equanimity of mind is called yoga." In my childhood I have listened from my grandfather about the droughts year after year and learned about the difficulties on those days. I also read the novels written on those subjects, there was the devastating naked dance of death due to hunger but not suicide.

At times when I see a newspaper, there is not a single day when a case of suicide is not published, and some of the headings are like these: "Police IG committed suicide. A Principal Secretary to a Province committed suicide. Scientist working in atomic power center committed suicide. Soldier posted at boarder, committed suicide. Professor committed suicide. Woman committed suicide after giving poison to her children. A love-pair committed suicide. Eighty-year-old committed suicide. Husband committed suicide after seeing wife with her lover. Wife committed suicide being pressurized to dance in a party. Failed student committed suicide." This gives a feeling as if in this country an era of suicide has descended.

In my childhood when I used to read newspapers, I learned about the comparative studies on crime rates, murders, rape cases, theft and robberies, suicides, etc., between India and USA, UK and other western countries which revealed that how people were happy in this poor country. Today there is not that poverty in the country. The nation has progressed in all directions and India has emerged as a world power. Along with that we have also rapidly progressed in suicides and crime rates and if we are not conscious enough a day may come we will leave behind the western countries in these respects. Is this our progress?

The Cause: What is the cause of all these? The answer is that we are not able to keep the equanimity of mind. I choose to mention about the suicides because these are the worst cases of mental disturbances. Before committing suicide the person is already dead, here it is the case of death before the death (suicide); he has lost all inner inspiration to live and seeks solace only in terminating the life (physical body). The issue is so sensitive that one can imagine from the lauded reactions from media, social scientists and thinkers it received when the landmark judgment was passed by a bench of Honorable Supreme Court of India comprising

Justice Banwarilal Hansaria on the issue of suicide in early 1990s; previously attempt to suicide was a punishable offence from British-India days. I did not remember all the details published in newspapers on those days but essence of the judgment was a compassionate one that the society needs. May be suicide is a kind of self-punishment the committer inflicts upon him in a state of mental illness, here the committer is not an offender but himself is a victim to a state of depression and visualizing the world in a negative way. Self-esteem is completely lost, self-depreciation reached its nadir and there is darkness everywhere for the person. This is not only an offence on his physical, vital and mental bodies but also an offence on the Self. The inner light or the discriminating intellect is extinguished before the act of suicide or we can say reasons failed. Prior to that he is in a state of terrible confusion and does not see anything other than failures and seeks solace only through an escape route called physical death, the mental death already preceding this. To sum all these we can say faith on the Self is lost. I can say all these because I have coordinated with some in deep depression and having tendency to suicide and was able to restore faith in life, courage and confidence to fight with situations, and it is the Kriyā-yoga meditation that helped along with other supportive means. I have interacted with some *kriyāvān-s* in my master's ashram mostly Europeans who got new life due to yoga and meditation, leaving their dark pasts of drug and depression. The living dead persons can be injected with life and light through yoga and meditation, of course the help of medical sciences, social counselors and a compassionate atmosphere etc. are all beneficial.

Let us see a simple reason, why we suffer from viral and bacterial diseases? Though disease causing viruses and bacteria are there in the atmosphere and are always entering our bodies but we suffer only when our immune power is low, then only we are their victims and are diseased. We suffer and if we don't take remedial measures we can die. But if our immunity is high then these disease-causing germs can do no harm. It is same in the case of our mind. In our life, difficult situations arise. Be it our personal life or social life, life is full of up and downs. Sometimes these are minor but at times it can be a big storm. All depends on how much the external situations shake our internal environment. If we are not strong internally and don't have tolerating capability then on small matters we will loose mental balance. One who is mentally stable enough and stands like a rock then big storms cannot do any harm. The whole thing is how to keep equanimity of mind.

Understanding the Process that Solves: Situations will change in a positive or a negative way. We can control them to some extent through social, political and economic means and we also do so. But situations can never be wholly according to our own likings even if one tries as much as one can. Then it is certainly not worthy to loose our mental balance due to that, since loosing mental balance

does not give any solution to the problem rather it worsens the situation. It is raining and we have to go out and we know, we cannot stop the rain. But we can go with an umbrella or a raincoat, we can save ourselves from rain, and we have to do like that. Correcting the external situations is one aspect and correcting our mental state is another aspect. One who is willing can correct his mental state, for that the techniques to have control over mind are to be accepted, and the name of those techniques is yoga. Lord Vāsudeva says,

*yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgam̐ tyaktvā dhanañjaya,
siddhyasiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvaṁ yoga ucyate.* (Ś Bg., 2.48)

Oh Dhanañjaya, *dhanañjaya*, do your duties being established in yoga, *yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi*, discarding attachment, *saṅgam̐ tyaktvā*, and be even-minded in success and failure, *siddhyasiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā*; equanimity of the mind is called yoga, *samatvaṁ yoga ucyate*.

The Lord is advising us to work adopting the yoga in the form of equanimity of mind that is without attachment and aversion. When we do something be it physical or mental action, we create attachments and aversions. We never work in a state of detachment. Our mind wants that such and such should happen with us, and such and such should not happen. But always the events do not happen accordingly. There is no such rule in the nature that situations will emerge according to the likings of our mind and those not at per likings of our mind will not happen. But we desire like that and suffer. In a lighter vein I can say, in the days when I used to watch TV in 1990s there was a comedy based serial and the meaning of the title song was, “everyone likes his own intelligence and other’s wife.” Such is the state of our mind. Whatever we think and whatever we desire that only is dear to us. Near ones and own job is not dear to general mass. We are attending our job only as a routine duty, and we don’t inject life to our job. In this way we are becoming psychic patients, of course degree varies with persons, someone with lesser degree and someone with higher degree. Some maintain psychic balance in small problems but loose when faced with a big one. Some in adverse situations loose balance for a period and if the period is for some minutes or hours then it is okay. But if the period of unevenness state of mind is for months together or for years, it is then devastating, even one becomes mad. There are some who can solve the major problems in their workplace at ease but cannot face very small ones in the family. I have seen such good teachers who are successful in instilling discipline among his pupils but completely failed when it was the turn of their own children. A high profile administrative officer having good name in the field of administration but a complete failure in family life or a renowned scientist but personal life is running resorting to the support of alcohol, such instances are abundant in societies. These persons can do miracle in their professions but in personal relations their talents do not work. I have learned from a friend about a case of divorce from conflict arising out of silly

reason like who should put the mosquito net before bedtime. All these indicate that in some situations we can remain even-minded and in some we lose evenness. The more our civilization develops materially; the state of our mind worsens, and we are failing to keep the equanimity of mind. Before thirty/ forty years the farmers dying in hunger were not committing suicides, of course our expectations are high today but all our expectations cannot be fulfilled the way we want. If we breakdown due to this then what shall we achieve? Some how we are losing the technique to maintain equanimity of our mind.

Once in west Swāmī Vivekānanda said, “an illiterate farmer in India can tell you something about the spiritualism.” It was a fact that illiterates of this country knew some spiritual techniques, now it has declined a lot. In my childhood I have seen this. I have seen a laborer working in the paddy field teaching principles of spiritualism to fellow laborers while working. Later I read those teachings in scriptures. In each village there was a small cottage in the form of a monastery, and in each village there was a monk. Each individual had a master, *guru*. He used to learn some spiritual techniques from his master and practice. The inhabitants of these illiterate villages had sufficient mental power to fight with difficult situations, to fight with tragedy. I don't say that this is completely lost today; it is there but becoming scarce. In last thirty/forty years a lot has been changed in India. Today's religious practice has become mainly listening to the discourses of some religious leaders. Listening to religious discourses and stories from Purāṇa-s is good, but one has to be careful about how to apply those teachings in day-to-day life. In our childhood our grandparents were our religious storytellers and discourses. Today with the changing age this has come in a new form and is being done by these religious storytellers, *kathāvācaka*, and the electronic media; and this may be inhabitable with changing world but the practice we require to bring forth these teachings in life is lacking.

Some Practices: What practice is that by which we can keep our mental equilibrium? When we ask such a question the answers we receive are: “One should have faith and devotion in God, which gives abundant energy. One should have faith on masters, great-realized souls who had conquered desires, *āptakāma*, and faith on scriptures, and then we should follow their teachings. We should read the scriptures. We must leave the egoistic tendencies of mind. We should analyze and enhance our discriminating intellect. Through the discriminating intellect we should contemplate that we have done our works and whatever are the results we should accept them, should not develop attachments or disliking. Again we should analyze that happiness or sorrows whatever it may be, these are results of our actions of present and past lives, *prārabdha*, we should accept these. We must surrender all actions and their results to God. For higher spiritual practitioners and for the practitioners in the path of knowledge, it is said to contemplate on the Principle, *tattva vicāra*, leave the identification of self with

body and mind, *adhyaśa niraśa*. Know that the appearance of world is illusion; it is the God that reflected Himself as the world. The world is like a dream; this is mirage, what is the utility of attachments and hatreds here. When one has the Knowledge and the world does not exist for him then pains and pleasures, attachments and aversions are finished.

All these practices are correct and help but let us analyze what these are? All these be it faith, devotion, discriminating intellect, analysis of the Principle, etc., happen only in our mind; these are different states of mind, actions of mind based on divine qualities. Desires, anger, greed, delusion, attachments and hatreds, etc. are also actions of mind but based on demonic qualities. We have to win the actions of demonic qualities and establish the actions of divine qualities. Then only it is possible. Then only we have mental equilibrium, we will be established in yoga. Our main problem is with the state of mind; demonic qualities making them uneven and divine qualities make it even. But how the divine qualities would be established defeating the demonic qualities, and how there would be the victory of gods in this war between gods and demons? The answer is found in Upaniṣads.

Upaniṣads teach *Prāṇopāśanā*: A story comes in *Chāndogyopaniṣad* (pt. II, chap.1) and the same story also found in *Bṛhadāranyakopaniṣad* (pt. III, chap.1, Udgīthabrāhmaṇa). The sons of the Lord of creatures, Prajāpati, gods and demons fought against each other. Gods or *deva*-s refer to the glowing qualities or the divine qualities within us, *sattva* based qualities, and the *asura*-s or demons are those who dwell in *asu*, *asu* is the vital energy engaged to sensual enjoyments, demonic or *tamas* based qualities. Prajāpati is the person having right to scriptural action and the Knowledge, Prajāpati is a spiritual practitioner; we are all Prajāpatis and within us this fight is going on. Since gods and demons arise within one subtle body they are referred as brothers. To defeat the demons, the gods worshiped the nose as the elevated one but the demons fixed the nose with vices. So through nose one smells both good and bad smells. Then the gods worshiped speech, eyes, ears, etc., one after another as the elevated one and the demons fixed all these with the evils; so speech speaks those not to be spoken and those to be spoken, eyes see those not to be seen and those to be seen and so on, and the gods are defeated again and again. This implies that through five sense organs, viz., nose, tongue, eyes, skin, and ears and through five action organs, viz., speech, hands and legs, etc., we cannot win over the demonic qualities. The sense and action organ based consciousness would not work as these contain both virtue and vices. Then the gods worshiped the mind as the elevated one and the demons also fixed it with evils. Mind is the controller of five senses and organs of action but here also evil remains, so the mind makes both bad and good resolves; and we cannot win the demonic qualities taking the help of the mind, and the mental techniques are not fool-proof ones. At the end the gods worship the chief *Prāṇa*, the vital power, sense and action organs, and mind are called secondary *prāṇa*-s,

as the elevated one. This time as a ball of soil when thrown to a rock is destroyed similarly the demons are finished reaching the chief *Prāṇa*. So this is the process to win over the demons in a war between the gods and demons. The mind is merged in the vital power. So to control the mind we have to worship the vital power, and for the worship of the vital power we have to take the support of *prāṇavāyu*, the vital airs, viz., the inhalations and the exhalations. This is the first lesson in spiritual sciences.

Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā teaches Prāṇopāsana: Lord Vāsudeva Śrīkṛṣṇa also says the same thing in *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* (chaps. 4–6). This practice of action of vital airs, *prāṇakarma*, is the sacrifice, *yajña*, or the sacrificial fire ceremony. Starting from “*śrotrādīnīndriyāṅyanye samyamāgniṣu juhvati*” up to “*apare niyatāhārāḥ prāṇāṅprāṇeṣu juhvati*” in the fourth chapter (26–30) practicing the action of vital airs is taught. Again *prāṇakarma* is advised in the fifth chapter (27), “*sparsāṅkṛtvā bahirbāhyāṁścaḥṣuścaivāntare bhruvo,*” etc. Entire sixth chapter talks about the process of meditation, and in his commentary of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* at the beginning of the sixth chapter Bhagavadpāda Śrī Śāṅkarācārya has said this as the internal practices for Knowledge. And this is the fact, because the Knowledge would not arise without purifying the mind and the purification of mind takes place through *prāṇopāsana*. This *prāṇopāsana* is named the Kriyā-yoga.

Soham Japa is the Tradition of Prāṇopāsana in India: I remember that in my childhood, a monk was staying in our village *maṭha*, the small cottage monastery. In the *maṭha* there was no temple or deities though we villagers were idol-worshippers. This idol-worship is not worship of a stone statue rather worship of consciousness, visualizing the God on idols. When one sees an idol or a temple he remembers God, *sattva* qualities appear in the mind, thoughts of wrong doings disappear. No one accepts an idol as a stone statue because he understands that through rituals the *prāṇa* is established, *prāṇapratiṣṭhā*, in the statue. This forms faith and this is stepping into the spiritual world through idols, rituals, and temples. Later under the guidance of monks one enters into the internal practices. In the *maṭha* the ritual worship of *gādi* or *pothi*, i.e., scriptures written on palm-leaves were going on. But the real worship was an internal one. Once in a year there was *aṣṭaprahara nāma yajña*, sacrifice in the form of taking the name of lord for a day and night. The name taken there on was,

*bhaja ananta kiśora ātmā rāma,
japa nitya haṁsa soham marā rāma.*

Contemplate, *bhaja*, Rāma the Self, *ātmā rāma*, who is at his early youth, *kiśora*, and infinite, *ananta*. Repeat, *japa*, the eternal (names), *nitya*, (those are) haṁsa and soham, *haṁsa soham*, marā and Rāma, *marā rāma*.

Here one is asked to contemplate on the Self, the Self is Lord Rāma, Rāma is the state of bliss, *rāmanāma bhuvī khyātambhirāmeṇa vā punaḥ* (RPU, 1.3), the name of Rāma is famous in the world, *rāmanāma bhuvī khyātam*, and again He is the state of bliss, *abhirāmeṇa vā punaḥ*. Again Rāma is, *ramante yogino'nante nityānande cidātmani* (RPU, 1.6), that the Transcendental Self in the Form of Consciousness, *cidātmani*, Form of Eternal-Bliss, *nityānande*, and Infinite, *anante*, on whom yogis sport or contemplate, *ramante yoginaḥ*. He is always in His early youth, *kiśora*, the Life-force is never old. *Ananta* is the name of the legendary snake on which Lord Viṣṇu sleeps on the ocean of milk. *Ananta* means "infinity." Snake is the symbol of energy. Viṣṇu is vastness. Water is the life, it is creation and milk is food, the base of life. *Ananta* is one with Lord Viṣṇu the sustainer, *mahāprāṇa*; in body context it is the Conscious Life Energy. How to contemplate such a Lord named Rāma or Viṣṇu? The process is, *jagatprāṇāyātmane'smai namaḥ syānnamastvaikyam pravadetprāgguṇeneti* (RPU, 3.2), I bow down to that (Rāma), *asmai namaḥ*, life-energy of the world, *jagatprāṇāya*, and which is the Self, *ātmane*, after bowing down, *syānnamastva*, speak of the unity (with the Lord), *aikyam pravadet*, (I am) manifested from the qualities (of yours), *prāgguṇeneti*. This is named in scriptures as *ahamgraha upāsana*, worshiping to seek the unity. This worshiping is done by repeating the eternal name *hamṣa* that is *soham*; the life force in the form of breath, this is *prāṇopāsana*. Our exhalation is *ham* and inhalation is *so*. The Life-force is Lord Rāma. *Hamṣa* means "I am He" and *soham* means "He is I." *Rāma* is the Lord and *marā* is the dead body. With ego we are dead bodies, without ego we are Lord, one with Him. This *soham japa* or repetition of *soham* is called *ajapā* or non-repetition, because it is breath and it is not pronounced. If we inhale *so* and exhale *ham* then this dead body would become the Lord, in fact we are always doing it only we have to be aware of our inhalations and exhalations since the mind along with the ego is merged in the vital force. This technique is called repetition of the reverse name, *ulaṭā nāma*, we say *hamṣa* but do *soham*. Sant Tulasīdāsa sung, *ulaṭa nāma japata jaga jānā, vālmīki hoyā brahma samānā*, the whole world new that by repeating the reverse name Sage Vālmīki has become the Brahman. The sage poet of the famous epic *Rāmāyaṇa* was previously a bandit named Ratnākara who by repetition of the reverse name of Rāma, i.e., *marā* became the sage Vālmīki. This reverse name is the breath technique, *prāṇakarma*. In some traditions a practitioner inhales *ma* and exhales *rā*. *Ma* represents time, *kāla*; *rā* is *ra* and *ā*, *ra* is light or manifestation and *ā* is the Form of Lord, all forms are manifestations of the Lord and *kāla* or time is his power, these all are *Prāṇa*. To enter into the *Prāṇa* we have to hold the breath, *prāṇavāyu*. *Prāṇavāyu* is Hanumān; he is Son of God Air, *pavanaputra*. That is the reason Sant Tulasīdāsa sung, *rāma duāre tum rakhavāre, hoto na ājñā binu paisāre*, you are the guard to the doors of Rāma, without your permission no one can enter. One should not misunderstand that by speaking this I deny either the

historical or the godly aspect of Śrīrāma and Śrīhanumān. Accepting these aspects in the context of form, *ādhibhautika*, and in the context of god, *ādhidaivika*, this is only throwing the light into the body context, *ādhyātmika*, related to our internal spiritual practice.

This is our tradition. All the villages of India are like the village of my childhood. Many of these villagers had not listened the name of Kriyā-yoga but they were doing the *prāṇakarma*. With the death of the monk of my village in my adolescent age this tradition of my village was lost. Within a short span such a noble tradition is almost going to be finished from the country. This is the reason that the farmers who constitute the backbone of Indian society are losing the equanimity of mind. But we have not given up hope. The soul of this country is spiritualism. The seed of spiritualism is never lost here; only it either increases or decreases. To revive our tradition with full swing and to inject confidence and life to our society we all have to adopt the non-sectarian breath technique. Breath technique is most effective to keep the evenness of mind. We can also adopt mental analysis, *vicāra prakriyā* or *manana*, but only after being expert in *prāṇakarma* since mental analysis is not possible in a turbulent mind; turbulent mind is stabilized and concentrated by *prāṇakarma*. Here it is important to mention one thing, while doing *prāṇakriyā* the impressions hidden in our subconscious mind comes to the surface; we can remember many past events, can see many types of scenes, but we should not create attachments or aversions towards them. We have to watch them as witness otherwise we shall commit mistakes.

DEVOTION, BHAKTI, IN KRIYĀ-YOGA

Whether one follows the doctrines of action, devotion, yoga or knowledge in the spiritual path one should not see them as isolated routes or routes opposed to each other since the purpose is one. Due to misconception and lack of proper understanding paths of yoga, devotion and knowledge appear to be opposed to each other. According to the path of knowledge, self-analysis and contemplation is the route to liberation where as the path of yoga believes in practice of equanimity, and the path of devotion believes in strong attachment to a personal God as the route. The path of action emphasizes on surrendering results of actions to God and in practice of actions without desires. In no way these routes are antagonistic in nature. One has to choose a path according to one's own nature and spiritual development. Even after traveling a distance in a path one can switch over to another for his further and speedy growth, a spiritual practitioner practicing sincerely can know what he should do further. Moreover to be cured from a disease as multiple drugs and methods are used similarly one can take help from different doctrines for the Knowledge and Supreme Devotion. Coming to the methods in a doctrine we find that some methods are common to all and some are overlapping. We find some yogic methods are found in all philosophies

and in all doctrines, similar is also for some methods of the doctrine of devotion (or *bhakti*) as these are also found in other doctrines.

Noble Faith, Śraddhā, is the First Form of Devotion: *Śraddhā*, which is commonly translated as faith, is the first form of devotion and all the treatises declare this as the precondition. *Śraddhā*, *viśvāsaḥ* (trust) and *bhakti* (devotion) have nearly similar meanings. *Śraddhā* can be said as belief in divine revelations as expounded in the scriptures and belief in the teachings of the realized masters. *Śraddhā* is also a strong desire based on nobility, *sattvaguna*, with reverence to the god, the teacher and the scriptures. In the words of Bhagatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya,

śāstrasya guruvākyasya satyabudhayāvadhāranā,
sā śraddhā kathitā sabbhīryayā vastūpalabhyate. (Vkc., 25)

Understanding and holding the Truth, *satyabudhayāvadhāranā*, of scripture, *śāstrasya*, of teachings of teacher, *guruvākyasya*, that has been called as *śraddhā*, *sā śraddhā kathitā*, by Knower of Truth, *sabbhīḥ*, by which, *yayā*, matter (the Eternal), *vastu*, is achieved, *upalabhyate*.

This says *śraddhā* as the process of attaining knowledge. This is also called *viśvāsaḥ* or trust, and this gives confidence to walk on the path. *Viśvāsaḥ* means beyond the *svāsaḥ* or beyond the breath. So *śraddhā* or *viśvāsaḥ* becomes the result of the yogic techniques; and yet this is the precondition for all the doctrines, viz., *karma*, *yoga*, *jñāna*, or *bhakti*. Here when one is beyond the breath there is no fickleness of mind, and all the doubts are finished; this is the state of knowledge and this knowledge arises out of experience after the spiritual practice. This develops into *ṛtambharā prajñā*, the knowledge filled with the truth. This has been said as, *bhidyate hṛdayagranthiśchidyante sarvasamśayāḥ* (*Mu. U.*, 2.2.8), when the knot of the heart is pierced or untied all the doubts are cut off or get solved. If we take this as the devotion, then devotion is the result of all the doctrines, and this is the result as the Knowledge. But this state cannot come in the beginning. Then the *śraddhā* that is the first form of devotion and is precondition to all the treatises is a traditional faith with reverence and a strong desire based on nobility. This should not be confused as blind faith since blind faith emerges due to ignorance and is *tamas* based. For example if one is asked to sacrifice an animal before a goddess to get such and such boons and he performs this by faith this is said to be a blind faith. Even instances of a fool performing human sacrifices were there. These are *tamoguna*-based activities where selfish desires, cruelty and violence play a role. But in *śraddhā* or noble faith, the knowledge from the scriptures and the knowledge from the realized masters is the guarantee on truthfulness of the path. Bhagavāna Vāsudeva says, *śraddhāvāmlabhate jñānam tatparaḥ samyatendriyaḥ* (*Ś Bg.*, 4.39), one who has noble faith, *śraddhāvān*, is diligent, *tatparaḥ*, and has controlled the organs, *samyatendriyaḥ*, attains, *labhate*, the Knowledge, *jñānam*. Here along with diligence and control of sense-organs

and organs of action, the noble faith becomes the first condition for the Knowledge. Again He says, *ajñāścāśraddadhānaśca saṁśayātmā vinaśyati* (Ś Bg., 4.40), one who is ignorant, *ajñāḥ*, and, *ca*, is faithless, *āśraddadhānaḥ*, and, *ca*, is doubting in nature, *saṁśayātmā*, perishes, *vinaśyati*. One cannot practice having doubts in teachings of a teacher or teachings of the scriptures, even if one practices that would be half hearted and that practice is not going to produce desired results. Ṛṣi Patañjali also says, *śraddhāvīryasmṛtisamādhiprajñāpūrvaka itareṣām* (Ygs., 1.20), for others (those who follow the path of efforts), *itareṣām*, resort to the means of noble faith, *śraddhā*, vigor (sustained effort), *vīrya*, memory (repeated contemplation), *smṛti*, concentration, *samādhi*, and knowledge (knowledge arising from these practices), *prajñā*. Noble faith or revered faith becomes the first of the means to be followed. Often outer expressions like prostrations, etc. are taken as the noble faith, but this is not so. An outer expression can just be a show without inner faith though often inner-faith expresses itself in outer expression.

Devotion is Searching the Self: On the devotion Bhagavatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya says,

mokṣyakāraṇasāmagrayām bhaktireva garīyasī,
svasvarūpānusamdhānam bhaktirityamidhīyate. (Vkc., 31)

Among the means required for liberation, *mokṣyakāraṇasāmagrayām*, only devotion, *bhaktireva*, is most important, *garīyasī*. Searching the ones own form, *svasvarūpānusamdhānam*, is named as the devotion, *bhaktirityamidhīyate*. Again he says,

svātmataṭtvānusamdhānam bhaktirityaparejaguḥ (Ibid., 32)

Analyzing the Principle called the Self, *svātmataṭtvānusamdhānam*, is declared as the devotion by others, *bhaktirityaparejaguḥ*.

Here Bhagatpāda is quoting others and there is only a very thin line of demarcation between above two. The first one indicates to the route, here one is not conversed with the Principle called Self, *ātmatattva*, he is in process of searching and in the second one he has the indirect knowledge, *parokṣa jñāna*, and is in process of analysis and contemplation to attain the non-indirect knowledge, *aparokṣa jñāna*. This is the highest form of devotion that results in the Knowledge. This requires to cast off completely “the narrow I sense,” and to leave the identity with ego, intellect, mind and body; *ahamkārādidehāntān bandhānajñānakalpitān* (ibid., 27), from ego to body, *ahamkārādidehāntān*, bondage, *bandhān*, is imagined, *kalpitān*, due to the ignorance, *ajñāna*. The Self, named Śiva that is the form of bliss and that is eternal, pure, omniscient and ever liberated, appears to become the individual self, *jīva*, due to identification with body-mind interactions. This identification is the form of ignorance. The practice process of eradication of that ignorance by the individual self is named as devotion here by Bhagatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. For that practice the foundation is to learn distinguishing

between the eternal and non-eternals, *viveka*, practice of detachment, *vairāgya*, desire for liberation, *mumukṣutā*, control of mind, *śama*, control of organs, *dama*, withdrawal of mind from objects, *uparati*, toleration of adverse conditions, *titikṣā*, noble faith, *śraddhā*, and a state of mind without apprehensions or volition, *samādhāna*. Up to this the route is same for the path of yoga and for the path of knowledge though yoga describes these as restraints, *yama*, observances, *niyama*, postures, *āsana*, breath technique, *prāṇāyāma*, withdrawal, *pratyāhāra*, concentration, *dhāraṇā*, and meditation, *dhyāna*. So yoga becomes the practical aspect of Vedānta till the state of *sabīja samādhi*. Then the routes differ, followers of the path of knowledge resort to mental analysis, *manana*, and contemplation, *nididhyāsana*, of the Principle to get established in the Principle where as the followers of the path of yoga believe in further practice of meditation to be specialist in “no thought state,” *nirvicāra*, so as to develop “the knowledge that holds the Truth,” *ṛtambharā prajñā*, to be established at Own Form. Here supreme detachment, *para vairāgya*, and the discriminating intellect resulting in the knowledge, *viveka khyāti*, play the key role. If we take the definitions of devotion according to Rṣi Śāṅḍilya then the practices in the paths of knowledge and yoga are all devotional practices; *ātmaratyavirodheneti śāṅḍilyaḥ* (NBS, 18), as per Sage Śāṅḍilya the devotion must be without hindrance to the enjoyment of bliss in the *Ātman*. This means devotion do not clash with the practice of contemplation on the Self.

Devotion as Normally Understood: Since the devotion is supreme attachment to God that is in no way opposed to the love of the Self. However most of the teachers in the path of devotion do not accept these processes as devotion. They believe in a Personal God, viz., Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Durgā, or Śiva with a name and form, and for them devotion is the supreme attachment to that Personal God keeping a separate existence of the individual self. This can be said in the words of Swāmī Śivānanda as, “*Bhakti* is a sacred higher emotion with sublime sentiments that unites the devotee with the lord.” Here a strong attachment to a personal god wards off all-other worldly attachments. But problem arises when understanding is not proper and attitude develops as “someone else’s personal god is inferior to my personal god and all these are separate entities.” This leads to formation of sects, though all want to speak the same truth but the truth gets hidden in sectarianism. According to many interpreters the practice of *Īśvara-praṇidhāna* in yoga is a form of *bhakti* or devotion. We have discussed *Īśvara-praṇidhāna* in the heads, “Self-study, *Svādhyāya*” (*supra*, p. 117) and “Knowing the God, *Īśvara-praṇidhāna*” (*supra*, p. 119), how these are core practices of the Kriyā-yoga and how far there is scope of expression of devotion in them. However for the teachers in the path of devotion mainly there are nine modes of practices known as *navavidha bhakti* or *navadhā bhakti*. They are listening His divine sports, *śravaṇa*, singing, His names and glory, *kīrtana*, remembrance of his name and glory, *smaraṇa*, service of His (or to the deity) feet, *padasevana*, worshiping Him

(to the deity or mental worshipping) or offering flowers etc., *arcana*, prostration, *vandana*, a state of being His servant, *dāsya bhāva*, a state of being His friend, *sākhya bhāva*, and self-surrender, *ātmanivedana*. These nine have each nine modes and become eighty-one fold. These are all known as sacred emotional devotion, *bhāva* or *saguṇa bhakti*. However Sage Nārada expounds sacred emotional devotion in eleven forms of practices in His-form, viz., *guṇamāhātmyāsakti*, attachment for glorifying His attributes, *rūpāsakti*, attachment for His beauty and form, *pūjāsakti*, attachment for His worship, *smaraṇāsakti*, attachment for remembering Him, *dāsyaśakti*, attachment for Him as His servant, *sakhyāsakti*, attachment for Him as a friend, *vātsalyāsakti*, attachment for Him as a child, *kāntāsakti*, attachment for Him as His wife, *ātmanivedanāsakti*, attachment as self-surrender, *tanmayāsakti*, attachment as complete absorption in Him, *paramavirahāsakti*, attachment to the pain of separation from Him (NBS, 82).

The Supreme Devotion and Being Established in Yoga: Ṛṣi Nārada speaks of devotion, *sā na kāmayaṁānā nirodharūpatvāt* (NBS, 7), that (devotion) is not the form of desires, *sā na kāmayaṁānā*, this is the form of halting (the desires), *nirodharūpatvāt*. And Ṛṣi Patañjali speaks of yoga, *yogaścittavṛttinirodhaḥ* (Ygs., 1.2), yoga is halting the activities of mind. *Nirodhaḥ* means halting, suppression or control. Our mind should not be “of the nature of desires,” *kāmayaṁānā*, desires are to be halted and these desires appear as actions of mind, *cittavṛtti*. Teachers of devotion explain that the devotion does not co-exist with any desire, even the desire for liberation is not there. This is the final form of devotion and this is the state of establishment in yoga, *kaivalyam*, when there is, *puruṣārthaśūnyānām guṇānām pratiprasavaḥ* (ibid., 4.34), dissolution of *puruṣārtha*, *puruṣārthaśūnyānām*, this is dissolution of the four goals of a human being, viz., nobility, wealth, desires and liberation, and the manifestations of the qualities of nature has been stopped, *guṇānām pratiprasavaḥ*. So the ultimate result is same. This has been described as the abiding in Own-form, *svarūpe’vasthānam* (ibid., 1.3) in yoga where as in devotion this is said as, *sā tu asmin paramapremarūpā* (NBS, 2), that verily is the form of Supreme Love, and again said, *amṛtasvarūpā ca* (ibid., 3), and it is the form of Immortality. Even with a trace of egoism it can neither be Supreme Love nor the form of Immortality. Eternal happiness and immortality lies in annihilation of the ego and when one is established in the Brahman named as the Truth, Knowledge and Infinite, *satyaṁ jñānāmanantam brahma* (Tai. U, 2.1.1). If that Brahman is named Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Īśvara, or Ātman this remains the same, it is just for our understanding that we give this a name. This is the state of Supreme Devotion. The Supreme Devotion, *parā bhakti*, the Knowledge, *jñāna*, and the establishment of Power of Consciousness in its Own Form, *kaivalyam svarūpapratīṣṭhā vā citiśaktiriti* (Ygs., 4.34) are synonymous.

This state of Supreme Love develops from the noble faith, then attraction and adoration to a Personal God with name and form in case of devotees, for yogis

the place of a Personal God is occupied by Īśvara, God the Cosmic Self, and for practitioners of knowledge, *jñānī*, it is contemplation on the Brahman or the Transcendental Self. So according to the stages these vary and these are natural spiritual processes. Śrī Hanumān says, “*dehabuddhyā tu dāso’ham jīvabuddhyā tvadamsakah. ātmabuddhyā tvamevāhamiti me niścītā mati,*” when I am in body consciousness I am Your servant, when I am in the consciousness of individual self I am part of You, but when I realize “I am the Self,” I am surely one with you. Sant Tulasīdāsa sings, “*sīyārāmamaya sab jaga jānī, karau praṇāma jori juga pānī,*” knowing the whole world as the form of Sītā and Rāma, I bow down to all with folded hands. Sītā and Rāma are same as Śakti and Śiva, Prakṛti and Puruṣa, and Māyā and the Brahman. Vedas speak of the Puruṣa, *sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ sahasrapāt* (YV, 31.1), the Puruṣa is having thousands of heads, thousands of eyes and thousands of feet. He is covering the whole universe and remains in excess of ten fingers, *sa bhūmim sarvata spṛtvātyatiṣṭhaddaśāṅgulam* (ibid., 31.1). He is the Special Puruṣa, *puruṣaviśeṣa īśvaraḥ*, of the yogis; they search that Mahāprāṇa within the body and that lodged in excess within the ten fingers of the cranium. A yogi finds the Hiraṇyagarbha within the human cranium and transcends in to the state of *kaivalyaṁ svarūpapratīṣṭhā*, establishment in its Own Form and the state of only One. This is the state of *ātmārāmaḥ*, sporting in the bliss of Ātman. This is *parā bhakti*, supreme devotion. Sage Nārada speaks, *yajñātīvā matto bhavati stabdho bhavati ātmārāmo bhavati* (NBS, 6), knowing which, *yajñātīvā*, one becomes intoxicated (with the bliss of divine), *matto bhavati*, becomes still (becomes peaceful, volitions of mind are finished), *stabdho bhavati*, and sports in the bliss of the Self, *ātmārāmo bhavati*.

Common Practices in Yoga and Bhakti: However the basic conditions and practices to develop *bhakti* and to be established in yoga are same. We have already discussed these basic conditions for yoga and let us see how *Nārada Bhaktisūtras* also teaches the same. It says, *tattu viśayatyāgāt saṅgatyāgācca* (35); that verily (is attained), *tat tu*, from abandonment of sense-objects, *viśayatyāgāt*, and from renunciation of attachment (to them), *saṅgatyāgāt ca*. Sage Patañjali has taught this as detachment; *dr̥ṣṭā’nuśravikaviśayavitr̥ṣṇasya vaśīkārasamjñā vairāgyam* (Ygs., 1.15), when the mind loses all thirsts for objects, *viśayavitr̥ṣṇasya*, seen or listened to, *dr̥ṣṭā’nuśravika*, it establishes in a state of complete desirelessness, *vaśīkārasamjñā*, is called the detachment, *vairāgyam*. The detachment should be developed for objects seen, viz., opposite sex, son, food, drinks, power, vehicles, palaces, adorations, etc. and for objects listened to like enjoyments in heaven etc. This does not say to leave intake of food rather to leave attachment for it, which is *saṅgatyāgah*, renunciation of attachment. Again ceaseless worship is advocated in both the doctrines. Sage Nārada teaches that, *avyāvṛta bhajanāt* (NBS, 36), devotion is attained by uninterrupted, *avyāvṛta*, worship, *bhajanāt*. Sage Patañjali teaches, *sa tu dīrghakālanairantaryasatkārā’sevito*

ṛḍhabhūmiḥ (Ygs., 1.14), that (practice) when, *sa tu*, continued for a long time, *dirghakāla*, uninterrupted, *nairantarya*, with devotion, *satkārā*, *sevito*, becomes a strong foundation, *ṛḍhabhūmiḥ*. Sage Nārada advocates leaving association of evils, *duḥsaṅgaḥ sarvathaiva tyājyaḥ* (NBS, 43), evil association, *duḥsaṅgaḥ*, should be abandoned, *tyājyaḥ*, certainly forever, *sarvathaiva*. Further it is said, *kāma-krodhamohasmr̥tibhramśabuddhināśasarvanāśakāraṇatyāt* (ibid., 44), (evil company) being the cause of, *kāraṇatyāt*, desire, *kāma*, anger, *krodha*, delusion, *moha*, loss of memory (forgetting Truth), *smr̥tibhramśa*, loss of intellect (or discrimination), *buddhināśa*, and complete ruin, *sarvanāśa*. Ṛṣi Patañjali advocates non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, continence, non-acceptance as restraints, *ahiṃsāsatyāsteya brahmacaryā'parigrahā yamāḥ* (Ygs., 2.30); and cleanliness, contentment, austerity, self-study and knowing and surrender to God as observances, “*śaucasantoṣatapaḥsvādhyāyēśvara praṇidhānāni niyamāḥ*” (ibid., 2.32). To observe these one has to leave evil company, cruelty, anger, desires, greed, delusion, etc. *Bhaktisūtras* also speak, *ahiṃsāsatyāśaucadayāstikyādi cāritryāni paripālānīyāni* (NBS, 78), characters like, *cāritryāni*, non-violence, *ahiṃsā*, truthfulness, *satya*, cleanliness, *śauca*, compassion, *dayā*, belief in existence of God, *āstikya* and other virtues, *ādi*, are to be observed in totality, *paripālānīyāni*. Yogic Scriptures advise about a solitary place, *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* speaks of *vivikta deśa sevītvam* (13.10), resort to a solitary place and *Bhaktisūtras* also advise the same, *yo viviktasthānam sevate* (NBS, 47), he who resorts to a solitary place. *Vivikta deśa* means place free from impurities of worldly affairs, this helps the mind to be one pointed. Here inner solitude is more important, this should not be loneliness. *Yogasūtras* speak of renunciation and transcending three qualities of Nature, *tatparam puruṣakhyāterguṇavaitr̥ṣṇam* (Ygs., 1.16), the supreme detachment, *tatparam*, is the loss of thirst in the qualities of Nature, *guṇavaitr̥ṣṇam*, by the knowledge of Puruṣa, *puruṣakhyāteḥ*. *Bhaktisūtras* speak, *yo lokabandhamunmūlayati nīstraiguṇyō bhavati yogakṣemaṃ tyajati* (NBS, 47), he who, *yo*, roots out, *unmūlayati*, worldly bonds (desires), *lokabandham*, is beyond the *guṇa*s or three qualities of the Nature, *nīstraiguṇyō bhavati*, gives up the acquisition and preservation, *yogakṣemaṃ tyajati*. The binding forces of the world are desires, cravings and attachments and they are based on *rajas* and *tamas*, on “I and mine.” A yogi and a *bhakta* transcend the qualities, which is result of the spiritual practices. When the discriminating knowledge sharpens then only the absolute detachment is possible. He even gives up applying his mind for the acquisition and preservation of his daily needs. Now it becomes the duty of Īśvara to provide that need since he is one with the Supreme,

ananyāścintayonto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate,
teṣāṃ nityābhijuktānām yogakṣemaṃ vahāmyaham. (Ś Bg., 9.22)

Those persons, *ye janāḥ*, who think of (being meditative), *cintayontaḥ*, and worship me everywhere, *mām paryupāsate*, being not-different from me, *ananyāḥ*,

who are in ever association with me, *nityābhijuktānām*, for them, *teṣām*, I arrange, *vahāmyaham*, their acquisition and preservation, *yogakṣemam*.

This is possible when one renounces fruits of actions and transcends dualities of life. Sage Nārada speaks, *yaḥ karmaphalam tyajati karmāni samnyasyasti tato nirdvando bhavati* (NBS, 48), he who, *yaḥ*, gives up, *tyajati*, the fruits of actions, *karmaphalam*, renounces actions, *karmāni samnyasyasti*, thereby, *tato*, becomes, *bhavati*, free from pairs of opposites, *nirdvandah*. This is the detachment, *vairāgyam*, and this should happen in mind, *citta*. This is state of inhibition of the actions of mind, *cittavṛttinirodhaḥ* (Ygs., 1.2). The detachment and the practice, for stability of mind to be achieved, are essential for it; *abhyāsavairāgyābhyām tannirodhaḥ* (ibid., 1.12), by practice and detachment, *abhyāsavairāgyābhyām*, those (actions of mind) can be stopped, *tannirodhaḥ*. The flow of mind towards hankering for results of actions and renouncing selfish actions are done by practice of the detachment and developing the discriminating intellect. Love or strong attachment for Īśvara or the Cosmic Self and/or a Personal God according to our understanding helps in halting all other attachments and breath practices help us in stabilizing the mind and to be free from fluctuation. A yogi understands that Īśvara is *prāṇa*. Our mind is always in *dvandah*, with pairs of opposites. Root of all pairs of opposites is in a single pair named *rāga* and *dveṣa*, attraction and repulsion. The ego or “I sense” and the ignorance are the cause. We have discussed this in the head “Afflictions” (*supra*, p. 123). Merging the “I sense” with “Vast I Consciousness” named Īśvara in case of yogis or merging the “I sense” with Personal God of a devotee with a sense of Īśvara, not with the sense of a god giving boons, takes one beyond the pairs of opposites, *dvandātītaḥ*. So we find basic foundations are same for both the doctrines and final states, viz., *parā bhakti* and *kaivalyam svarūpaṭṛiṣṭhā* are also same. And all the doctrines be it *jñāna*, *bhakti* or *yoga* are complementary and supplementary to each other.

Kriyā Techniques help a Devotee: We have seen that noble faith that is the first form of devotion is basic requirement for all the paths, all the paths are interlinked and no path is an isolated one and many practices are common to all the paths. Terms like *yogī*, *bhakta*, or *jñānī* can also be used for all though there are some major differences in the techniques of practices in these paths and that should be adopted according to nature of a person. All the seekers traveling in any path are devotees in the beginning. But whether a Kriyā Technique helps a devotee who is a devotee in nature means having emotional attachment, *mamatā*, to a Personal God with name and form? It is no doubt that a God with a name and form is easier to practice. According to the nature of sports, *līlā-s*, of the God described in the scriptures, Purāṇas, a devotee develops affection towards that God and accepts Him as the Sought Deity, *iṣṭadeva*, or Personal God. Family and social influences in many cases may play a role but not necessarily those should be factors in choosing a path. Now if the person is in lower ladder of evolution as

most are, he prays the God for fulfillment of his desires and worships, rituals, repetition of names, etc., by such a person are only aimed at that direction. Some go on worshipping different gods for different results according to the faculties governed by the gods. These are not wrong if the desire has a scriptural sanction and such a desire should not encroach the right of another for enjoyment. Gradually one learns to love the God for sake of love. Whatever it may be Kriyā Techniques help.

Kriyā Techniques are based on the *prāṇa*. These stabilize the mind, fluctuations of the mind are reduced and the mind becomes single pointed. For worshipping we need concentration or single-pointedness of mind. Breath techniques help in this. This is the reason we find that in rituals and rites performed to worship a god, there is inclusion of a breath technique in the beginning. Nowadays these are done just as a routine ritual, that too in a negligible way by the appointed priest only and not by the worshiper. Even the last-rite rituals after the death of a person includes *pūṛaka piṇḍadāna kriyā*, this refers to breath techniques though not understood by many. This refers to offering inhalation to the departed. We also say to the last-rite ritual performed by the elder son as “holding the *kriyā*,” means holding the breath, *prāṇa*, of the departed. The *prāṇa* principle is one for all. We can establish unity with every being and our God through the *prāṇa*. But the understanding was lost in the mediaeval age. Love to the God also demands offering of *prāṇa* to the God. What more we can offer to God than our *prāṇa*, which is so dear to us and includes body, mind and intellect? Can love be possible without single-pointedness of mind towards the God? This concentration practice is breath based. So a Kriyā Technique helps.

Since most of the *kriyā* practitioners are emotional devotees in the beginning we find placement of *pañcādeva*, the five gods in five *cakra*-s in spinal column in the Gurupraṇāma technique. Then the individual soul and the Sought Deity, *iṣṭādeva*, of the practitioner are placed in *Ājñā* and *Sahasrāra cakras*, respectively. These help him in a rapid initial growth in spirituality. Later he understands the gods in the context of the body. He understands that all the gods are one Principle. He understands his Personal God is none but *Īśvara*. This is *Hiraṇyagarbha*, sum total of all the powers of will, all the powers of action and all the powers of knowledge; this is trinity *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu* and *Rudra* in One. The use of twelve lettered, *dvādaśākṣarī*, *Vāsudeva* mantra in the *kriyā* meditation though mainly a prāṇic technique but this develops true devotion in a practitioner.

We learned that masters like *Yogīrāj Śrī Bhūpendranāth Sānyālji* and *Yogīrāj Śrī Jwālāprasād Tiwārījī* were giving *gāyatrī mantra* for repetition to their disciples. *Śrīyukteśwarājī* was used to do *kīrtana* (chanting and singing God’s name and glory with musical instruments) time to time with his disciples and move in the Grand Road of Puri. The devotional chants of *Paramahaṃsa Yogānanda* are famous. Due to manifestation of love and devotion he was named *Premāvatāra*,

an incarnation of love. Prabhuji Swāmī Nārāyaṇa Giri Mahārāj was used to perform ritual worship of Lord Nārāyaṇa in each full moon day. Paramahansa Hariharānanda was used to worship Goddess Kālī. His first monk disciple, Swāmī Premānanda Giri Mahārāj of Gaṅgāsāgara was used to worship Lord Jagannātha daily. Swāmī Śaṅkarānanda Giri Mahārāj is used to bring *kīrtana* parties named Śrī Viṣṇu Kīrtana Maṇḍalī to Puri on the day of Car festival. Though these are not kriyā techniques but masters of the tradition used to some traditional devotion techniques to use and instill noble faith for the spiritual growth and also for teaching the common mass to remain with devotion.

THE JOURNEY, OBSTACLES IN THE PATH AND THE REMEDIES

Auspicious Resolve, Śiva-saṁkalpa: We have to make our mind rich with auspicious resolves to succeed in the spiritual path. We discussed that mind is the main instrument and when it is devoid of *ṛtti*-s or devoid of whirls as thoughts and desires then only the Truth can reflect in that mind. To make the mind tranquil what we practice is the spiritual practice or the Kriyā-yoga. The mind controls the organs, the mind regulates our actions and the doors of the mind are the sense organs. So to start with and to continue we need auspicious resolves in our mind, this is called *Śiva-saṁkalpa*. Before the beginning of any ritual worship we pray,

*yajjāgrato dūramudaiti daivam tadu suptasya tathaiivati,
dūraṅgamam jyotiṣām jyotirekam tanme manah śivasamkalpamastu.*

(YV, 34.1)

In the state of awake, *jāgratam*, that, *yat*, light, *daivam*, which travels far, *dūramudaiti*, which behaves similarly during sleep (dream state), *tadu suptasya tathaiivati*, the far traveling, *dūraṅgamam*, light of the lights (controller of the sense-organs), *jyotiṣām jyotirekam*, may that mind of mine, *tanme manah*, hold the auspicious resolve, *śivasamkalpamastu*.

Mind is the reflection of consciousness, so this is said as form of light or form of knowledge. This controls the sense-organs and organs of action. But its nature is traveling be it in state of awake or in state of dream. Only at the state of deep sleep, the *prāṇa* absorbs it. Though here mind is quieted but due to effect of *tamoguna* the one in this state is not attaining the Knowledge.

The Journey: Now our journey is to quieting down these thought waves of the mind in the state of awake, this is yoga, and this is *cittavṛttinirodhaḥ* (Ygs., 1.2), inhibition of actions of mind. If a water-body like a lake or pond is crystal clear and standstill this can reflect the entire galaxy of stars in a dark night. But if we through a little pebble then the whirlpool caused or even a single wavelet affects every reflection. And if disturbances are of extreme in nature like storms causing numerous whirls and tides with currents and counter motions then everything is lost. Like

that of a water-body we need a crystal clear and unperturbed mind to reflect Consciousness. So to stabilize our mind we need a practice. We need to restore calmness to the final extent of samādhi. We need to develop *ṛtambharā prajñā*, a state of mind that holds the Truth to reach at the state of only One, *kaivalyam*.



Fig. 3.1. Waves disturb every reflection.

Practice, *Abhyāsa*, and Detachment, *Vairāgya*, is Name of the Route: We have to start our journey from Noble Faith, *śraddhā*, to end with the Knowledge, *jñāna*. We discussed, *śraddhāvāṁllabhate jñānam* (*Ś Bg.*, 4.39), one who has noble faith attains the Knowledge. Other factors are diligence and control of organs, and these are all done with the mind. For this we have to leave violence, falsehood, greed, sexual indulgence and possession.

These have been discussed under the restraints, *yamāḥ* (*vide supra*, p. 133). We have to observe cleanliness, contentment, austerity, self-study and surrendering to God. The later three observances have been developed into practice of postures, breathing practices, withdrawal of senses, concentration, meditation and samādhi (*vide supra*, p. 106). All these are measures to retract the mind to calmness. In that calmness a yogi establishes in equanimity and attains the Absolute Bliss. He sees that the Self exists in everything and everywhere, and for such a yogi happiness and sorrow ceases to exist. Arjuna questions the steadiness of such a state, *etasyāhaṁ na paśyāmi cañcalatvāt sthitiṁ sthīrām* (*Ś Bg.*, 6.33), I do not see, *ahaṁ na paśyāmi*, its, *etasya*, steady state, *sthitiṁ sthīrām*, due to restlessness, *cañcalatvāt*. Again he questions,

cañcalaṁ hi manaḥ kṛṣṇa pramāthi balavaddṛḍham,
tasyāhaṁ nigrahaṁ manye vāyoriva suduṣkaram. (Ibid., 6.34)

Oh Kṛṣṇa, *kṛṣṇa*, since the mind is restless, *cañcalaṁ hi manaḥ*, turbulent, *pramāthi*, strong and hard, *balavaddṛḍham*, I consider its control to be, *tasyāhaṁ nigrahaṁ manye*, very difficult as of a wind, *vāyoriva suduṣkaram*.

Lord Kṛṣṇa does not deny this rather agrees to this as saying, *asamśayam mahābāho mano durnigrahaṃ calam* (ibid., 6.35), Oh mighty-armed one, *mahābāho*, there is no doubt, *asamśayam*, that the mind is difficult to control, *mano durnigrahaṃ*, and is restless, *calam*. For this control we need two things, practice and detachment, *abhyāsenā tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa ca gr̥hyate* (ibid., 6.35), Oh Son of Kuntī, *kaunteya*, but by practice, *abhyāsenā tu*, and by detachment, *vairāgyeṇa ca*, it is brought under control, *gr̥hyate*. Ṛṣi Patañjali asserts the same, *abhyāsavairāgyābhyām tannirodhaḥ* (Ygs., 1.12), by practice and detachment those actions of mind can be stopped. *Abhyāsa* or practice is a positive means, something is to be adopted and *vairāgya* or detachment is a negative means, some else is to be discarded, and our goal is to be achieved from both ends. These two are the commonest means and all other means are included in these two. Practice is the practice of the discriminative intelligence, whatever means we adopt be it austerity, self-study, knowing and surrendering to God, practice of postures, and breath techniques leading to withdrawal of senses, concentration and meditation, all these come under the practice. By these practices the mind is directed towards the discriminating intelligence, and that discriminating intelligence brings a tranquil state of mind. So the practice is defined as, *tatra sthitau yatno-bhyāsaḥ* (Ygs., 1.13), the practices (like restraints etc.) adopted, *yatnaḥ*, to acquire and remain in that state (of tranquility), *tatra sthitau*, is called the practice, *abhyāsaḥ*. This is constant alertness. The state of mind aimed here is not an ordinary state of calmness for a period but the continuity of mind devoid of all fluctuations be it happiness and sorrow known as the flow of tranquility, *praśāntavāhita sthitiḥ*.

Detachment is to inhibit the flow of mind towards sense objects. Since the mind is always attracted towards allurements and apparent dazzling objects those are though fascinating and pleasing but in actuality are degrading and painful. These enjoyments of sense-objects involve all forms of sorrow. Ṛṣi Patañjali teaches, *pariṇāmatāpasamskāraduḥkhaairgunavṛttivirodhācca duḥkhameva sarvaṃ vivekinaḥ* (ibid., 2.15), the discriminating persons judge, *vivekinaḥ*, all worldly objects, *sarvaṃ*, as sorrowful, *duḥkhameva*, because they result in suffering, *pariṇāma duḥkhaḥ*, afflictive during enjoyment, *tāpa duḥkhaḥ*, afflictive in their latencies, *samskāra duḥkhaḥ*, and also due to contrary nature of the *guṇa*-s or three qualities, *gunavṛttivirodhāt ca*. The cause of all these is the ignorance (see *supra*, the head "The Ignorance, *Avidyā*," p. 124). Detachment or renunciation is indifference towards sense-objects and their enjoyments both seen and heard. The detachment has been described as, *dṛṣṭā'nuśravikaviṣayavitrūṣṇasya vaśikārasamjñā vairāgyam* (ibid., 1.15), when mind loses all thirsts for objects seen or listened, viz., worldly objects, supernatural powers or enjoyments in heaven, it establishes in a state of total want of desires called the detachment. *Vaśikārasamjñā* is complete freedom from the influences of the objects, good or bad, with a saturated state of mind through discriminative intellect. Worldly

desires have never been satisfied, so enjoyments to carry on with life must be without hankerings and it is always good to develop and maintain an attitude of indifference towards them. To quench the desires by enjoyments are like putting fuel to the fire to extinguish it. We must remember that our body, sense-organs, organs of action and mind are products of the Nature, *prakṛti*, hence it is natural that they run towards the Way of Nature, *pravṛtti*. We have to reverse that direction and make it flow towards the *Puruṣa*, and then it is renunciation, *nivṛtti*. So it is said, *tatparam puruṣakhyāterguṇavairiṣṇam* (Ygs., 1.16), supreme detachment is obtained by the Knowledge of *Puruṣa* when there is loss of thirst in the qualities of Nature. We need to realize the *Puruṣa* principle through a discriminating intellect and to develop the knowledge that holds the Truth.

Requirements in the Journey: We have already discussed the first requirement, i.e., the noble faith, *śraddhā* to reach the Discriminating Knowledge (*vide supra*, p. 155). Other requirements in order are *vīrya*, *smṛti*, *samādhi*, and *prajñā* (*ibid.*, 1.20). *Śraddhā* gives *vīrya* or vigor. This is enthusiasm leading to sustained effort. Here *vīrya* mostly refers to breath techniques or the Prāṇic Practices. This gives *smṛti* or memory. This is repeated recollection of the spiritual practice. One must not forget that *smṛti* is one of the actions of mind, *vṛtti*, which is finally to be discarded. The *smṛti* here talked about is a noble quality, *sāttvika vṛtti*, named as contemplation. This is a main practice tool for those in the path of knowledge but for the path of yoga this is also a tool as per this sūtra of Ṛṣi Patañjali. Minimum requirement is that one should not forget his goal and practice, but here also contemplation on *Īśvara*, Aum or *Haṁsa* that brings mind the conception of an eternally emancipated God along with the Prāṇic Practice of *Īśvara-praṇidhāna Kriyā*, Aum *Kauśala* or *Haṁsa Sādhanā*, etc., as taught in the *Kriyā-yoga* take the practitioner to the state of undisturbed mind and conducive to concentration or *samādhi*. So *smṛti* is not a mechanical Prāṇic Practice in *Kriyā-yoga*, this is a form of conscious Prāṇic Practice. *Smṛti* leads to *samādhi* and here *samādhi* relates to *saṁyama* or three forms of meditation, viz., *dhāraṇa*, *dhyaṇa* and *samādhi*. These lead to the discriminative knowledge or *prajñā*. Now there is no “narrow I sense,” only the “Vast I consciousness,” *sarvātma bodha*, remains. For quick success one needs intense practice, *tīvrasamvegānām* (*ibid.*, 1.21), quick success happens, *āsannaḥ*, for the practitioners practicing with intense ardor, *tīvrasamvegānām*. *Samvega* includes the detachment, the noble faith and the aptitude to hasten forward the practice. The core practice has been said as, *īśvara-praṇidhānavā* (*ibid.*, 1.23), from *īśvara-praṇidhāna* also one attains *samādhi* and the Knowledge, all this has been discussed under the head, “Knowing the God, *Īśvara-praṇidhāna*,” *supra*, p. 119.

Breath is the Vehicle: We have discussed this aspect in different heads (*see supra*, the heads, “Breath, *prāṇavāyu*, strengthens the Discriminating Intellect,” p. 11; “Breath Techniques clean the Mind,” p. 100; “Worshiping *Prāṇa* is the Way,” p.

102; “Understanding *Īśvara*prāṇidhāna Technique,” p. 121; “Equanimity through *Prāṇakarma*,” p. 132; “Sāmyama is Control of Vital Airs, i.e., *prāṇakriyā*,” p. 143; “Upaniṣads teach *Prāṇopāsanā*,” p. 151; “*Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* teaches *Prāṇopāsanā*,” p. 152; and “*Soham Japa* is the Tradition of *Prāṇopāsanā* in India,” p. 152). We observed that in our every action and in every moods of our life our breath changes. Anger, fear, nervousness, greed, sexual desires, anxiety, over-joy, overdoing, etc. fasten our breath and heart beat. In friendship, compassion, happiness, calmness, contentment, etc., our breath becomes normal. In deep sleep we have a rhythmic breath but that is even *tamas* based. In extreme calmness our breath becomes slow. This gives rest to heart, brain and mind. We bring a state of calmness by altering our breath through practice of breath. First we practice long and deep breath to overcome *tamas* and then resort to other breath techniques that makes the breath slow gradually and finally reaches to a state of breathlessness and we remain in the *Prāṇa* only. All the moods of mind are inhibited.

Obstacles, *Antarāyāḥ*: There are certain obstacles met by the practitioner while one is in the practice of inhibiting the actions of mind. These obstacles derail from the path and cause distractions. They are named as, *vyādhistyānasamśaya-pramādā’syālaviratibhrāntidarśanālabdhabhūmikavānavasthitatvāni cittavikṣepāstentarāyāḥ* (Ygs., 1.30), disease, *vyādhi*, incompetence, *styāna*, doubt, *samśaya*, inertia, *pramāda*, laziness, *ālasya*, non-abstention, *avirati*, delusion, *bhrāntidarśana*, non-attainment, *alabdhabhūmikatva*, instability, *anavasthitatva* are distractions of mind, *cittavikṣepāḥ*, known as obstacles, *antarāyāḥ*. These nine obstacles are distractions or fluctuations of mind. *Vikṣepāḥ* or distractions can be said as mental oscillations. Cravings and aversions are special type of distractions. To eradicate all types of oscillations of mind we need concentration of mind and then inhibition of all actions of mind. That is our practice. Normally oscillations are the nature of mind and are products of *rajoguna*. But here we are discussing about the distractions a practitioner encounters normally after a period of practice as obstacles to the practice.

Diseases or *vyādhi*: Diseases or *vyādhi* are sickness of body related to any organ and/or any system of the body. We cannot practice in an ailing body due to lack of fitness and lack of concentration. Even those who are not concerned with the spiritual practice for them also diseases are of great concern because these are painful and create hindrances in leading their lives. Since yoga gives a remedy for diseases people are interested in it and a branch of yoga known as “Yoga Therapy” has developed, became popular and helping the mankind. But it must be kept in mind that this is a by-product of yoga, and yoga is that which cures the disease called “the world,” *samsāra*.

Cause of Diseases: The cause of diseases is either due to physiological disorders or due to microbial infections. The cause of the physiological disorders is mental

disorders. We create imbalances in our mind due to attachments and aversions. These govern our thinking, behaviors and actions, and most of the times due to our likes and dislike these take a wrong course. When the intensity of mental imbalances increases they result in a mental disease, *ādhi*. *Ādhi* gives rise to *vyādhi* or a physical ailment. A normal person is not aware about the mental developments and when these imbalances manifest externally in the body level take the form of diseases. Mental diseases create instability in elements, *dhātu vaiṣamya*. Instabilities in three elements, viz., air, fire and water in the body create *vāta*, *pitta*, and *kapha* problems respectively according to Āyurveda. This leads to impaired homeostasis or disturbances in body fluids, *rasa vaiṣamya*, and further incompetence of organs and systems, *karaṇa vaiṣamya*. Our physical body is made up of the five elements, viz., ether, air, fire, water, and earth. Ether is the subtlest element where as earth is the grossest element. Expressions of diseases are due to the disturbances in the middle three. The link between mind and physical body is the vital energy, *prāṇa*. When the mind is disturbed due to our reactions to the outer environment the disturbances in mind cause disturbances in the flow of *prāṇa* in the subtle nerves, *aṅgamejayatva*, and also disturbances in flow of our breath, *śvāsapraśvāsa* (*vide infra*, “Companions of the Distractions,” p. 172). We notice the fluctuations in flow of breath due to different states of mind be it anger, greed, fear, frustration or a desire, but we do not notice the fluctuations of vital energy in our bodies. Those who are versed with the yogic practices can notice these fluctuations in the form of changes in subtle vibrations appearing inside the body and when these become little gross they appear as restlessness or quivering of body, *aṅgamejayatva*. Now the nerves unable to maintain stability result in instability in elements, *dhātu vaiṣamya* followed by disturbances in body fluids, *rasa vaiṣamya* and finally incompetence of organs, *karaṇa vaiṣamya*. These lead to various psychosomatic diseases. These are stress related. Ninety per cent of diseases are psychosomatic in nature; only few infectious diseases are not psychosomatic. Again some of the contagious diseases like AIDS and STDs (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) are due to wrong behavior patterns, which have origin to our wrong attitude. Infectious diseases are also related our decreased immune power which is mostly psychic in origin. We have two systems to regulate our body mechanism. One is the Nervous System and another is the Endocrine System. Similar to the Nervous System mental disorders also create disturbances in the endocrine system. Due to stress conditions Hypothalamus secretes CRF (corticotrophin releasing factor) that activates the master gland pituitary to secrete ACTH (adeno-corticotrophic hormones). ACTH signals the adrenal glands to release adrenal hormones known as stress hormones. These hormones inhibit the growth process and decrease energy flow to visceral organs to redirect energy to body muscles to flight away from stress situations (Fig. 3.2). The hypothalamus also stimulates sympathetic nervous system to secrete neuro-

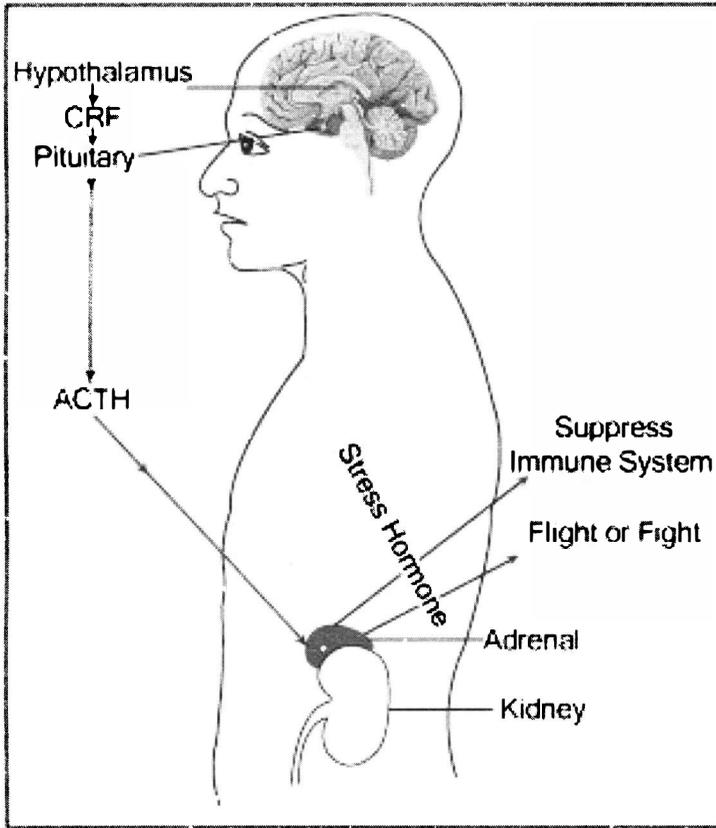


Fig. 3.2. Stress hormones suppress immune system.

hormones called catecholamines that increase pulse rate, blood pressure, sweating, blood glucose and muscle tone, decrease secretions of digestive juices and bowel mobility, and widely opens lungs air passage and eyelids. This means more heart, lungs and muscle activities to flight away from stress situations. This helps animals to save their lives and also helped humans in ancient times in danger situations and calamities. Now with modern man having no such danger and creating internal stresses always due to wrong belief system suffers the bad effect of stress hormones. Due to continuous stress situations important visceral organs are devoid of energy and become impaired. This lead to development of psychosomatic diseases and suppressing immune power since the stress hormones directly suppress the immune system to redirect energy to organs and muscles where they are not in use and become a burden there. So we find that mental disorders create psychosomatic diseases and are also responsible for decreased immunity to develop infectious diseases. To illustrate it more clearly let us take a hypothetical situation. Suppose you are lost in a forest, say Simlipal Tiger Reserve

or Achanakmar Tiger Reserve, and there you drank some unhygienic water as the water is polluted with dusts, bacteria, etc. due to rains, and now had diarrhea. You were very tired, had no strength to move and were resting under a tree. Suddenly an inhabitant of a forest village came running shouting “tiger . . . tiger . . .” and you hear the howling. Now you also started running behind the man in the direction of the forest village. Wherefrom the strength to run came? The impulse of sudden fear of tiger through your ear reached the brain, which was transmitted by the mid-brain to the hypothalamus. Hypothalamus signaled sympathetic nervous system to secrete catecholamines, and also signaled pituitary via CRF and pituitary signaled adrenals via ACTH. Now adrenals secreted stress hormones that stopped blood flow to all vital organs and increased blood flow to thighs and leg muscles to redirect energy to legs for running from all parts of the body. Now suppose the tiger never comes and you do not have to run anywhere but always there is fear of tiger and you listen the howling to secrete stress hormones, then all your vital organs would be deprived of sufficient energy and will weaken leading to impairment of their functions, and your immunity will also decrease. Heart, blood vessels and lungs will have excessive work and no rest, and your flight muscles will also be subjected to degeneration due to excessive load of energy and no work. Your muscles are given the signal to run, became ready to run but no running. So Bhagatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya warns,

*mano nāma mahāvyaḡhra viśayāraṇyabhūmiṣu,
carayatra na gacchantu sādhave ye mumukṣavaḡ. (Vkc., 176)*

The great tiger, *mahāvyaḡhra*, named the mind, *mano nāma*, is moving, *carayati*, in the forest of sense objects, *viśayāraṇyabhūmiṣu*. So the noble ones, *sādhaveḡ*, who aspire for liberation, *ye mumukṣavaḡ*, do not visit, *na gacchantu*, there, *atra*.

Though the forest of sense-objects looks very beautiful, the great tiger named the mind is always howling there and creating fear, greed, anger, nervousness, attachments, aversions, etc. inside the mind and always creating stress situations. Now where to run away from this mind named tiger with our physical body? So to be free from these stress situations we have to practice not to remain in mind and our breath teaches us to do that. That is the Kriyā-yoga.

Therapy: The approach of modern clinical sciences is only to clean the surface without going to the root of the problem. Though clinical science has developed our understanding of physiological processes of the body, useful in combating infectious diseases and marveled in surgery but it has not improved drastically in curing physiological and psychosomatic diseases. Yoga therapy in combination with Āyurveda provides a successful solution to the problem but unfortunately due to lack of vision by the planners of the nations particularly those from India to provide resources, infrastructure and direction, lack of research with modern scientific knowledge, vested interests of the stake holders at the top, and lack of

an integrated approach starting from medical education to health implementation are major hurdles to overcome till date. Whatever has been done is due to isolated efforts of some individuals and groups, and to name a few of them are Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana, Vivekananda Kendra, Bihar School of Yoga, Patanjali Divya Dham, and few others. Since the root of diseases lie at the mental level we have to cure it from that level only. But once the diseases are manifested we have to adopt one short-term strategy to be cured and get immediate relief, and another long-term strategy is required to root out the problem. For immediate relief we have to take the help of medicines, herbal treatments and yoga therapy that includes diet regulation, *kriyā*s like Neti, Dhauti, Vasti, Kuñjar Kriyā, Sañkha Prakṣāḷana Kriyā, Mūlaśodhana, Agnisāra, and Kapālabhātī, etc., also selected yogic *vyāyāma* or loosening exercises to activate the affected body parts. Sūrya Namaskāra is a complete yogic *vyāyāma*. On yogic *vyāyāma* emphasis should be given to loosen the joints and to stretch and relax muscles and body parts. The Energization Exercises taught by Paramahansa Yogānanda, the Guruprañāma and the Mahāmudrā techniques taught in the Kriyā-yoga meditation helps a lot. Then selected yogāsanas should be practiced depending on the nature of the ailments. But most important to act at the root which is psychic in nature and the psychic problems of mind can be cured by *prāṇākarma*. Deep breathing exercises should be learned. One must learn the Haṁsa Sādhana technique and the Kriyā Proper breathing of first *kriyā*. These will help to remove the disturbances in flow of energy through nerves and act at the level of Vital sheath for healthy life. Then *kriyā* meditation must be learned that will train mind to remain relaxed during meditation. This will act at the level of the Mind sheath and the Knowledge sheath. And when a practitioner learns to reach the State of Bliss in Parāvasthā he acts for a healthy life from the sphere of the Bliss sheath.

Incompetence: Incompetence or *styāna* is incapability of mind not to generate interest for the practice. Even if there is will, mind lose power to practice and there is recourse to evil or contrary thoughts. This is lack of vigor. We need more *prāṇa* to counter that.

Doubt: Doubt or *saṁśaya* is suspicion, this is thinking on both ways like, “this can be this or this cannot be this” or “this is possible or this is not possible.” This is indecisiveness and this appears due to lack of firmness and lack of vigor. Lord Kṛṣṇa says, *saṁśayātmā vinaśyati* (Ś Bg., 4.40), one who is doubting in nature perishes. Doubt arises with regard to existence of God, success in Self-realization or techniques and process of the path undertaken etc.; these delude the practitioner, slacken the efforts undertaken and the practitioner may even give up his practice.

Inertia: Inertia or *pramāda* is not to be engaged in practice; this is due to not thinking about the practice and then being engaged in the worldly affairs.

Laziness: Laziness or *ālasya* is disinclination in practice due to heaviness of body and mind arising out of *tamogūṇa*. By more and more breath practice, *rajas* is to be developed to counter *tamas*.

Non-abstention: Non-abstention or *avirati* is contact of the mind with sense objects and thirst or craving to enjoy them. This is against detachment and takes away from the practice.

Delusion: Delusion or *bhrāntidarśana* is wrong knowledge. To accept the practices to be undertaken as non-practices and the non-practices to be practices come in the category. Here though the discussion is related to practice and it is not said about erroneous conception in spiritual experiences like hallucinating visions etc. but they also come under delusion, and are detrimental to growth in yoga. These often give wrong conception to the practitioner that he has attained a higher state. We find that a large chunk of the spiritual world is mad after these hallucinating visions. A practitioner has to remember that doubts and delusions are greater dangers than other obstacles.

Non-attainment: Non-attainment or *alabdhabhūmikatva* is failure to attain any yogic state.

Instability to Retain: Instability to stay in a state or *anavasthitattva* is not being able to remain in a yogic state even after attaining it. Since these nine obstacles distract the mind they are named as distractions and these distractions remain with the whirls of mind.

Companions of the Distractions: These nine distractions or obstacles discussed above always bring their five friends as additional obstacles with them and are known as companions of the distractions. They are, *duḥkhadaurmanasyāṅgamejayatvaśvāsaprasāvāsā vikṣepasahabhuvah* (Ygs., 1.31), sorrow, *duḥkha*, dejection, *daurmanasya*, restlessness of body, *aṅgamejayatva*, inhalations, *śvāsa*, and exhalations, *praśvāsā*, are companions of distractions, *vikṣepasahabhuvah*. Sorrow or *duḥkha* upsets one and he tries for its removal. Normally this refers here to physical uneasiness but associated with mental uneasiness and is of three kinds, viz., *ādhyātmiḥka*, arising within the self due to both physical diseases and mental disturbances, *ādhibhautika*, inflicted by others—human or animals, and *ādhidivika*, natural calamities etc. Dejection or *daurmanasya* is a type of frustration and this is caused due to failure or non-fulfillment of a desire. Restlessness of body or *aṅgamejayatva* is unsteadiness resulting in shaking of body or a part. This results in gross vibrations in the body and painful itching, burning, distracting sensations or stiffness etc. in a part. This can also be nervousness. The *vyāna vikṣaṇā* technique is very much helpful to counter restlessness of body and helps in maintaining steady posture for practice. Inhalation or *śvāsa* refers to unnatural inbreathing, due to tiredness etc. Exhalation or *praśvāsa* refers to unnatural outbreathing, due to frustration and frightening etc. Such inhalations and exhalations

show a distracted state of mind and do not appear in a calm mind. However, during the practice of concentration a regulated breathing technique is followed, here inhalation or exhalation carried out is not a distraction. In meditative state breath slows down and may stop also. If the process of inhalation and exhalation goes on then the mind cannot enter to the state of samādhi. Mind and vital airs are so related that the mind will not acquire a complete tranquil state when breath is running. So inhalations and exhalations, those are distractions and can only be eradicated by practice of inhalations and exhalations, “*pracchar-danavidhāraṇābhyaṁ vā prāṇasya*” (Ygs., 1.34).

Remedy: Before the descriptions of obstacles, the practice of Īśvara or Aum has been emphasized as the preventive measure for obstacles, *tataḥ pratyakcetanā-dhigamo’pyantarāyābhāvaśca* (ibid., 1.29), from that, *tataḥ*, comes realization of the Inner Self, *pratyakcetanā*, *dhigamaḥ*, and *ca*, also, *api*, the obstacles are prevented, *antarāyābhāvaḥ*. *Pratyak* means what is underlying in everything and ancient, i.e., Īśvara, this is the Inner Self; and *pratyakcetanā* means Self of person having the Knowledge. Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā removes the obstacles like diseases etc. and takes to the Self-realization. We have to remember that all the obstacles are nothing but distractions of mind, *cittavikṣepāḥ*. Again after the description of obstacles the same Īśvara has been said as the remedy, *tatpratiṣedhārthamekatattvā-bhyāsaḥ* (ibid., 1.32), to eradicate them, *tatpratiṣedhārtham*, a single principle should be practiced, *ekatattvā’bhyāsaḥ*. The single principle here is the Īśvara and the practice is Īśvarapraṇidhāna. One can argue that a disturbed mind can be made one-pointed by practice of any “one principle” and it should not necessarily be Īśvara. But our purpose is not simply to make the mind one pointed; our purpose is to annihilate the ego-consciousness and to merge the ego in total Consciousness. Our purpose is to halt all the modifications of mind that are nothing but “I thoughts.” So the individual self can only be merged in the Cosmic Self, Īśvara. That is the reason that one principle spoken here is Īśvara. Then Īśvara can be contemplated in various ways like singing the glory of God etc. as done in the path of devotion or it can be a mental analysis, an idea contemplated upon with concentrated attention as done in the path of knowledge. Though such types of practices yield results and hence not denied but here the yogic practice of Īśvarapraṇidhāna is a different one. If simply contemplation on the God has been intended then the phrase, “a single principle should be practiced, *ekatattvābhyāsaḥ*,” should not have been mentioned as this was mentioned earlier in the treatise. So here practice of “one principle” has been emphasized as a specific yogic technique. We have said that Īśvarapraṇidhāna is a technical term in the Kriyā-yoga. This is a practice by which the mind easily gets stabilized and this is the practice of regulated breathing or we can say a yogic breathing discussed under the head “Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā” (*vide supra*, p. 122). By the coordinated inhalation and exhalation and understanding the Prāṇa Īśvara, one is not easily

disturbed by afflictions and this becomes a natural and pleasant support. Breathing practice is further elucidated by the sūtra, *pracchardanavidhāraṇābhyām vā prāṇasya* (Ygs., 1.34), by practice of *pracchardana* and *vidhāraṇa* of breath, and this is discussed under the head, “Worshiping the *Prāṇa* is the Way” (*supra*, p. 102). But simply practicing breath technique without attempting to settle the mind may result in extrovertness due to increase in *rajoguna*, so the mind should hold to something and that something is Īśvara, Aum or Hamsa. So the practice is neither alone a vital one nor simply a mental one. This is a psycho-vital technique with more emphasis on vital part in case of Kriyā-yoga. When one practices the higher Kriyā Techniques like breathing and meditation on twelve-lettered Vāsudeva mantra, this becomes an extended form of Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā.

Another aspect is to train our mind to cultivate friendship, kindness, contentment and indifference to purify the mind so that obstacles are ward off. The sūtra says, “*maitrikaruṇāmudītopekṣāṇām sukhaduḥkhaḥpunyāpunya viṣayāṇām bhāvanātaścittaprasādanam*” (ibid., 1.33), friendship, *maitri*, with happy and prosperous, *sukha*, objects, *viṣayāṇām* (persons, places, situations, events or objects), kindness, *karuṇā*, with the suffering ones, *duḥkha*, contentment, *mudītaḥ*, with ones of nobility, *puṇya*, and indifference, *upekṣā*, to ones in wrong path, *apuṇya*, is to be cultivated to remain in a mind that is full of bliss, *cittaprasādanam*. Here it becomes a mental contemplation but such a mental contemplation is more effective when that is based on vital energy.

4

The Body Principle, *Śarīra Tattva*

Human Birth: We have to practice union with our source through our body and in life only. Here, it is not a question of debate whether the three eternal, viz., the Cosmic Self, *Īśvara*, the individual self, *jīva*, and the Nature, *Prakṛti*, are separate entities or One Entity as the intellectuals often do. One has to realize this by practice. The problem with us is that we are in sorrow and we want to overcome that, and all our attempts to overcome sorrow with material to intellectual means have failed to do so. The spiritual knowledge suggests such a solution and that is union of the individual self with the Infinite, Truth, Knowledge, and Bliss Principle. This Principle is named *Īśvara* or the Brahman. This is annihilation of ego. This, in other words, is called as removal of the ignorance that exists as a barrier between the individual self and the Cosmic Self. This makes the vision of the Self as a continuous entity in all beings. Yoga suggests a practice to overcome that barrier. For this we need a practice to develop the discriminative intellect up to the state of Knowledge holding the Truth. This state one achieves in *samādhi* and it must be achieved while one is living in this body. The *Kenopaniṣad* says,

*iha cedvedīdatha satyamasti
na cedihāvedīm mahatī vinaṣṭiḥ
bhūteṣu bhūteṣu vicitya dhīrāḥ
pretyāsmālokaḍamṛtā bhavanti. (Ke.U, 2.5)*

If, *cet*, known, *avedīt*, here, *iha*, then, *atha*, there is truth, *satyamasti*, if, *cet*, not known, *na avedīt*, here, *iha*, then there is great destruction, *mahatī vinaṣṭiḥ*. The wise ones, *dhīrāḥ*, having realized (That), *vicitya*, in all beings, *bhūteṣu bhūteṣu*, detaching away, *pretya*, from this world, *asmāt lokāt*, become immortal, *amṛtā bhavanti*.

So the Knowledge is to be achieved here in this body, if not, then one has to travel from birth after birth only to experience sufferings. Knowing Him in each moving and nonmoving beings, one turns away from this world of “ego sense” to the world of “Consciousness of Immortal Self.” *Samādhi* is a state of consciousness in close proximity to the Knowledge and this Knowledge is lodged in the innermost

cavity, *brahmapurī*, within the brain. And to be established in the Knowledge we need to attain that state again and again. Scriptures say that only a human body can do that practice. We have no definite knowledge of aliens in some other planets, if they are higher to us and if they have been developed into super humans with divine qualities and are ever associated with the Truth Principle or not. Again, whether any kind of yoga is possible for animals within our planet or not? Our knowledge says this is not possible since they do not have an evolved mind with rational thinking that requires an evolved brain and an erect spine. Scriptures say that there are eighty-four lakhs (one hundred thousands is one lakh) of species both moving and nonmoving (nonmoving represents plants) in this earth, and an individual soul has to travel through all these lives as a part of his evolutionary process to reach the Ultimate through the human form. Since in the lower forms of life, the discriminating intellect is not developed, the evolution takes place by the actions of the Nature. Only humans in the evolutionary ladder are blessed to perform the practice leading to Self-realization with their efforts. So it is said, *jantūnām narañanma durlabhamataḥ puṁstvam tato vipratā* (*Vkc.*, 2), among the living beings, *jantūnām*, a human birth, *narañanma*, is difficult to achieve, *durlabham*, then, *ataḥ*, the qualities of a man, *puṁstvam*, and again, *tataḥ*, qualities of a Brahmin, *vipratā*. On the basis of material, scientific, technical and intellectual developments it is proved that human beings are the highest among the animals but here intention is to speak of spiritual journey of humans on the basis of development of the discriminating intellect. The qualities of a man do not refer to a male birth as often misinterpreted; this refers to the qualities leading to the way of retuning, *nivṛtti*. Similarly the qualities of a Brahmin refer to noble qualities, *sāttvika vṛtti*. Then such a body becomes fit for the spiritual practice. This body is *kṣetra* or the field; *idaṁ śarīraṁ kaunteya kṣetramityabhidhīyate* (*Ś Bg.*, 13.2), Oh son of Kuntī, *kaunteya*, this body, *idaṁ śarīraṁ*, is known as the field, *kṣetramityabhidhīyate*. Here in this body the spiritual war is to be declared to win over the Generals of the Prince of the Blind King. The Blind King, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, is our mind with cravings and attachments. Our ego is the Prince Duryodhana, and the generals are our modifications of mind like desires, anger, greed, etc., those cling to the outward manifestation. So we should have some idea on the body principle. Here the intention is not to discuss anatomy and physiology of the gross body, of course this knowledge helps. One can have this knowledge from a standard book on anatomy and physiology. Our purpose is to understand the body principle as enumerated in the scriptures to understand the subtle anatomy and physiology related to the spiritual science.

The Creation and the Body Complex: The body complex is composed of twenty-five principles categorized in to four categories according to the Sāṅkhya System. The Yoga System describes one more, i.e., Īśvara the Special *Puruṣa*, *Puruṣaviśeṣa* Īśvara, making a total of twenty-six principles. The four categories are Nature,

Prakṛti, Modifications, *vikṛti*, Both Nature and Modifications, *prakṛtivilikṛti ubhayātmaka* and Not-Nature Nor-Modification, *prakṛtivilikṛti anubhayātmaka*. The Modifications are effects. Those, which are both cause and effects, are called Both Nature and Modifications. Which is neither cause nor effect is Not-Nature Nor-Modification. Here the Nature or *Prakṛti* is the primordial cause of the world, Creator and the Queen who rules. *Prakṛti* is defined as, *prakaroti viśvaṃ yā sā prakṛti*, one that creates the universe is *Prakṛti*. This *Prakṛti* co-exists with the Lord to design the entire creations of names and forms. The three primordial characteristics, viz., *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* remain in equilibrium in the Higher-Nature, *parā-prakṛti*. With the activation of the *rajas* constituent of the Higher-Nature, *parā-prakṛti*, by the Lord known as “His austerity in the form of knowledge,” *jñānamaya tapaḥ*, the equilibrium is disturbed and this gives rise to *sattva* in one hand and *tamas* in other hand. This creates a chain of reactions. This has been described as, *tapasā ciyate brahma*, etc. in Upaniṣaḍ: “by austerities the Brahman becomes gross and from it food is born. From food *prāṇa* is created, and then from *prāṇa* are formed mind, truth, worlds, and actions, *karma*-s, as immortality” (*Mu. U.*, 1.1.8). Here the food refers to *Prakṛti* and the *prāṇa* refers to the cosmic vital power in association with the cosmic intelligence. Again, *etasmājjīyate prāṇo manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca*, etc., from that Transcendental Being originates *prāṇa*, the vital energy (this includes the cosmic intelligence and the cosmic power of action), then created are mind and all the organs, also ether, air, fire, water, and earth, which support the world (*ibid.*, 2.1.3). We find different orders in description of creations as “*sa prāṇamasṛjata prāṇācchradhām kham*, etc. (*Pr. U.*, 6.4), He created *Prāṇa*, from *prāṇa* He created faith, the cosmic noble mind and from faith He created ether, air, fire, water, and earth in succession. Then organs, viz., sense organs and action organs including the entire body made from above five elements, and minds are created.” Again it is said, “*tasmaddhā etasmādātmana ākāśaḥ sambhutaḥ ākāśadvāyuh*, etc., from that Brahman, which is the Self, was created the space, from space air, from air fire, from fire water, from water earth, from earth herbs, from herbs food are produced and from food was born man.” (*Tai. U.*, 2.1.1.) These apparent differences in order of creations and omissions or additions in the steps of creations as found in the scriptures, do not make a major difference in the understanding since the way of presentation has different modes trying to establish the same Truth. In deep analysis we find that there are no differences. Again these do not intend in establishing the creation rather this is to understand the Principle called the Brahman or the Self. As per the Sāṅkhya System the first modification of the *Prakṛti* is the Cosmic Intelligence or *mahat*, this is also known as *buddhi sattva*. From *mahat* proceeds the Ego Principle, *ahaṅkāra tattva*. From the Ego Principle proceed five subtle elements, *pañcātmanmātrā*, and eleven organs, viz., five sense organs, five action organs and mind. From the five subtle elements proceed five gross elements, *pañcamahābhūta*.

The five subtle elements are sound, *śabda*, touch, *sparsa*, vision, *rūpa*, taste, *rasa*, and smell, *gandha*. The five gross elements are ether, *ākāśa*, air, *vāyu*, fire, *agni*, water, *āpa*, and earth, *prthivī*. The five sense organs, *jñānendriya*-s, are ears, *śrotra* or *śraṇanendriya*, skin, *tvak* or *tvacā*, eyes, *cakṣu* or *netra*, tongue, *jihvā* or *rasanā*, and nose, *ghrāṇa*. The five organs of action, *karmendriya*-s, are organ of speech, *vāk*, hands, *pāṇi*, legs, *pāda*, organ of procreation (includes excretory system), *upastha*, and organ of defecation (includes digestive system), *pāyu*. Mind is the eleventh organ controlling all these organs and engaged in feeling or receiving sensations, thinking and enjoying, etc. The five gross elements, the five sense organs, the five organs of action and the mind, these sixteen are only effects hence categorized as the Modifications, *vikṛti*. The five gross elements are modifications of the five subtle elements. The five sense organs, the five action organs and the mind are modifications of the Ego Principle. The Cosmic Intelligence (cause of the Ego Principle and effect of the Nature), the Ego Principle (cause of the five subtle elements and eleven organs, and effect of the Cosmic Intelligence) and five subtle elements (cause of the five gross elements and effect of the Ego Principle) are categorized under Both Nature and Modifications, *prakṛtīvikṛti ubhayātmake*. Since Puruṣa is neither the cause of any so Not-Nature, nor the effect of any so Not-modification, hence this is Not-Nature Nor-Modification, *prakṛtīvikṛti anubhayātmake*. This shows that Puruṣa is beyond all attributes, this is the *nirguṇa* aspect of Puruṣa, and according to the Sāṅkhya System, Puruṣa or the Self is beyond all attributes, *nirguṇa*, and many (referring to many individual souls). But the Vedānta believes that Puruṣa is both one having attributes, *saguṇa*, at certain stages, and *nirguṇa* at others. Whether this is *saguṇa* or *nirguṇa*, the Self is one, and the multiplicities are creations of the ignorance (identification with body-mind principle as the self); and again this Self is always pure without being mutated. Then the question arises why this should be accepted as a Principle when this is Not-Nature Nor-Modification. The answer is without the Puruṣa “the feeling of I-Consciousness” is not possible in Prakṛti. The consciousness found in intelligence, etc. are only the reflections of the Pure Consciousness, i.e., Puruṣa. So the entire body complex according to Sāṅkhya consists of twenty-five principles, viz., (1) Nature, (2) Intellect, (3) Ego, (4–8) Five Subtle Elements or senses, (9–19) Eleven Organs, (20–24) Five Gross Elements and (25) Puruṣa. We should remember here that what have been said as *buddhi* or *buddhivṛtti* in Sāṅkhya and Vedānta are referred as *citta* or *cittavṛtti* in Yoga. The omission of term “*citta*” here shows its inclusion within the term intellect, *buddhi*. Sometimes *citta* or the mind stuff is referred as subconscious but *citta* is a broader term including mind, intellect, ego, subconscious and all other internal faculties like memory, *smṛti*, etc., however memory, etc., are described as *vṛtti*-s of *citta* (see *supra*, “*Citta*, the Mind Stuff,” p. 32; “Five States of the *Citta*,” p. 34; “The Whirls of Mind, *Cittavṛtti*-s,” p. 35). Our internal organ consists of

four inner instruments, viz., mind, *mana*, intellect, *buddhi*, ego, *ahaṅkāra*, and subconscious or *avacetana* that stores impressions, *citta*. Discriminating intellect, *viveka buddhi*, and intelligence, *medhā* come under the faculty of intellect, *buddhi*. The term mind, *mana*, is also normally used for *citta*. We have to see how a term is used and in what context. However, all these principles starting from Puruṣa upto body and organs are all Prāṇa and modifications of Prāṇa, hence called the *prāṇa*. Puruṣa is the pure Prāṇa, source of all knowledge and vital power, and return to that Principle through knowledge is the goal.

THREE BODIES

According to Sāṅkhya and Yoga systems the entire body complex is classified into three bodies, viz., (1) the gross body, *sthūla śarīra*, (2) the subtle body or the astral body, *sūkṣma śarīra* or *līṅga śarīra*, and (3) the causal body, *kāraṇa śarīra*.

Gross Body, *Sthūla Śarīra*: The gross body is the physical body. It is body constituted of seven body elements, *sapta dhātu*, viz., bone marrows, bones, fats, muscles, blood, skin and nerves forming different limbs and appendages as feet, thighs, abdomen, chest, back, hands, head, and various internal organs etc., to which the feelings of “I” and “mine” is expressed. This gross body is built up with five gross elements, viz., ether, air, fire, water, and earth. The cause of the gross elements is the five subtle elements, which became gross by a process called of “division and intermixing of five,” *pañcīkaraṇa*. So the gross body is made up of five gross elements, five sense organs and five action organs. This is just a gross instrument run by the fuel of vital energy performing physiological functions. The egocentric individual self, *jīva*, receives a type of body according to his past actions, *prārabdha*, and this gross body is the enjoyment house of pains and pleasures for the individual self. The five subtle elements become the objects as sound, touch, vision, taste and smell, and the egocentric individual enjoys these through the five sense organs and creates attachments. We have to remember that this body is not for enjoyment of sense objects to create more bondage rather this is an instrument to practice detachment. The state through which the individual interacts with the material world and receives pain and pleasure is known as the waking-state, *jāgratāvasthā*. This gross body is like a house where the individual stays and interacts with the world, or we can say, as cloth is to the gross body similar is the gross body to the subtle body. This gross body is subjected to birth, growth, decay, disease, old age, and death.

Subtle Body or Astral Body, *Sūkṣma Śarīra* or *Līṅga Śarīra*: All our mental faculties constitute this body, and mainly this is made up of ego, mind, and ten organs. This is the seat of mental behaviors. This is called subtle body because this is made from subtle elements before they become gross by the process of intermixing of the five, *pañcīkaraṇa*. The ten organs (five sense organs and five action organs)

included here are not gross organs of the body but are subtle organs, vital in nature linking objects with the mind. The gross organs are channels through which perceptions are made to pass. Eye comprising eyelids, cornea, eye-ball or retina having a form does not see, these only are information passing channels through optic nerve to the optic area in the brain. This gross eye comes under the gross body. The real eye principle is different and that is the subtle eye and this eye does not have a form. The same is true for other organs. Some include five vital airs, viz., *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *samāna*, *vyāna*, and *udāna* in the subtle body whereas others put these in the gross body. Since these bind the gross body with the subtle body and are found in both we can put them in either way. The main function of this subtle body is desires, *kāma*, and actions, *karma*. This body is responsible for enjoyments of results of actions of present and past lives in the form of pains and pleasures by the individual self. In total the subtle body known as *Sūkṣma Śarīra* or *Līṅga Śarīra* is made up of eight principles, viz., (1) five action organs, (2) five sense organs, (3) five vital airs, (4) five subtle elements, (5) four internal organs, *antahkaraṇa catuṣṭaya*, (6) ignorance, *avidyā*, (7) desires, *kāma*, and (8) actions, *karma*. In short we can say the four internal organs, *antahkaraṇa catuṣṭaya*, viz., mind, intellect, ego and subconscious constitute the subtle body (see *supra*, “*Citta*, the Mind Stuff,” p. 32). This behaves as the self due to the ignorance. Ignorance, *avidyā*, is delusion due to wrong identification of the self with the body-mind entity; this is forgetting the integral unity with the Infinite True Self. This ignorance gives rise to desires for happiness. The deluded being forgets that happiness lies in establishing in his true Self and in totality, and then in a state of delusion plans for happiness as suggested by the intellect. Then these plans to materialize, take the form of actions. The manifestation of this subtle body is the dream state, *svapnāvasthā*, in the waking state both gross and subtle bodies work whereas in the dream state we remain only in the subtle body.

Causal Body, *Kāraṇa Śarīra*: That which has not been manifested is the causal body. This is the innermost envelope. The Nature or *Prakṛti* also known as the Unmanifest or *avyakta* with its three qualities, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* are known as the causal body, the qualities do not interact. The manifestation of causal body is the deep sleep state, *suptāvasthā*, when the actions of mind, intellect and all the organs are merged in *prāṇa*, only the *prāṇa* remains awake. This is *Prāṇa* the Nature. Here all the impressions of waking and dreaming state remain in seed form, and when the person awakes these seeds manifest in the form of desires and actions due to interaction of the three qualities. This deep sleep state is also called the Unmanifest State because the individual cannot experience either the Self or the world, cannot think or contemplate. Though the *Prāṇa* remains awake during the state but for the sleeping individual this is unmanifest due to a state of *tamas*; the sleeping individual is not aware of the *Prāṇa* during the deep sleep.

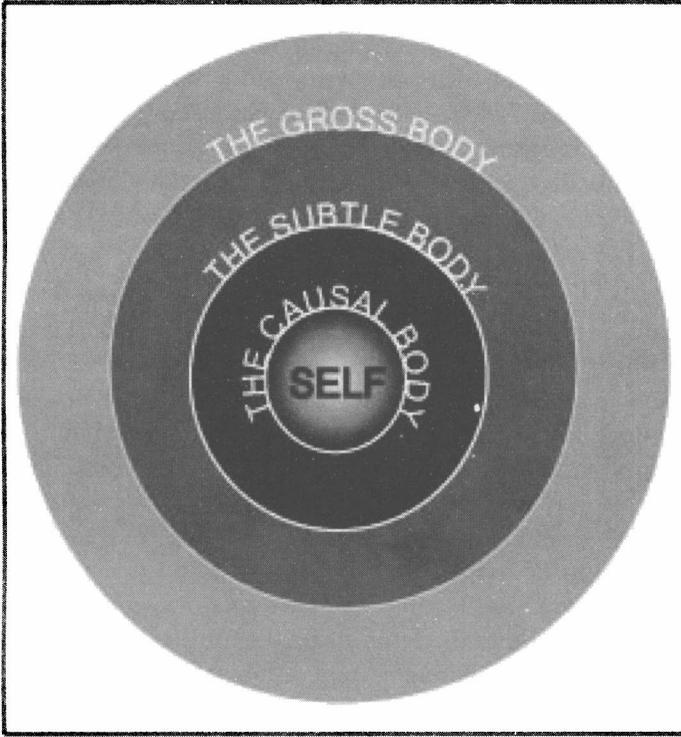


Fig. 4.1. Three bodies of the Self.

THE FIVE SHEATHS, PAÑCAKOŚĀ

For further and better understanding of the body principle, the three bodies are elaborated into five sheaths. This has nicely been described in part two and part three of *Taittirīyopaniṣad* known as *Brahmānandavallī* and *Bhṛguvallī*, respectively. The five sheaths are: (1) the Food Sheath, this is the gross body made up of the food material that we intake, (2) the Vital Sheath, interior to the Food Sheath made up of the vital energy performing body activities and physiological functions, (3) the Mind Sheath, this is interior to the Vital Sheath made up of the mind stuff, (4) the Knowledge Sheath, interior to the Mind Sheath is the Knowledge Sheath made up of intellect, and (5) the Bliss Sheath, the inner most sheath interior to the Knowledge Sheath and is the bliss layer of our true existence, and our true Self is lodged inside these five coverings. The Vital Sheath is the embodied self of the Food Sheath, the Mind Sheath is the embodied self of the Vital Sheath, the Knowledge Sheath is the embodied self of the Mind Sheath, and the Bliss Sheath is the embodied self of the Knowledge Sheath. There are interactions in respect to the five sheaths; the Vital Sheath interacts between the Food Sheath and the Mind Sheath, the Mind Sheath interacts with the Vital Sheath and the

Knowledge Sheath, and the Knowledge Sheath interacts with the Mind Sheath and the Bliss Sheath. However these interactions are not always a linear one, a higher sheath can interact with one or more lower sheaths. Again the Mind Sheath can connect the Bliss Sheath and the Knowledge Sheath with the Vital Sheath and the Food Sheath, and the Vital Sheath can interact with any sheaths. The Mind Sheath being the intermediate one is most beneficial and most wicked among all, and is to be taken very seriously on the fronts of social growth and spiritual practice.

The Food Sheath, *Annamaya Kośa*: The gross body that made from food, *anna*, sustains on food, perishes without food, and becomes the food is *annamaya kośa* or the Food Sheath: “*annātpuruṣaḥ, sa vā eṣa puruṣo’nnarasamayaḥ*” (*Tai. U.* 2.1), from food was born, *annāt*, man, *puruṣaḥ*, that man is surely, *sa vā eṣa puruṣaḥ*, a product of the essence of food, *annarasamayaḥ*. Again, *annādbhūtāni jāyante*, from food was born all beings, *jātānyannena vardhante*, being born they achieve growth by food, *adyate’iti ca bhūtāni*, since this is eaten and eat the beings, *tasmādannam taducyata iti*, so this is called as food (*Tai. U.* 2.2). Physical body is formed by the union of sperm from father and ovum from mother known as zygote. Sperm and ovum are formed from the food eaten by the father and the mother. Zygote develops into the fetus inside the mother’s womb and this growth is due to the essence of food eaten by the mother. After the birth, the baby sucks the mother’s milk as food and grows, and then the person eats food to grow. After death of a being, the body is recycled to become food again. The food is matter and this Food Sheath is the material body. What we have discussed about the Gross Body, *sthūla śarīra* (*vide supra*, p. 179) is the Food Sheath, however, the most important components are the five sense organs, *jñānendriya*-s, and the five action organs, *karmendriya*-s. This body is made from the five gross elements named ether, air, fire, water, and air. A person with a dull intellect can only think that this material body is the Self, and this is due to the ignorance or identity of “I sense” with the body. This can be eradicated only through the meditation to have the knowledge. On the advice of the father Varuṇa that, *yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante*, etc., from which these beings take birth, that by which they live after being born, that towards which they move and into which they merge, know that to be the Brahman (*Tai. U.* 3.1), Bhṛgu practiced meditation, *tapah*, and knew the food, i.e., matter or the Gross Cosmic Body as the Brahman, *annam bramheti vyajānāt* (*ibid.*, 3.2). Here Sage Bhṛgu made only identity of the individual material body with the cosmic material body, *Virāṭa*. Then he was asked by Lord Varuṇa to make further meditation, *tapah*, and find the subtler.

The Vital Sheath, *Prāṇamaya Kośa*: What normally persons understand as *Prāṇa* is the *Prāṇamaya Kośa*, however the *Prāṇa* is a much greater term and this has been discussed in the chap. 2 in details (*vide supra*, “The Prāṇa Principle,” p.

43). This Vital Sheath activates the entire physiologic system of the body and the organs. This is made up of subtle organs and life-force, being filled with which the Food Sheath works. Here we are discussing simply about the vital activities without the consciousness or knowledge aspect of the *Prāṇa*. All the gods (gods in the divine context, and also gods in the body context means organs in a body) act by following the vital energy, *prāṇam devā anu prāṇanti*, these humans and also animals, *manuṣyāḥ paśavaśca ye*, since life of beings depend on vital energy, *prāṇo hi bhūtānāmāyuh*, therefore this is called the life of all, *tasmāt sarvāyusamucyata iti* (*Tai. U.*, 2.3). This vital energy is the subtler than the physical energies, viz., electricity, magnetism, light, X-ray, etc. Without this vital energy the Food Sheath is a dead body. The mental energy though subtler, receives energy from this source and cannot act without this. Since Cosmic Gross Body could not explain *yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante*, etc., since it has an origin, Bhṛgu practiced further meditation and knew: *prāṇo brahmeti vyajānāt*, knew the vital force as the Brahman, *prāṇāddhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante*, from the vital force indeed emerge all these beings, *prāṇena jātāni jīvanti*, being born they live through the vital force, *prāṇam prayantya bhisamviśantīti*, they move towards and enter into the vital force (*Tai. U.*, 3.3). By further meditation Bhṛgu arrived at the Cosmic Vital Energy or the activity aspect, *kriyā śakti*, of the Hiraṇyagarbha as the Brahman, this is unity of individual vital energy with the total vital force. Then he was asked to make further meditation and find the subtler.

The Mind Sheath, Manomaya Kośa: Interior to the Vital Sheath is the Mind Sheath, a psychic complex. The Self is the form of Bliss, and mind along with the speech returns back without achieving the Self; *yato vāco nivartante*, from which the speech returns, *aprāpya manasā saha*, failing to achieve along with the mind, *ānandaṁ brahmaṇo vidvān*, he who knows the Bliss that is Brahman, *na bibhēti kadācaneti*, does not fear at any time (*ibid.*, 2.4). Mind is the cognitive principle and it expresses through words, ideas and speech, and these all move together. Through the mind and speech duo everything is known and expressed, this is the power of the mind. But this mind fails to conceptualize and express the Brahman, which is beyond all concepts and words. The mind can be said as a receiver receiving signals from the sense organs. The Mind Sheath consists of subtle sense organs and the mind, which is a bunch of thoughts. This mind is the ignorance, the three qualities of ignorance, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* act in this mind. This is the field of activity of “I thoughts” and “mine,” and finishes all the peace and tranquility. The mind is nothing but a strong fire burn by the fuel of many desires, *jājvalyamāno bahuvasānendhanai*, the fire known as the Mind Sheath manifests the material world, *manomayāgnirbahati prapañcam* (*Vkc.*, 138). This mind likes, *rāga* and dislikes, *dveṣa*, and prefers to remain in the domain of emotions. In the dreaming state this mind creates the entire dream world and merges in the *prāṇa* during the deep sleep state. And also in the waking state the

concept of world one has it according his mind. This mind is also a transmitter, transmitting the consciousness reflected upon it from the Knowledge Sheath. This mind is the cause of bondage and when the discriminating intellect, *viveka buddhi*, and detachment, *vairāgya*, develop in this mind and it becomes pure, the same mind becomes the cause of liberation. The mind is nothing but a spring of energy forming a belief system, a thought pattern that shapes personality, intellect, actions, future and even health of an individual. This mind precedes all phenomenon, everything is mind made, be it speech, actions, behavior or character, so mind matters most. Bhṛgu practiced further meditation and knew: *mano brahmeti vyajānāt* (*Tai.U*, 3.4), knew mind as Brahman.

This is the Cosmic Mind, *Prajāpati*, which is the faculty of Hiranyagarbha possessing the total mental energy, *icchā śakti*. Here the unity of individual mental energy with the total mental energy is established. Then father Varuṇa asked him to make further meditation and find the subtler.

The Knowledge Sheath, *Vijñānamaya Kośa*: An ordinary man generally appears as a psychic being, guided by the instincts inherent in mind. But that is not everything. In that way we are not separate from animals. What makes us separate from animals is the presence and development of the Knowledge Sheath, *Vijñānamaya Kośa* or *Buddhimaya Kośa*, interior to the Mind Sheath. The Knowledge term is often used for the Brahman because He is the all knowledge, but here the Knowledge Sheath referred is the intellect, *buddhi*, this is both intellect born from the impressions carried inside the mind, *samskāraja buddhi* and the discriminating intellect, *viveka buddhi*. This discriminating intellect is the understanding, and this should be developed by practice of concentration and contemplation up to the state of knowledge holding the Truth. This state of knowledge holding the Truth is termed as *viveka khyāti* or final understanding. Of the embodied being known as this Knowledge Sheath, noble faith is verily his head, *tasya śraddhaiva śiraḥ*, righteousness is the right side, *ṛtam dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ*, truthfulness is the left side, *satyamuttaraḥ pakṣaḥ*, meditation is the self or trunk, *yoga ātmā*, the *mahāt* principle is the stabilizing tail, *mahaḥ pucchaṃ pratiṣṭhā* (*ibid.*, 2.4). So this constitutes noble faith that is forerunner to all pious activities, righteousness and truthfulness, and then concentration and contemplation as means of right knowledge. The *mahāt* principle is the First Born Hiranyagarbha and this is the foundation; this is Cosmic Knowledge, the cause of all intellectual cognitions. Since this is the cause of all intellectual cognitions, the “ego sense” develops automatically along with this as its corollary due to the effect of ignorance. The whole spiritual practice is to get rid of this “ego sense” by developing the Knowledge that holds the Truth, *viveka khyāti*. Bhṛgu practiced further meditation and found: *vijñānam brahmeti vyajānāt* (*ibid.*, 3.5), knew knowledge as Brahman. When *jñāna* is said to be ordinary knowledge, *vijñānā* is known as the science or special knowledge. This *vijñāna* known by Bhṛgu is the Cosmic Knowledge

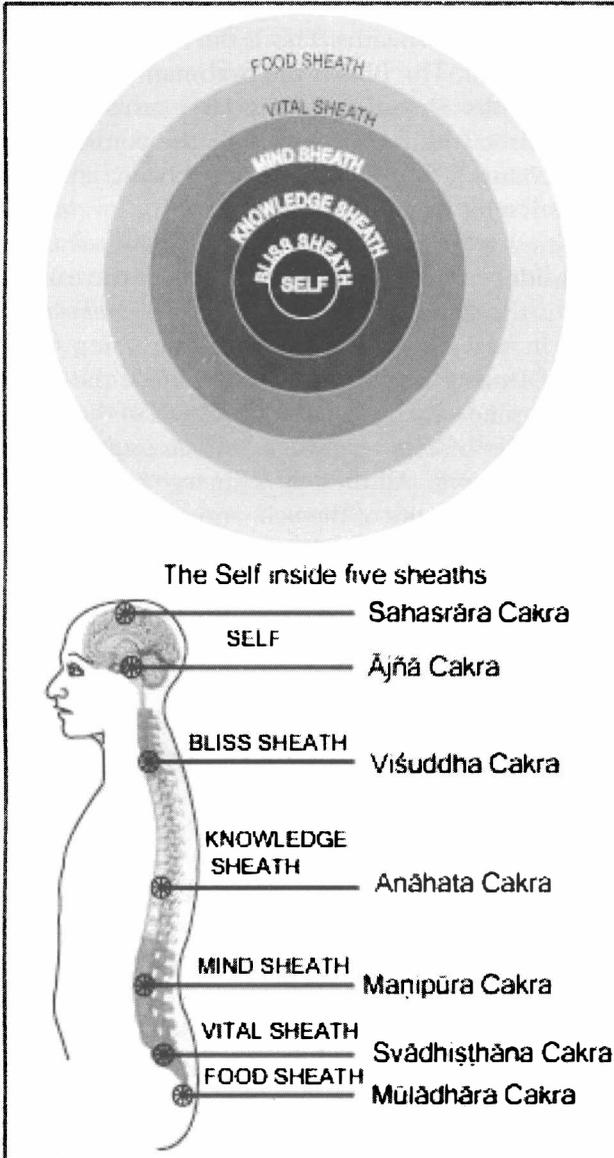


Fig. 4.2. Relation between the energy centers with the five sheaths and the deity named the Self.

Principle, *Mahat*, which is the faculty of Hiranyagarbha possessing the total knowledge energy, *jñāna śakti*. Here the unity of individual intellect with the total intellect principle is established. Then father Varuṇa asked him to make further meditation and find the subtler.

The Bliss Sheath, *Ānandamaya Kośa*: This is the subtlest among the five sheaths and is the innermost to all the sheaths. This is the innermost cavity inside which is lodged the individual self. The Bliss is the Brahman because He is the source of all bliss, but here the Bliss Sheath is the bliss layer surrounding the Inner Self. This is a joy characteristic within us reflected by the consciousness of the Self, and is a work of the Nature, *Prakṛti*. The embodied being known as Bliss Sheath has these characteristics: his head is verily the likings or joy, *tasya priyameva śiraḥ*, enjoyment of happiness is the right side, *modo dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ*, exhilaration of happiness is the left side, *pramoda uttaraḥ pakṣaḥ*, bliss is the trunk or self, *ānanda ātmā*, the Brahman is the stabilizing tail (foundation), *brahma pucchaṃ pratiṣṭhā* (*Tai.U*, 2.5). When in our daily life we achieve something or get the desired object we are happy. During that period of happiness, the distractions of our mind are less. This happiness is known as modification of the mind as joy, *ananda vṛtti*. Any of the five types of *vṛtti*-s can be a *ānanda vṛtti*, the deep sleep, *nidrā vṛtti*, is generally a *ānanda vṛtti*. All these joys emerge from the Self within since that bliss is the very characteristics of the Self, and appear to the surface of mind as a modification of consciousness by the *tamas* quality of the *Prakṛti*. The less and less are the distractions of mind the more and more is the joy. When in our mind there would be no distraction, a state of tranquility, in the words of Rṣi Patañjali “the state of *cittavṛtti nirodhaḥ*” or “no thought state,” and then it would be Bliss only. This is the trunk of the Bliss Sheath in close proximity of the Self whereas pleasures, *ānanda vṛtti*-s, are its head, left side and right side. This bliss in “no thought state” is not like a pleasure, *ānanda vṛtti*; it is a state of pure happiness due to contact with the Consciousness. This is different even from the deep sleep state where bliss is a *vṛtti* due to *tamas* quality of the *Prakṛti*. Bhṛgu practiced further meditation and being pure and pure knew the innermost: *ānando bramheti vyajānāt* (*ibid.*, 3.6), knew Bliss as the Brahman. This Bliss is the non-dual one, and is established in the supreme space, *parama vyoman pratiṣṭhītā* (*ibid.*, 3.6). Within the human body this supreme space is the cave of the heart, *brahmapurī*, above the *Ājñā cakra* inside the brain. With this realization, the head, the right side, the left side and the trunk of the Bliss Sheath as described above all merged with the foundation that is Bliss the Brahman.

Correlating Three Bodies, Five Sheaths and *Prāṇa*: The Gross Body is the Food Sheath. Due to the activities of gross vital airs (or that of the Vital Sheath) this becomes a living body or else it is a dead body. The living body is a complex of 206 bones, 660 muscles, ligaments, veins, arteries, nerves, visceral and thoracic organs and systems, brain, spinal column, skin and appendages etc. performing physiological functions due to the vital energy. So a living Gross Body is the Food Sheath and the Vital Sheath combined. Here the Vital Sheath refers to the gross *prāṇa*. The Subtle Body is the Mind Sheath and the Knowledge Sheath combined. Within the living body the Vital Sheath is also attached to the Subtle Body be it

waking or dreaming state, so this trio forms the Subtle Body. In deep sleep both the Mind Sheath and the Knowledge Sheath rest in the subtle vital energy or in subtle *prāṇa*, lodged in the Vital Sheath. When the Subtle Body leaves the Gross Body, a subtle portion of the vital power known as *udāna vāyu* takes it away. It is said, *yo vai prāṇaḥ sā prajñā yā vā prajñā sa prāṇaḥ* (*Kau. U.*, 3.3), that which is vital energy the same is knowledge and that which is knowledge the same is vital energy. So subtle body is nothing but a derivative of the *prāṇa* and is dependant on the subtle *prāṇa* for its existence. Even out side the Gross Body when the Subtle Body travels from one body to another this does so only being dependant on the *prāṇa* named as *udāna*. The Nature (*Prakṛti* or Unmanifest, *avyakta*) with its three qualities *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* is known as the causal body and the manifestation of causal body is the deep sleep state, *suptāvasthā*, when the actions of mind, intellect and all the organs are merged in *prāṇa*. It is said, *yatraitatpuruṣaḥ suptaḥ svapnaṁ na kañcana paśyatyathāsmiṁprāṇa evaikadhā bhavati*, when a person is asleep does not see any dream then he becomes one with the *prāṇa*, *tadainam vāksarvairnāmabhiḥ sahāpyeti*, then this speech together with all names goes to it, *caḅsuḥ sarvairūpaiḥ sahāpyeti*, eye together with all forms goes to it, *śrotram sarvairiḥ śabdairiḥ sahāpyeti*, ear together with all sounds goes to it, *manaḥ sarvairdhyātairiḥ sahāpyeti*, mind together with all objects of concentrations goes to it (*ibid.*, 3.3). We can say the *prāṇa* is the causal body to which the subtle body merges and there is only bliss. The sleeping person recognizes this bliss after he awakes. So the causal *prāṇa* and the Bliss Sheath combine form the causal body.

Moving Around in the Five Sheaths, *Pañcakośa Parikramā*: There are many pilgrimages in India, viz., Ayodhya, Chitrakut, etc., where we find an ancient traditional custom of *Pañcakośa Parikramā*. In the place of pilgrimage there is a main deity revered most and around the area in a circumference there are several sub-deities. The average distance from the main deity to a sub-deity is within five *kośa*, now *kośa* being taken as a unit of distance over the ages but originally it was not so. A pilgrim before paying his homage to the main deity visits all the sub-deities around the five *kośa*, and pays homage to all these deities. Then he offers his final worship to the main deity and his pilgrimage is a success now. But this is actually our inner pilgrimage to the inner deity, *Vāmana*, at the cave of the heart just above the *Ājñā cakra*. This is a Kriyā-meditation technique. In all these techniques of Guru Praṇāma, Haṁsa Sādhanā, Mahāmudrā, and Kriyā Proper we do *Pañcakośa Parikramā*. Annamaya Kośa is related to Mūlādhāra *cakra*, Prāṇamaya Kośa is related to Svādhiṣṭhāna *cakra*, Manomaya Kośa is related to Maṅipūra *cakra*, Vijñānamaya Kośa is related to Anāhata *cakra*, and Ānandamaya Kośa is related to Viśuddha *cakra*. When breath ascends and descends through these *cakra*s by practicing breath techniques or meditation, we consciously do *Pañcakośa Parikramā* and then pay our homage to the Inner God. The Second Kriyā breath technique and the meditation on the twelve-lettered Vāsudeva mantra

is also *Pañcakośa Parikramā*. Here we go into more details, moving around the five sheaths and then paying homage to the central deity Vāsudeva. When we come to the Inner Mātṛkā Meditation in higher kriyā techniques, the meditation on forty-eight basic sounds in forty-eight petals in lower five *cakra*-s is nothing but *Pañcakośa Parikramā*. For the practitioners in the path of Knowledge, *jñāna mārga*, denial of the five sheaths as non-self through mental analysis and contemplation by practicing “not this not this,” *neti neti*, to reach at the Self, is also *Pañcakośa Parikramā*.

FIVE VITAL AIRS OR BREATHS, PAÑCAPRĀṆA

The vital airs, *prāṇa*, in the body have been divided into five common types, viz., *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *samāna*, *udāna*, and *vyāna* depending upon the work it performs in the body. All physiological activities within our body be it muscular activity or cellular activity is carried out by different vital breaths, *prāṇa*-s. However we find different types of classifications of the vital breaths.

Exhalation and Inhalation Duo: In some Vedic literatures only these two *prāṇa* and *apāna* are mentioned. When only these two are mentioned they are to be understood as the exhalation and the inhalation. In *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* it is said, “*ūrdhvaṁ prāṇamunnayatyapānaṁ pratyagasyati* etc. The Dwarf One, who is sitting inside the heart and who pulls the exhalation, *prāṇa*, upward and pushes the inhalation, *apāna*, downward to Him all other gods of the world worship” (*Ka. U.*, 2.2.3). Here *prāṇa* is said to be the exhalation and *apāna* as the inhalation, but we do not find the same trend everywhere. Normal understanding goes for *prāṇa* as inhalation and *apāna* as exhalation, but from spiritual practice point of view the *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* mentioned description is true. When we inhale during First Kriyā-meditation, i.e., Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā, we inhale from the base of the spine to top at the fontanel. In the base region of the spine is the *apāna* breath, we bring it to oblate with the *prāṇa* breath at the top. So the inhalation is *apāna*. We exhale from fontanel to base of the spine. Now at the top it is the *prāṇa* breath and we bring it down to oblate with the *apāna* breath. So the exhalation is *prāṇa*. This has been said as, *apāne juhvati prāṇaṁ prāṇe’pānaṁ tathāpare* (*Ś. Bg.*, 4.29), offer the act of exhalation into that of inhalation and the act of inhalation into that of exhalation. In between *apāna* and *prāṇa* is the *Vāmana*, the Dwarf One. This is the Self, *sva*, this is Īśvara sitting at the cave in third ventricle. However both inhalations and exhalations are said to be actions of the *prāṇa* breath according to other texts, viz., *Jābāladarśanoṇiṣd* (4.30).

The Major Threes: The vital breaths that work in the body as the Vital Sheath is classified into main three, viz., *prāṇa*, *apāna*, and *vyāna* in *Taittirīyōpaniṣad*; *tasya prāṇa eva śiraḥ*, *prāṇa* is verily his head, *vyāno dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ*, *vyāna* is the right

side, *apāna uttaraḥ pakṣaḥ*, *apāna* is the left side, *ākāśa ātmā*, space is the trunk or the self, *pr̥thivī pucchaṃ pratiṣṭhā*, the earth is the stabilizing tail (*Tai. U.*, 2.2). All the vital energies remain in the space and emerge in the body as form of airs, so space is said to be the self of vital breaths. Since vital energies are received in the gross body from food, the earth is said to be the stabilizing tail. Here these three are main three in the gross body, and *samāna* seems to be included in *vyāna*, and *udāna* seems to be included in *prāṇa*. In *Yajurveda* the major three have been said as *prāṇa*, *udāna*, and *vyāna*; *dhānyamasi dhīnuhi devān prāṇāya tvodānāya tvā vyānāya tvā*, Oh foodgrains, you satisfy the gods (gods are sense organs in the body), we invoke you for *prāṇa*, for *udāna* and for *vyāna* (*YV.* 1.20). Here these three are main three in the subtle body and *apāna* is included in *prāṇa* and *samāna* is included in *vyāna*. But generally the vital breaths are classified into five depending on their functions. Since the functions of *prāṇa* in our body are many we can even classify them to hundreds.

Prāṇa is One Only: Whether two, three, five, ten or many this is one *prāṇa* only as it is said: *na hi kaścana śaknuyātsakṛdvācā nāma prajñāpayitum cakṣuṣā rūpaṃ śrotreṇa śabdaṃ manasā dhyātumityekabhūyam vai prāṇā*, one is not able to indicate a name by speech, see forms by eye, hear sounds by ear, contemplate by mind all at once which indicates all the vital airs are one, *ekaikametāni sarvāṅyeva prajñāpayanti*, being one all the vital airs express, *vācam vadānti sarve prāṇā anuvadanti*, when speech speaks all the vital airs speak, *cakṣuḥ paśyatsarve prāṇā anupaśyanti* etc., when eye sees all the vital airs see, when ear hears all the vital airs hear, when mind thinks all the vital airs think, and when breath breathes all the vital airs breathe (*Kau. U.*, 3.2). When the mind is busy with something even if eyes are open and images are formed in the retina still then one sees nothing. A preoccupied mind does not listen to the sounds though the sound waves hit his eardrum. It appears that at the same time we see and speak, see and think or think and speak but there is a very minute fraction of time-gap between them when the *prāṇa* switches over from one function to the other and that is not normally noticed. Another example may be cited that when digestive function is going on one may be speaking or seeing, but the purpose here was to say that all the vital airs are one even if they do different functions and that is the reason in deep meditation when the *prāṇa* ascends all other vital activities slow down or even stopped. It is again said, *sa vāyumivātmānam kṛtvābhyantaram prāviśatsa eko nāviśatsa pañcadhātmanam pravibhajjocyate yaḥ prāṇo-pānaḥ samāna udāno vyāna iti*, making the Self as the air He (Prajāpati, Lord of creatures) entered inside them, being one He divided himself into five as *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *samāna*, *udāna*, and *vyāna* (*Mai. U.*, 2.6).

The Major Fives: Now that which goes up that is surely the *prāṇa*, *atha yo'ya-mūrdhvamutkrāmatītyeṣa vāva sa prāṇaḥ*, now that which goes down that is surely

the apāna, *atha yo'yamavañcam samkrāmatyeṣa vāva so'pānaḥ*, now that which conducts the coarse element of food into apāna and distributes in all the limbs and very subtle that is surely samāna, *atha yo'yam sthaviṣṭhamannadhātumapāne sthāpayatyaniṣṭham cāṅge'ṅge samam nayatyēṣa vāva sa samānaḥ*, now that which swallows and vomits the food eaten and drunk that is surely udāna, *atha yo'yam pītāsītamudgirati nigirātī caiṣa vāva sa udānaḥ*, now that which is spread all over the nerves and vessels that is surely vyāna, *atha yenaitāḥ śirā anuvyāptā eṣa vāva sa vyānaḥ* (*Mai. U.*, 2.7). This is the division of vital breaths in relation to physiological activities of the body, and this is the division of the vital breaths of the Vital Sheath. Here these are gross vital breaths.

Śāṅḍilyopaniṣad gives the account of presence of five breaths with some differences from other texts. Prāṇa breath moves in face, nose, base of throat, navel, two big toes, and bellow the *kuṇḍalinī* (perineum). Vyāna breath moves in ears, eyes, waist, ankle, interior nose, throat, and pharynx. Apāna breath moves in anus, organ of procreation, thighs, abdomen, scrotum, hips, navel and in places of fire. Udāna breath moves in all the joints. Samāna breath is pervading in hands, legs and all the body parts. Samāna distributes the essence of food eaten through out body and moves in seventy-two thousand nerves being associated with the fire element in the body (*Sa. U.*, 1.4.13). Similar descriptions are also found in *Jābāladarśanopaniṣad*. Prāṇa breath remains in nose, inside the mouth, middle of navel and in heart (*JU.*, 4.26). Apāna breath remains in anus, organ of procreation, thighs, knees, entire abdomen, waist, navel and legs (*ibid.*, 4.27). Vyāna breath remains in ears, eyes, shoulders, elbows, throat and in the places where Prāṇa breath stays (*ibid.*, 4.28). Udāna breath remains in both the hands and legs, and Samāna breath remains in the entire body (*ibid.*, 4.29). Prāṇa breath is responsible for inhalation and exhalation, Apāna breath is responsible for urination and defecation, and Samāna breath is responsible to keep the status of the body (*ibid.*, 4.30.31). Udāna breath is responsible for Prāṇa to ascend and Vyāna is responsible for expression of sound (*ibid.*, 4.32).

The relation and interdependence between these five breaths acting inside the body has been enumerated in *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*: “*kasminnu tvam cātmaṁ pratiṣṭhitau stha it prāṇa iti* (3.9.26), On which are you (your body) and yourself (the intellect along with the ego) are established?” On the prāṇa, “*kasminnu prāṇaḥ pratiṣṭhita ityapāna iti*, On which is the prāṇa established?” On the apāna, “*kasminnvāpānaḥ pratiṣṭhita iti vyāna iti*, On which the apāna is established” On the vyāna, “*kasminnu vyānaḥ pratiṣṭhita ityudāna iti*, On which the vyāna is established?” On the udāna, “*kasminnudānaḥ pratiṣṭhita iti samāna iti*, On which the udāna is established?” On the samāna, Prāṇa is the main vital breath that sustains mind, intellect, ego, and sense-organs. Since this is the form of air inside the body this requires excretion of used prāṇa in the form of excretion and exhalation, so *prāṇa* is *apāna* based. The *apāna* for its activity depends upon the

all-pervading physiologic breath *vyāna* that controls all physiologic activities through nerves. *Vyāna* is dependant on *udāna* since it can work so long as the *udāna* stays in the body. Since *samāna* distributes essence of food energy, *prāna*, throughout the body the *udāna* is based on the *samāna*. Once the *samāna* extinguishes (or stops working) then the *udāna* has to ascend leaving the body.

Prāna and Apāna: However, *Praśnopaniṣad* deals about the five vital breaths in details and in a simple way, which is most referred and widely accepted; *pāyūpasthē'pānam*, *apāna* is placed in organ of defecation and organ of procreation (*Pr. U.*, 3.5). These are two lower apertures of body performing ejections of feces, urine, semen etc and related to excretion. Then, *caṣṣuṣrotre mukhanāsikābhyaṁ prānaḥ svayaṁ pratiṣṭhite*, *prāna* himself has established in eyes, ears, mouth and nostrils (*Pr. U.*, 3.5). The main physiologic vital breath is placed in eyes and ears, that are organs of perceptions, and also coming out of mouth and nostrils, that are carrying out breathing functions, speech and actions of action organs.

Samāna: Again, *madhye tu samānaḥ, eṣa hyotaddhutamannaṁ samaṁ nayati tasmādetāḥ saptaṁciṣo bhavanti*, *samāna* is in the middle, this one distributes equally all the foods that are eaten hence issue out of the seven flames (*Pr. U.*, 3.5). In the middle between the *prāna* and the *apāna* is placed the *samāna* breath. The middle point being the navel region that is the place of digestion and assimilation of foods eaten and drunk, the seat of the *samāna* breath is the navel region and the *samāna* breath is responsible for digestion and assimilation processes. This is also responsible for distribution of food equally throughout the body and hence is related to the process of circulation and distribution of food energy to all the cells of the body where they are burnt to give life energy for sustention of body and growth. These come out as sense-knowledge in seven flames, viz., two eyes, two ears, two nostrils performing breathing and smell, and mouth performing speech and taste. In the above it was said that the *prāna* himself has established in eyes, ears, mouth and nostrils, and now it is said that the *samāna* is coming out as seven flames, which indicate that the activities of organs are controlled by the *prāna* that draws from its source the *samāna* in the body.

Vyāna: *Vyāna* means pervasiveness, pervading in the entire body. The *vyāna* breath is even a subtler one, present throughout the body through nerves, coordinating all functions and even works as a connecting link between the Vital Sheath in one hand and the Mind Sheath and the Knowledge Sheath on the other since this is moving in the entire Central Nervous System. This is the subtle *prāna* and link between the subtle *prāna* and the gross *prāna*. And hence it is said in the same text, "*hṛdi hyeṣa ātmā. attraitadekaśataṁ nāḍināṁ tāsāṁ śataṁ śatamekaikasyaṁ dvāsaptaṁtirdvasaptatiḥ pratiśākhānāḍisahasraṇi bhavantyāsu vyānaścarati*", this Self is surely in the heart, there are hundred and one nerves, each of them has hundred branches, again each branch is divided into seventy-

two sub-branches, and *vyāna* moves among them.” (*Pr.U*, 3.6.) This heart is the brain and the total number nerves come approximately $(101 \times 100 \times 72,000)$ to 7,27,200,000. Human brain is the seat of consciousness in the body and this is regarded as the seat of the Cosmic Self known as the *Hiraṇyagarbha* in an individual body; here the same is described as the Self, *ātmā*, in this text.

Udāna: *Udāna* is the subtlest among the five and is responsible for ascending out of this body; *athaikayordhva udānaḥ puṇyena puṇyam lokam nayati pāpena pāpamubhābhīyāmeva manuṣyalokam*, now through one (one among the one hundred and one nerves) *udāna* breath in its upward trend takes to the virtuous world as a result of the virtues, to the sinful world as a result of sins, and to the human world as a result of both (*Pr. U*, 3.7).

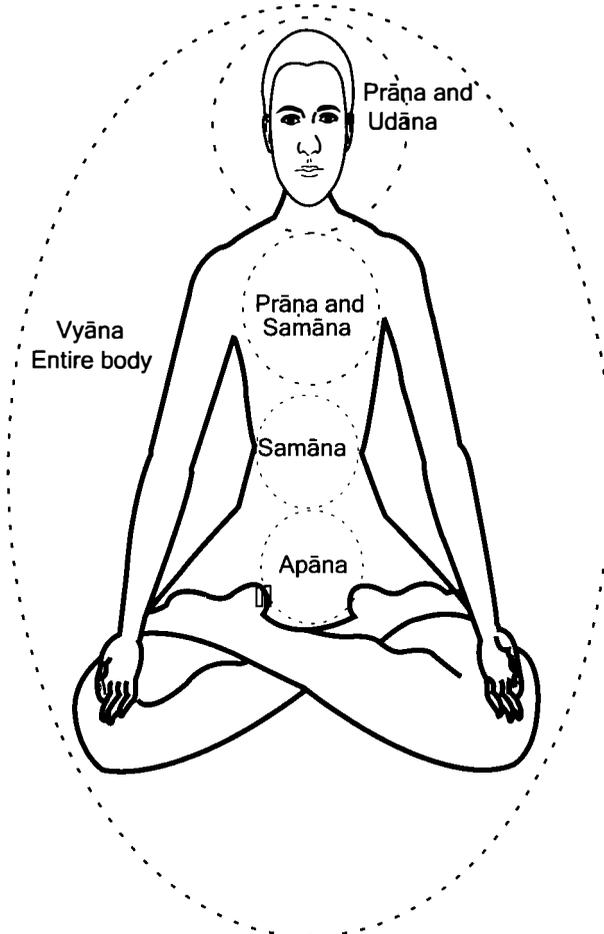


Fig. 4.3. The placement of the five vital breaths in human body according to *Prāśnopaniṣad*.

Further it is said: “*tejo ha vā udānastasmādupaśāntatejāḥ, punarbhavam-
indriyairmanasi sampadyamānaiḥ, udāna* is verily the fire, so who gets his fire
extinguished to attain rebirth together with organs enter into the mind (*Pr. U,*
3.9); *yaccittastenaīṣa prāṇamāyāti, prāṇastejasā yuktaḥ sahātmanā yathāsankalpitam
lokam nayati*, whatever, he have with his *citta* (mind) with those he enters into
prāṇa, *prāṇa* in association with fire (*udāna*) along with the individual self leads
to the desired world.” (Ibid., 3.10.) The vital power, *prāṇa*, in the body is
compared to the sun in our solar system and the sun is distinguished as a special
manifestation of fire. Then fire here is compared with the *udāna*. When a person
gets his fire extinguished means the life sustaining vital breaths extinguished
inside the body and the person approaches death then all the organs enter into
the mind. Here organs are subtle sense organs and subtle organs of action, they
take the form of the mind. Then all the thoughts of the mind or *citta*, means the
mind along with its impressions enter into the chief vital force, *prāṇa*. Now this
prāṇa carrying the impressions of mind in association with *udāna* or the ascending
prāṇa takes the individual self, which is still an ego sense attached to subtle body
and devoid of a gross body to the desired world for a rebirth.

Relation of Five Vital Breaths with Seed Sounds and Elements: *Dhyāna-
bindūpaniṣad* gives an account of relation of five vital breaths with five elements
and seed sounds. The *Prāṇa* and the *apāna* are said as, *yakāraṁ prāṇabijam ca
nīlajīmūtasannibham*, the letter “*ya*,” *yakāraṁ*, is the seed of the air and is the
prāṇa breath, *prāṇabijam*, and, *ca*, is like color of blue clouds, *nīlajīmūtasannibham*;
then, *rakāramagnibijam ca apānādityasannibham*, the letter “*ra*,” *rakāraṁ*, is the
seed of the fire, *agnibijam*, and, *ca*, is the *apāna* breath like the color of sun,
apāna ādityasannibham (*Db. U,* 95). The *vyāna* and the *udāna* are said as, *lakāraṁ
pṛthivīrūpaṁ vyānaṁ bandhūkasannibham*, the letter “*la*,” *lakāraṁ*, is form of the
earth, *pṛthivīrūpaṁ*, and is the *vyāna* breath, *vyānam*, is like the color of china-
rose (*Hibiscus rosa*), *bandhūkasannibham*; then, *vakāraṁ jīvabijam ca udānam
sāṅkhavarṇakam*, the letter “*va*,” *vakāraṁ*, is the seed of the individual self (also
seed of life or seed of water), *jīvabijam*, and, *ca*, is the *udāna* breath, *udānam*,
like the color of a conch, *sāṅkhavarṇakam* (*Db. U,* 96). The *samāna* is said as,
hakāraṁ viyatsvarūpaṁ ca samānaṁ sphatikaprabham, the letter “*ha*,” *hakāraṁ*, is
the form of the ether, *viyatsvarūpaṁ*, and, *ca*, is the *samāna* breath, *samānam*,
like the luster of a transparent crystal, *sphatikaprabham* (*Db. U,* 97). Accordingly
the five vital breaths are placed in the energy centers in the body. *Mūlādhāra
cakra* is the seat of the earth element, seed sound “*la*” and the *vyāna* breath.
Svādhiṣṭhāna cakra is the seat of the water element; seed sound “*va*” and the
udāna breath. *Maṇipūra cakra* is the seat of the fire element, seed sound “*ra*”
and the *apāna* breath. *Anāhata cakra* is the seat of air element; seed sound “*ya*”
and the *prāṇa* breath. *Viśuddha cakra* is the seat of the ether element; seed
sound “*ha*” and is the *samāna* breath.

Five Divine Doors, Pañca devasuṣayah: *Chāndogyaopaniṣad* (3.13.1–5) deals with the five-prāṇa breaths as the five divine openings or doors of the heart. Heart here refers to the intellect, inside that is lodged the self-luminous Self. The place of the heart is just above the *Ājñā cakra*. “The eastern door is the prāṇa breath, that is eye, that is the sun. That should be worshiped as the fire and the food.” (Ibid., 3.13.1.) The *eastern door* to the Self is the prāṇa breath. The prāṇa inside the body is same as the sun outside; sun is the source of all individual prāṇas and is represented by eye and vision. This is the fire element since the sun and the prāṇa are special manifestations of the fire and this is also the food. Food is a conversion of solar energy and is converted to life energy inside the body.

“The *southern door* is the *vyāna* breath, that is ear, that is the moon. That should be worshiped as prosperity and fame.” (Ibid., 3.13.2.) This is the most powerful inside the physiologic body, subtler one carrying out and controlling body functions and is related to the subtle body or the mind, also works as a link between the subtle body and the gross body. Moon is the mind, the moon controls the psychic aspects, and ear represents directions (space) and sound inside the body. The *vyāna* moves in all directions in body and is the form of sound since it is related to the mind and thoughts. Prosperity and fame comes from the deeds that are dependant on the *vyāna* since the *vyāna* is responsible for both the mind and activities of the body.

“The *western door* is the *apāna* breath, that is speech, that is the fire. That should be worshiped as the sacred knowledge and food.” (Ibid., 3.13.3.) The *apāna* is the ejaculating breath and speech is dependent on it since the speech is a modified exhalation through larynx and tongue. Speech and the fire are same. Speech is a hot air. We need sufficient fire element or the *prāṇa* in our body to speak loudly. Speech becomes pure with the sacred knowledge, i.e., knowledge of righteousness, observance of righteousness, knowledge from the scriptures and self-study. Food gives us the *prāṇa*, which transforms into the *apāna*.

“The *northern door* is the *samāna* breath, that is the mind, that is the rain. That should be worshiped as fame and luster or radiance from the body.” (Ibid., 3.13.4.) The *samāna* breath is responsible for digestion, assimilation and distribution of food inside the body, so this becomes sustainer for mind in the body. Mind is related to the water or rain. The moon, which is regarded as mind, has an effect on the water, ocean, tides and rain. The mind is the cause of knowledge and fame. Body luster is directly dependent on good digestion and assimilation in one hand and mental peace on the other.

“The *upper opening* is the *udāna* breath, this is the air, this is the ether. That should be worshiped as vigor and greatness.” (Ibid., 3.13.5.) This is the ascending breath, and this remains as air outside the body after departing the body. The base of this air is the ether as it travels in the ether. This is vigor and this ascends against the gravitation of earth. This is great, and its greatness is to carry the mind with its impressions and the ego sense from one body to other body.

Five Subsidiary Vital Breaths, *Pañca upaprāṇa*: In some literatures like *Dhyānabindūpaniṣad*, *Yogacūḍāmaṇyupaniṣad*, *Śāṅḍilyopaniṣad*, and *Jābāladarśanopaniṣad*, etc., we find mention of five subsidiary vital breaths named as *nāga*, *kūrma*, *kṛkara*, *devadatta*, and *dhanañjaya* are said to be functioning in a limited way. *Nāga* is known for expelling by eructation, *udgāre nāga ākhyātaḥ*, *Kūrma* is linked to twinkling of eyes, *kūrma unmīlane tathā*, *Kṛkara* is known with sneezing, *kṛkaraḥ kṣutkarō jñeyo*, and *Devadatta* is associated in yawning, *devadatto vījṛmbhaṇe* (*YCU*, 25.) *Dhanañjaya* is spread throughout the body in such a manner that it does not leave even after the death, *na jahāti mṛtam vāpi sarvavyāpī dhanañjayah* (*ibid.*, 26), this is the air element. Guru Gorakhanātha had supported the above activities of these vital breaths (*GS*, 1.34–36). In other texts slight difference is found, drowsiness is the work of *Devadatta*, *tandrā devadattakarma*, cough etc. is the work of *Dhanañjaya*, *śleṣmādi dhanañjayakarma* (*Sa. U.*, 1.4.13). The work of *Dhanañjaya* is to maintain luster of the body, *dhanañjayasya śobhādi karma proktaṃ hi sāmkr̥te* (*JU*, 4.33), and hunger is the work of *Kṛkara*, *kṣudhā tu kṛkārasya ca* (*ibid.*, 4.34).

Different Classifications of Vital Breaths: In the above we discussed classifications of vital breaths into two, three, five, and ten. However, the grouping and classifications of the vital breaths can be many but we have to remember that this is one *Prāṇa* only. The five main *prāṇas* can be grouped into two categories, one working in a gross body and another on a subtle body. Again each can be sub-grouped into three depending upon *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* qualities. In this way five main *prāṇas* become thirty types. To this if we add two that are associated with causal body, i.e., the *prāṇa* and the *udāna*, then these become thirty-two. Then exhalation and inhalation if added to these, they become thirty-four. The five subsidiary *prāṇas* can be grouped into two on the basis of *rajas* and *tamas* qualities making them ten, and now we have total forty-four *prāṇas*. Then the seven main *Prāṇic* energy centers, *cakras*-s, are seven more *prāṇas* to be added making the number as fifty-one. Again twenty-five body principles discussed above (*supra*, “The Creation and the Body Complex,” p. 176) are twenty-five *prāṇas*. Moreover fifty basic sounds or letters in six centers, *cakras*-s, are also said to be fifty *prāṇa*-s. In these ways the classifications may vary if we go on specifying on the basis of a particular function. But our purpose is to control and regulate the *prāṇas* with an aim to control the mind to reach a state of equanimity.

THE ENERGY CENTERS, *CAKRA*-S

The reference to and description of *cakras*-s or the energy centers are found in many literatures, viz., *Yogakuṇḍalyupaniṣad*, *Yogacūḍāmaṇyupaniṣad*, *Yogarājopaniṣad*, and *Saubhāgyalakṣmyupaniṣad*, etc. All most all post-Upaniṣadic yogic and Āgama literatures describe these energy centers or wheels of energy called *cakras*-s. However, there is no unanimity about their numbers in the body. We

have discussed this while discussing 22 of the Prāṇa-sūkta (*vide supra*, p. 93). The seven *cakras* on which there is unanimity are Mulādhāra or the coccyx center, Svādhiṣṭhāna or the sacrum center, Maṇipūra or the lumbar center, Anāhata or the thoracic center, Viśuddha or the cervical center, Ājñā referred as the master center, the medulla center, a point between pituitary and pineal, and Sahasrāra or the fontanel center, and these are in the spinal cord (former five) and in the brain (later two), i.e., in the central nervous system (CNS). Since the Kriyā-yoga meditation is based on these seven, we will discuss about them. The literatures on the *cakras* are in plenty and the way they are presented to a reader is most of the times confusing. The Kriyā-yoga techniques are *prāṇa* based and imagination is not encouraged in the Kriyā-meditation though imagination is not completely denied since one has to put mind into the practice. So *cakras* are mentioned here in a simpler way. *Cakras* can be said as special centers of the vital force, *prāṇa*. They are not gross structures; hence dissections and microscopic examinations cannot reveal them. These *cakra-s* are in the subtle body and we have discussed that the main components of the subtle body are the *prāṇa* and the mind stuff, i.e., mind, intellect, ego and subconscious. Our central nervous system in the gross body is the seat of mind. A particular aspect of the mind controlling our life has a corresponding center in our spinal cord and brain of the gross body. Our subtle *prāṇa* flows in the spinal cord and at a particular center its manifestation becomes manifold and one can feel them during meditation.

Petals of Lotuses: The *cakra-s* are also said to be lotuses with varied number of petals. So some persons imagine a lotus, while meditating at a center. Ofcourse such type of meditation increases concentration, visualizing power and gives some good results but that is not the purpose our spiritual journey.

We have to remember that our goal is to inhibit all the modifications of mind, so we should not go into any sorts of imaginary vision even if that helps in creativity. Petals in the *cakras* are basic seed sounds. In Sanskrit language there are fifty basic sounds or fifty alphabets. They are distributed in fifty petals in six *cakra-s*. The sound being the subtle ether element is basic seed behind the creations. Entire universe has emerged from these fifty sounds. Sounds take the form of words and thoughts, first thoughts appear and then they manifest as forms in the gross world. In our mind it is thoughts first, which are nothing but sounds. Then they manifest into speech and actions. To contain our thoughts we have to go to their basic sounds from which they are produced. Our *saṁskāra-s* or impressions of past actions are stored in the form of sounds in the petals of the lotuses. We have to burn those impressions by meditation on these basic sounds. Though in different systems meditations on the colors of *cakra-s* are carried out, the Kriyā-yoga meditation is not based on colors of the *cakra-s*. Colors of the *cakra-s* also vary from persons to persons depending on their inner make up, *saṁskāra-s*. Color is related to the fire element, which is gross then sensation and sound.

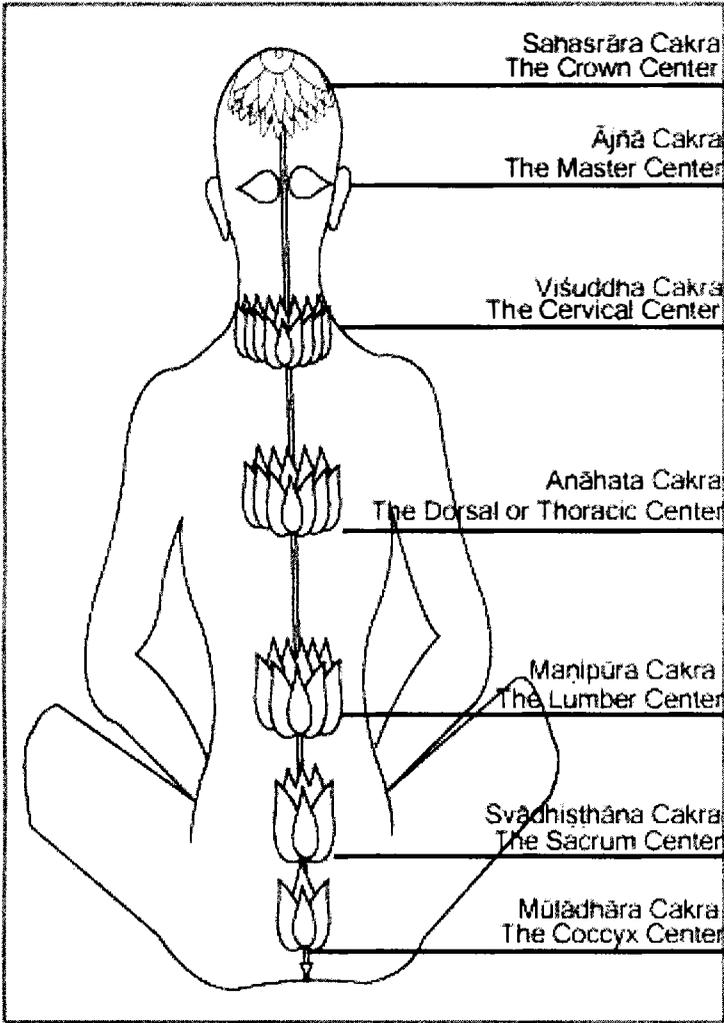


Fig. 4.4. Seven lotuses or the energy centers in the human body.

The Kriyā-yoga meditation being a subtler and integrated one gives emphasis on all the three subtle manifestations, viz., light, sound and vibration. Here a practitioner meditates on light, which he experiences as a result of Kriyā meditation, but color visualization is discouraged. However more emphasis is given on vibrations and sounds. Vibration or sensation is related to the air element and sound is to the ether element. The sound vibration produces sensation vibration. So the seed sounds in petals are meditated in higher kriyās, these are known as the Mātrkā Dhyāna. These Mātrkā are associated with the elements

for creation. These petals of the lotuses can be said as spokes of the wheel or subtle yoga-nerves around a wheel, *cakra*, appearing as a lotus regulating, modifying, accelerating or inhibiting the flow of subtle vital energy inside the spine.

Vertebral Column and Spinal Cord: Since the *cakra*-s or the lotuses are lodged in the spinal cord and spinal cord runs within the vertebral column, we should have some knowledge about them. The vertebral column is known as spine or

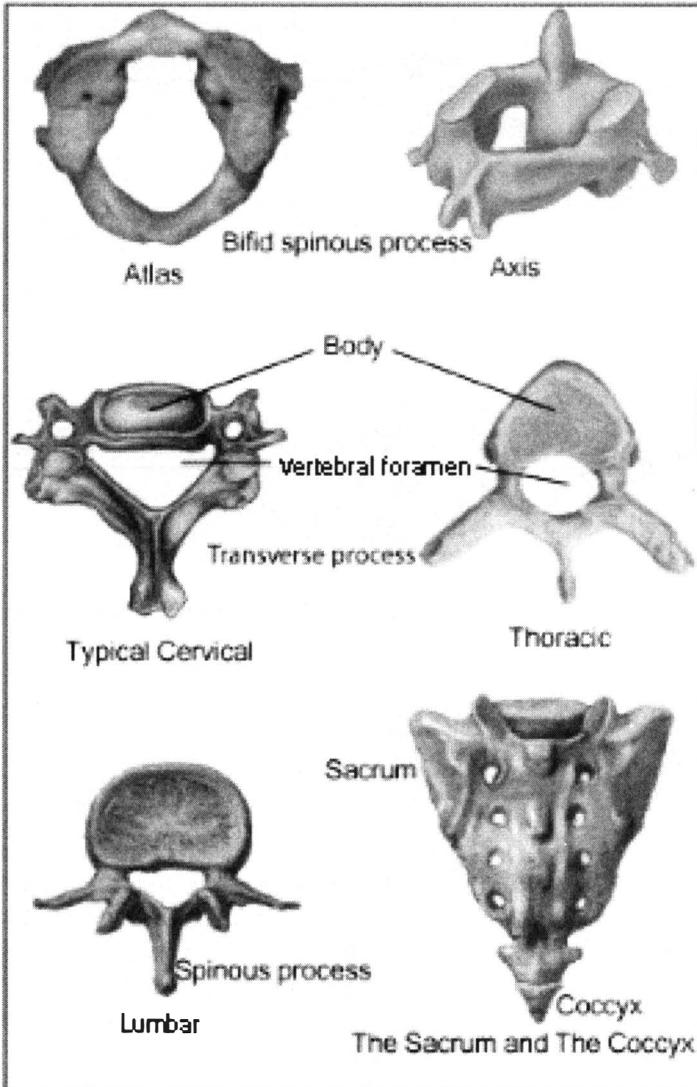


Fig. 4.5. Human Vertebrae.

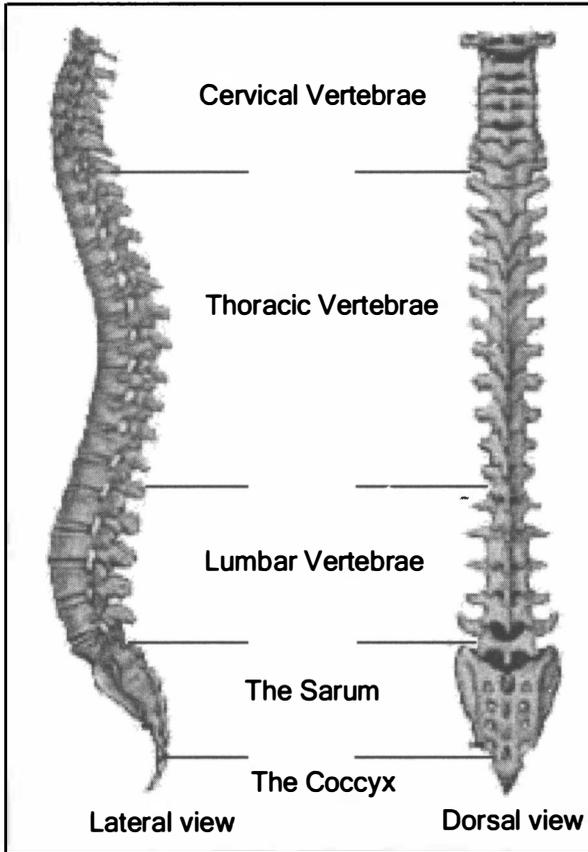


Fig. 4.6. The Vertebral Column.

spinal column, in Sanskrit called *merudaṇḍa*, *meru* means axis and *merudaṇḍa* is axis-staff. *Meru* refers to the northern mount or Sumeru in our earth as well as in a human body. *Sumeru* means the mount that is the seat of bliss, when the *prāṇa* ascends to the top through the spinal cord and settles at the Mount of Master, *Guru Parvat*, above the *Ājñā cakra* then there is bliss only. The southern end of the earth is called the southern mount or Kumeru, in our body this is the end of the vertebral column at the coccyx. *Ku* means bad; we are lost in the world and sense enjoyments forgetting our true identity with the vital force called *kuṇḍalinī* in yogic and tantric literatures, and here *kuṇḍalinī* is sleeping below in the spinal cord. *Kuṇḍalinī* is the subtle *prāṇa*. This is the cosmic energy within our body system. At Kumeru our inner energy sleeps and we are with the outer manifestations forgetting our true identity.

The vertebral column is made up of thirty-three vertebrae piled in a series, one on the other with fibro-cartilages lodged between the vertebrae giving it a

spring action. The arches of vertebrae form a hollow cylinder named neural canal for passage of the spinal cord. The first vertebra is called Atlas, which joins the spine with the cranium or brain-box. The second vertebra is called Axis and five more cervical vertebrae form the cervical or neck region of total seven vertebrae. The back or the thoracic region is made up of twelve thoracic or dorsal vertebrae. The waist region is made up of five lumbar vertebrae. The sacrum region is made up of five sacral vertebrae and the terminal coccyx region is made up of four coccyx vertebrae. For articulation and support the vertebrae have neural spines, transverse processes and articular processes. There are openings through which the spinal nerves pass from the spinal cord (Figs. 4.5 and 4.6). Mūlādhāra corresponds to the coccyx region, Svādhiṣṭhāna to the sacrum region, Maṇipūra to the lumbar region, Anāhata to the dorsal region and Viśuddha to the cervical region. These *cakra*-s are inside the spinal cord.

The spinal cord, *medulla spinalis*, is a major part of the central nervous system (CNS), the other part being our brain. This is an elongated and almost cylindrical cord but slightly flattened, running inside the vertebral column and is a continuation of our brain through its *medulla oblongata*. The spinal cord starts from the level of atlas vertebra and extends up to the level of second or third lumbar vertebra and then tapers down. The tapering portion of spinal cord is named *filum terminale* that descends up to the coccyx region. Three protective membranes named *dura mater*, *arachnoids*, and *pia mater* sheath the spinal cord. In between *dura mater* and *arachnoids* is the *sub-dural space*, and between *arachnoids* and *pia mater* is *sub-arachnoid space* and these are filled with cerebrospinal fluids to prevent it from any injury. The cord has two swellings, one is a cervical enlargement from the third cervical to second thoracic for large nerves of upper limbs and other is a lumbar enlargement at the ninth thoracic for the nerves of lower limbs. The spinal cord is incompletely divided into two symmetrical halves by an *anterior median fissure* and a shallow *posterior median sulcus*. The spinal cord is made up of very soft *grey* and *white brain-matter*, the *grey matter* being situated centrally and has the form of a fluted column running throughout the entire length of the cord. In transverse section this resembles alphabet "H." The *White matter* is arranged on the sides of *grey matter* (Fig. 4.8). *White matter* is made up of nerve fibers and nerve cells, and the white color is due to *myelinated nerve fibers*. The *grey matter* is of nerve cells, nerve fibers and blood vessels, and the grey color is due to more nerve cells. This cord is divided into cervical region, thoracic region, lumbar region and sacral region, and differences can be marked in transverse sections. Thirty-one pairs of spinal nerves come from spinal cord each having a dorsal root and a ventral root. They are eight cervical pairs, twelve thoracic pairs, five lumbar pairs, five sacral pairs and one coccygeal pair (Fig. 4.7). Before termination the cord gives a bunch of nerves known as *cauda equina* that is situated in the perineum between anus and reproductive organs. The

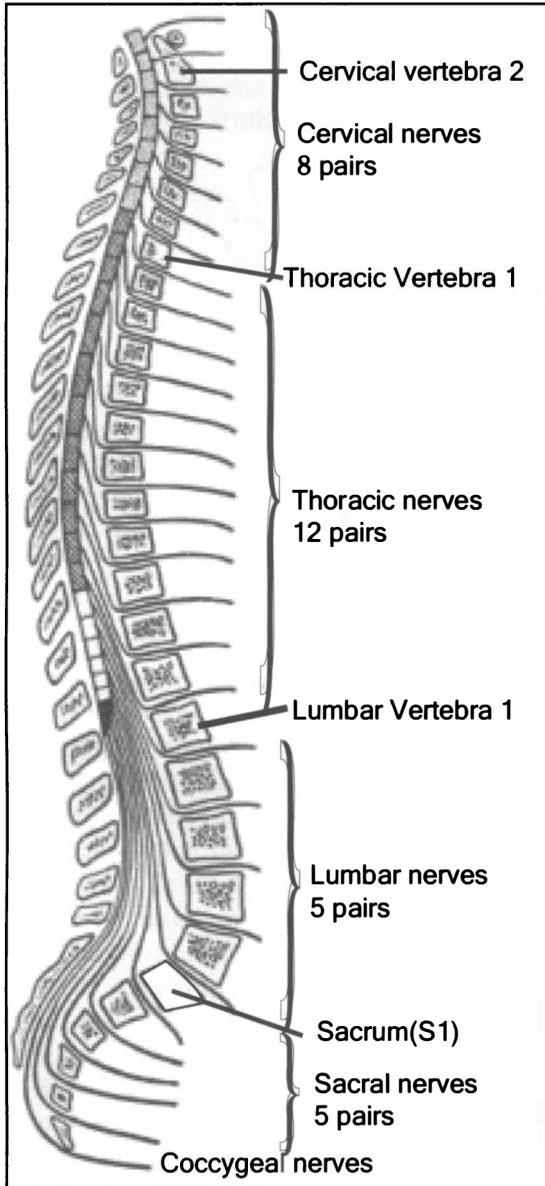


Fig. 4.7. The Spinal Cord.

central canal (Fig. 4.8) of the spinal cord travels through the entire length of the cord and is known as *canalis centralis*. At the lower region below *conus medularis* from where the spinal cord tapers, the central canal is triangular in cross section with base directed forward. At the above region the canal is continued upward

and open into the *fourth ventricle* of the brain in *medulla oblongata*. This *fourth ventricle* runs into the *third ventricle* of the brain.

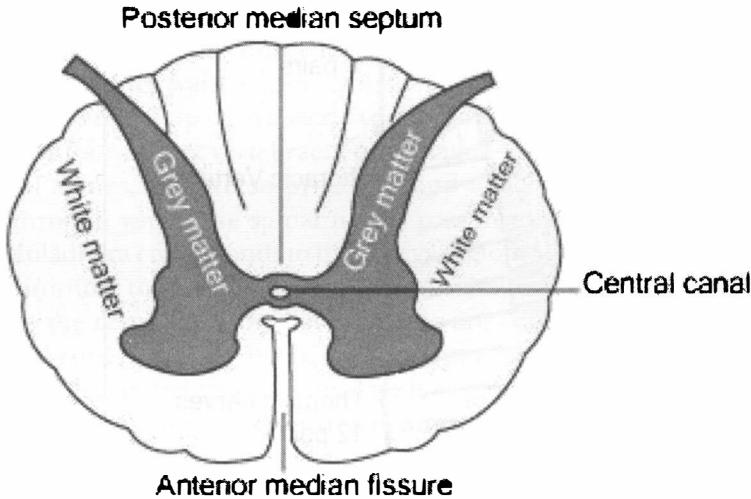


Fig. 4.8. Transverse Section of the Spinal Cord.

Subtle Vital Channels, *Yoga-nāḍī*-s: In yogic scriptures, the *cauda equina* of the gross body in the perineum area is known as *kanda* or *adha-sahasrāra*. This is also known as *Kāmākhyāpīṭha*. This is believed to be the seat of the coiled residual infinite vital power known as *kuṇḍalinī*. This is very important to Haṭhayogins who perform Haṭha yogic kriyās to raise the *kuṇḍalinī*. The spinal cord in general sense is called the *Suṣumnā nāḍī*. Inside *Suṣumnā* is *Vajrā nāḍī* and inside *Vajrā* is *Citrā nāḍī*. These are all subtle Prāṇic channels. *Suṣumnā*, *Vajrā*, and *Citrā* have the qualities of the fire, the sun and the moon, respectively. In the former two *rajas* quality is predominant whereas the later is having *sattva* quality. Inside the *Citrā nāḍī* is *Brahma nāḍī*. *Brahma nāḍī* in the gross body corresponds to the *canalis centralis*. *Kuṇḍalinī*, the Great Vital Power passes through the *Brahma nāḍī* from *Mūlādhāra* to *Sahasrāra*. However, the term *Suṣumnā nāḍī* is also used for *Brahma nāḍī* and *Suṣumnā* term is very often and commonly used in yogic literatures, when no distinction is made then *Suṣumnā*, *Vajrā*, *Citrā*, and *Brahma nāḍī*-s are all referred as *Suṣumnā*. Through yogic practice the vital energy has to flow within the *Suṣumnā*. However yogic scriptures describe seventy-two thousand *nāḍī*-s or subtle channels and among them seventy-two are main channels. Among them ten are important, and they are *Idā*, *Piṅgalā*, *Suṣumnā*, *Gāndhārī*, *Hastijihvā*, *Pūṣā*, *Yaśasvinī*, *Alambusā*, *Kuhū*, and *Śankhinī* (*YCU*, 16 and 17, *GS*, 1.26,27). *Idā* is situated in the left side and *Piṅgalā* on the right side (*YUC*, 18). *Suṣumnā* is in the center and *Gāndhārī* is in the left eye. *Hastijihvā* is in the right eye and *Pūṣā* is in the right ear (*ibid.*,19). *Yaśasvinī* is in the left ear

and Alambusā is on the face. Kuhū is at the procreative organ and Śāṅkhinī near the anus at the base of the spine (YCU, 20). At each door of the body one nerve, *nāḍī*, is situated, and at the route of the vital energy Iḍā, Piṅgalā, and Suṣumnā are situated (YCU, 21; GS, 1.28–31). From the above it is understood that the *nāḍī*-s represent the nerves and the nervous system. The seventy-two thousand *nāḍī*-s represent the Peripheral Nervous System consisting of both afferent and efferent nerves. Gāndhārī, Hastijihvā, Pūṣā, Yaśasvinī, Alambusā, Kuhū, and Śāṅkhinī represent nerves of the Peripheral Nervous System mostly the sensory nerves supplied to the main organs. Gāndhārī and Hastijihvā are optic nerves, Pūṣā and Yaśasvinī are auditory nerves, and Alambusā is the facial nerve. These are cranial nerves. Kuhū and Śāṅkhinī can be sensory or motor nerves; most likely these are sensory nerves. Either they represent the spinal nerves connected to anus, rectum and procreative organ and may have reference or relation to *kanda* or nerves in the perineum. Suṣumnā represents the spinal cord of the Central Nervous System. A suggestion given by some interpreters is that Iḍā and Piṅgalā represent the Autonomic Nervous System of the body, which can be debated.

Peripheral Nervous System: A living cell contains the living material known as protoplasm. Excitability and conductivity are properties of living protoplasm. Any change in the environment excites the living cell known as a stimulus and the reactions responded to a stimulus is known as response or effect. In developed organisms there are specialized receptors on the body known as sense-organs to receive external stimuli and there are specialized effectors in the form of muscles or secretory glands. The coordination between them is maintained by two systems, one is endocrine system controlling through the hormones and another is nervous system controlling through the nerves. The nervous system is a quicker one and this also controls the endocrine system.

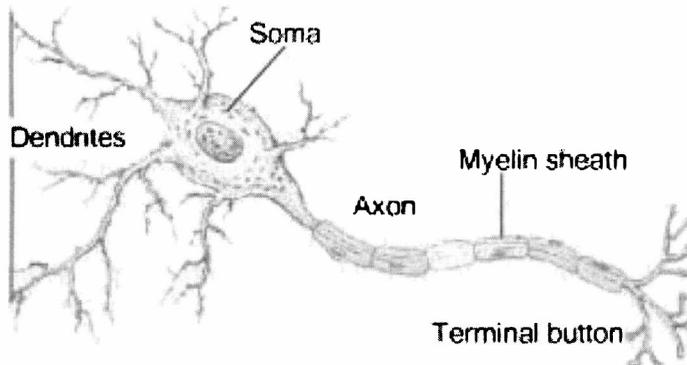


Fig. 4.9. A Nerve Cell.

The unit of the nervous system is a nerve cell or neuron. Nerve cells connected to a receptor is known as the receptor neuron or sensory neuron and those are

connected to an effector is known as the effector neuron or motor neuron. These motor and sensory nerves constitute the Peripheral Nervous System. Thirty-one pair of spinal nerves arising from the spinal cord and twelve pair of cranial nerves that arise from the brain, these together form the Peripheral Nervous System. The neurons of the Peripheral Nervous System connect to the receptors through peripherally directed processes known as dendrites in one hand and to the Central Nervous System through the centrally directed processes known as axons on the other hand. They enter the spinal cord through the dorsal or *afferent roots* of the spinal nerves and through the *sensory roots* of the cranial nerves. Similarly the ventral or *efferent roots* of the spinal nerves and the *motor roots* of the cranial nerves leave the spinal cord and the brain to bring response to the effector organs, viz., muscles etc. In this way the brain and the spinal cord regulate the entire body system by conducting stimuli and responses, bringing about the integration of impulses and the coordination of responses. Gāndhārī, Hastijihvā, Pūṣā, Yaśasvinī, Alambusā, Kuhū, and Śāṅkhiṇī *nāḍī*-s, etc., described in the yogic literatures are mostly the sensory or afferent nerves. These are the doors of the mind through which the mind becomes extrovert and roams in the world of sense objects.

Autonomic Nervous System: The Autonomic Nervous System is that part of the CNS, which controls the involuntary functions of our body like heart, lungs, intestines, kidneys, liver, etc. This is divided into two sub-systems known as Sympathetic and Parasympathetic system. The *sympathetic system* has left and right sympathetic chains, or a double chain of nerve ganglia running on either side of the spinal cord. This has its center on hypothalamus of the brain. This is connected to cardiac plexus, gastric plexus, etc., to reach the internal organs. This system secretes neuro-hormones called catecholamines to regulate normal functions of heart, lungs, liver and muscles, etc. But in case of stress situations hypothalamus sends signals through sympathetic nerves to lungs, hearts, blood vessels and livers, etc. The more release of catecholamines increases heart beat, pulse rate, blood pressure, sweating, blood glucose level and muscle tone, decreases digestive secretion and bowel mobility, and widely opens lungs air passage and eyelids.

The *parasympathetic system* consists of a large nerve named Vagus that has its center in medulla oblongata, and it comes down through neck, chest and abdomen to supply nerves to heart, lungs, stomach, intestine and liver, etc., and its activation decreases the heart beat, pulse rate, blood pressure, sweating, makes blood glucose level and muscle tone normal, increases the secretions of digestive juices and bowel mobility and relaxes the eyelids. The stimulation of the Vagus nerve helps to adopt stress situations. This Vagus nerve is of much importance to Kriyā-yogis. In the second kriyā breathing technique with twelve-lettered Vāsudeva mantra and the neck rotation involved therein activates the Vagus nerve to decrease the vital functions of the thoracic and the visceral organs for their reduced

activity. Concentration at Ājñā *cakra* or the medulla center also decreases body activities through the Vagus nerve. This conserves energy, gives rest to the organs, and slows down heartbeat, pulse rate and respiration thereby preparing the body for long meditation and *samādhi*. A rested and un-agitated body affects the mind to calm down.

Idā and Piṅgalā: Many modern day interpreters of yoga have either referred Idā and Piṅgalā either to the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous system or to the double chain of nerve ganglia of sympathetic nervous system. But in view of the present author these seems not to be correct. One reason they cite that since double chain of nerve ganglia run on sides of spinal cord, and the spinal cord being the Suṣumnā, the left sympathetic chain is Idā and the right sympathetic chain is Piṅgalā. But Idā is inhibitory or cooling and Piṅgalā is excitory or heating to the body hence we can not say left sympathetic as Idā and right sympathetic as Piṅgalā since entire sympathetic system is excitory in nature. Another view is that due to contrary nature of the sympathetic and the parasympathetic, the parasympathetic being inhibitory is Idā and the sympathetic being excitatory is Piṅgalā. But we have to remember that these *nāḍī*-s are subtle energy channels and not necessarily gross channels and their placement in a gross channel in our body must correlate with their yogic vital functions. It is said that our vital breath, *prāṇa*, either flows in Idā or Piṅgalā. Idā is Candra *nāḍī*, the nerve dependant on moon, and this has cooling effect. Piṅgalā is Sūrya *nāḍī*, the nerve dependant on sun; this is *rajas*, more action and heat. In this way one can argue that the sympathetic is Piṅgalā and the parasympathetic is Idā. Since both Idā and Piṅgalā run along with the Suṣumnā from Mūlādhāra to Ājñā, we cannot say them as the sympathetic and the parasympathetic systems because parasympathetic is supplied to thoracic and visceral organs and not running along with spinal cord. Moreover when the *prāṇa* flows in Idā it moves up and down in Idā, the same is also for Piṅgalā. But in case of sympathetic and parasympathetic it is only the downward flow of the *prāṇa*, exciting in case of former and inhibiting in case of later. The Kriyā-yoga tradition of masters says that Idā, Piṅgalā, and Suṣumnā are inside Suṣumnā or in the spinal cord. Idā is *tamas*, vital channel, Piṅgalā is *rajas*, vital channel and Suṣumnā is *sattva* vital channel. On the gross body Idā corresponds to the left side and Piṅgalā corresponds to right side of the *canalis centralis*, and Suṣumnā or the Brahma *nāḍī* corresponds to the *canalis centralis*. Some Kriyā-masters refer back of Suṣumnā as Idā and front of Suṣumnā as Piṅgalā. By *prāṇakarma* or kriyā breath practice Idā and Piṅgalā move apart so that the Brahma *nāḍī* opens for the flow of the *prāṇa*.

The Coccyx Center, Mulādhāra *cakra*: This is situated at the base of the spine inside the Suṣumnā. This is also called Ādhāra *cakra*. Ādhāra means foundation and Mūlādhāra is *mūla ādhāra*, and this means root foundation or basic

foundation. This is the Lord of Smell. This center is related to the organ of smell and the organ of defecation. The quality of earth element is predominant here. The seed sound of the earth is *lam̐*. This is *bhūr loka*, the world of earth, and the lowest of the seven worlds. This is related to the Food Sheath and the material world. This is the center of our mind related to money, wealth, property, vehicles, food, medicines, physical body and anything and everything in the material world. This is our attachment and aversion to the material world. This is the first home of the first affliction named as the ignorance, *avidyā*. We suffer from greed, feeling of poverty when the negative effects of this center affect us. With the positive effect of this center we lead a prosperous life, develop contentment and the virtue to donate, etc. This is the first seat of violence, *himsā*, and nonviolence, *ahimsā*. Here is the first seat of cleanliness, *śauca*. This is the seat of *pramāṇa vṛtti*, proof based actions of mind. The first spiritual effort noble faith, *śraddhā*, develops from this center. The *bhūr* is the fist oblation. We have to oblate our breath from this center to God the Father, *paramapitā*, at the crown center. The four petals of the center represent the seed sounds, *vaṁ*, *śaṁ*, *ṣaṁ*, and *saṁ*.

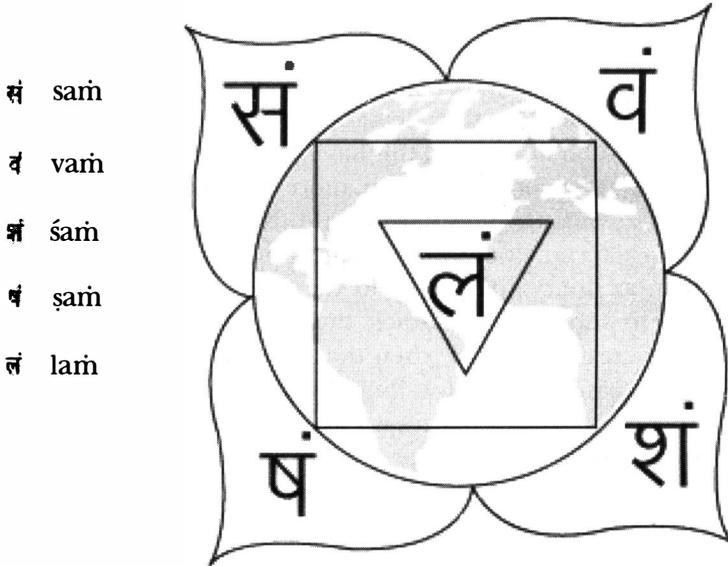


Fig. 4.10. The Coccyx Center, Mūlādhāra cakra.

The Sacrum Center, Svādhiṣṭhāna cakra: This is situated inside the Suṣumnā at the level of the procreative organ. *Svādhiṣṭhāna* is *sva* and *adhiṣṭhāna*. *Sva* means self and *adhiṣṭhāna* means the place where it is established. The individual self is established here, so this is the first home of the second affliction, *asmitā*, i.e., the feeling of “I” and “mine” with the body and its relations. This is the Lord of Taste. This center is related to the organ of taste and the organ of procreation. The quality of water element is predominant here. The seed sound of water is

vaṁ. It is water that takes the form of the *Puruṣa*, the physical body. From this center develops the attachment for the physical body and for relatives of the physical body. This is *bhūvar loka*, the world of intermediate space, and this is in between the physical world and the astral world. This is related to the Vital Sheath and emotional world. This is the center of our mind related to sex, love, affection, emotion, relations with husband or wife, children, father, mother, brother, sister, relatives, other human beings, animals, and pets. This is our cravings and hatred to our emotional world. This is the most problematic center for all barring a few blessed ones. We suffer from great catastrophes in our life due to the negative effects of this center. The negative effect of this center develops dishonesty in our relations, excessive sexual drive that burns our relations, morality, peace and reputations, etc., unnecessary strong emotional attachments that destroys our discriminative intellect, even in spiritual life this brings to an illusory world of emotion with a misnomer as devotion. With the positive effect of this center we lead a balanced life, develop peace of mind and the virtue to love. This is the first seat of truthfulness, *satya*, and untruth, *asatya*. Here is the first seat of contentment, *santoṣa*. This is the seat of catastrophe-based actions of mind, *viparyayaḥ vṛtti*. The second spiritual effort named as the vigor, *vīrya*, or continuity in spiritual practice with force develops from this center. The *bhūvar* is the second oblation. After the first oblation *bhūr*, we have to oblate our second breath from this center to God the Father, *parama pitā*, at the crown. The six petals of the center represent the seed sounds, *baṁ*, *bhaṁ*, *maṁ*, *yaṁ*, *raṁ*, and *laṁ*.

बं baṁ

भं bhaṁ

मं maṁ

यं yaṁ

रं raṁ

लं laṁ

वं vaṁ

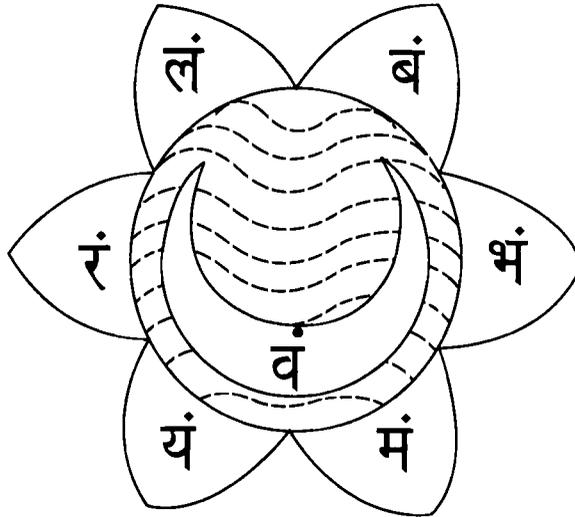


Fig. 4.11. The Sacrum Center, Svādhiṣṭhāna cakra.

The Lumbar Center, Maṇipūra cakra: This is situated inside the Suṣumnā at the level of navel. This is also called Maṇipūraka. *Maṇi* means jewel and *pūra* means

filling, making full and *pūraka* means filling up, fulfilling. *Mañipūra* or *Mañipūraka* is one that is filled with jewels or a house of jewels. A jewel reflects the light and glows. The mind, which appears as consciousness, is due to reflection of the light of the Consciousness. So the mind acts like jewels. Jewels are of different colours though they reflect the same sunlight. So depending upon the quality of the jewel the reflection varies. Similarly, a mind depending upon the preponderance of *guṇa*-s, viz., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* involved in it, relents the consciousness as *vṛtti*-s. This is the whirlpool of our mind, and our mind is the storehouse of jewels or wealths if we can dip down into the depth of calmness beneath through our breath. If utilized properly the mind can make miracles. It can make the impossibles possible. This is the center of mind based on the mind. All faculties of our mind, i.e., the mind based on wealth, the mind based on sex, emotions, affection, etc., the mind based on ego, knowledge or contentment converge and diverse from here making it unstable and jumping from one object to other. Both negative and positive currents of the mind churn here. If we can properly churn this ocean of mind the hidden jewels will manifest. This is the Mind Sheath. This center is the Lord of Vision. This is related to eyes and legs. The quality of fire element is predominant here. The seed sound of the fire is *raṁ*. This is the center of appetites since fire is the appetite for food. This is not only appetite for food but also appetite for desires, for all visual and heard objects. This is the first home of the third affliction named as the attachment, *rāga*. Here the mind creates likes and dislikes for anything and everything. This is *svarloka*, the world of celestial beings, astral beings. The mind is the astral world. This is the world where the king of gods, Indra rules. The gods in the body are sense organs and the mind is their king. We suffer from anger, frustration, nervousness, depression, etc. when the negative effects of this center affect us with unfulfilled desires. With the positive effect of this center the mind becomes stable and concentrated. This is the first seat of stealing, *steya*, and non-stealing, *asteya*. Here is the first seat of austerity, *tapah*. This is the seat of alternative and unstable-based groundless actions of mind, *vikalpaḥ vṛtti*. The third spiritual effort of repeated recollection in the spiritual practice, *smṛti*, develops from here at this center. The *sva* is the third oblation we offer to our Supreme Father. The ten petals of the center represent the seed sounds, *ḍaṁ*, *ḍhaṁ*, *ṇaṁ*, *taṁ*, *thaṁ*, *daṁ*, *dhaṁ*, *naṁ*, *paṁ*, and *phaṁ*.

The Dorsal or Thoracic Center, Anāhata cakṛa: This is situated inside the Suṣumnā at the level of heart. *Anāhata* means not hurt, not wounded, and without obstruction. The *Anāhata cakṛa* is defined as, *śabda brahmamayaḥ śabdo anāhataṁ yatra dṛśyate*, sound is the form of Brahman, where sounds appear uninterrupted that center is said to be *Anāhata cakṛa*. The predominance of air element is found here. The air is created from the ether, i.e., sound. Here onwards to down up to the earth element all the gross forms are manifestations of sounds. Manifestation is called *abhivyāñjana*. The seed sounds from *anāhata* onwards are called consonants, *vyañjana varṇa* or manifested sounds. The consonants, *vyañjana*

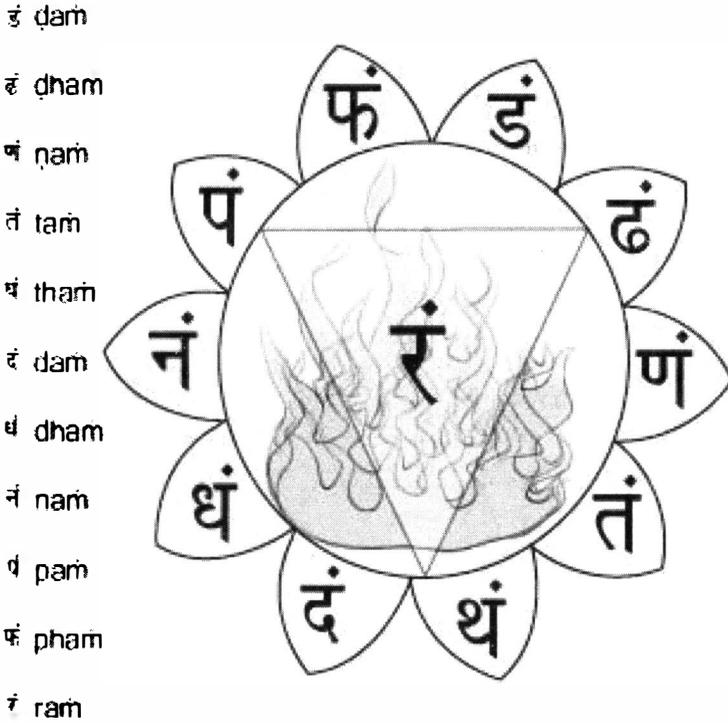


Fig. 4.12. The Lumbar Center, Manipūra cakra.

varṇa, cannot manifest themselves on their own, these are dead bodies, *śava*-s, these manifest along with energy, *śakti*. Vowels or *svaraḥ varṇa* are *śakti*, the life-force of consonants or *vyañjana varṇa*. When *śakti* is in the dead body, the dead body becomes alive; *śava* becomes *śiva*, the Manifested Brahman. Vowels or *svaraḥ varṇa* are sole characteristics of the ether element. One hears the uninterrupted or *anāhata* sounds from this center. This is the Lord of Sensation, touch. Sounds in the body produce vibrations in the form of sensations. This center is related to the organ of touch or sensation and the hands. The seed sound of the air is *yaṁ*. This is *maharloka*, the raised world or the world of great ones. *Anāhata cakra* is the seat of intellect, and the intellect makes one great. When the discriminating intellect develops upto the level of holding the Truth, one is able to transcend the world of heaven, *svarloka*. This is related to the Knowledge Sheath and the intellectual world. This is the center of our mind related to knowledge and intellect. This intellect within the gross or the subtle body, creates spontaneously its corollary “the ego,” and this is like a shade to an object when comes in contact with light. This is the first home of the fourth affliction named as the aversion, *dveṣa*. We suffer from big ego problems when the negative effects of this center affect us. With the positive effect of this center

we develop the discriminating intellect. This is the first seat of sexual restraint, *brahmacarya*, and sexual extrovertness, *bhraṣṭa ācaraṇa*. Here is the first seat of self-study, *svādhyāyah*. This is the seat of sleep-based actions of mind, *nidrā vṛtti*. The fourth spiritual effort of practice of concentration, *samādhi*, relating to *saṁyama* or three forms of meditation, viz., *dhāraṇā*, *dhyaṇa*, and *samādhi* develop from this center. The *mahar* is the fourth oblation of our *prāṇa* from this center. The twelve petals of the center represent the seed sounds, *kaṁ*, *khaṁ*, *gaṁ*, *ghaṁ*, *ṅaṁ*, *caṁ*, *chaṁ*, *jaṁ*, *jhaṁ*, *ṅaṁ*, *ṭaṁ*, and *ṭhaṁ*.

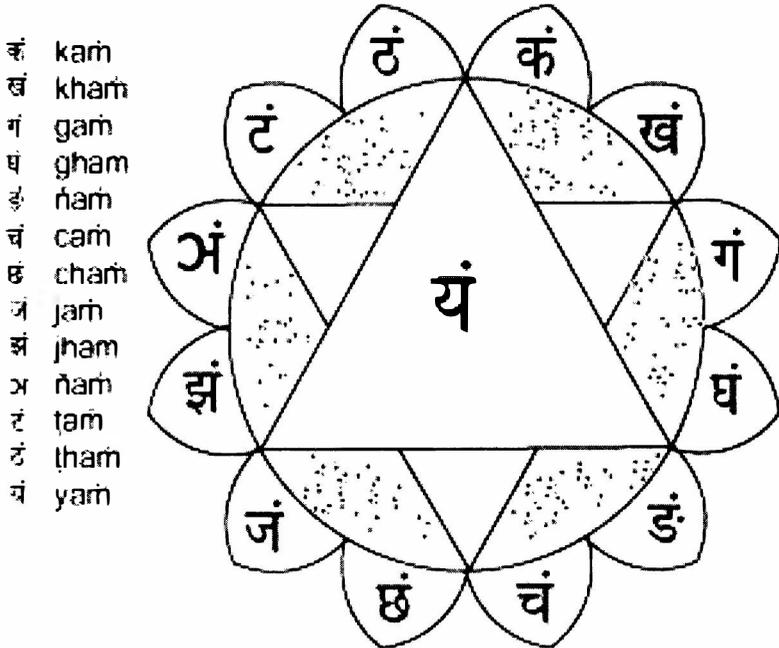


Fig. 4.13. The Dorsal or Thoracic Center, Anāhata cakra.

The Cervical Center, Viśuddha cakra: This is situated inside the Suṣumnā at the level of base of the throat. *Viśuddha* means pure, free from vices or imperfections. From here starts the process of purification, *viśuddhiḥ*. This center is the Lord of Sound. This is related to the organ of hearing and the organ of speech. The quality of the ether element is predominant here. The ether is pure, *viśuddha*. The seed sound of the ether is *haṁ*. The *haṁ* is *śiva*, and the *haṁ* is the Cosmic Ego Principle, *Īśvara*. From the Cosmic Lord, *śiva*, emerges the *śakti* in the form of sound vibrations, and the first sound vibrations are vowels. Vowels are called *svaraḥ varṇa*. *Svaraḥ varṇa* is *śakti*. *Sva* means self, *sva* means heaven, and *svaraḥ* means sound. *Svaraḥ varṇa* are the sounds of the Self, these are sounds from the heaven, and the sounds from the ether. This is *janarloka*, the world of creations. The *jana* means to be born, the cause; *prāṇādvāyurajāyata* (RV, 10.90.13), the air

was born from the *prāṇa*. The *prāṇa* remains in pure form in the ether element. This is related to the Bliss Sheath and the world of happiness. This is the center of our mind related to happiness, joy, pleasure, peace and bliss. This is the center of creativity. We are thrown into the world of wrong visions, hallucinations, and fantasy when the negative effects of this center affect us. This is the first home of the fifth affliction named as the inherent involvement, *abhiniveśa*. This is the first seat of gathering, *parigraha*, and satisfaction with minimum, *aparigraha*. Here is the first seat of devotion and knowing to the Lord within, *īśvaraṣṛāṇidhāna*. This is the seat of recollection-based actions of mind, *smṛtiḥ vṛtti*. The fifth spiritual effort of discriminative knowledge or *prajñā* emerges from this center to be established in heart center. The *janar* is the fifth oblation. We have to oblate our fifth breath from this center to the Supreme Father at the crown in Sahasrāra. The sixteen petals of this center represent the seed sounds, *am, ām, im, īm, um, ūm, ṛm, ṛ..m, līm, li..m, em, aim, om, aum, am* (emphasis on *m*) and *aḥ* (emphasis on *h*).

- अं am
- आं ām
- इं im
- ईं īm
- उं um
- ऊं ūm
- ऋं ṛm
- ॠं ṛ..m
- लं līm
- लीं li..m
- एं em
- ऐं aim
- ओं om
- औं aum
- अं am (emphasis on m)
- अः aḥ
- हं haṁ

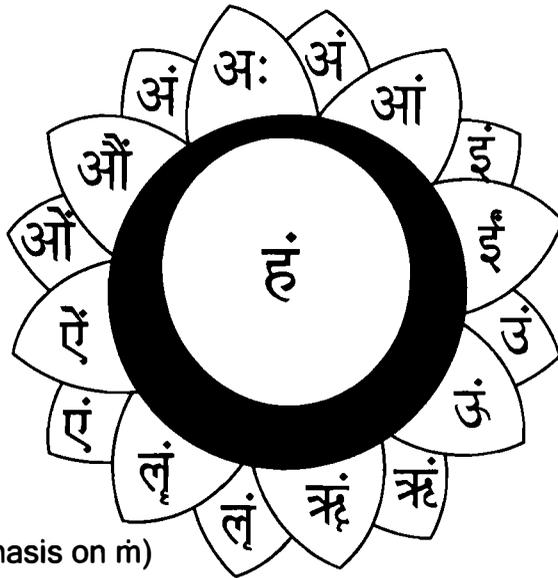


Fig. 4.14. The Cervical Center, Viśuddha cakra.

The Brain: The brain occupies the whole brain-box known as cranium. The cranium is made up of skull bones and is like a protecting iron locker to keep safe the brain treasure. To save the brain from injuries similar as in case of spinal cord, the coverings, viz., *dura mater*, *pia mater*, and *arachnoids*, cover it filled with cerebro-spinal fluid. The brain is made up of nervous tissues of soft grey

and white matter. The brain is made up of (1) the *rhombencephalon* and (2) the *prosencephalon*, this is the major brain mass. The *rhombencephalon* constitutes medulla oblongata or the *myelencephalon*, pons or the *metencephalon*, hindbrain or the *cerebellum*, and mid brain or the *mesencephalon*. Mid brain, pons and medulla oblongata together constitute the brain stem. The major brain mass or the *prosencephalon* constitutes the *diencephalon* and *cerebrum* or the *telencephalon*.

The Medulla Oblongata: The *medulla oblongata* is the lowest part of the brain. From this spinal cord continues below. This is connected to the *pons* on the above. The *medulla oblongata* contains the centers that control the systems like respiratory and circulatory, etc. So this is of immediate importance in a meditation practice. The cavity of *medulla oblongata* is known as the *fourth ventricle*. This becomes narrow in lower part of *medulla oblongata*, and then is continuous with the *canalis centralis* of the spinal cord. On the above the *fourth ventricle* is connected to the *third ventricle* of the brain.

Pons: *Pons* is considerably thicker than the *medulla oblongata*. This is situated in the junction where the *cerebellum* and the *medulla oblongata* meet, and is made up of a broad band of transversely coursing white and grey fibers arising from the *cerebellum* and the *medulla oblongata*, which form a considerable protuberance on the ventral side.

Cerebellum or the Hind Brain: The *cerebellum* commonly known as hindbrain or little brain is the back portion of the brain, situated posterior to *pons* and the *medulla oblongata*. This is oblong shaped, occupies major part of the posterior cranial cavity or posterior cranial fossa, connected to the mid brain on the above, *pons* on the middle and the *medulla oblongata* below. This is the center for muscular coordination and dreams.

The Mid Brain: The mid brain is short, constricted with thick walls, and in-between the *rhombencephalon* and the *prosencephalon*. The cavity of the mid brain is a reduced narrow canal known as the *cerebral aqueduct* that connects the *fourth ventricle* to the *third ventricle*. When the life-force, *prāṇa*, is pierced through this then it crosses the *Ājñā cakra* to enter into the cave of the heart or the house of the Brahman, *brahmaṇḍī*, i.e., the *third ventricle*.

Diencephalon: The *diencephalon* is invisible from the surface view due to development of the cerebrum or the cerebral hemispheres. Its cavity is a deep slit that constitutes major part of the *third ventricle* or cave of the Brahman, *brahmaṇḍī*. This *diencephalon* is the Mount of Master, *guru parvat*, above the *Ājñā cakra*.

Cerebrum or the Cerebral Hemispheres: The *cerebrum* is made up of two large brain masses commonly known as the *cerebral hemispheres*. This is the major and advanced brain. This is oval in shape, highly convoluted forming *gyres*, the largest part of the brain occupying the anterior and the posterior *cranial fossae*. Each

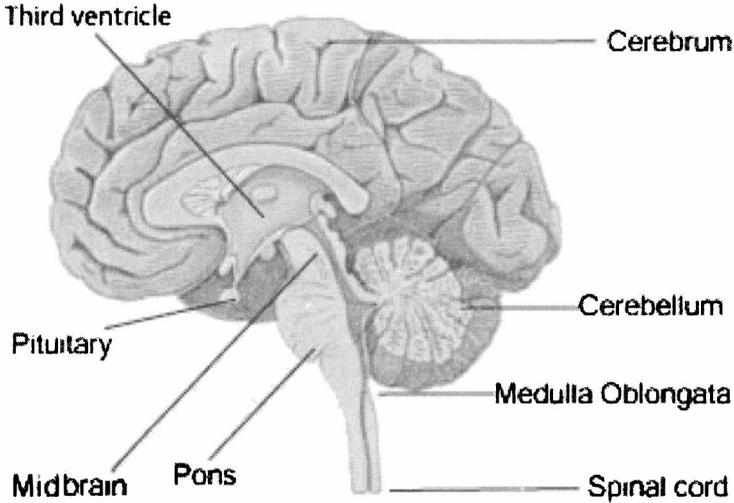


Fig. 4.15. The Brain.

hemisphere encloses inside a cavity called *lateral ventricle*. The left and the right lateral ventricles are continuous with the third ventricle. The outer layer of each hemisphere is called cerebral cortex and is made up of grey matter, and the inner layer or the central core is called cerebral medulla and made up of white matter in which masses of grey matter are embedded known as basal nuclei. The important centers of hearing, speech, sight and olfactory, etc., and the psychic center are situated in the cerebral hemispheres.

The Pituitary and the Hypothalamus: The Pituitary gland is of much importance in body physiology. This is partly neural and partly somatic in origin. The posterior pituitary or the *neurohypophysis* is neural in origin and the anterior pituitary or the *adenohypophysis* is non-neural. The middle portion, connecting the anterior and the posterior halves, is known as the *pars intermedia*. This is both neural and non-neural. The Pituitary secretes a large range of hormones named Growth Hormone (GH), Adeno-cortico-trophic Hormone (ACTH), Thyroid Stimulating Hormone (TSH), Follicle Stimulating Hormone (FSH), Interstitial Cells Stimulating Hormone (ICSH), Leutenizing Hormone (LH) and Prolactin Hormone from the anterior lobe and through them controls and regulates body physiology. The posterior lobe secretes hormones Oxytocin and Vassopressin and the intermediate lobe secretes Melanocyte Stimulating Hormone (MSH). So this gland is called the master gland in the body. A natural belief developed by some authors that this might be the *Ājñā cakra*. But this is not so. The Pituitary is controlled by the hypothalamus at the base of the third ventricle through a set of releasing factors, so the pituitary is not the real master; it is the hypothalamus, which is the master of pituitary. The hypothalamus is a part of the Mount of

Master, *guru parvat*, described in yogic literatures. Again a large portion of pituitary, the anterior lobe secreting major hormones is non-neural in origin. Moreover the pituitary is not in the central axis of the nervous system, i.e., in the central line of the *canalis centralis*, the fourth ventricle and the third ventricle. Since the mid brain sends information to the hypothalamus, and in this way controls the activities of the pituitary this can even be said the Ājñā *cakra*. The Ājñā *cakra* is situated in the medulla in close proximity to the mid brain just bellow the *cerebral aqueduct* and influences the actions of the pituitary through the mid brain. The *cerebral aqueduct* is the Knot of Rudra and this must be pierced to enter into the Cave of the Brahman.

हं ham

क्षं kṣam

ॐ Aum

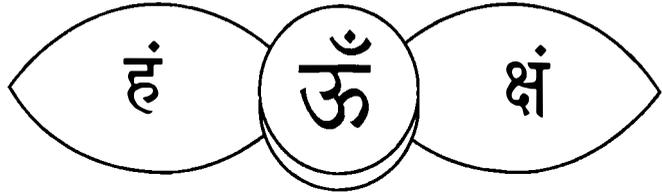
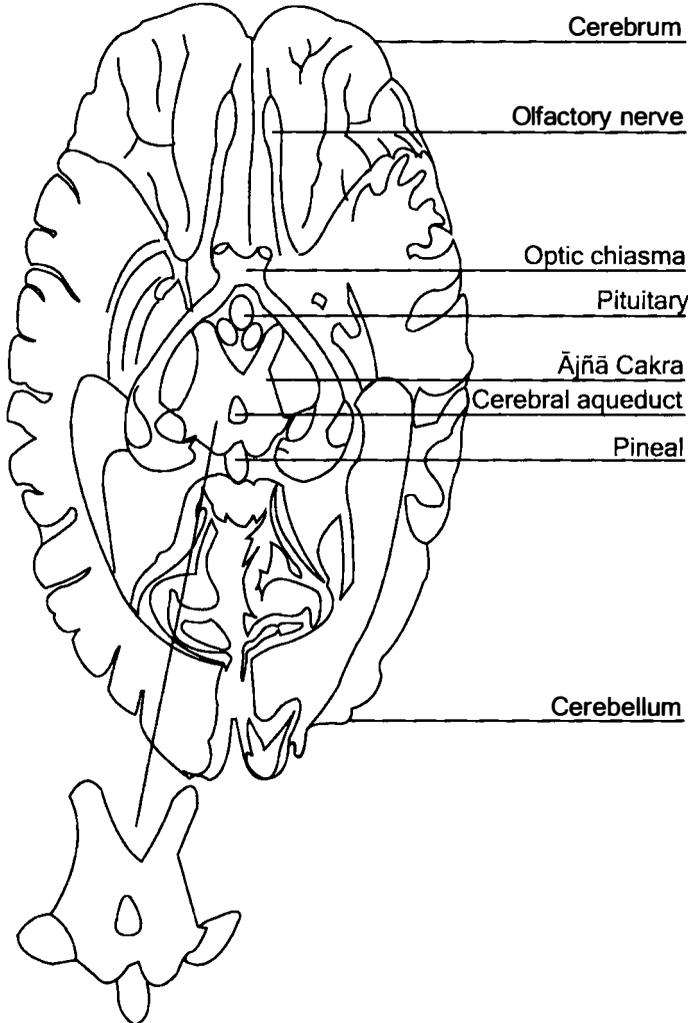


Fig. 4.16. The Master Center, Ājñā *cakra*.

The Master Center, Ājñā *cakra*: This is situated inside the Suṣumnā *nāḍī* at a place corresponding to the space between two eyebrows. For common reference some refer it as the pituitary center and others as the pineal center. But this is in between the pituitary and the pineal. This is in the brain stem in the *medulla oblongata*, just bellow the *cerebral aqueduct* and in close proximity with the mid brain. Ājñā means command. This is the master in the body. This gives command to all the five centers bellow. This is the Lord of five senses. The qualities of earth, water, fire, air, and ether elements are present here. This controls all the five sense-organs and the five action organs along with the mind. The seed sound of the center is *Om*. This *Om* is everything. This is the seed of all the basic fifty seed sounds. *Om* is the name of the Lord. This is *tapas loka*, the world of austerities, and is the sixth of the seven worlds. This is the center for all the five restraints, viz., nonviolence, truth, etc. and all the five observances, viz., cleanliness, contentment, etc. Here *tapah* takes the form of knowledge. This is related to *cit*, the consciousness. This is the center of the consciousness of the individual self, *jīva bhāva*. This is the center of five types of modifications of the mind, *vṛtti-s*. From here also emerges the five afflictions, viz., ignorance, *avidyā*, the feeling of “I” and “mine,” *asmitā*, attachment, *rāga*, aversion, *dveṣa*, and inherent involvement, *abhiniveśa*. By *tapas* or austerities in the form of self-control and self-surrender the individual self, *jīva*, merges with the Transcendental One, *parama*. One who sits here means one who brings the *prāṇa* from Mūlādhāra and settles at this center is a performer of austerities, *tapasvī*. This is the center of all the five efforts, viz., noble faith, *śraddhā*, vigor or continuity in practice with

enthusiasm, *vīrya*, repeated recollection in the spiritual practice, *smṛti*, practice of concentration, *samādhi*, and discriminative knowledge, *prajñā*. Both sun and moon are also referred as *tapasaḥ*. This is the house of both sun and moon. On the front it is zodiac Leo and on the back it is zodiac Cancer, the houses of the sun and the moon respectively. The sun is our *prāṇa* and the moon is the mind. On gross body the pituitary represents the solar point and the pineal represents the lunar point. From here at *Ājñā cakra* arise all the worlds downwards up to the material world but this remains unchanged along with all these modifications,



Tortoise, Kūrma nāḍī

Fig. 4.17. Brain showing Kūrma nāḍī and Ājñā cakra.

so this is called *kuṭāstha caitanya*. Mental stability comes when one settles here; this is Kūrma *nāḍī*, *kūrmanāḍyām sthairyam* (*Ygs.*, 3.31), concentration at Kūrma *nāḍī* brings stability. The section of this area of brain resembles a tortoise, *kūrma* (Fig. 4.17). The *tapas* is the sixth oblation. We have to oblate our sixth breath from this center to the Supreme Father. One who can pierce his breath through the narrow oblong opening above this center like an eye of a needle corresponding to the *cerebral aqueduct* in the mid brain, he is the blessed one to enter into the Cave of the Brahman. The two petals of this center represent the seed sounds, *ham* and *kṣam*. We have to realize the Self or Śiva, *ham*, and infinity, *kṣam*, here at this center.

The Crown Center, Sahasrāra cakra: This is situated at the brain in the cerebrum. The entire cerebrum is the crown center. The mid point is the point just beneath the anterior fontanel. This is the point between two frontal and two parietal bones of the skull. These bones are not completely formed in newborn infants and get closed as the infant grows (Fig. 4.19). This is the tenth door, *dasama dvāra*, through which the Lord entered inside the body temple. He is the Lord Indra and has entered the body by splitting up the farthest point at crown where hair is parted; *sa etameva sīmānam vidāryaitayā dvārā prāpyadata* (*Ai. U.*, 1.3.12). She is Aditi, who comprises of all gods, manifested as Prāṇa the Hiraṇyagarbha, *yā prāṇena sambhavati*, and has entered into the cave and stays there, *guhām pravīśya tiṣṭhanti* (*Ka. U.*, 2.1.7). This cave corresponds to the third ventricle and the tenth door is the *brahmarandhra*. Sahasrāra *cakra* is the *cakra* of *sahasra ara*, means wheel of thousand spokes. So this is called lotus of thousand petals.

Thousand symbolizes innumerable yoga *nāḍī*s. The petals are downward here opening towards the cave of the Brahman. All the fifty basic seed sounds are multiplied here again and again. This is *satyaloka*, the abode of Truth, and the highest of the seven worlds. The *satya* is the seventh oblation. After the seventh oblation a yogi becomes Balarāma, and that is the seventh spiritual birth. Balarāma is the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa, and is an incarnation of Śeṣanāga Ananta. *Nāga* or cobra represents energy. *Śeṣa* means the residual one, this is the remaining energy after creation of the universe and this remaining energy is infinite, *ananta*. That is called *kuṇḍalinī*, the infinite ocean of Prāṇa. That is everywhere, below the Mūlādhāra and also in the Sahasrāra, within the body and outside the body. *Ananta* is one with Lord Viṣṇu, the vastness. Then on the eighth there is a new birth, the eighth child is Kṛṣṇa, the Transcendental Consciousness. He is *sarvātmā*, the soul of all.

The Three Knots, granthitraya: The yogic scriptures describe about the presence of three knots, *granthi*s, inside the Suṣumnā *nāḍī*. A yogi has to pierce the six centers, *ṣaṭ cakra bhedana*, and the three knots, *granthitraya bhedana*, with his subtle breath or *Śakti* to unite it at the place of Śiva in Sahasrāra. The Three Knots described are Knot of Brahmā, *Brahmagranthi*, Knot of Viṣṇu, *Viṣṇugranthi*,

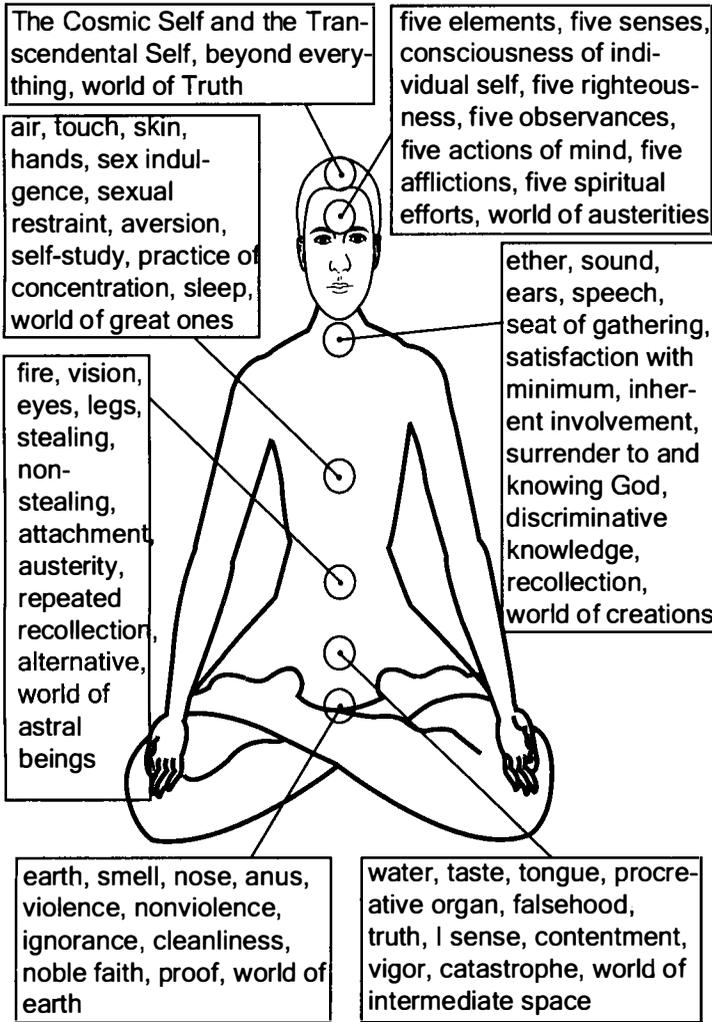


Fig 4.18. Relationship between energy centers and elements, senses, sense-organs, organs of action, righteousness, observances, afflictions, spiritual efforts, actions of mind, and worlds.

and Knot of Rudra, *Rudragranthi*. However, we find that the scriptures differ regarding position of the knots. In *Yogakuṇḍalyupaniṣad* it is said,

*brahmagranthīm tato bhītvā rajogūṇasamudbhavam,
suṣumnāvadane śīghram vidyullekheva saṁsphureṭ. (YKU, 67)*

After piercing the Knot of Brahmā, *brahmagranthīm tato bhītvā* that is made up of *rajas*, *rajogūṇasamudbhavam*, enters inside the face of Suṣumnā, *suṣumnāvadane*, quickly, *śīghram*, like an sparkling electric current, *vidyullekheva saṁsphureṭ*.

*viṣṇugranthim pratyātyucaih satvaram hṛdi samsthitā,
ūrdhvam gacchati yaccānte rudragranthim tadudbhavam.* (Ibid., 68)

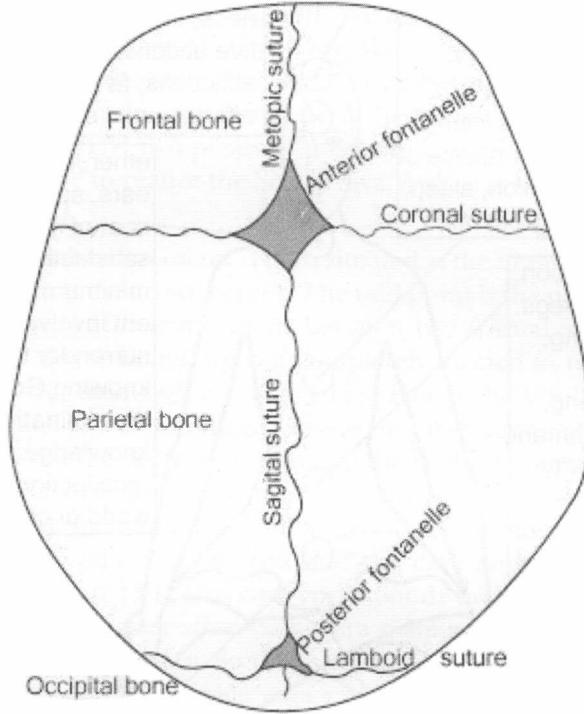


Fig. 4.19. Skull of a new born showing fontanelle.

Then piercing the Knot of Viṣṇu, *viṣṇugranthim pratyātyucaih*, quickly, *satvaram*, that is inside the heart, *hṛdi samsthitā*, moves above, *ūrdhvam gacchati*, to the end where, *yaccānte*, there is the Knot of Rudra, *rudragranthim tadudbhavam*.

According to this it appears that the Knot of Brahmā is Mūlādhāra since it is said *suṣumnāvadane*, inside the face of Suṣumnā. But opinion varies regarding this. Some put forward it as Mañipūra since it is said that this is made up of *rajas*, *rajogunāsamudbhavam*. Mūlādhāra and Svādhiṣṭhāna are dark areas, and these are mostly *tamas* based *rajas*. Mañipūra is the fire element and center of mind hence here *rajas* is predominant. Moreover the *conus medularis* from where the spinal cord tapers forming the *filum terminale* is in the lumbar region and this can be said as face of Suṣumnā. The heart center Anāhata is said to be Knot of Viṣṇu and at the end in Ājñā *cakra* is the Knot of Rudra. *Brahmavidyopaniṣad* says, *rudragranthirbhruvornmadhye bhidyate aksharavāyunā*, the Knot of Rudra in the midpoint between two eyes (means at Ājñā *cakra*) and is pierced through the knowledge of uneroded air (*BVU*, 71). But according to *Vāmakeśvara Tantra*,

*rudragranthīm tato bhītvā viṣṇugranthīm bhinatti yaḥ,
brahmāgranthīm ca bhītveta kamalāni bhinatti ṣaṭ.* (VT, 5)

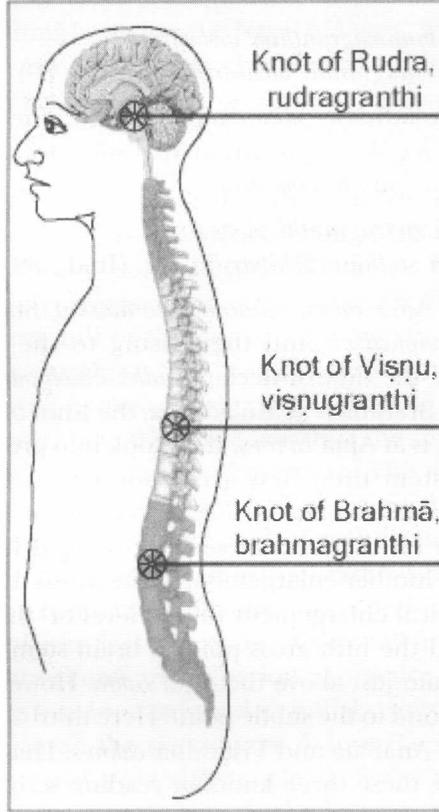


Fig. 4.20. The Three Knots.

By piercing the Knot of Rudra there, *rudragranthīm tato bhītvā*, who then pierces the Knot of Viṣṇu, *viṣṇugranthīm bhinatti yaḥ*, and pierces the Knot of Brahman, *brahmāgranthīm ca bhītveta* and pierces the six lotuses, *kamalāni bhinatti ṣaṭ*.

Now explanations are made as the Knot of Rudra is at Mūlādhāra, Knot of Viṣṇu is at Anāhata and Knot of Brahmā is at Ājñā *cakra*. But some others say this is about piercing of the Knots from the top to bottom, and then Knot of Rudra is Ājñā *cakra*, Knot of Viṣṇu is Anāhata and Knot of Brahmā is Mūlādhāra. Again in the same scripture it is said, *bhujaṅgākārarūpeṇa mūlādhāraṃ samāśritā* (VT, 1), the Śakti remains at the Mūlādhāra in the form of a snake or coiled form, and then, *vāyvāghātasādagnih svādhiṣṭhānagato jvalan* (ibid., 4), by the hit of the breath the fire inside the Svādhiṣṭhāna starts burning. This gives support to the view as the Knot of Rudra is at Mūlādhāra, Knot of Viṣṇu is at Anāhata and Knot of Brahmā is at Ājñā *cakra*. But this also raises a question the First Knot here may

be Mañipūra instead of Mūlādhāra since the activation of subtle breath at Svādhiṣṭhāna opens the Knot can be either way, Mañipūra or Mūlādhāra. Then according to *Lalitā Sahasranāma*,

*mūlādhāraikanilayā brahmagranthim vibhedinī,
mañipūrantaruditā viṣṇugranthi vibhedinī.* (LS, 89)

At the house of Mūlādhāra, *mūlādhāraikanilayā*, She pierces the Knot of Brahmā, *brahmagranthim vibhedinī*, arising at Mañipūra, *mañipūrantaruditā*, pierces the Knot of Viṣṇu, *viṣṇugranthi vibhedinī*.

*ājñācakrāntarālasthā rudragranthi vibhedinī,
sahasrārāmbujārūḍhā sudhāsārābhivarṣiṇī.* (Ibid., 89)

Entering inside the Ājñā *cakra*, *ājñācakrāntarālasthā*, She pierces the Knot of Rudra, *rudragranthi vibhedinī*, and then rising to the Sahasrāra, *sahasrārāmbujārūḍhā*, She rains the flow of nectar, *sudhāsārābhivarṣiṇī*.

So here the Knot of Brahmā is at Mūlādhāra, the Knot of Viṣṇu is at Mañipūra and the Knot of Rudra is at Ājñā *cakra*-s. If we look into gross points at the spinal cord and the brain stem then first gross point is at the base of spine at Mūlādhāra (*filum terminale externum* at the coccyx), second gross point is *conus medularis* at Mañipūra (at the level of second or third lumber vertebra), the third gross point is the lumber enlargement at the ninth thoracic and the fourth gross point is the cervical enlargement (at the level of third cervical to second thoracic vertebra), and the fifth gross point is brain stem and then the *cerebral aqueduct* in the mid brain just above the Ājñā *cakra*. However a gross point may not necessarily correspond to the subtle point. Here third and fourth gross points refer to positions near Anāhata and Viśuddha *cakra*-s. Hence it is natural to get confused to determine these three knots by reading scriptures, only scriptural knowledge supported by practice helps.

However, in our opinion these differences in the scriptures do not make a major problem in understanding the principle. The Prāṇa is the ruler of the mind. Depending on the impressions of our previous actions we have formed innumerable knots in our mind stuff, *citta*, those descended even up to the physical level. These knots are hindrances for the smooth flow of the *prāṇa*. All the six centers below the Sahasrāra from the Mūlādhāra to the Ājñā *cakra*-s are also knots. All our five sense organs are also knots. We are obsessed with a particular kind of mental mode and stuck there, then are unable to move to a higher mental state, not to speak about the State of Cosmic Consciousness. So the position of three major Knots in a person may vary according to his past impressions, *saṃskāra*-s. The opinions of *ṛṣi*s vary, and were based according to their personal experiences in their spiritual practices. The major three knots are *saṃskāra*-s that binds us very strongly. Among the three knots, the Knot of Brahmā is our *saṃskāra*-s with dominance of *rajas*, the Knot of Viṣṇu is our *saṃskāra*-s with

dominance of *sattva*, and the Knot of Rudra are our *samskāra-s* with dominance of *tamas*. According to the Kriyā-yoga tradition of Masters, the Knot of Brahmā is at Mañipūra, the Knot of Viṣṇu is at Anāhata, and the Knot of Rudra is at Ājñā *cakra*. The Knot of Brahmā is same as the Navel of Viṣṇu, *Viṣṇunābhi*, at Mañipūra. The Knot of Viṣṇu is same as the Navel of Brahmā, *Brahmanābhi*, at Anāhata. And the Knot of Rudra is same as the Navel of Rudra, *Rudranābhi*, at Ājñā *cakra*. Our identification with the world of “I and Mine” is ignorance, this is *tamas* based. When the life force crosses the Ājñā *cakra* to enter the cave of the Brahman then this world of “I and Mine” is burnt by the third eye of Rudra. The opinion of the present author from his experience is that Mūlādhāra is the Mouth of Suṣumnā where the subtle breath enters the Suṣumnā. The Knot of Brahmā is just beneath Mañipūra (corresponds to *conus medularis*), the Knot of Viṣṇu is just above Anāhata (corresponds to the lumber enlargement of spinal cord at the level of ninth thoracic vertebra), and the Knot of Rudra is just above the Ājñā *cakra* [corresponds to the *cerebral aqueduct* (Fig. 4.20)]. If a spiritual practitioner watches his subtle breath along the entire length of the spinal cord very minutely then he can feel the six centers and the three knots. This watching of the *prāṇa* in Suṣumnā can be compared to tuning a radio to change a broadcasting center. When you come nearer to the kilohertz mark of a center and even before reaching the kilohertz mark the center is picked in your radio, similar is the vibration in case of six centers. This feeling would come after a period of practice and in the beginning one may not even feel the centers. One shall find a feeling in the form of sweet pain in the three knots after a period of practice but that vanishes later. For some practitioners heaviness is found in initial stages at the Ājñā *cakra*. One also finds sweet pain in all the six centers. Before the sweet pain it is mostly stiffness in those points and a practitioner clearly feels those blockages in those points while ascending the breath from the Mūlādhāra to the Ājñā in the initial days of practice. These blockages may not be same in all points, these vary according to the *samskāra-s* of individual practitioners. However, continuous and uninterrupted practice of Kriyā removes all the blockages and the practitioner finds smooth vibration on those points where there was stiffness earlier.

FOUR CHAPTERS OF LIFE

Realization of the Self as a Continuous Entity: Our life is distributed in four chapters, and these four quarters are one. To understand our life we have to understand the four quarters of life. This is the core of the Vedānta and is described in a short treatise as the *Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad*: “*ayamātmā brahma saḥ ayamātmā catuṣpāt* (Ma. U, 2), this Self is the Brahman, and that this Self is of four quarters.” Realizing that through meditation takes one to the State of Transcendental Self. He becomes one with all. That is *sarvātma bodha*, all things and all beings are his ownself. There is nothing left to be known by him. Yājñavalkya

teaches to Maitreyī: “*yatra vā asya sarvamātmaivābhūttatkena*, here for whom everything has become the Self, *kaṁ jīghrettatkena*, what should one smell and through whom, *kaṁ paśyettatkena*, what should one see and through whom, *kaṁ śṛṇuyāttatkena*, what should one hear and through whom, *kaṁ abhivadettatkena*, whom should one greet and by whom, *kaṁ manvīta tatkṛṇa*, what should one think and by whom, *kaṁ vijānīyat*, what should one know” (*Br. U.*, 2.4.14). There is nothing left for such a person who has reached the highest Knowledge. For such a person who has realized the oneness of the Self what delusion and what sorrow can there be, *tatra ko mohaḥ kaḥ śoka ekatvamanuṣāyataḥ* (*Īś. U.*, 7). He who sees the Self in all beings feels no hatred, *sarvabhūteṣu cātmanāṁ tato na vijugupsate* (*ibid.*, 6). Hatred comes because we feel something as bad and different from us, jealousy comes because we feel something as better and different from us. But for whom everything and every beings are a continuous entity, and this continuous entity is the Self, then there can never be any hatred. That realization of the Self as a continuous entity must come in meditation, which is the state of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, samādhi without any alternative. That is *kaivalya*, the One and Only One, and that is *tuṛīya*, the Transcendental State.

Syllable Om is the Essence of All: The all creations are based on names, just sounds only. Sound is the essence of the ether element and all other elements beginning from the air up to the earth are created from it. The entire creation is from the sounds. Sound is exuberance, and sound is vibration, *spanda*. This is Śakti and this is the Prāṇa. This as vibration is inherent in air, and air is the first gross material for creation. Our perceptions, speeches and actions are based on our mind, and these are nothing but our mind. Our mind is nothing but thoughts and thoughts are nothing but words or names and these are sounds only. The entire creation is just a modification, *vikāra*, only. This is a modification of sound. The Upaniṣads say, *vacārambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyam* (*Ch. U.*, 6.1.4), all modifications has speech as its basis, a name only. Again it is said: *tadyathā śaṅkunā sarvāṇi paṇṇāni samṛṇṇānyevamoṅkāreṇa sarvā vāk samṛṇṇoṅkāra evedaṁ sarvam* (*ibid.*, 2.23.3), as the leaf exists there due to veins of the leaf in the same way all the speeches (or names) exist due to this sound *Om*, all these are the sound *Om*, all these. So from the above discussion it is clear that entire creations including us are modifications of names, names are nothing but sounds, and all the sounds emerge from and merge in the one sound *Om*. *Om* is the symbol of the Cosmic Self. “*Om* is the Brahman, and *Om* is all this, *omīti brahma, omītidam sarvam.*” (*Tai. U.*, 1.8.1.) One should meditate on *Om*. The Self should be meditated as *Om*. “This uneroded sound (alphabet or *akṣara*) *Om* is everything, *omītyetadaḥsarvamidaṁ sarvam.*” (*Mā. U.*, 1.) The Kriyā-yoga is *Om* Technique, *Om Kauśala*, be it Haṁsa Kriyā, *Om* Technique, Kriyā Proper or Mātrkā Dhyāna, all these meditation Techniques are *Om* Technique. “What ever exists in three periods of time, past, present and future is *Om*; everything in the

creation is a modification of Om. Anything beyond the three periods of time, i.e., Unmanifest is also Om.” (*Mā.U*, 1.) The fifty basic seed sounds create all the sounds, name, thoughts and speech. These manifest in the gross forms as creation. These fifty basic seed sounds emerge from *Om* and merge in *Om*. And it is said that *Om* or the Self is possessed of four quarters.

The Four Quarters: The first quarter of the Self is Vaiśvānara whose sphere of activity is the waking state, the second quarter is Taijasa whose sphere of activity is the dream state, the third quarter is Prājña whose sphere is deep sleep, and the fourth quarter is Turiya and Turiya is the Self. These four quarters are one, and it is the Self or *Om*. The syllable *Om* (*Aum*) is of four parts. This consists of three letters, viz., *a*, *u*, and *m*, as three parts, and the fourth part is called a half-letter, *ardhamātrā*, or no-letter, *amātraḥ*. Lord Brahmā prays to the Divine Mother,

sudhā tvamakṣare nitye tridhā mātrātmikā sthitā,
ardhamātrāsthītā nityā yānucāryā viśeṣataḥ. (Sds., 1.74)

You are the nectar of immortality, *sudhā tvam*, the eternal uneroded syllable (*Aum*), *akṣare nitye*, established in the soul of three letters (*a*, *u*, and *m*), *tridhā mātrātmikā sthitā*, and established in the eternal half-letter, *ardhamātrāsthītā nityā*, that cannot be pronounced in a special way, *yānucāryā viśeṣataḥ*.

“That very Self, *saḥ ayam ātmā*, from the standpoint of syllable, *adhyakṣaram*, is syllable *Om*, *oṅkāraḥ*, and again from the standpoint of letters, *adhimātram*, the quarters are letters, *pādā mātrā*, and the letters are quarters, *mātrāśca pādā*, and the letters are *a*, *u*, and *m*, *akāra ukāro makāra iti*” (*Ma.U*, 8.) “The letter *a*, *akāra*, leads to the waking state, Viśva, the letter *u*, *ukāra*, leads to the dream state, Taijasa, and the letter *m*, *makāra*, leads to the deep sleep state, Prājña. The one that is free from letters, *amātre*, there remains no attainment, *na vidyate gatih*” (*G Kā.*, 1.23). “The no-*mātrā* part, *amātraḥ*, or the non-lettered one is the fourth, *amātraścaturthaḥ*” (*Mā.U*, 12), and that is Turiya.

Vaiśvānara and the Waking State: The first quarter, Vaiśvānara, is expressed in the waking state, *jāgaritasthānaḥ*. This is the consciousness directed to external objects, *bahiṣprajñāḥ*, having seven limbs, *saptāṅga*, having nineteen mouths, *ekonovimśatimukhaḥ*, and enjoyer of gross objects, *sthūlabhuk* (*Mā.U*, 3). The Self is encapsulated within the three bodies, viz., gross, subtle and causal, and here is identified with a state of expression of the gross body. Vaiśvānara is the gross body. Since the world, *viśva*, is manifested in the form of beings, *nara*, the gross body is referred as Vaiśvānara. Here in the gross body the consciousness is directed outward, towards the sense objects through the doors of sense organs. So this is called *bahiṣprajñāḥ* means whose awareness is relating to external objects. Here consciousness is not inward, not towards the Self. Now we have the knowledge, *prajñā*, of the world around us. This knowledge is outside, *bahiḥ*, the consciousness of the true Self. Our body is a miniature model of the cosmos. Our body is the

microcosm and the cosmos is the macrocosm. So this being, *nara*, is also cosmos, *viśva*. This integration is put forth by Bhagatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya in explaining the seven limbs of Vaiśvānara in the lines of teachings of Upaniṣads. King Aśvapati teaches one cosmic gross body, Vaiśvānara, and as per this teaching from heaven to earth is one with the individual. The seven limbs are, *tasya ha vā etasyātmano vaiśvānarasya mūrdhaiva sutejāḥ*, of that Vaiśvānara-Self verily the head is the heaven, *caksurviśvarūpaḥ*, the eye is the sun, *prāṇaḥ pṛthagvartmāḥ*, the Prāṇa is the air, *ātma samdeho bahulo*, the middle portion of the body is the space, *bastireva raiḥ*, the urinary bladder is the water, *pṛthivyeva pādāḥ*, the two feet are indeed the earth, *ura eva vedīḥ*, the chest is the dais (for sacrificial fire), *lomāni bahiḥ*, the hairs on the chest are the mat, *hṛdayam gārhapatyo*, the heart is the Gārhapatya fire, *manaḥ anvāhāryapacana*, the mind is the Anvāhāryapacana fire, *āsyamāhavanīyaḥ*, the face is the Āhavanīya fire (*Ch. U*, 5.18.2). In this way the seven limbs, viz., head, eye, vital force, middle portion inclusive of chest with hairs, bladder, feet and face are described, and unity of the individual body-self, *piṇḍātmā*, with the cosmic body, *Virāṭa*, is established. The individual body, *piṇḍa*, is in no way separate from the cosmic gross body, *brahmāṇḍa* or *Virāṭa*. This also holds true from the findings of the material sciences. The individual body is processed from the matters of the cosmic gross body and recycled to merge in the cosmic gross body. The individual gross body has nineteen mouths through which the individual self experiences the gross objects. They are the five sense-organs, viz., ears, skin, eyes, tongue, and nose, the five organs of action, viz., organ of speech, hands, legs, organ of procreation, and organ of defecation, the five vital breaths, viz., *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *samāna*, *vyāna*, and *udāna*, the four internal organs, viz., mind, intellect, ego, and subconscious. By these mouths he enjoys the outer objects.

Tajjasa and The Dream State: The second quarter, Tajjasa, is expressed in the dream state, *svapnasthānaḥ*. This is the consciousness directed to internal objects, *antahprajñāḥ*, having seven limbs, *saptāṅga*, having nineteen mouths, *ekonovimsatimukhaḥ*, and an enjoyer of subtle objects, *praviviktabhuk* (*Mā.U*, 4). Here the Self is also encapsulated within the three bodies, and is identified with a state of expression of the subtle body. Tajjasa is the subtle body inside the gross body. The seven limbs and nineteen mouths are same as that of Vaiśvānara. Tajjasa is there in the Vaiśvānara since the main component of Tajjasa is the mind stuff. In waking state also it is mainly the mental vibrations that work but it is directed towards external objects and the self appears engrossed in external objects. The enjoyments in waking state are under influences of the ignorance, *avidyā*, desires, *kāma*, and actions, *karma* (actions carried out of the ignorance and desires). These enjoyments make impressions, *samskāra*, in the mind stuff named *citta*, and these impressions reappear in different forms during the dream state without any external means but is similar to the waking state and are under

the influences of the ignorance, desires and actions. In Jyotirbrāhmaṇa, the sleeping state is described as: “*sa yatra prasvapityasya lokasya sarvāvato mātṛamuṣādāya*, when he sleeps takes a part (little impressions) of this total world, *svayam vihatya svayam nirmāya*, destroying the self (deluding the waking) and creating the self (manifesting the dreaming state), *svena bhāsā svena jyotiṣā*, manifesting the self through the light of the self, *prasvapityatrāyam puruṣaḥ*, sleeps that person there (on that state), *svayam jyotirbhavati*, becomes the form of own-light.” (Br.U, 4.3.9.) In Viśva or Vaiśvānara state, a person enjoys the world through the senses, this is the state of all-embracing world, *sarvāvataḥ*, and from here a little impression is taken to the dream state, may be from this life or from previous lives. The experiences and enjoyments in this state are consisting of impressions only, and are not a gross cognition; and hence are subtle in nature. The manifestation of this self in dream, *svena bhāsā*, is through the light of the self, *svena jyotiṣā*. This light of the self is the form of desires, and this is the mind stuff. These four, viz., mind, intellect, ego and subconscious are the light, so the state is called Tajjasa. An elephant, a mountain, stars, planets, gods, persons including the self and all events in a dream state arises from this mind stuff only and merge in this mind stuff only. These all are light of the self. A person we meet in dream state in a particular date and at a particular place, in actuality is not present there. It is the self-light that becomes everything. The same is also for the waking state; it is only cognition of the mind. This self-light or Tajjasa is same as *Hiraṇyagarbha Prajāpati*, the Cosmic Mind. An individual mind is in no way separate from the Cosmic Mind. This feeling of separation is due the ignorance, desires and actions, the wrong knowledge due to identity the self with body-mind complex. In Madhubrāhmaṇa it is stated: *yaścāyamasyām pṛthivyām*, that who is in this earth, *tejomayaḥ amṛtamayaḥ puruṣo*, the immortal being full of light, *yaścāyamadhyātman śārīrastejomayaḥ amṛtamayaḥ puruṣo*, that who is in context of the body is the immortal being full of light in the body, *ayameva sa*, this is that (ibid., 2.5.1); both are one principle.

Prājña and the Deep Sleep State: The third quarter is Prājña and its sphere is deep sleep, *suṣupti*. Here the Self is also encapsulated within the three bodies and is identified with a state of expression of the causal body. The state of deep sleep has been described as, *yatra supto*, when the sleeping person, *na kañcana kāmam kāmāyate*, does not desire any desirables, *na kañcana svapnam paśyati*, does not see any dreams, *tat suṣuptam*, that is the state of deep sleep (Mā.U, 5). The common feature of Viśva and Tajjasa state is desires and enjoyments of gross or subtle objects whether it is perception of outer world or false perception in dream, and these are absent in the state of Prājña, i.e., deep sleep. The mind ceases to act in the state of deep sleep. Waking and dream states are conscious experiences of external and internal worlds, and these are nothing but vibrations of the mind, but in deep sleep there is no such vibration, the consciousness

solidifies, *prajñānaghara*. This is simply a mass of consciousness without volitions. But the common thing with the three states of Viśva, Taijasa, and Prājña is the unawareness of the reality named as the Self. The characteristics of this deep sleep state or Prājña is stated as: *ekībhūtaḥ*, everything becomes one or undifferentiated, *prajñānaghana*, a mass of consciousness, *evānandamayo*, that is full of bliss, *hyānandabhuk*, surely an enjoyer of bliss, *cetomukhaḥ*, entrance to the consciousness (*Mā.U*, 5). *Prājña* means special consciousness but here we see the cognitions of the outer world and perceptions of the subtle world are absent. Again there is unawareness of the Reality. But here we have to look that the desires are absent, and since they remain in seed form in the mind and the mind is absorbed in the Prāṇa so that there is undifferentiation and lack of duality, *ekībhūtaḥ*. Though this happens due to the effect of *tamas* and under the purview of the ignorance, *avidyā*, but still then such a state of bliss and undifferentiation is achieved. So this becomes a mere undifferentiated consciousness. This state is also an entrance to the state of subtle mental consciousness, *cetomukhaḥ*, in the dream state and to the state of outward consciousness in the waking state, because before and after a deep sleep state we remain either in one of these two states of consciousness. Since this state is nearer to the Self even though the mind is unaware of it, this becomes an enjoyer of bliss. Without that bliss, life would become impossible in the state of dream and waking. This Prājña is the lord. As Taijasa is there in Vaiśvānara so also Prājña is there in both Taijasa and Vaiśvānara. Taijasa is within the mind and Vaiśvānara is also within the mind, so both are almost same. Prājña is when mind ceases to act. Again as Vaiśvānara or the individual gross body is same as *Virāṭa* or the Cosmic Gross Body, and Taijasa or the individual mind is same as *Hiraṇyagarbha Prajāpati* or the Cosmic Mind, similarly Prājña or the individual causal body is same as the Unmanifest, *avyakta*, or the Cosmic Causal Body. This *avyakta* or Primordial Nature is the Prāṇa. The mind absorbs in the Prāṇa. As it is stated: “*sa yadā svapīti prāṇameva* etc., when a person sleeps speech merge in the *prāṇa*, eyes merge in the *prāṇa*, ears merge in the *prāṇa*, and mind merge in the *prāṇa*; The Prāṇa engulfs everything in it.” (*Ch. U*, 4.3.3.) Again it is said: “*sa yathā śakuniḥ sutreṇa prabaddho* etc., as a bird that is bound by a thread after flying in many directions without getting a place to settle returns to the place of its bondage similarly that mind after flying in many directions without getting a place returns to the Prāṇa; Oh good-looking one, the mind is surely under the *prāṇa*.” (*Ibid.*, 6.8.2.) When a person sleeps, *svapīti*, at that time he attains, *apītaḥ*, the Self, *sva*. The mind does not work, the ego is also not there and only the Self is there. But the person could not bring that Knowledge as he is under the influence of the covering quality (*tamas*) of the Unmanifest. The seed of creation is in the Unmanifest or the Prāṇa, and this gives rise to creation. The seed of all impressions in mind remain in the deep sleep state, and again germinate to conscious experiences of external and internal worlds, i.e., vibrations of mind in waking and dream state.

Turiya and the Self: The fourth quarter is Turiya and this is the Self. This is stated as: “*nāntaḥprajñam*, not conscious of the inside world, *na bahiḥprajñam*, nor conscious of the outside world, *nobhayataḥprajñam*, nor conscious of both the worlds, *na prajñūnaghanam*, nor a mass of consciousness, *na prajñam*, nor conscious, *nāprajñam*, nor unconscious. This is *adr̥ṣtam*, not seen, *avyavahāryam*, beyond worldly dealings, *agrāhyam*, cannot be grasped, *alākṣaṇam*, without any mark or characteristics, *acintyam*, unthinkable, *avyapadesyam*, not possible to describe, *ekātmapratyayasāram*, essence of realization of one Self, *prapañcōpaśamam*, in whom all worldly phenomenon ceases, *sāntam*, stable, *śivam*, auspicious, i.e., the Pure Existence, Consciousness and Bliss, *advaitam*, non-dual, *caturtham manyate*, considered as the fourth, *sa ātmā*, that is the Self, *sa vijñeyaḥ*, that is to be known.” (*Mā.U.*, 7.) In this state all the three states of Viśva, Taijasa, and Prājña are negated by descriptions of the state as not conscious of the outside world, nor conscious of the inside world and nor a mass of consciousness. So this is not possible to describe this state in words as it is stated: “*yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha*, from which the speech returns failing to achieve along with the mind. (*Tai. U.*, 2.4.) Since this is not under the cognizable purview of the mind the cognition by the five sense organs like seeing etc. grasping and description etc. by the five organs of action, and thinking etc. by mind are denied. That Self is inside everything, viz., mind, speech, eyes, etc. and that Self is in all the three states of Viśva, Taijasa, and Prājña. That Self knows everything, controls everything but not possible to know that because there exists no second one who can know it. The Self is the form of Bliss: “*ānandam brahmaṇo vidvān na bibheti kadācaneti*, he who knows the Bliss that is Brahman does not fear at any time.” (*Ibid.*, 2.4.) Since every things and every beings are one continuous entity without mutation and there is not a second one, then whom to fear and for what? In that state virtues and vices cease to exist. In the state of deep sleep one is nearer to that state though ignorant about it, and that is the reason the deep sleep is full of bliss, *evānandamayo*, and surely an enjoyer of bliss, *hyānandabhuk*. Bhagavān Gauḍapāda states,

dvaitasyāgrahaṇam tulyamubhayoḥ prājñaturayayoḥ,
vījanidrāyutaḥ prājña sā ca turye na vidyate. (G Kā., 1.13)

Non-perception of duality, *dvaitasyāgrahaṇam*, is common to both, *tulyamubhayoḥ*, Prājña and Turiya, *prājñaturayayoḥ*. Prājña consists of seed sleep, *vījanidrāyutaḥ prājña*, and that (seed sleep) does not exist in Turiya, *sā ca turye na vidyate*.

Doing a Prājña without Sleep is Turiya: The similarity between Prājña and Turiya is the absence of duality but in Prājña one sleeps, i.e., the Reality or the Self is not perceived. That sleep, *nidrā*, becomes the seed, *vīja*, for germination of duality in the form of cognition of multiplicities in the states of waking and

dreaming. That is germination of the ego, germination of the mind and germination of desires. Then again and again, these desires and actions performed to enjoy the desires, form impressions, *saṁskāra*, in the mind stuff. Thus the cycle of birth and death goes on. Prājña in the deep sleep state neither comprehends the outer world nor the inner world nor the Self where as Turīya is the witness to all the three states. In understanding these principles lay the ground of entire spiritual practice. If we can do a Prājña without sleep than that is Turīya. That is *samādhi*, the transcendental consciousness. That is the state of One and Only One, *kaivalya*. By reading the scriptures and analyzing these we have indirect knowledge, *parokṣa jñāna*. By the practice of the Kriyā-yoga and entering into the transcendental state, *parāvasthā*, again and again we shall reach the state of One and Only. Then our Kriyā-yoga is Kaivalya-yoga. We shall have the Knowledge. We have the non-indirect knowledge, *aṣṭaparokṣa jñāna*.

The Life and the Scriptures teach the Fours: Our life teaches us the four states. Our life is our teacher, our *sadguru*. That is our Prāṇa. Everyday we experience the three states of waking, dreaming, and deep sleep. We must experience the fourth state named Turīya. That is the purpose of our life. The three states also teach us that. A human life is divided into four stages of life, *āśrama*-s, viz., *brahmacarya* or the student life, *gārhaṣṭhya* or the family life, *vānaprastha* or the forest life, and *yativrata* or *saṁnyāsa* or the renunciate life. *Brahmacarya* is the waking state, *gārhaṣṭhya* is the dream state, *vānaprastha* is the deep sleep state, and *yativrata* or *saṁnyāsa* is the Turīya state. In the student life one learns about the world, conscious about the outside world. The family life is full of desires, and this is the mind. In the forest life one goes to spiritual practice and has indirect knowledge; he is still ignorant about the Reality. The renunciate life emerges from the Knowledge.

Human society has four classes, viz., the serving class, Śūdra, the business class, Vaiśya, the warrior class, Kṣatriya, and the teaching class, Brahmin. Everyday our life traverses in three classes of these fours. The waking state is work of the serving class, *Śūdra-vṛtti*, and our sense organs and the mind act as servers. The dream state is work of the business class, *Vaiśya-vṛtti*, and our mind is the businessman doing all sorts of ever-unfinished business there. The deep sleep state is work of the warriors, *Kṣatriya-vṛtti*, and our vital power, Prāṇa, is the warrior, this protects us and revitalizes us to do again the business and to serve. The Turīya state is the Brahmin, the knower of the Brahman. This is our Prāṇa without *tamas*, and this is the Prāṇa in equilibrium as a form of the Consciousness and without actions.

In *Rāmottaratāpinuyapaniṣad*, Śrīrāma is narrated as the form of syllable Om, *oṅkārah*, and is of four quarters. It is stated,

akārākṣarasambhūtaḥ saumitirviśvabhāvanah,
ukārākṣarasambhūtaḥ satrughnastaijasātmakeḥ. (RUU, 3.1)

From the uneroded letter-*a* manifested, *akāra akṣara sambhūtaḥ*, the son of Sumitrā (Lakṣmaṇa) who should be contemplated as Viśva, *saumitriḥ viśva-bhāvanaḥ*. From the uneroded letter-*u* manifested, *ukāra akṣara sambhūtaḥ*, Śatruḡna who is the form of Taijasa, *śatruḡnaḥ taijasātmakah*.

*prājñātmakastu bharato makārākṣarasambhavaḥ,
ardhamātrātmako rāmo brahmānandaikavigrahaḥ. (RUU, 3.2)*

Bharata is the form of Prājña, *prājñātmakastu bharato*, has manifested from the uneroded letter-*m*, *makāra akṣara sambhavaḥ*. Rāma is the form of half-letter, *ardhamātrātmako rāmo*, He is the deity as Brahman the Bliss, *brahmānandaikavigrahaḥ*.

*sā sītā bhavati jñeyā mūlaprakṛtisamjñikā,
praṇavatvāt prakṛtiriti vadānti brahmavādinaḥ. (Ibid., 3.4)*

She is Sītā who is known, *sā sītā bhavati jñeyā*, in the name of Primordial Nature, *mūlaprakṛtisamjñikā*. Since emerges from Praṇava (Om), *praṇavatvāt*, this is said as the Nature or Prakṛti, *prakṛtiriti vadānti*, by the Brahmvādins (those who discourse on the Brahman) *brahmavādinaḥ*.

She is the Prāṇa, the Prime Nature, and She is one with Om. All the four states are one with Om. She is the Power of Action responsible for creation, sustenance and dissolution, *utpattisthitisamhārahāriṇī sarvadehinām* (ibid., 3.3), for all the beings having bodies, *sarva dehinām*, She is the creator, *utpatti*, sustainer, *sthiti*, and destroyer, *samhāra kāriṇī*.

The same is also stated about Vāsudeva Śrīkrṣṇa in *Rāmottaratāpinuyapaṇiṣad* and also in *Gopālottaratāpinuyapaṇiṣad*. Vāsudeva Śrīkrṣṇa is the syllable Om. Balarāma is the letter-*a*, *a-kāra*, and is the form of Viśva. Pradyumna is the letter-*u*, *u-kāra*, and is the form of Taijasa. Aniruddha is the letter-*m*, *m-kāra*, and is the form of Prājña. And Vāsudeva is the form of half-letter, *ardhamātrā*, and is Turiya. Rukmiṇī is the primordial nature. (*GUU*, 10–12).

In Śrī Jagannātha Dhāma, Purī, in eastern part of India the deities are four. Śrī Jagannātha is the syllable Om. The deity is called *Dārubrahman*, the Brahman in the form of wood, *dāru*, since the deities are made up of wood. Balabhadra is the letter-*a*, *a-kāra*, the gross body, and is the form of Viśva. Subhadra is the letter-*u*, *u-kāra*, the subtle body, and is the form of Taijasa. Sudarśana is the letter-*m*, *m-kāra*, the causal body, and is the form of Prājña. Śrī Jagannātha is the half-letter, *ardhamātrā*, and is Turiya. Divine Mother Vimalā is the Prime Nature; She is Mahāprāṇa, the great vital power, and one with Śrī Jagannātha, the *onkārah*.

We have to enter into the half-letter, *ardhamātrā*, or else called no-letter, *amātra*, which cannot be pronounced. That principle is beyond purview of the mind and the intellect, the sense-organs and speech remain far behind. That is the One and Only One, *kaivalyam*. Once we enter into that state, then there is no duality; one is in the Self, which is the continuous entity. Then one realizes all the states

are also That. The appearances of illusions are due to a substratum, and these have a real base. Once the substratum or the real base is understood then the illusions cease to exist. We have to realize that Om. That is the purpose of our life. That is the goal of the Kriyā-yoga. That is the goal of all spiritual sciences and practices. That is *nirbīja nirvikalpa samādhi*, samādhi without seed and alternative. That is the Knowledge.

THE ENIGMA NAMED DEATH

The world we live is termed as the world of death, *martya-loka* or *mṛtyu-loka*. Here beings take birth to die. Even there is a lifespan for our earth and also a lifespan for the sun. Though in comparison to a good hundred years of lifespan of humans the life of sun is billions of times greater but still than this has to be dismantled and face its funeral in a black hole. In each moment thousands of suns are dying and thousands are taking birth. We humans being aware of all these facts, even then aspire to be immortal with our physical body. According to scriptures, there are some celestial beings in subtle bodies and are devoid of physical bodies. They are known as gods governing a particular faculty of nature. It is believed that they are blessed with drinking nectar named *amṛta* means *na mṛta*, “no death.” But the same scriptures say that the world of gods is for the enjoyment of good deeds done in this world and after the time span of the results of these good deeds is finished, they have to return back to this world to complete their evolution to Absolute Immortality. So the life of gods though not immortal but is relatively immortal in comparison to human lives, and hence they are said to be immortal. But we have to keep in mind that the life of gods is without a physical body like that of ours. This nectar, which the gods drink, is nothing but the life energy, *prāṇa*. Of course everything is manifestation of the Prāṇa but the more we have access to the subtler levels of *prāṇa* the more immortal we are. The subtlest *prāṇa* is nothing but immortality, the Pure Existence principle named the Truth. This is the basic teaching of Upaniṣads. But still than with our attachment and identification with our physical body, we want to be immortal physically and the death remains a *Yakṣapraśna* for us.

A *Yakṣapraśna*: With all our clinical and philosophical knowledge on death, this still remains an enigma, an unsolved question. The story of *Mahābhārata* on *Yakṣapraśna* (question of *Yakṣa*) is familiar where the last question deals with the death. The story goes like this. The Pāṇḍavas, sons of King Pāṇḍu, were in exile and roaming in the forest with mother Kuntī. Kuntī suffered from thirst, so also the Pāṇḍava brothers. The second Pāṇḍava Bhīma climbed a height and found the source of water. Then the brothers one after other went to fetch the water, where they have to encounter a *Yakṣa*. *Yakṣa* is a term used for a mysterious being guarding a treasure. This *Yakṣa* was none other than God of Dharma and is same as God of Death. The *Yakṣa* who was the guard of the water-body put a

condition that they can quench their thirst and save their life only if they answer his questions. But they did not bother to answer the question and tried to drink the water and died. At last, the crown prince Yudhiṣṭhira, an embodiment of Dharma, went to fetch water. He successfully answered all the questions and faces the last question, “What is (most) surprising, *kimāścaryam?*” The crown prince replied, “Everywhere and everyday we see death but somehow we believe that *I am not going to die*. What can be more surprising than this?” Then he was allowed to fetch water and get back the lives of his brothers. Is this story meant for simply teaching us the mortal aspect of our lives and manifestations? No, if we look into the metaphysics, the teaching teaches the inner truth of our spiritual pursuit and the immortality of our true Self. It was King Yudhiṣṭhira who conquered the death and ascended to the heaven with the Own Body, which was another famous story of the great epic.

Metaphysics of the Yakṣapraśna: Like the Pāṇḍavas we are in exile, thrown out of our Divine Kingdom by the treachery launched by the demonic forces within us. These stories relate to our inner body principle, *śarīra tattva*. Pāṇḍavas were the sons King Pāṇḍu. *Pāṇḍu* means white with yellowish tinge, and this is the intellect, *buddhi*. *Pāṇḍu* comes from *paṇḍā*, and *paṇḍā* means “knowledge,” *paṇḍā iti jñāna*. A priest in an ancient Hindu temple is called Paṇḍā, and he is supposed to be a person with knowledge. The knowledge is hidden inside the intellect, *buddhisattva*. This is of two types, viz., *samskāraja buddhi* and *viveka buddhi*. *Samskāraja buddhi* is the knowledge based on past impressions in the mind and *viveka buddhi* is the discriminating intellect. This King Pāṇḍu had a curse; if he would resort to courtship then he would die. Courtship is the enjoyment of sense objects forgetting the Self. This is death of the discriminating intellect, *viveka buddhi*, or in other words the death of King Pāṇḍu within us though we still have the knowledge based on the impressions, *samskāraja buddhi*. The King had two queens; one was Kuntī and other was Mādri. Kuntī is *kuntaḥ* and *ī*. A spear that can hit long distances to fight enemies is called *kuntaḥ* and energy is letter-*ī*. To fight our inner enemies the spear is also with us. That is long, thin and sharp but subtle breath, and the power of this breath is *Kuntī*. Kuntī is the life-force within our body. Due to the curse on Pāṇḍu, Kuntī had to invoke gods for progeny by the blessings of Sage Durvāsā she received earlier, and Yudhiṣṭhira was born from God of Dharma, Bhīma was born from God of Air, and Arjuna was born from Indra, the King of gods. Kuntī guided Mādri through spiritual practice to have two sons from Aśvinikumāras, and they were Nakula and Sahadeva. Mādri is also a quality within us. This is *moda* or joy when guided with righteousness, and this is also *mada* or *māda* means intoxication and exhilaration of pleasure when attached to desires and sense objects. The two sons of Mādri were the result of *tapas* under the guidance of Kuntī. These two sons are bliss quality, *ānandākāra vṛtti*, based on righteousness coming down to the level of body. These

five young Pāṇḍava princes are our juvenile divine qualities, *daivī vṛtti*-s, related to the discrimination and detachment. At this stage when a spiritual practitioner has juvenile divine qualities and has not matured with spiritual knowledge, there was courtship between Pāṇḍu and Mādri leading to the death of the King. Mādri is here exhilaration of pleasure without the guidance of Prāṇa Kuntī. This is the death of Pāṇḍu, and is the death of inner knowledge due to obsession with the sense objects. With the death of the discriminating intellect and knowledge, the Divine Kingdom was lost. Now the ruler was the Blind King, our mind without the discriminating intellect, and his eldest son was Duryodhana, a stubborn ego full of ignorance and worldly desires. This is the great enemy; *kāmarūpaṁ durāsadam* (Ś. Bg., 3.43), the enemy in the form of desires that is difficult to subdue. He and all his brothers were known as Kauravas. The Kauravas are the demonic qualities, *āsuri vṛtti*-s, within us. Kaurava is derived from *kṛ* or *kuruḥ*, which means “action” or “to hurt.” These are actions based on the ignorance and desires.

Due to the treachery of the demonic qualities, the divine qualities were in exile. Duryodhana, the enemy in the form of desires put them to burn in a house made up of lac. The desires when unfulfilled take the form of anger; *kāmātkrodhaḥ abhijāyate* (Ś. Bg., 2.62), from the desires spring the anger. This anger is the form of fire that tries to kill our divine qualities and the discriminating ability. The kingdom is now in the hand of demonic forces and the divine forces took resort to the spiritual practice in the body forest to gain strength for a future spiritual war to regain the lost paradise. But there were always dangers. Here they were confronted with the thirst. The thirst of mother Kuntī is the shortage of the life-force within our body and this leads to the thirst of all Pāṇḍava brothers. One can conquer a thirst but in a righteous manner. Here in this story the thirst is not a thirst for worldly enjoyment but for access to the Cosmic Life-force. Water is the Life-force guarded by the King of Righteousness, the God Dharma. If we do not follow the righteousness than the judicial aspect of the King of Righteousness is the death. It was Bhīma who was able to locate the water source. Bhīma was the son of the Air-god. Bhīma is *prāṇavāyu*, the breath. This can find the Inner Life-force. We have to do a right breath practice, *prāṇakarma*, for that. That is the Kriyā practice. Sahadeva is the earth element within, the sense of smell and is based at Mūlādhāra. Nakula is the water element, the sense of taste and is based at Svādhiṣṭhāna. These two are sons of two Aśvinīkumāras, and the two Aśvinīkumāras are physicians of gods. They are twin-born from a celestial nymph named Aśvinī from the Sun-god. So they are related to the physical and the vital manifestations at physical level. Hence the sphere of Sahadeva is the food sheath, *annamaya kośa*, and the sphere of Nakula is the vital sheath, *prāṇamaya kośa*. Arjuna is the son of Indra; this is the righteous mind. Arjuna is the fire element within, the sense of vision and is based at Maṇipūra. Bhīma is the air element,

the sense of touch and is based at Anāhata. Yudhiṣṭhira is the ether element, the sense of sound and is based at Viśuddha. These all can be helpful in spiritual practice. But one, who can confront the death successfully, will gain access to the immortality in the form of the Cosmic Life-force.

One after other the four brothers failed to confront the Yakṣa, the God of Death. The first spiritual practitioner Sahadeva in the form of noble faith, *śraddhā*, and cleanliness, *śauca*, can only give us the foundation. Sahadeva breath is cleansing breath. Nābhikriya, Kapālabhātū, Bhastrikā, Nāḍi Śodhana, Śītalī, Sītkarī, and Sadanta breath techniques come under the Sahadeva breath. The second spiritual practitioner Nakula in the form of vigor, *vīrya*, or continuity in spiritual practice with force and contentment, *santoṣa*, strengthens the foundation. Nakula breath is the easy breath, *sukhapūrvaka*. The Anuloma Viloma, Bhrāmārī and first step of Haṁsa breath are the Nakula breath. The third spiritual practitioner within us is our righteous mind and that is Arjuna, a major warrior in this field in the form of austerity, *tapah*, and repeated recollection in the spiritual practice, *smṛti*, travels a long journey along with the fourth brother Bhīma. Arjuna is the bowman. He pulls the string of the bow up to the ear and throws arrow to a long distance hitting the target. Arjuna breath is the long and deep breath, thin but sharp creating heat, *tāpa*, in the body. The *ujjāyī*, *haṁsa*, and the *Īśvaraṣṛaṇidhāna Kriyā* or the First Kriyā proper breaths are Arjuna breath. This increases *rajas* to subdue the *tamas*. This paves ground for higher spiritual practice. This breath can pierce the Knot of Brahmā. The fourth spiritual practitioner Bhīma in the forms of further subtle vital breath, this is our inner reading, i.e., the self-study, *svādhyaiah*, and practice of concentration, *saṁādhi*. The Second Kriyā breath, *Ṭhokar Kriyā*, and the Third Kriyā breath are the Bhīma breath, and this has the hammering effect on the energy centers in the body. The *haṁsabreath* and the subtle breath, felt at each *cakra* as vibrations, are also Bhīma breaths. This can pierce the Knot of Viṣṇu. Bhīma almost takes us to the destination but fails to confront death till we are not established in the discriminative knowledge or *prañā*. The crown prince Yudhiṣṭhira in the form of devotion and knowing the Lord within, *īśvaraṣṛaṇidhāna*, and the discriminative knowledge or *prañā* confronts the death, makes the brothers alive and gets access to the Cosmic Life-force. Yudhiṣṭhira is Viśuddha, the pure *praṇa*. He was an expert in using a spear, *kuntaḥ*. Fourth Kriyā breath is the Yudhiṣṭhira breath. That is the very subtle life-force, the inner breath ascending in a form of sparkling electric current inside the Suṣumnā to hit the Ājñā *cakra* without the outer breath techniques and this pierces the Knot of Rudra.

However, the most important aspect of the Yakṣapraṇa is the sublime eternity of our Innermost Being. Why should we use to believe that “I am not going to die” when everywhere and everyday we see the death? Since this belief is an illusion then what is the real substratum at the base of this illusion? This is because we are an Immortal Principle, and that is the pure *praṇa*, *viśuddha praṇa*. No

power in this creation and/or beyond the creation can kill the Principle named Self.

In another story, while the Pāṇḍavas were ascending to the heaven, first to fall down was the Queen Draupadī who was married to the five brothers. She is the “I sense,” *jīva bhāva*. Then one after other brothers from Sahadeva onwards fell down. Earth, water, fire and air elements are thrown away. All our characters, qualities of the sense-organs, the mind, the intellect, the ego and the subconscious are thrown away. Only the ether element containing the pure and subtlest *prāṇa* ascended. Our Prāṇa has not met the death yet.

Correct Answer on Identity: Of course we are an Immortal Principle but a material body perishes. With our wrong identity with the body-mind complex we are going to meet the death again and again. One has to enquire in his life, “Who am I? Where from I came? Where do I go?” Till we have not acquired the correct answer we are going to die again and again. After each life we shall face this question. Whether it is the God of Death, the Nature, the God or any other power regulating the rules of the creation that pose a question on our identity is sitting within us. Since that Principle is one with us it is our self-questioning, our wrong “I sense” being tested by our true Self for removal of the ignorance. If we are not able to give the correct answers, we shall be subjected to this mundane world to meet the death again. Our answers depend on our total evolution, our education and our impressions in the mind stuff till the end of this life. If our answers are: “I am owner of a corporate house,” “I am a minister,” “I am a social reformer,” “I am a big monk with many followers,” “I am a scientist,” “I am an artist,” “I am father or mother of so and so,” “I am husband or wife of so and so,” “I am son or daughter of so and so,” “I am Brahmin, warrior or businessmen,” “I am Hindu, Muslim or Christian,” “I am Indian, Chinese or American;” then with such an answer with obsession to any particular kind we shall have to continue rounds after rounds for our liberation till we are evolved with a correct answer. We need an understanding of all beings as the Self, *sarvātma bodha*. That is the Knowledge. Once we have the Knowledge that “I am the Self of all, a continuous entity in the form of the pure life-force, *visuddha prāṇa*, the Pure Existence, Infinite Consciousness and Bliss,” then the God of Death will salute us and address us as “My Lord.” Ofcourse from us, there would be no separate entity as the God of Death. The teachings of Lord Death to Naciketā states,

*yadeveha tadamūrta yadamūrta tadanviha,
mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyumāṇnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati. (Ka. U, 2.1.10)*

That indeed is here, *yat eva iha*, that is there as unmanifest; *tat amūrta*, that, *tat*, which is there as unmanifest, *yat amūrta*, is here, *anu iha*. He, *sa*, attains, *āṇnoti*, death after death, *mṛtyoḥ mṛtyum*, one who, *ya*, sees, *paśyati*, the multiplicities, *nāneva*, here, *iha*.

Again the Death teaches: “*manasaivedamāptavyam neha nānāsti kimcana* etc., that is to be known through the mind only, there is no multiplicity here. One, who sees differences here, goes from death to death.” (*Ka. U.*, 2.1.11.) Being ignorant about the true identity and establishing the wrong identity with the body-mind complex we see the differences, and we see the multiplicity. But in actuality in this manifested world, what is *mūrta* or manifested here as bodies and mind etc., the same principle is there in subtle and causal worlds as not being manifested, *na mūrta* or *amūrta*. That is the pure Prāṇa, a mass of constant uninterrupted consciousness. We have to know that through our mind, by performing austerities, control of the sense organs and control of the mind so as to develop the discriminating intellect up to state of the Knowledge, *prajñā*. The correct answer shall come only if we win over the mind, win over the desires, cravings and aversions, and know the Principle. Or else we have to face cycles of birth and death again and again. This Knowledge has to be acquired here during in this body as it is stated: “*iha cedvedīdatha satyamasti* etc., if known here then there is truth, if not known here then there is great destruction. The wise ones having realized That in all beings detaching away from this world become immortal. (*Ke.U.*, 2.5.) If not then one has to travel from birth after birth only to experience death after death.

Death is Changing Our Worn-out Cloths: In *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, death is described as simply changing the cloths for a newer one and that is often cited.

*vāsāmsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya
navāni grhṇāti naro'parāṇi,
tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇā-
nyanyāni samyāti navāni dehī.* (Ś. Bg., 2.22)

As, *yathā*, worn-out, *jīrṇāni*, cloths, *vāsāmsi*, are rejected, *vihāya*, and other, *aparāṇi*, new ones, *navāni*, are taken up, *grhṇāti*, by a man, *naro*, like that, *tathā*, rejecting, *vihāya*, the worn-out, *jīrṇāni*, bodies, *śarīrāṇi*, the embodied self, *dehī*, accepts, *samyāti*, the other, *anyāni*, new ones, *navāni*.

The death what we see is only the death of the physical body. Even the material basis of the physical or gross body, i.e., the gross elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether do not meet to death with the death of the gross body. Only the existing form made out of these is dismantled since that is worn-out and not in a position to house the interior self any more. We have already discussed the three bodies, the five sheaths and the five vital airs. It is a body constituted of seven body elements, *sapta dhātu*, forming different limbs and appendages to which the feelings of “I” and “mine” is expressed due to the ignorance. This gross body is like a house where the individual stays and interacts with the world. The death is only dismantling the old house. Since this body also known as the Food Sheath is made from the five gross elements, a person with a dull intellect can only think

this material body as the Self. But the embodied being inside the gross body is also not the true Self. This embodied being is the subtle body. In short we can say the subtle body is principally constituted of four internal organs, *antahkaraṇa catuṣṭaya*, viz., mind, intellect, ego, and subconscious. This along with the causal body, the Prāṇa, changes the house to remain in a new house. When the gross body is unable to withhold the life sustaining vital breaths, then the death approaches it. Then all the subtle organs enter into the mind, they are absorbed in the mind, and the mind along with all the thoughts and impressions enter into the chief vital force, *prāṇa*. Now this *prāṇa* carrying the impressions of mind in association with the ascending *prāṇa*, *udāna*, leaves the body and takes it for a rebirth as per the previous actions. It was stated. "whatever he has in his mind with those he enters into *prāṇa*, *prāṇa* in association with *udāna* leads the individual self to the desired world." (*Pr. U*, 3.9.) So the death is certainly not an end nor is our life an uncertain journey. Death is a new beginning again to complete the journey of life. This is to complete our evolution to our true identity.

BIOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY OF DEATH

From the above discussions we arrive at conclusions that the death that we encounter is only dismantling our old house. The subtle body takes a new body according to the past actions and the impressions therein. This is only to complete our journey. So immortality is impossible for an ego bound entity finding multiplicity and differences. Ego itself is the ignorance; it is darkness and darkness cannot withstand light. It has to meet a death. But can it be possible without the death of a physical body to evolve into a divine being and still remain with a physical body? The very question seems childish since after realizing everything and everybeing as the Self and this Self is a continuous entity, then where is a need for sustaining a physical body. Still then we can discuss this, and for this we have to analyze the clinical view of death and correlate it with the spiritual viewpoint.

Biology of Death: The normal clinical death is cessation of brain activity, followed by stoppage of respiration and heartbeat. Then there is death of organs and cells, which can survive for a small period after the stoppage of heartbeat depending upon the left out life-force lodged in them. Then that is even extinguished finally leading to the decomposition of the organs. Before that from birth to death there are thousands of deaths and births of the cells inside our body. Somatic cells divide by a process of mitosis to produce new cells for the growth and repair. Germinal cells divide by a process of meiosis to produce sperms and ova for reproduction of the species. Cells die inside our body due to aging, infections, mechanical damage, external and internal toxins. The enucleated blood cells called RBCs in our body have a very short span of life but our nerve cells exist from birth to death. But as a society of cells, body exists relatively longer with changes be it growth, decay or diseases.

But how a living body comprising of billions and billions of cells and hundreds of organs coordinate and work? Each cell can be like that of an individual organism and we can say a body is a society of cells coordinating with each other to work as an integral unit. We explain the coordination by explaining the activities of the nervous system and the endocrine system. Science supports the physiologic energy in the form of chemical and electromagnetic coordination. Respiratory, circulatory and digestive systems are engaged in renewal and distribution of energy in the form of food and oxygen. Excretory system removes the toxins to keep the body environment clean for sustenance. Body immune system provides immunity to save the body from external toxins and infections. But still then there is disease, old age and the death.

For the continuity of a particular species, the nature has developed the physiology of reproduction. This is the immortality of a race. Even then some species are already extinct due to different factors, viz., scarcity of food, natural calamities, difficulty in adaptation to unfavorable conditions or problems facing from survival competitions, etc. However most species continue to survive and evolve. This continuation of a species can be said as a relative immortality but individual immortality is not there. There are broadly two modes of reproduction, one is asexual and other is sexual. In lower organisms asexual reproduction is carried on in the form of binary fission, budding and sporulation, etc., and we can say this is “no death” of the organism since the same organism with same genetical make up is being multiplied and continues to live. Ofcourse mutations can occur in them but generally this is a stagnation of evolution of life. So the nature developed sexual reproduction to give varieties of species and evolution of life leading to the development of intellect in case of humans. Depending upon the genetic make up that guides the physiological processes, an average lifespan and a reproductive age for a species is found. A dog lives for an average life of twelve years and cattle lives for an average life of twenty years. Normally the life span of a species is related to the reproductive cycle and after the period of reproductive age the old age descends leading to death. However, humans can live longer and human age is not so much linked with the reproductive age like those of other animals. However, the sex steroid and cortico-steroid hormones that are related to growth and vigor in initial years of their secretions at adolescence become inhibitory and retarding in later years, forming epiphysial cartilages to retard the growth of long bones, thickening of bones and developing obesity etc. and then these hormones are triggered off from the body system by the genetic make up of the body. Then there is disorder in calcium metabolism leading to decalcification and retardation in height etc. and reduction in body size are found with the old age.

The biological explanation of natural body death is due to aging and this is an inner disharmony due to the biochemical changes within our body environment that creates imbalances in keeping the cohesion of the body organs to hold the

physiologic life energy in a working order. The imbalances are due to over oxidation and production of metabolic toxins within our body. Scientists are in process of finding the ageing materials and the anti-oxidative materials like vitamin E, beta-carotene, etc. that can inhibit the aging process. Though meagre but they met with some amount of success. This aging process is chiefly gene based and in accordance with growing age there occurs more genetic errors and production of endotoxins in body, which when culminate to a peak point, then there is no return leading to the death. Depending upon the genetic make up and physiological processes an average lifespan for a species is found, and after a particular age there is decrease in vigor, decrease in performance of vital organs and decrease in mental ability. Even the development processes from crawling, walking, speaking of an infant, adolescence and youth age, secretion of growth, metabolic and sexual hormones all are based on the genetic programing. Due to aging normal process of cell division slows down, so the body has to continue with old and diseased cells. Production of T-cell lymphocytes slows down and that weakens the immune system leading to infectious diseases and exotoxins. Aging interferes with *apoptosis* or “cell death” thereby renewal of the tissues and organs with young cells are hampered. In case of diseases like cancers etc. there are sudden genetic disorders leading to uncontrolled multiplication of cells. All these processes are gene based. Specific genetic disorders speed up in certain diseases like Hutchinson-Gilford, Werner’s and Down Syndrome, etc. So it is believed that if we can manipulate the genetic material in our favor we can win over the aging and death. Some extreme examples are formation of amyloid in Alzheimer’s disease that cause early death of brain cells, and the toxins produced as by products of nerve transmissions cause the death of nerve cells in Parkinson’s disease. However, the environmental factors and the life-style also play a role. Smoking, addictions to drugs and alcohols, insufficient rest, living in stress conditions, negative outlook leading to depressions, etc., give rise to body toxins that accelerate the aging process and impairment of body functions. There may be infections and poisoning. Whatever it may be diseases and/or aging are disharmony within the body environment giving rise to internal toxins, loosing coordination and cohesion and thereby physiological functions could not be carried out leading to stoppage of their functioning. Diseases can be due to stress conditions following impairment of the vital functions and the vital organs. We have already discussed about the stress conditions and have seen that this is the result of our imbalanced mind (*vide supra*, “Diseases or *vyādhi*,” p. 167). Now from the above it is understood that the aging and death are more a genetic one, so scientists prefer a genetic manipulation approach to solve the problem of aging and death. Moreover, the scientists believe that genetic manipulation can also favor adaptation to stress conditions though intervention at the level of environmental and lifestyle factors are emphasized. Since at present there is no breakthrough in genetic intervention to counter aging effectively, the present

day approach to aging is based on antioxidants like vitamin E, quality of health care, changing lifestyles to avoid smoking and drugs, exercise, rest and coping to stress situations.

Setback to the Concept of Supremacy of Genes: The concept of the life-force in clinical sciences is different from that of spiritual sciences. In clinical sciences where it is just a physiologic energy, for spiritual science it is physiologic energy and the consciousness including knowledge and will power. Death from a scientific viewpoint is gene based and this declares the supremacy of genetic material DNA. The concept of genetic inheritance of characters fast developed due to the rediscovery of the Work of Mendel in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Science had also been able to explain that the proteins are the major life stuff and was in a way to find to the process of protein synthesis in body. The discovery of the genetic material DNA by Watson and Crick (*Nature* 171, 737–38) in the year 1953, and subsequent development of the Central Dogma Theory in biological science explaining that proteins that are the prime life materials are created from the information stored in the Genetic material DNA. The flow of information is from DNA to RNA to Protein, and the biochemical process of Cellular Protein Synthesis was explained in details. As a student in biology in his pre-monastic life the present author believed in the supremacy of DNA and the Central Dogma Theory as all biologists do. The belief developed in the biological world that if we could map the entire human genome and then manipulate according to our own needs, then we could solve all the problems of life, be it aging, death, diseases, body characters, behaviors and even intellect. Simultaneously genetic engineering technology was also developed to manipulate the genetic material DNA.

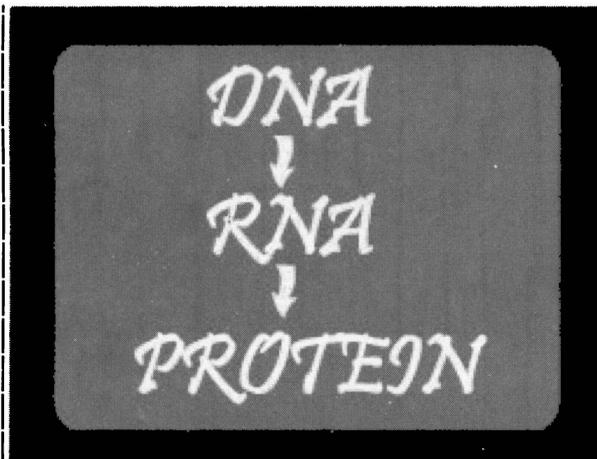


Fig. 4.21. The Central Dogma Theory.

Cloned animals are produced and success claimed in artificial life. According to the Central Dogma Principle, normal belief is that the blue print of one protein or one polypeptide chain of a protein is encoded in one gene, which is the part of a DNA material. So we need at least one gene to produce one protein. In our body we have more than 1,00,000 proteins for which there must be same number of genes. Moreover we need around 20,000 regulatory genes to organize the activities of protein encoding genes. The expectations of scientists are that they would encounter at least 1,20,000 genes in a human genome but to their surprise in the year 2003, fifty years after the discovery of the genomic material, they found that human genome constitutes around 25,000 genes (Pearson in *Nature* 423 (2003): 576; Pennisi in *Science* 300 (2003): 1484; idem, 301 (2003): 1040–41). Now that around 95,000 genes are missing this gives new challenges to biological scientists. Analysis of these studies gives support to epigenetic researches that give emphasis on environmental influences, nutrition, stress and emotions that can modify the genomic information. The latest trend is developing in favor of primacy of “The Belief System” that overpowers the biology of genes (B.H. Lipton, *The Biology of Belief*, Mountain of Love/Elite Books, 2005). So now at least the western scientists have started thinking in the lines of supremacy of mind over the matter that the Vedas and Upaniṣads declared long back in human history and even Lord Buddha emphasized on this in later years of the Vedic era. But they are yet to think about the concept of Prāṇa in the lines of Upaniṣadic teachings, which holds key to the belief system. This may so happen that the biological sciences will be dragged into the arena of spiritual science as the physics was dragged into the sciences of energy from that of matter of Newtonian concept with the development of Einstein’s theory and quantum physics.

Spirituality of Longevity, Death and Samādhi: Science supports physiologic energy in the form of chemical and electromagnetic coordination, and it also admits mind. But yogic view of the principle named Prāṇa acting in a body is much broader than the scientific view of physiologic life energy. Life ceases when the Life-force, *prāṇa*, withdraws. This ascending *prāṇa* named *udāna vāyu* ascends along with the mind, the mind being merged to it (*see supra*, “Death is Changing Our Worn-out Cloths,” p. 235; “Gross Body,” p. 179; “Subtle Body or Astral Body,” p. 179; “Correlating Three Bodies, Five-Sheaths and *Prāṇa*,” p. 186; “Udāna,” p. 192). Yogis learn to stop breathing and the heartbeat and again to resume them. But this suspension of heartbeat and breathing do not lead to a death, and the body cells and organs do not die. Only they are in a suspended animation, activities of organs are reduced. Here the cellular and organic living is carried out with minimum life-energy whereas the life-energy concentrates in the brain more as a form of consciousness. Till the *prāṇa* has not ascended the body there is no death even if the organs are not working, even if there is no breathing and no heartbeat. Lower animals like fishes, amphibians and reptiles

undergoing *aestivation* and *hibernation* also live with minimum life-energy. This has been developed by the nature in them as a physiological conditioning to overcome extreme hot and cold climates where the normal process of life is not possible. But yogic process of suspending the vital activities in *samādhi* is breath based and the subtle breath, *prāna*, contains the will within it. This is for the purpose of silencing the activities of mind. Here no such external conditioning like cocoon formation, etc., is found to stop internal physiologic activities as in case of aestivation or hibernation, but internal physiological processes are reduced. Most important aspect is the conversion of vital energy engaged in physiologic activities into consciousness that is a pure form of *prāna*. This is no way comparable with aestivation and hibernation of *poikilothermic* or cold-blooded animals whereas *homoeothermic* animals like mammals and birds require a definite body temperature for their lives. Human beings being highest evolved mammalian species; the nature does not support here a suspended animation like that of aestivating and hibernating species. In case of *samādhi*, the suspended animation of body organs is only a conversion of vital resources into conscious vital elements and thereby gaining access to the Cosmic Consciousness.

The Kriyā-yoga techniques teach us to be aware of the subtle life-energy, *prāna*, hiding behind and supporting our material body. Yogis over the ages explored this life-force, *prāna*, to overcome decay and death, to make a new rejuvenated body, *kāyākalpa*. But this was neither due to attachment to the physical body nor for the purpose of prolonging the kingdom of ego. In Purāṇic history we find many demons performing strong austerities to receive a boon from Lord Brahmā or from Mahādeva to become immortal. But this immortality was related to immortality of the physical body to rule over the others for satisfaction of their giant ego. Since this was set to disturb the balance in cosmic life their attempts were foiled down though they may be resorting to same yogic techniques the yogis follow. But the purpose of yogis for a rejuvenated body, long life and even aspiring for “death at will,” *icchāmṛtyu*, was for the purpose of higher spiritual pursuit attempting to the realization of Immortal Principle named the Self in this life since death might cause a pause in their lives’ journey. In some cases even after their own realization they have to stay in the gross body for *lokasaṅgraha*, i.e., for the benefit of the society trying to tilt the balance towards the divine forces from the side of the demonic forces. After their purpose is solved though they could have prolonged their life within the gross body but they prefer to leave that mask.

The technique of prolonging the life is based on the life-force, *prāna śakti*. The more and more we have access to our subtle life-force we can gain more mastery. Our breath leads us to our subtle *prāna*. So a breathing technique is of utmost importance here. In yogic scriptures it was said,

*ṣaṣṭatāni divārātrau sahasrāṅyekaviṁśatiḥ,
etatsaṅkhyānvitam mantram jīvo jāpati sarvadā.* (YCU, 32; GS, 1.42)

In a day and night, *divārātrau*, twenty-one thousands, *sahasrāṅyekaviṁśatiḥ*, and six hundreds, *ṣaṣṭatāni*, this much number, *etatsaṅkhyānvitam*, of mantra, *mantram*, a human being, *jīvo*, always, *sarvadā*, repeats, *jāpati*.

Here the mantra is *hamsaḥ*, the inhalation is *saḥ* and exhalation is *ham*. So in twenty-four hour's nature has fixed 21,600 breaths. This comes with an average of fifteen breaths per minute. This also agrees with clinical sciences, clinical sciences say about forty breaths per minute for new borne, about eighteen breaths per minute for average persons, and about fifteen breaths per minute for athletes and persons with good health. More breaths exceed this count and results in a shorter life. A dog breathes quickly and has a shorter life span. An elephant breathes less but long and deep and has a longer lifespan. Long and deep breath makes elephant very strong. Quick breaths show restlessness. In our every disposition of mind, the frequency of breath changes. This increases in anger, fear, nervousness, sexual desires, greed, etc. Since these leads to stress conditions, thereby changing internal body environment in the form of release of internal toxins and suppression of immunity, which lead to allowing more external toxins, and hence accelerating the aging process and impairment of organs. These also have geno-toxic effects thereby creating more genetic errors and again fastening the aging process. On the other hand, less number of breaths than this number increases life span since this is related to mental concentration and stress free conditions of mind. The breath quiets the mind. But body must get sufficient oxygen and carbon dioxide must be removed, otherwise the physiologic environment would tilt acidic giving rise to internal toxins. For this yogic breath is long and deep. This is breath economy, less number of breath but more oxygen. A *kriyā* breath for a beginner is around twenty seconds, ten seconds for inhalation, ten seconds for exhalation and there is no retention of breath. In this way there is only three breaths per minute. This breath is sharp and thin like a cobra breath. We see a cobra around the neck of the greatest yogi Lord Śiva. If we breathe like a pig, donkey or monkey, we will develop lethargy, sluggishness or restlessness. A crocodile also breathes less and has a greater concentration, and it remains like dead. If we resort to that type of breath then we would certainly develop concentration but that is not our purpose. Here by holding the breath we increase carbon dioxide and this would manifest in intolerance, body physiologic environment will also become toxic. For crocodiles this is not a problem since these are cold-blooded animals. A leopard can follow a prey silently holding its breath. A cat can watch a mouse hole holding his breath. These are quick breathing animals but can hold breath and concentrate. We do not need such type of concentration. The Kriyā-yoga does not teach holding the breath forcefully. When the physiologic environment of our body by regular

long and deep breath practice come to a state of automatic holding of breath then breath and heart beat would stop automatically. This is automatic suspension of breath, *kevala kumbhaka*. So in the Kriyā-yoga one does not find closing the nose by fingers to hold the breath. The *kevala kumbhaka* leads to the transcendental state, *parāvasthā* or *samādhi*. This is “no thought” state. Practice of such states rejuvenates both the body and the mind, and gives access to abundant life-force. One overcomes the stress effects completely and most probably this affects the genomic material in a positive manner, which needs scientific study. This results also in long and healthy physical body though that is not the spiritual purpose.

For a westerner unacquainted with yoga principles (nowadays many westerners are being acquainted) and for a materialistic scientific mind it may always be difficult to understand and believe that how a body can function and life be sustained without breath and heartbeat. But still then thousands of Indian yogis both monks and householders, Kriyāvāns, Kashmiri Śaīvas, lineages of siddhas, Theravāda Buddhists, Tibetan Lamas, Tāntrikas of Samayācāra System (who believe in internal practices the life-force and meditation on seed sounds), and in present day even hundreds of western yoga practitioners practice this. A common saying among the westerners about these uncommon states and different miracle like happenings is that these are “Indian Rope Tricks,” throwing a rope into the air and then climbing it. But there exists nothing called “Indian Rope Trick” in yoga. Our ignorance of understanding the subtle principles of life energy, *prāṇa śakti*, appears as miracles to us. However, there exist many magical tricks or Indian rope tricks or even western rope tricks to divert the attention to somewhere else and then manipulate certain things appearing impossible, but nowadays these magics are understood and have become a source of entertainment. But the states of elevated spiritual practices should not be confused with magic. In the opinion of the present author an average human should always be discouraged to be charmed by a miracle since he could not distinguish between a miracle and a magic, rather one should be advised to concentrate more on the righteous way of living. However, the state of *samādhi* teaches us that the life-force, *prāṇa-śakti*, is a continuous entity. The Life always continues. The Life has not met the death yet. Death is only a nature of the body.

Another wrong concept developed by the materialistic mind is that “*samādhi* is a process of suicide.” But in actuality this is a “process of suicide of the ignorance.” Due to “ego sense” we are attached to the body-mind complex. The “Vast I Consciousness” is reduced to a “narrow I concept” clinging to one body-mind which is just a small wave in a vast Ocean of Prāṇa. Then there is development of cravings only to enjoy sufferings. If eradication of this ignorance or wrong concept of mind and to merge in the vast Ocean of Bliss is a suicide, then everyone should resort to such a process of suicide. Such a question had also arisen in the mind of Maitreyī. Sage Yājñavalkya taught Maitreyī. “As salt dissolves in water

and dissolved salt cannot be taken back from the water and from wherever one takes the water, the water is salty, similarly all this is the Great Element, a Mass of Consciousness that is Infinite and Unfathomable. Everything is created from this and merges in this. After being freed from the sense of body and mind, a being does not retain any special definition, i.e., name and form.” (*Br. U*, 2.4.12.). This deluded Maitreyī, she was thinking about the loss of separate existence and she said, “Oh Lord, by saying that after the departure, this is devoid of any definition, you are putting me into delusion.” (*Ibid.*, 2.4.13.) Sage Yājñavalkya eradicated her delusion, “When there is appearance of duality then other smells another, other sees another, other greets another, other thinks another, other knows another. But for whom everything has become the Self, what should one smell and through whom, what should one see and through whom, what should one hear and through whom, whom should one greet and by whom, what should one think and by whom, what should one know?” (*Ibid.*, 2.4.14.) *Samādhi* is removal of the ignorance, eradication of wrong perception of duality, and merging in the Ocean of Consciousness.

A Rare Example of Life: Very recently a rare example of life came to the notice of Scientists. A yogi named Śrī Prahāda Jānī known as Mātājī (due to his woman like dressing and devotion to Divine Mother) was admitted to a defence hospital in Ahmedabad on 28 April 2010 and was observed by a group of thirty defence scientists and doctors for fifteen days. He is eighty-two years old and has not taken any food or water since last sixty-five years. He survives only on meditation. He says he received this boon from a goddess in his childhood while wandering in forests. He was also admitted in the same hospital for observance in 2003. This time he was observed with close circuit cameras and the scientists performing a number of tests on him. He was given measured water to wash his mouth and was noticed that he did not swallow any. How he is surviving even without water? No scientific clue is yet available. He does not pass any urine or stool. He is fit like a soldier. It was observed that urine is formed in his urinary bladder and then after a period vanishes. His brain is biologically like that of a young man of twenty-five. He only lives on air. Newspapers, electronic media, e-magazines all over the world carried the news. Now no one said yet, another “Indian Rope Trick.” Those who have read about the fasting yoginī in *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogānanda described in chapter 46 knew about a woman saint named Giribālā to whom Paramahansa Yogānanda and his American disciples met in 1935. She had not taken food for more than fifty years by that time, and she learned the technique from an unknown saint on the bank of sacred Ganges. She was surviving with meditation, only on air and sunlight. She stated that this state was the result of a breathing technique with a mantra. She had also gone through stringent tests three times to find the authenticity of her state. How life is possible without food and water. For that one has to understand the Principle

named Prāṇa. Sage Patañjali (*Yogasūtras*, chap. 3, *sūtra* 30) described about such an achievement, *kaṅṭhakūpe kṣutpīpāsānivṛtīh* (by practicing *saṁyama*, i.e., concentration, meditation and *samādhi*) on the well of the throat, hunger and thirst can be subdued. This seems to be a technique of breathing hitting at throat and followed by subtle breath techniques at the cervical center along with sound waves, but not known exactly what it is. Intellectuals make different interpretation of the *sūtra*. For some hunger and thirst represent desires. But a *sūtra* uses a word very miserly, for desire this would certainly not use two words, hunger and thirst. Moreover, the entire treatise teaches winning over desires, this in the beginning dealt with the inhibitions of modifications of mind, *citta vṛtti*, and then overcoming ignorance, *avidyā*, I sense, *asmīā*, cravings, *rāga*, aversions, *dveṣa*, and inherent involvement, *abhiniveśa*. So here in the aforesaid *sūtra*, this is simply talking about a result of a particular type of meditation that wins over hunger and thirst. In all ages we find living examples though such examples are very rare. Are these examples are not the cases of conquering the death in this gross body? But the techniques for such a state demand certain preconditions. Those are observances of righteousness including truthfulness and abstinence, noble faith and surrendering ego to the Cosmic Self.

The Death is a Necessity: Our earth known as the world of death, *mṛtyu-loka*, so the issue of death cannot be settled here. Since this world itself is mortal, immortality is a misnomer here. However a relative immortality in the form of prolonged life may be possible depending upon our access to the subtle Prāṇa. This depends upon how much adaptability, flexibility or plasticity we garner in our internal organ mind or in other words how much less egoistic we become by accessing and merging our mind again and again in the subtle Prāṇa. The more and more we become rich in breath, we shall have more access to the subtle life energy and overcome ego problems, stress effects, diseases and short life. But the death is also a necessity here. The death is only a temporary rest in the journey of our inner being for perfection. Death is a longer sleep. Just think if your tired body after a day's work and your tired mind with all problems and worries, then if you do not get a sleep at the night, how is your next day? If such a situation continues for four or five days then what will be your state? As sleep refreshes us from the events of a day, the death refreshes us from the events of a life. Death is a part of the Nature or Unmanifest, *avyakta*, similar to sleep. In deep sleep, the mind merges in Prāṇa the Unmanifest; similarly our mind along with impressions enters the *prāṇa* and then *udāna prāṇa* ascends causing the death of the body. During the period of death we remain in Prāṇa, and that means we are in life only after shedding our outer shields. So death is a temporary release from the sufferings of life to take rest in Mother Nature. Mother Nature cares so much for us; otherwise this world would have been filled with psychic patients. As sleep is divided into states of dream and deep sleep, the period after

death to next birth is also has states of dream and deep sleep. Here the dreaming world is the subtle world, *sūkṣma jagat*, whereas the deep sleep world is the causal world, *kāraṇa jagat*. In the subtle world we can still have pleasures and sufferings in the form of subtle vibrations but the causal world is a state of joy. In the causal world we attain to our Own Form but under the influence of *tamas*. All the gods and different celestial beings belong to a kind of subtle world and they enjoy a state of joy according to the noble deeds they performed and their stay in this world is a longer one. They act on the faculty they rule from that plane. The World of Manes is also a subtle world relatively shorter than the World of Gods. The gods and manes have to return to the world of humans for austerities and to complete their journey to the Knowledge. There are lower levels of subtle worlds to which most of the beings visit after the death and have to enjoy sufferings in this world due to their unwholesome actions and unfulfilled desires. Then they have to enter into the causal world before a rebirth. Here in the causal world they forget everything and attain a state of bliss under influence of *tamas* and then get a birth according to past actions and impressions therein. Siddhas also remain in both subtle and causal worlds, a Siddha in a subtle world is called a *videha yogī* or a yogi without a body and in a causal world is called a *prakṛtilaya yogī* or a yogi merged in the Nature. They wait there for a suitable birth to attain the final Knowledge. Now they need not have to go through all these spiritual efforts after birth, as one normal person has to go through, for them *samādhi* is automatic, *bhavaḥpratyayaḥ* (Ygs., 1.19). These Siddhas with their subtle or causal bodies can act, help or guide the seekers from that plane.

Requisites for the Land of Immortality: We are an Immortal Principle and that is the reason we have a quest for immortality. To free the indwelling self from the ego bound bondage or the ignorance is immortality. This needs some requisites, some preparedness to land in the land of immortality. That requisite is to become a Naciketā. Naciketā is *naciketas* or fire. This is our consciousness in association with inner fire in the form of *prāṇa*, and this is the indwelling self in quest of the Knowledge. Naciketā is the son of Vājaśravasa who in turn is the son of Vājaśravā. Food is *vājam* and fame is called *śravaḥ*. So the fame of food is Vājaśravā, and his son Vājaśravasa is none but the Food Sheath or the body-self. Vājaśravasa is the ego bound consciousness strongly identifying itself with the body as the self with an uncompromising desire for name and fame. Since this Naciketā has taken birth inside this house of ego bound consciousness, this is the son of Vājaśravasa. But this Vājaśravasa cannot make him captive. The indwelling self itself is divine in nature and its natural tendency is to attain the divinity. This process of attaining divinity or immortality is the spiritual practice. So in pursuit of the Knowledge he would visit to the door of Death and wait there. Then Death would appear as a giver of boons. God of Death, *Yama*, is same as God of Righteousness, *Dhrama*. Visiting the God of Death is performance of righteousness,

yama and observing the spiritual observances, *niyama*. A *niyama* is a *yama* exhausting itself in its total fulfillment. These follow other spiritual practices like postures, *āsana*, breathing techniques, *prāṇāyāma*, withdrawal of senses from sense objects, *pratyāhāra*, concentration, *dhāraṇā*, meditation, *dhyaṇa*, and *samādhi*. The last three *dhāraṇā*, *dhyaṇa*, and *samādhi* constitute waiting at the door of Death for three nights. Then the God of Death appears being apologetic since a Brahmin guest like that of a fire waited for three nights without food. Brahmin and fire represents the characters of Naciketā, the spiritual practitioner. Brahmin is the knower of the Brahman but here the term is used for a spiritual practitioner in quest of the Knowledge and the fire represents resorting to austerities in the form of breath or prāṇic techniques, techniques of life-force. Again the Brahmin and the fire are same since the power of consciousness and the activating power of the God is one. Three nights waiting without food means attaining a state of “no desire” or “not receiving any sense objects through the sense doors and the mind.” To such a spiritual practitioner in quest of the Knowledge and practicing prāṇic techniques who is ready to shed the wrong identity of self as the body, before him Death cannot appear with his terrifying image. His terrifying image is for those who find themselves as bodies. Now Death promises three boons. The first boon asked and received by Naciketā is a calm mind free from anxiety and anger for his father and that his father should recognize him. This is a boon for the nobility of the mind principle forever. We discussed that Vājaśravasa is the mind identifying itself with the body and with a desire for name and fame and such a mind is subjected to deflections in the form of anxieties and anger, etc. The spiritual quest of mind named Naciketā has taken birth inside this mind and now it wants the mind principle in totality to be free from such volitions and to recognize Naciketā. Recognizing Naciketā means accepting the Thirst for the Knowledge within us in totality without any doubt. Then comes the second boon. To learn about the heavenly fire that leads to the heaven where there is no fear of old age, hunger, thirst or sorrow. Death teaches, know it to be established in the cave, *viddhi tvametam nihitam guhāyam* (*Ka. U.*, 1.1.14), located in the cave of the intellect of the knowledgeable persons. That fire is the Prāṇa Hiraṇyagarbha; “*yā prāṇena sambhavatyaditirdevatāmāyī* etc., one who is Aditi, who comprises of all gods is manifested as the Prāṇa Hiraṇyagarbha and this has entered into the cave (the cave of intellect) and stays there and has manifested with the elements.” (*Ibid.*, 2.1.7.) That cave of intellect corresponds to the third ventricle of the human brain in our gross body. Knowing that fire one has access to the heaven through the northern route, *devayāna mārga*. Since that is a state of relative immortality, even though that is a state of joy without hunger, thirst, fear, and sorrow, Naciketā asks for the third boon, i.e., knowledge of the Principle of Pure Existence, the Truth of Immortality. Now the Death God tests his disciple by trying to dissuade him in a way of offering sons, grandsons, animals, elephants,

horses, gold, long life as per his wish to stay alive, a vast kingdom to rule, all sorts of worldly enjoyments, fitness to enjoy all enjoyments, any difficult cherished things, and at last the celestial nymphs with chariots and musical instruments to which no human being has access. Naciketā refuses these all politely. He states, all these drive away the vigor of a man. All these enjoyments are in the expenses of our life-force and these are death. And again, “*api sarvaṃ jīvitamalpameva*, all life is short indeed, *tavaiva vāhāstava nṛtyagīte*, let the vehicles, the dances and songs be yours.” (*Ka. U*, 1.1.26.) Even the life of a god is short-lived, only that Principle of Pure Existence exists. One who like Naciketā can renounce all worldly desires within, then he is qualified for the Knowledge of Death or “It does not exist,” *na asti*, and for the Knowledge of Immortality or “It exists,” *asti iti*. Then the final Knowledge descends, as “It exists.” This is immortality.

5

Kriyā Practice

Walking on the Razor's Edge: We need to practice certain techniques for our spiritual journey purpose. These techniques are very important since these are the vehicles but these are not everything. In the base there should be a strong quest for realization of the Truth and we must be prepared to desert our stubborn ego. We should at least be prepared to deny the cravings of mind belonging to the lower worlds, and then only a technique would be beneficial. Again we must have a proper technique according to the scriptural sanctions. For that we need to understand the principle behind it. In *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, Lord Vāsudeva says,

*yaḥ śāstravidhimutsrjya vartate kāmakārataḥ,
na sa siddhimavāpnoti na sukhaṁ na parām gatim.* (Ś. Bg., 16.23)

He who, *yaḥ*, setting aside, *utsrjya*, the scriptural sanctions, *śāstravidhim*, follows, *vartate*, the impulsion of desires (or passions), *kāmakārataḥ*, he, *sa*, does not attain, *na avāpnoti*, perfection, *siddhim*, nor happiness, *na sukham*, nor the supreme destination, *na parām gatim*.

This has been said in the context of divine and demonic qualities. Both gods or the persons with divine qualities as well as demons or the persons with demonic qualities can perform the austerities (*vide supra*, “Two Types of Humans, *Deva-s* and *Asura-s*,” p. 22; “The Divine and the Demonic Properties,” p. 99). A demonic way of austerity does not have scriptural sanctions since the scriptures are instrumental in determining the renunciation of demonic qualities. We have to strive for what is noble, and the scriptures are our authority with regard to what should be done and what should not be done. So a proper understanding of the scriptural sanctions and the Principle becomes necessary. At the base of the demonic qualities, there is a strong and gigantic ego that wants to attend sense objects for pleasure and to rule over the others. Whatever technique it may follow, it is bound to meet a failure as the principle of spiritualism is based on noble faith, compassion, broadness, finding the Self in every being, etc., and these are opposed to a ego craving for pleasure and ruling over others. Two diametrically opposite qualities cannot go together at a given time. Again it is said,

*aśāstravīhitam ghoram tapyante ye tapo janāḥ,
dambhāhaṅkārasaṃyuktāḥ kāmarāgabalanvitāḥ.* (Ś. Bg., 17.5)

Those, *ye*, persons, *janāḥ*, who undergo infliction, *tapyante*, of severe, *ghoram*, austerity, *tapah*, not sanctioned by the scriptures, *aśāstravīhitam*, being associated with, *saṃyuktāḥ*, arrogance, *dambha*, and strong ego (or pride), *ahaṅkāra*, and possessing, *anvitāḥ* desires (or passion), *kāma*, attachment, *rāga*, and strength (here strength refers to strength of arrogance, pride, passion, and attachment), *bala*:

*karṣayantaḥ śarīrastham bhūtagrāmamacetasah,
mām caivāntaḥśarīrastham tānviddhyāsuraṇiścayān.* (Ibid., 17.6)

(They) torture, *karṣayantaḥ*, the aggregate of existing beings (body organs both gross and subtle), *bhūtagrāmam*, inside the body, *śarīrastham*, due to non-discrimination, *acetasaḥ*, and even me, *mām ca iva*, who reside in the inner body, *antaḥśarīrastham*, know them, *tān viddhi*, surely as demons, *āsuraṇiścayān*.

One may not be versed in scriptures and may follow a spiritual path simply being endued by the noble faith. This was the purpose of the question asked in the beginning of the chapter: *śraddhātraya vibhāgayogaḥ*, “The Three Kinds of Faiths,” of *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā*, “*ye śāstravidhimutsrjya yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ*, who, *ye*, being endued with faith, *śraddhayānvitāḥ*, worship, *yajante*, ignoring the scriptural injunctions, *śāstravidhimutsrjya*.” (Ibid., 17.1.) Here two types of situations arise, one is being ignorant about the scriptural sanctions but following the traditions resorting to worship or a practice, and another is being aware of the scriptural sanctions but discarding them and resorting to a practice contrary to the scriptural injunctions. The second types are surely demonic types with arrogance and ego to fulfill their passion and cravings. But for those who are ignorant about the scriptural injunctions and perform being endued with faith, here it is to be seen what type of faith one possesses. Depending upon the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* the faiths are of three types. If one possesses the faith based on *sattva* and worships following the tradition than even if he is ignorant about the scriptural injunctions, he would chose and walk in the right path. So in the base there is noble faith, righteousness, control of organs, and resolve to practice the spiritual observances, etc., “*śraddhāvamllabhate jñānam tatparaḥ saṃyatendriyaḥ*, one who has noble faith, is diligent, and has controlled the organs, attains Knowledge.” (Ibid., 4.39.) One may not be versed in the scriptures but can know if he is resorting to a worship following impulsion of passions, cravings and/or hatred, and if he is being guided by arrogance and ego; or else if that of a noble faith, sincere desire for knowledge, kindness and love, is guiding him.

So the knowledge on scriptures and a technique alone are not enough to reach the Ultimate. Even being versed with a scriptural knowledge one can discard them to fulfill his vicious interest. He can even manipulate the scriptural meaning

and interpret in a way to suit his vested interest and make others fool. Particularly in the present age we often find such behaviors. Next a technique followed may be correct but followed by a wrong person since gods as well as demons can practice this. In Purāṇic history we find many demons like Mahiṣāsura, Hiraṇyakaśyapu, Rāvaṇa, and others had practiced austerities and as a result of their austerities were able to get a boon either from Lord Brahmā or from Lord Mahādeva, and got mastery over some inner forces of the Nature but ultimately their efforts ended with a failure. They may be practicing a correct technique but at the base was a giant ego. This giant ego drained their energy gained through the lower channels of sense enjoyments. A simple example is that yogic techniques like *mudrās* Aśvinī, Vajrolī, Śakticālinī, etc. are very much helpful in arousing the hidden Prāṇic energy named *kundalinī*, and the techniques are very much helpful in practicing sexual restraint, but a practitioner can use these tools for sexual enjoyment. So a technique becomes secondary and the motive behind it becomes primary. A technique can supplement our motive. Since the success of the demons would have meant a great imbalance in the inner world of life principle tending towards the negativity and thereby defeating the purpose of the creation, Mother Nature takes every care to do the needful. A big fish can turmoil a part of a sea but it cannot rule over the ocean.

But a technique is also important. One has a noble aspiration to reject the sensual demands of mind but simply aspiring does not help. So one has to practice a technique for that. We need a proper understanding, at the base of our practice there must be noble faith, *śraddhā*, and otherwise a technique can be misused for a wrong purpose. A noble faith is a faith based on discrimination and not a blind faith (*vide supra*, "Noble Faith, *śraddhā*, is the First Form of Devotion," p. 155). That is the reason in ancient India practice of righteousness, *yama*, observances, *niyama*, and devotion, *bhakti*, to a Personal God was given utmost importance at the foundation stages of spiritual life, the higher practices of meditation techniques and contemplation of the Principle were taught in a later stage. Now due to development of technologies and various other factors, the techniques are no more hidden ones, and again there is fear of extinction of hidden techniques. Due to hiding the techniques, distorted techniques also come up. Another factor is that a rare technique with a person or a master is not necessarily in a safe hand since all such masters are not genuine masters with a strong spiritual base. A fake master is one who does not know a proper technique but pretend and cheat others. We find another type who might knew a proper and rare technique but at the base is a big ego, we cannot say them as fake masters but these are masters with the techniques but without firmly being established in divinity. While the former types are to be rejected out rightly, it depends upon the seeker if he can learn the techniques from the later type masters since they knew the techniques. One example is the learning of Kaca, the

son of Guru Br̥haspati, the Master of Gods. He went to Guru Śukrācārya, the Master of the Demon King Br̥ṣaparvā. Śukrācārya has the knowledge of giving life to dead, *mṛtasañjīvanī*, by which he was able to give life to the demons died in war with the gods. Kaca was able to learn the technique finally from him after being killed for the third time by the demons. But we have to remember that Kaca always revered his master Śukrācārya though he differed with him on ideology and principle. So the path of a seeker becomes difficult but we have to remember that Mother Nature is there to balance all imbalances and a seeker's duty is to qualify him for the journey with noble faith, *śraddhā*, auspicious desire, *śiva-saṅkalpa*, and righteousness, *yama*, and the rest will follow. Without unconditional love and readiness to surrender everything to the God either in the form of a Personal God, the Cosmic Self or the Transcendental Self we shall always remain lost. Then only we can have access to Oneness, and see the Self in every being. If we are not able to practice oneness in multiplicity then that is no practice. Do we strongly aspire for this? Are we ready to reject the demands of our ego and attraction towards sense enjoyments? Do we try to cultivate unconditional love to the Cosmic Self, to all-beings? If the answers to these questions were "yes" then only a technique would help. Otherwise, a technique can help to a limited degree, may be giving us more power to strengthen our ego and thereby pushing us to bigger darkness. God of Death teaches to Naciketā,

*kṣurasya dhārā niśitā duratyayā
durgam̐ pathastatkavayo vadanti. (Ka. U, 1.3.14)*

The seers, *kavayah*, speak, *vadanti*, that path is difficult, *durgam̐ pathaḥ tat*, as of a sharpened, *niśitā*, razor's edge, *kṣurasya dhārā*, and can be passed over with difficulty, *duratayā*.

Though difficult, this is not impossible. There are footprints of wise ones. We have to follow that. In the story of the Yakṣapraśna in *Mahābhārata* the Lord of Righteousness as Yakṣa asked the crown prince Yudhiṣṭhira, "*kā panthāḥ*, what is the route?" The crown prince replied, "Vedas and other scriptures vary, the opinion of one sage cannot be taken as eventual truth, the Principle of Truth is hidden inside the cave, and we have to tread in the path through which the noble ones has traveled, *mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*." Before us are the footprints of the saints and sages over the ages. If we are confused we have to find the Truth that lies in the cave of intellect, we have to use our discrimination. This would tell us the right way. We have to listen to that discriminating intellect and not to our mind, which deludes us. The cave is above the Ājñā *cakra*, and we have to take our breath there.

The Pathfinder: We require a pathfinder to progress in our spiritual journey. He who is a Siddha in his previous life, either a disembodied yogi, *videha*, or a yogi merged in Nature, *prakṛtilaya*, for him *samādhi* is automatic, *bhavaḥpratyayah*.

(Ygs., 1.19). Such a soul is rare in this earth, but for majority of us we need self-effort, and in this process we need someone who can teach us the techniques and/or the principle. He should be a person who has walked at least some distance on this route. To find a master who is completely perfect is really a difficult one. A real perfect master is a one, who sees the Self in everybeing. Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā speaks,

*bahūnām janmanāmante jñānavānām prapadyate,
vāsudevaḥ sarvamiti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ.* (Ś Bg., 7.19)

After the end of many births, *bahūnām janmanām ante*, a wise man, *jñānavān*, attains me, *mām prapadyate*, for whom that Vāsudeva is all, *vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ iti*. Such a great soul, *sa mahātmā*, is very rare, *sudurlabhaḥ*.

Vāsudeva means the Self of all, who sits in the heart of all; *sarvabhūtanivāso'sti vāsudeva namo'stute*, we bow down to Vāsudeva who resides in all-beings. One who has realized every being as the Self he is a Wiseman. Many of us have this knowledge through scriptures but this is an indirect knowledge but one who has this knowledge by realization and is established in this knowledge is a rare one. How can we get such a rare person in our lives? Those who are blessed ones due to their previous noble actions they can get one Mahātmā Buddha, Bhagavatpāda Śrī Śāṅkarācārya or other such great souls, *mahātmā*-s, to guide them in their spiritual journey. But most of us prefer to live in a world of illusion, and we expect that the master we choose must be a Buddha or Śrī Śāṅkara. All the souls are in process of perfection and the same is also for most of the masters. They are walking in their path towards the Self, have some mastery and the degree of perfection varies.

In the path of yoga a yogi experiences different states of mind, *citta*, till the final dissolution of mind in the Self, known as the One and Only, *kaivalyam*. The seeker may find a teacher who is established in one of these states while traveling in the path. The scriptures describe seven states in the path of yoga. The seven states described in *Yogavāsīṣṭha* as,

*śāstrasajjanasamṣparkaiḥ prajñāmādaḥ vivardhayet,
prathamā bhūmikaiṣoktā yogasaiva ca yoginaḥ.* (Ygv., 6.120.1)

Study of scriptures and contact with noble persons, *śāstrasajjanasamṣparkaiḥ*, that leads to the development of the discriminating intellect etc., *prajñāmādaḥ vivardhayet*, has been said as the first state, *prathamā bhūmikaiṣoktā*, of the yoga by the yogis, *yogasaiva ca yoginaḥ*.

This state is named as good will, *śubhecchā*. This is the first state of spiritual practice to develop the discriminating intellect. The practitioner tries to refrain from the sense enjoyments and develops noble virtues, engages in worshiping, good conduct, contact of saints and sages, studying scriptures, engages in austerities and spiritual practices.

vicāraṇādviṭīyā syāttrīyā asaṅga bhāvanā,
vilāpanī caturthī syādvāsanāvīlayātmikā. (Ygv., 6.120.2)

The mental analysis or contemplation, *vicāraṇā*, is the second state, *dviṭīyā*, the third state, is contemplation of non-attachment, *asaṅga bhāvanā*, the state of lamentation, *vilāpanī*, is the fourth, *caturthī*, and that state is the state of merger of desires, *syāt vāsanā vīlayātmikā*.

The second, third, and fourth states are also states of spiritual practice. In the second state known as *vicāraṇā*, the practitioner engages in intense spiritual practices, performs austerities, observes restraints and observances, engages in concentration and meditation. In the third state known as *asaṅga bhāvanā*, the practitioner develops non-attachment, rejects the state of being a doer and an enjoyer. In the fourth state known as *vilāpanī*, the practitioner gets free from desires. At the success in the fourth state the practitioner establishes in the state of yoga; the desires are thinned, the modifications of mind are halted. After that there is no danger to fall from the path. The rest states just follow.

śuddhasaṁvīnmayānandarūpā bhavati pañcamī,
ardhasūptaprabuddhābho jīvanmukto atra tiṣṭhati. (Ibid., 6.120.3)

The fifth state, *pañcamī*, becomes, *bhavati*, full of pure consciousness, *śuddha saṁvīn mayā* and form of bliss, *ānanda rūpā*. The liberated one, *jīvanmukto*, stays here, *atra tiṣṭhati*, in the state of half-sleep and in knowledge, *ardhasūpta-prabuddhābho*.

svasaṁvedanarūpā ca ṣaṣṭhī bhavati bhūmikā,
ānandaikaghanākārā suṣūptasadrśasthitīḥ. (Ibid., 6.120.4)

The sixth state, *ṣaṣṭhī bhūmikā*, becomes, *bhavati*, the form of feeling the Self, *sva saṁvedana rūpā ca*. This is the concentrated form of Bliss, *ānandaikaghanākārā*, and the state appears like deep sleep, *suṣūptasadrśasthitīḥ*.

turyāvasthopaśāntātha muktireveha kevalam,
samatā svacchatā soumyā saptamī bhūmikā bhavet. (Ibid., 6.120.4)

The seventh state, *saptamī bhūmikā*, becomes, *bhavet*, the state of equanimity, *samatā*, purity, *svacchatā*, and charming gentleness, *soumyā*. This is the peaceful state of Turiya, *turyāvasthopaśāntātha*, and is the state of only liberation, *muktireveha kevalam*.

Very often a term *yogabhraṣṭa* is used for some evolved souls who then are engaged in enjoyments or in ego satisfaction. *Yogabhraṣṭa* means one who is deviated from the path of yoga or fallen from the path of yoga. Till a yogi has not crossed the fourth state there lays the danger to fall down due to previous *karma*s. Such persons get a good birth and enjoyments. However, due to the previous spiritual practice they will ascend again in the spiritual ladder in the same birth or in subsequent births. However, a common man must revere a *yogabhraṣṭa*

even though the said yogi has erred or fallen from the path. Sometimes a *yogabhraṣṭa* while in process of downfall can even act as a spiritual master. If the master a seeker selects has crossed the fourth state then the seeker is almost under the supervision of a real master. But if the master is a *yogabhraṣṭa* and again is in the process of downfall, then it becomes really difficult for the seeker. The problem with most of the seekers is that it becomes really difficult to judge a master in the beginning. But we must have our goal in our mind and must not forget that. Whatever we can learn from a master we should learn and then with all humility and reverence to the master from whom we have learned something, we should proceed further. As a bee moves from flower to flower in search of honey, a disciple can move from one master to other master in search of knowledge.

We discussed that even a highly evolved person can err until he has not reached complete perfection. To err is human. But one must not repeat the error and must undergo self-purification austerities for the mistake committed. But those who are in the process of repeating mistakes and does not repent for these, they should be avoided. We must accept the realities of life. For most of the disciples of a master, their master is second to none; he is an incarnation, *avatāra*, of God or at least a realized master, *sadguru*. With so many masters around and the claim of their disciples, how can it be possible that there are so many incarnations or so many realized masters? This goes against the rulings of the scriptures, of course according to Vedānta all beings are none but the Self and there is no duality but certainly the claim of the disciples is not in the line of the teachings of Vedānta. In this way they create problems for themselves, for their masters and for the society.

We have to be very practical in our approach with both the feet firm on the ground. We should not live in an imaginary world. While I was at Sītāramaṇī Cave Ashram at Baijnath Dham in Himachal Pradesh for my meditation practice, in a celebration offering tributes to a monk, one old disciple of Brahmaliṇa Swāmī Harihara Tīrthajī Mahārāj (Swāmī Harihara Tīrthajī was a revered monk in Rishikesh) said, “We are always in process of comparing these young ascetics with our Gurudev Hariharajī Mahārāj and disapprove the status of these monks. Why don’t we compare them with ourselves? I see everyday they get up from bed between 3 AM to 4 AM before the dawn, take bath in this cold weather and then sit for their meditation, repetition of mantras or other spiritual practices. They do their self-study, meditation and contemplation. No one asks them to do it. They are practicing sexual restraint, *brahmacarya*, and have shown courage for renunciation. While walking in the path some might have encountered a failure but still then they are continuing. But we are engaged with our own selfish interests and our prayers are also for fulfilling our selfish motives. They are far elevated from our status in spiritualism and whatever we can learn from them we should learn rather than trying to find fault.” That old devotee has passed away, but how

realistic was his approach. We have to find a master who can at least teach us some preliminaries and should not wait for an angel to descend. Simultaneously we have to see that the person we choose fulfills the minimum criteria.

A true master never propagates that he is a realized one. My master learned from Prabhuji that Śrīyukteśvarajī used to say, "I am not yet realized." Such masters reveal their state to a select few. But we find some present day masters who are self-proclaimed incarnations or self-proclaimed Paramahansas (*paramahansa* is a highest title in the monk order bestowed by one's Guru or one of the Śaṅkarācāryas but in actuality this is a state of divinity where the monk remains in Turīya state). The general behavior found in these fake types of masters is intolerance towards others though outwardly they project themselves as very kind and compassionate. So one can detect such persons, if he is vigilant and not emotionally biased. In present days we find so many Śaṅkarācāryas and there is no statistics about their exact number. There are only four *Śaṅkara-pīṭha-s* (seats) established by Bhagatpāda Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, so we should have four Śaṅkarācāryas. For two or three sub-pīṭhas the number increases to a maximum of seven, and again there are some retired ones but can use the title. In this way in a given time the maximum number should not be more than twenty. But due to the self-manifested Śaṅkarācāryas the number goes high, may be the number is doubled. Of course Indian society does not recognize them but they are able to name their ashrams as *pīṭha-s* and create a small group around them. Similarly, there may be some spiritual masters but at the base there may not be any spiritualism. We need not be disappointed due to these since this is the way of nature. There are also Kriyā-masters without knowing Kriyā-yoga. Some teach loosening exercise, *śītilīkaraṇa vyāyāma*, as Kriyā-yoga, some others teach body-cleansing techniques, *śuddhīkaraṇa kriyā-s*, as Kriyā-yoga. Everyone should practice loosening exercises and body-cleaning techniques since these are good for health and preparatory in nature for Kriyā-meditation; these are yogic kriyās of Haṭha-yoga but should not be taught in the name of Kriyā-yoga meditation to cheat. Again some others knew only preliminaries of the Kriyā-yoga, some even not learned and practiced in a proper way but teach. Again these are the ways of the Nature. Swāmī Vivekānanda once said, "We find imitations because there is gold. Imitations prove that gold exists. Similarly, the presence of so many pseudo-prophets is proof of the presence of prophets." If one meets the general monks in India, finds that ninety-nine percent of them are noble souls practicing austerities, renunciation, discrimination and devotion, engaged in soul culture and in process of acquiring the Knowledge. But about the masters and choosing one, a seeker has to be very careful.

Among these entire spectra, one has to find a person to learn the principle and the techniques. When I met my master and discussed with him for the first time he told me, "you have to learn alphabets, a schoolteacher can teach you.

But you are in search of a university professor. Come tomorrow, and learn the techniques. Later you can get a professor when you pass the school.”

A general health behavior among us Indians is that a large mass does not have any personal physician. When one is ill he visits any physician or even a quack and next time to some other physician. Or else one may visit a particular physician and cling to him even if he is not cured for long. Even one may be cured by a quack. But all these health behaviors show foolishness. It is good to visit a particular physician so that he would have your health history but at the same time if one is not cured for long time even after sincerely following the physician, he must find out some one better. Similarly in the spiritual field people visit to any monk, listen to any body's discourses, follow any religious teacher. Then those persons, who accept a master, cling to him all the life without evaluating their progress. Listening and visiting can increase the knowledge but practice should be done under the guidance of one at least for a particular period of time. Then one must be sincere and truthful to the teachings and practice. If then he is not progressing, then he should evaluate the whole process.

Once one accepts a master it is most important to have reverence to the master and the techniques. Without this one cannot put his heart to the practice, and a mechanical practice would give very limited result. Practicing something without believing is no practice. But this reverence, belief or devotion should not be a blind one. This should be based on discrimination. We need a guru but not *gurudom*, a term often used for “manipulation of disciples by a so-called guru.” A guru makes one liberated and does not put one in bondage. But again some disciples feel that following righteousness, *yama*, and observances, *niyama*, are bondage. Such disciples lack basic qualifications to walk in the path.

Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahansa used to say his disciples to test their guru. When one finds his master as a perfect one then his faith becomes manifold and very strong. Of course we are not going to find one Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa or Śrīyukteśvarājī in all periods of time. But we can find a master who can make us travel at least some distance in right direction. Even if the master is not a perfect one but if there is sincerity, noble faith, righteousness and observances of spiritual detections etc. by the disciple then Mother Nature, the Siddhas and other celestial powers in the subtle world take care. We get a master according to our own *karma* or actions in our past lives.

A master is not different from us. A master is the Principle. Thinking of a physical body as a master and a master as a physical body is not correct. Master is the Self. He is not different from us. Our master is sitting inside at the cave of the intellect above the *Ājñā cakra*. When we shall be able to find Him within then our journey would be smooth. For that we have to follow our breath and then our subtle *prāṇa*. Our breath is our immediate master. However we should have a master with a physical body from whom we should learn the techniques,

otherwise a practitioner may fall into very difficult situations if he practices simply on reading a book.

PREPARING THE GROSS BODY

First we have to remember that the Kriyā-meditation is based on breath. So as long as one is breathing, one can practice even if one is lying sick in bed. But for active and sincere practice we need a healthy body. So body cleansing techniques, yogic postures, *asana*-s, and yogic exercises were developed for this purpose. They are many and nowadays very popular. One can follow one schedule according to his suitability and physical need, and the Kriyā-yoga tradition does not interfere with it. These are complementary to the kriyā-practice. Whose daily work involves physical labor like working in the field for agriculture etc. or manual labor in an industry, they need not go for these exercises until and unless there is a specific need to cure a disease or for a particular organ or limb. They should directly come for kriyā practice. Others should try first if they can do some manual labor like gardening, giving manual labor for some social purposes like cleaning the environment in the area or helping others in need, cleaning their own houses, utensils and cloths, etc., so that simultaneous to our physical exercise some productive work is done. These give more satisfaction than simple physical exercise. While doing physical work if one learns to become aware about his breath and the subtle vital currents in the body, then his work becomes a meditation. However all should learn the yogic exercises and those who are not engaged in manual labor they should practice yogic exercises everyday.

Energization Exercises: Paramahansa Yogānanda has developed Energization Exercises to train the body for meditation. These techniques are generally not taught in the lineages stemming from other disciples of Śrīyukteśvaraḥ or from different lineages of Śrī Lāhiḍi Mahāśaya. Since Paramahansa Yogānanda had developed these exercises, these are not under the original basic techniques as taught by Śrī Lāhiḍi Mahāśaya, but the principle behind it is the same, i.e., awareness of the *prāṇa*. A teacher who knows the principles of addition and subtraction in mathematics he can form many exercises for his pupils on addition and subtraction for their practice. The Energization Exercises of Paramahansa Yogānanda is correlating will and vital energy via exercises exerting tension on a body part and then relaxing. One can learn them from Yogadā Satsaṅga Lessons.

Kriyā Hatha-yoga: One can also resort to traditional yogic exercises and yogic postures, *yogāsana*-s, taught under Haṭha-yoga. A yogic posture is designed in such a way that when we practice a posture we can mark that in case of forward bending breath expels out and in case of backward bending breath enters in, though the practitioner may not be aware about this. This is called *paścāt prāṇāyāma*; *paścāt* means secondary or backward, and here the breathing technique is done automatically without the consciousness of the practitioner.

Then after a period of practice the practitioner becomes aware. We need to start with the breathing awareness from the beginning. Haṭha-yoga done with breathing awareness is called Kriyā Haṭha-yoga. Then in the next step in Kriyā Haṭha-yoga is the awareness of subtle vital movements or Prāṇic currents within the body while attaining, remaining or retracting from a posture. During the stay at the posture we should observe vital energy, *prāṇa*, in the part of the body to which the energy is directed. The practitioner finds that in a particular posture or in a yogic exercise, the prāṇic energy is directed to a particular region or regions of the body and can feel those regions are contracting and expanding; can feel that those regions are vibrating with the life-force. This observation or subtle breath awareness recharges the body and after the session, the practitioner does not feel any tiredness, rather feels more energetic. Another aspect in the Kriyā Haṭha-yoga is the awareness of the energy centers, *cakra*-s, to which the life-force is directed. These three aspects, viz., breath-awareness, subtle energy awareness in body parts and *cakra* awareness make the Kriyā Haṭha-yoga different and advanced from the traditional Haṭha-yoga. It is a positive development that many of the traditional Haṭha-yoga schools are adopting the breath awareness and *cakra* awareness to the postures. Hence the differences between Haṭha-yoga and Kriyā Haṭha-yoga minimise.

As such the Kriyā Haṭha-yoga is not under the traditional Kriyā-yoga practices. Practitioners of Kriyā-yoga were practicing traditional Haṭha-yoga postures with breath-awareness, *cakra* awareness and feeling vibrations in body parts, and later a name was given to it as Kriyā Haṭha-yoga. One can go to any Haṭha-yoga school, learn a set of postures according to his need but should add breath-awareness, awareness of *cakra*-s and awareness of the subtle breath within the body. Some amount of practice would lead the practitioner to be able to observe these. Once a practitioner learns the Haṁsa Sādhanā and Vyāna Viṣṇāṇā techniques then awareness of breath and awareness of subtle breath inside body and *cakra*-s become very easy.

Sūryanamaskāra: Before practice of yogic postures, *yogāsana*-s, one should practice yogic *vyāyāma*-s or exercises. *Yogāsana*-s when done in quick succession without staying for a period in a posture then this becomes yogic *vyāyāma*, and are commonly known as loosening exercise, *śīthilikarāṇa vyāyāma*. Salutations to the Sun, *sūryanamaskāra*, is the best form of yogic *vyāyāma*. This takes away the lethargy, makes the entire body flexible, increases the plasticity of spine and prepares the body for further *yogāsana*-s and *prāṇāyāma*. This has additional effect of devotion since this is done with chanting of twelve mantras for twelve rounds of practice and each mantra is a name of the Sun-god prefixed with *Praṇava* sound *Om* and a seed sound, *Bīja mantra*, like *Hrām*, *Hrīm*, *Hrūm*, *Hraim*, *Hraum*, or *Hrah*. In another system, only *Om* and *Hrīm* are prefixed to names of the Sun-god. These sound vibrations create strong but subtle prāṇic vibrations

throughout the body. Like syllable Om or *Pranava*, syllable *Hrīm* is also very important constituting letters *h*, *r*, and *ī*, and *anusvārah*. The *anusvārah* is the nasal sound that always belongs to a preceding vowel, added to it. This *Hrīm* is called *śakti pranava*. Letter-*h* represents Śiva, letter-*ī* represents Śakti and letter-*r* represents fire, light or manifestation. The nasal sound *anusvārah* that follows the vowel-*ī*, sends the strong vital vibrations within the body. Faith, devotion and Prāṇic energy rejuvenates the entire body, organs, systems, and nerve centers. Each name of the Sun-god has a meaning, e.g., *mitra* means “friend,” and these names meant for instilling those qualities within us. Some do *sūryanamaskāra* in twelve steps and others in ten steps. The twelve-step *sūryanamaskāra* is a yogic exercise in combination of *yogāsana*-s like Namaskāra *mudrā*, Ardhačakrāsana, Pādahastāsana, Aśvasancālanāsana, Dvipadāsana or Daṇḍāsana, Śaśāṅkāsana, Aṣṭāṅga *mudrā* or Sāṣṭāṅga Namaskāra, Bhujaṅgāsana, and Parvatāsana. In ten-step practice, steps containing Śaśāṅkāsana are dropped. Each step is associated with practice of inhalation or exhalation.

Śithilīkaraṇa Vyāyāma: Though *sūryanamaskāra* is a full proof exercise, one can select another set of loosening exercises, *śithilīkaraṇa vyāyāma*. Here care should be taken to loosen toes, ankles, knees, leg joints, waist, fingers, wrists, calves, shoulders, neck, limbs and body. There are various sets of such exercise packages and one can follow a standard package. One can follow the exercises like hands stretching, wrist rotation, shoulder rotation, hands front and back movement, chest muscle exercises, toes movement, ankle rotation, loosening knee joints, stretching and rotation of hip joints, jogging, forward and backward bending, twisting the waist, back stretch movement like a tiger, rotating the body from waist, neck rotation, alternate leg lifting in supine position, and leg movements and body movements in Pavanamuktāsana etc. Whenever possible except exercises like jogging, each exercise must include long inhalation and exhalation practice along with it or else at least breath awareness in case of exercises like ankle rotation or wrist rotation etc. We can give fifteen minutes to half an hour for *śithilīkaraṇa vyāyāma* depending upon age, life style and time in hand.

Yogāsanas: After *śithilīkaraṇa vyāyāma* and/or *sūryanamaskāra* one should practice *yogāsana*-s for fifteen minutes to half-an-hour. There are eighty-four basic postures and nowadays due to permutations, combinations and modifications we find around three hundred postures in different schools and new age books on postures. But our aim is to keep our body healthy and fit for meditation. Accordingly we should choose the postures. However in case of a definite need following a disease, a certain set of postures can be chosen as therapy. In general, emphasis should be given on those postures that make our spine flexible and a long sitting capability. We have to choose forward bending, backward bending,

side bending and spine twisting postures. It is good to start with standing postures followed by lying down postures and then sitting postures. Ardhačakrāsana, Pādahastāsana, and Ardhačakrāsana can be chosen as standing postures. Bhujāṅgāsana, Śalabhāsana, Dhanurāsana, Sarvāṅgāsana, Matsyāsana, Halāsana, and Čakrāsana can be chosen as lying-down postures. Ekapāda-pāścimottānāsana, Pāścimottānāsana, Uṣṭrāsana, Ardhamatsyendrāsana, and Yogamudrā can be chosen as sitting postures. In-between one can take rest either in Śavāsana or in Makarāsana. We have to remember that in Kriyā Haṭha-yoga practice long inhalation with backward bending, long exhalation with forward bending, and breath-awareness while staying in a posture is very important. Also important is to be aware of movements of vital energy within our body parts and *cakras*.

Yoganidrā: The term *yoganidrā* or yogic sleep has much wider meaning, and on actuality this refers to *samādhi*. In deep sleep state there is no mind since the mind is absorbed into the *prāna*. This happens in *tamas*. In the yogic sleep the mind is also absorbed into the *prāna* but in *sattva*, here the practitioner is being aware of it. So Samādhi and Yoganidrā are synonymous. Yoganidrā is described as, *yogaścittavṛtti nirodhalakṣaṇaḥ samādhistadrūpā nidrā*, when actions or modifications of mind are halted that is called yoga, that is Samādhi and that state is Yoganidrā. Upaniṣads speak of the Yoganidrā as: “*śuddhādvaitā-jādyasahajāmanaskayoganidrākhaṇḍānandapadānubṛtvā* (MBU, 2.5), pure, *śuddha*, non-dual, *advaita*, without dullness of consciousness, *ajādyā*, natural, *sahaja*, without thoughts, *amanaska*, the state that follows the uninterrupted bliss, *akhaṇḍānandapadānubṛtvā*, is called *yoganidrā*, *yoganidrā*.” However, the Yoganidrā described below here is only a step towards this greater Yoganidrā known as State of Bliss.

Yoganidrā or the yogic sleep practiced in general is a technique of body relaxation. This technique is different from Śavāsana, i.e., corpse posture. This is an advanced form of corpse posture with the awareness of subtle *prāna* in the form of vibrations throughout the body. Similarity in both cases is that one has to lie supine on the ground with hands and feet apart and then allowing the whole body to relax. No part of the body should be tense. Concentration should be moved from toes to head allowing each part to relax. Here in case of Śavāsana autosuggestion can be given to relax the body parts. In case of Yoganidrā while moving the concentration it is just to be aware of the subtle vital energy in the part of the concentration. Famous Yogi Brahmaḷina Swāmī Satyānanda Saraswatī of Bihar School of Yoga, Munger, made Yoganidrā technique very popular. However, his Yoganidrā techniques are based on many imaginations; may be this was developed keeping in view of particular audiences, and one can see the technique taught by him in his book titled *Yoganidrā*. In the opinion of the present author, that technique is very much helpful to prisoners, psychic patients and persons with restless mind, hence the effort is laudable because they need special

care. A beginner can also start with that technique. But those who want higher spiritual goal to pursuit they should avoid imaginations as much as possible. So the technique we suggest is very simple without imaginations and easy to practice for all.

The Technique: First take a deep breath in corpse posture and then be aware of your breath. Next just move your concentration from toe to head. One may not feel the vibrations in the body parts in the beginning, and may be for him this is an experience of light on the part of concentration. Feeling that light is also relaxing. Then after a period of practice one can feel subtle vibrations in the body. Those who has learned the “Haṁsa Sādhanā” technique and are practicing, they can feel the vibrations from the beginning on the very first day. Our body though seems to be a solid mass but it is always vibrating and humming. All cells are vibrating, within the cells molecules are vibrating, atoms are vibrating and even sub-atomic particles are vibrating. We have to feel that. More and more our mind becomes calm we are able to feel it. This is feeling the vital air pervading in the entire body known as *vyāna vāyu*. For the beginners it is good if they have a guide to instruct. Simple instructions can be given, viz., “concentrate on your left big toe and feel,” then after a pause next instruction comes as “concentrate on your left toes and feel,” then “concentrate on your left sole and feel,” “concentrate on your left foot and feel,” “concentrate on your left ankle and feel,” and so on. After the left leg then concentration should be directed to right leg, then to hips, waist and back, then to lower abdomen, abdomen and chest, then to left hand followed by right hand, then neck, then different parts of the face and head. Pause should be given to concentrate and feel each part and the whole exercise takes a minimum duration of twenty minutes. One can do it for an hour also. To end the process, instructions should be given to take long and deep breath, move the eyeballs and then move the body to left and right gently.

This is a very relaxing process and at the end of yogic exercises and postures or Kriyā Haṭha-yoga, this can be given in lieu of rest in Śavāsana. My experience is that the participants of a yoga camp feel this very relaxing and most of the new participants sleep and some even start snoring as if they have not slept for long. Even an old practitioner if tired very much can sleep. In this fast moving world, most persons do not know how to relax or sleep properly. When one sleeps then this is not Yoganidrā. But to sleep for the beginners is okay, anyhow they relax and later they learn gradually to relax awake.

NĀBHI KRIYĀ

Nābhi Kriyā is a preparatory technique of the Kriyā-yoga meditation and is not taught under the core techniques. Many of the present days Kriyā-yoga masters don't teach this. However some Kriyā-yoga masters and some masters from other lineages teach this technique. The present author learned that some masters are teaching loosening exercises, *śīhitākaraṇa vyāyāma-s*, having effect on upper

abdomen, lower abdomen, umbilicus and waist region as Nābhi Kriyā. They teach mostly alternate leg lifting in supine position, leg movements and body movements in Pavana Muktāsana Kriyā, exercises made out of Ardhačakrāsana, Pādahastāsana, Ardhačakrāsana, Ekapāda-pāścimottānāsana, and Pāścimottānāsana without using these names. These are exercises of Kriyā Haṭha-yoga since they teach these with inhalations and exhalations. Though these are good yogic exercises, have positive effect on the visceral organs but so far the knowledge of the present author goes these do not come under the Nābhi Kriyā taught in the Kriyā-yoga tradition.

In Haṭha-yoga traditions *Uḍḍiāna* or concave depression of abdomen and *Nauli Cālana* or movements of abdominal recti muscles, *rectus abdominis*, which forms the front linear wall of the abdominal cavity, are known as Nābhi Kriyā. This helps in digestion, stimulates appetite, cures abdominal diseases and promotes health of all organs of abdominal viscera. We also find a technique described by Paramahansa Nigamānanda in his book *Yogi Guru* and also by Swāmī Śivānanda and other yogis. Here the practitioner is advised to bind the navel and lower abdominal region with a cloth about three meters long and about twenty centimeters wide so that the lower abdominal cavity is compressed. Then the practitioner is asked to inhale and retain the breath for a period and then release. Though they had not referred this as Nābhi Kriyā but some also refer such a practice of Haṭha-yoga tradition as Nābhi Kriyā. The Nābhi Kriyā in Kriyā-yoga is rather a simpler one to practice.

Technique—Step I: The Nābhi Kriyā of Kriyā-yoga tradition has two parts. The first part is a body cleansing breath technique. This is done in sitting posture keeping the spine straight. Nowadays Kapālabhātī technique is very familiar due to electronic media and the effort of famous yogi Bābā Rāmadeva. The first part of Nābhi Kriyā has similarity with the Kapālabhātī so far the breathing technique is concerned. The extra part is here the practitioner concentrates at Maṇipūra *cakra* while practicing. Maṇipūra *cakra* is important since it is the center where higher and lower mental currents collide. Then while exhaling the practitioner contracts the abdomen by pressing the umbilicus with thumb and/or forefingers of both hands. In this way there is a stimulating effect on the nerves in the umbilicus region and on the solar plexus. This technique cleans the blood by expelling carbon dioxide, more oxygenated blood makes the body fluid from acidic to alkaline, activates brain cells, stimulates abdominal organs, diaphragm and thoracic organs. The important aspect here along with Kapālabhātī is the concentration at Maṇipūra and pressing the umbilicus. After some rounds of practice the practitioner takes a long and deep breath and then comes to a state of near breath suspension, which means there is very slow and mild breath. This leads the mind to calm down and due to concentration at Maṇipūra the practitioner feels the vibrations at the center. Some practitioners may not feel

the vibrations at Maṇipūra but can feel at umbilicus, and then they can practice concentration at Maṇipūra and transfer the feeling of vibration from the umbilicus region to Maṇipūra.

Step II: Now the practitioner proceeds to the second step of Nābhi Kriyā. Mentally the practitioner repeats the sacred syllable *Om* along with the vibrations at the lumber center, Maṇipūra. In this way he concentrates his mind with the help of sound *Om* and vibrations at the lumber center. After going through some rounds at Maṇipūra he can climb up to Anāhata to feel the same. Then he ascends to Viśuddha and Ājñā *cakra*-s. From Ājñā he comes down to Mūlādhāra attending each center in between and repeating the same process in all the centers, and then from Mūlādhāra climbs to Svādhiṣṭhāna to finish at Maṇipūra (Fig. 5.1).

Our mind is like a monkey and it does not like to stay at one place. Forcing the mind makes it more violent, it must be controlled indirectly. Here we give the options of *Om* along with vibrations and different centers to the mind so that we train it to bring from hundred objects in to a few. Moreover the process energizes each center.

A Variation: We find another version of this technique taught in Kriyā-yoga by some masters. Here they don't teach the first part. They begin with a sitting posture and press the chin against the base of the throat, then concentrate at Maṇipūra and chant *Om* mentally up to hundred and eight counts. The practitioners can take the help of a rosary for counting. Then they lift the chin and tilt the head towards the back, concentrate at the Ājñā *cakra* and chant few rounds of *Om*.

If we evaluate this technique then pressing the chin down comes under *Jalandhara bandha* of traditional Haṭha-yoga. A *bandha* or lock takes to a state of retention of breath, *kumbhaka*, of course here there is no complete retention. If this is not preceded either by long and deep breathing exercises or by the breathing exercises like those of Kapālabhātī and Bhastrikā, then practicing concentration in chin down position for long would lead to gradual accumulation of carbon dioxide in body fluids, which is not good for health. The minds of persons with accumulated carbon dioxide in body become irritable. So when it is not preceded by breathing exercises, the practitioner should not lock the chin; however if preceded by breathing exercises then one can practice with the chin down.

The reason many present day Kriyā-yoga masters do not teach the technique of Nābhi Kriyā may be keeping in view that a practitioner gets similar benefits from other Kriyā-yoga techniques. In Guru Praṇāma technique there is retention of breath and bowing down. In Mahāmudrā techniques there is alternate compression of left and right abdominal cavity and then compression of total abdominal cavity followed by inhalation and stretching. These techniques take care of the health of visceral organs and arousal of Prāṇa inside the spine.

practitioner can meditate more at Mañipūra if feels stiffness at that the center. But before learning the techniques of Guru Praṇāma, Mahāmudrā, Kriyā-breath, and Kriyā-meditation, it is good and beneficial for one to practice Nābhi Kriyā.

KHECARĪ MUDRĀ

This is the first technique taught under the Kriyā-yoga traditions. This is also called Nabho *mudrā*. The letter-*kha* means space or ether. One who moves in the sky, viz., a bird, a cloud, the wind, the sun, the moon, a planet and celestial beings like a *gandharva* is called *khecara*. *Khecarī* is the feminine aspect or the energy aspect of that moves in the sky. One of the names of the Divine Mother Durgā is also Khecarī. Khecarī is the vital energy that moves in the ether. *Nabhah* is also another name of the sky. Here in this technique the tongue is rolled up, so that one keeps silence. Before the speech is articulated, this appears in the form of thoughts in the mind. These thoughts are nothing but subtle sounds and the sounds come from the subtle ether element. Now by rolling up the tongue a practitioner sends the thought waves back to the ether. This is a way of having mastery over the mind. So it is said,

cittam carati khe yasmājjihvā carati khe yataḥ,
teneyam khecarī mudrā sarvasiddhanamaskṛtā. (YCU, 55)

or

cittam carati khe yasmājjihvā bhavati khe gatā,
tenaiṣā khecarī nāma mudrā siddhanamaskṛtā. (Db.U, 82 and 83)

Whose mind moves in the ether, *cittam carati khe yasmāt*, and whose tongue moves in the space (here keeping the tongue in posterior nasal cavity, *kapāla kuhara*, above the palate is referred as movement of tongue in space), *jihvā carati khe yataḥ*, that is the Khecarī *mudrā*, *teneyam khecarī mudrā*, saluted by all the Siddhas, *sarvasiddhanamaskṛtā*.

Tongue, the Most Important Organ: Tongue is one of the most important organs of our body. We loose maximum energy through our tongue. If one evaluates the activities in a day he/she might notice that it was unnecessary gossiping, loose talks that dominates all other activities, and this is not at all required. Due to our tongue we create friends and due to the same tongue we create enemies. This tongue is a double-edged sword and we must know how to utilize it properly. If we practice Khecarī *mudrā* then we shall be able to do that. First we shall learn to restrain our speech. When we remain rolling our tongue up and back, and a thought comes, we are able to analyze and evaluate it; and then we learn if it should at all be pronounced or not. Over a period we learn to be judicious in using our words and in the process we save a lot of vital energy. As an organ of speech, the tongue is related to Viśuddha *cakra*. Again the tongue is also an organ of taste, and taste is related to the sex center, i.e., the second *cakra*,

Svādhiṣṭhāna. Controlling taste, controlling sex and controlling speech are the major aspects in controlling the mind and growth in spiritual path. These are the reasons for which the Khecarī *mudrā* has been given so much importance in yogic practices. Again we find that over the ages, many myths and misconceptions have been gathered around this simple practice.

The Technique in the Scriptures: Practicing this *mudrā* is very simple and one can achieve success easily only if he practices sincerely. The technique; of Khecarī *mudrā* is described as,

*kapālahukhare jīhvā praviṣṭā viparītagā,
bhruvorantargatā dṛṣṭimudrā bhavati khecarī. (YCU, 52; GS, 1.62)*

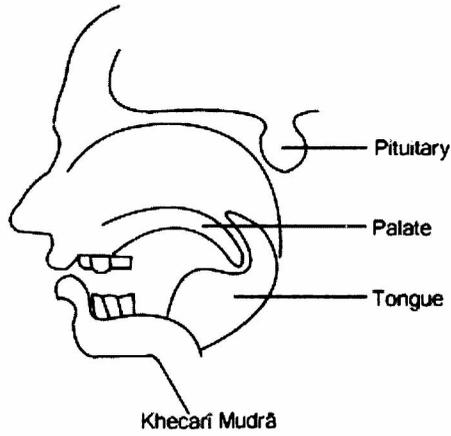
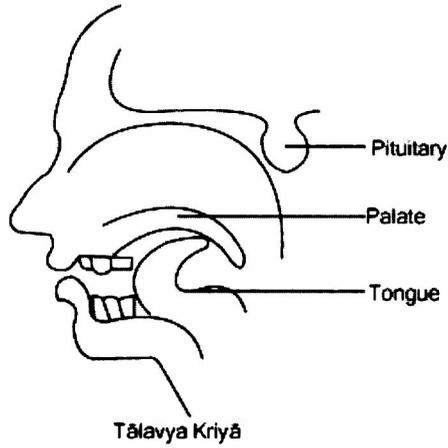
When the tongue, *jīhvā*, in a reverse order, *viparītagā*, is entered inside the Kapāla Kuhara (posterior nasal cavity above the palate), *kapālahukhare praviṣṭā*, and the attention is fixed in the space between the eyebrows, *bhruvorantargatā dṛṣṭi*, that becomes the Khecarī *mudrā*, *mudrā bhavati khecarī*.

The same has been told in another place as,

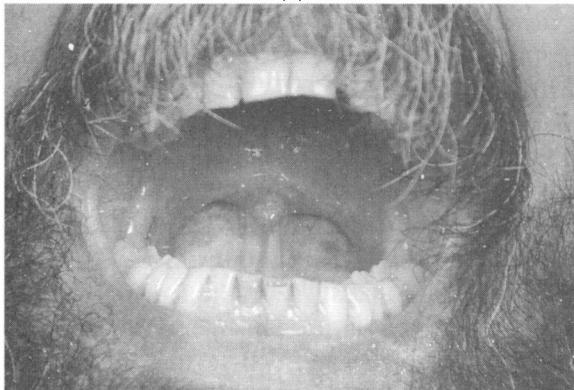
*antahkapālahukhare jīhvām vyāvṛtya dhārayet,
bhrūmadhyadṛṣṭirapyeṣā mudrā bhavati khecarī. (YTU, 117 and 118)*

One should keep, *dhārayet*, the tongue, *jīhvām*, covering, *vyāvṛtya*, the inside of posterior nasal cavity above the palate, *antahkapālahukhare*, fixing the gaze inside the space between two eyebrows, *bhrūmadhyadṛṣṭirapyeṣā*, that becomes the Khecarī *mudrā*, *mudrā bhavati khecarī*.

Technique of Khecarī, Success and Experiences: The present author has taken only five months to achieve success. Though I learned this technique in last week of January 1994 but I was just rolling up the tongue only during the meditation hours and my meditation was also not very regular in early days. I took a resolve for success and started practicing Khecarī from fifth of August 2002 sincerely in my master's ashram at Rishikesh, and then in two occasions till October 2002 I felt little pain because of minor injury caused to frenum due to strain on rolling up. In October 2002 my tongue touched the uvula and on fifth of January 2003 the tongue entered through the uvula passage. I felt breathlessness and little uncomfortable. From twenty-fifth of January 2003 the tongue entered through uvula passage and remained in posterior nasal cavity and I was able to breathe and remain in a comfortable state. On the next day the tongue touched the partition of anterior left and right nasal cavity, and also touched the base of the skull. For first few days the uvula passage was tight and later the tongue remained normally as it remains in mouth cavity. This made the breath very normal. The present author knows many practitioners who achieved success in this technique, and even knows a young ascetic who is able to achieve success within a month. He also knows a person who is casually practicing this technique since last forty years



(a)



(b)

Fig. 5.2. (a) Tālavya Kriyā and Khecarī mudrā; (b) Mouth opened to show Khecarī mudrā.

without success because of his talkative nature and this man can give you a nice lecture on the *mudrā*. So what is important is the practice and the speech restraint.

Just roll back your tongue up and push it inside. No need to use your hand or fingers. Just push your tongue up and back. Try to do this through out the day and not just during one-hour meditation. When you don't need to talk, don't take food or not in sleep you can practice this technique, and you can do this while doing other works. You must not have any bad habits like smoking, chewing tobacco or drinking alcohol, etc. These damage the tongue, makes it keratinous, forms ulcers and the tongue loses its elasticity. Younger persons can get success easily than the older ones. While pushing your tongue up and back it would touch hard palate, then soft palate, then touch the uvula, cross the uvula passage, come to the upper surface of soft palate and finally lie in the posterior nasal cavity above the palate, *kapālakuhara*, and then touch the partition wall of anterior left and right nasal cavity. Even you can learn to block left or right nasal pits from inside and touch the base of the skull by your tongue.

While practicing you may feel strain in *frenum lingua*. This is a septum in lower part of the front portion of our tongue joining the tongue with base of the mouth. Even minor injury to the *frenum lingua* may occur and that would heal naturally if the practitioner does not suffer from diseases like high blood sugar or blood urea, etc. From the experience of the present author he learned the following. During the initial days of practice of rolling tongue back and up mouth is filled with salivary juices, and during the meditation so much juices are secreted that frequently the practitioner has to swallow it or else it flows down through the mouth. The taste of the juice varies, sometimes it is salty, sometimes sweet, sometimes as if the juice is mixed with ghee and sometimes there is aromatic smell in the juice. When the tongue enters the nasal cavity through uvula passage the taste is generally salty and later changes to that of mixed with ghee. While the practitioner is nearing success, i.e., the tongue entering though uvula passage, he feels breathlessness during the practice. Then for few days the same breathless condition prevails while practicing. Initially this may be little uncomfortable and the practitioner may develop fear since the passage would remain tight for few days but one need not fear. Then the tongue remains in the posterior nasal cavity comfortably as it remains in the mouth cavity. If the practitioner is practicing Kriyā breath techniques and Kriyā-meditation simultaneously with the practice of the *mudrā*, then at the time of success of the *mudrā* he may experience some mystic experiences during the period while meditating; also he may experience breathless state, stoppage of heartbeat etc. during the meditation with a complete calm mind without any thoughts.

Incidentally it may be mentioned here that the present author had a vision of Śrīyukteśvarajī continuously from January 25 to 29, 2003 during his night meditation, which collided with the success in Khecarī. This was the effect of Khecarī along with Kriyā breath techniques and meditation. I was meditating

in the night at two o'clock alone in my room. Just after few minutes I sat for meditation I could not do any technique. In front of me Śrīyukteśvarajī was sitting in his usual meditative posture. His body was made up of bright golden light, he was wearing a golden robe with usual knot on the chest region and a very strong golden light was spreading from his body lighting the entire room. He was not speaking anything and his blissful presence was being felt for a considerable period of time. The big portrait of Śrīyukteśvarajī in the meditation hall of the ashram was a different one so this was not the effect of the portrait on my subconscious mind reflecting in this way. Moreover, I had never meditated on the photo of Śrīyukteśvarajī. I had never thought of having a vision of Śrīyukteśvarajī nor wished so. Hence I could not reject this vision as a manipulation of mind. I read from books of yogis that at a stage of meditation gods, gurus, siddhas, and saints visit the practitioner in their subtle bodies to bless and encourage on practice, and that was ascertained from my own experience.

No Need to Cut the Frenum: The practitioner need not have to cut, *chedana*, the *frenum* and/or milk, *dohana*, the tongue for success in Khecarī. Traditionally cutting the *frenum* is called *chedana* and milking the tongue to make it long is called *dohana*. Though these are prescribed in some scriptures like *Yoga-kundalyupaniṣad*, hundreds of Kriyā-yoga practitioners have mastered the technique without cutting the frenum and milking the tongue. However one is not going to be a “sky-walker” due to success in this technique, one would be a sky-walker in the sense that he would send back thoughts to the ether. Since the ether element is related to bliss he would attain the state of bliss, and that is the state of sky walking. So many myths and misconceptions has been attributed to the success in Khecarī and described in various texts, which should be neglected. Maybe the purpose was to create an enthusiasm to a beginner and the sayings are with inner meanings.

Tālavya Kriyā: The practice of Khecarī *mudrā* is in traditional Haṭha-yoga system is known as *lambikā-yoga* and in Kriyā-yoga system is known as *tālavya kriyā*. The practice of above procedure described to achieve success in the Khecarī *mudrā* is known as *tālavya kriyā* (*vide supra*, p. 269). We find some Kriyā-yoga teachers teach the *tālavya kriyā* as rolling back the tongue to touch hard palate above and then bringing it back in such a manner with making the sound “frog jumping into the water.” The present author fails to find the rationale behind making a “frog jumping into the water sound” for success in Khecarī. If we push back the tongue then there would be stress in the frenum and it would loosen over a period of time. Sound can be created either while pushing back the tongue or in bringing it back but these are completely unnecessary and have nothing to do either in success of Khecarī or in concentration. Ofcourse children in India play by making such sounds by their tongue.

Benefits: Khecarī has also many more benefits other than restraint in speech and saving energy as described above. The salivary juices secreted during practice washes away the debris from the mouth so that mouth is always fresh and foul smell does not come. This excessive secretion of saliva helps in digestion and body toxins are excreted through saliva. During the period of meditation one does not feel thirst so he/she can sit for long sittings. One does not suffer from nasal congestion due to Khecarī and breath-practice. When one gets success in Khecarī then his/her breath becomes smooth without fluctuations. In breath-practices with the *mudrā*, one finds, the breath as long, sharp, thin, strong, and flexible. This breath helps the vital energy to ascend piercing the *cakra*-s and knots within the spinal cord. The base of the skull above the nasal cavity is very sensitive and provided with many nerves, and these nerves get stimulated. This stimulates pituitary and the *Ājñā cakra*. Concentration becomes automatic at the *Ājñā cakra* without any more effort of the practitioner. So it is said,

*tālumūlagatām yatnājjihvayākramya ghaṇṭikām,
ūrdhvarandhram gate prāṇe prāṇaspando nirudhyate. (Sa. U, 1.30)*

When by the tongue, *jihvayā*, the base of the skull is reached, *tālumūlagatām*, with care, *yatnāt*, crossing the uvula, *ākramya ghaṇṭikām*, *prāṇa* enters into the hole at the top, *ūrdhvarandhram gate prāṇe*, and the vibrations of *prāṇa* are stopped, *prāṇaspando nirudhyate*.

In this state the life-force becomes upward and concentrates in the brain, and the practitioner attains a state beyond the vibrations, which results in stoppage of vibrations of mind leading to stillness of the mind.

But the Khecarī *mudrā* of entering tongue into the posterior nasal cavity is only outer, *bāhya*. The real Khecarī is a different one. When one gets success in stabilizing the breath without effort to hold the air, *vāyuh sthiraḥ vinā avarodhanam*, this is *kevala kumbhaka*, this is automatic stoppage of breath but one remains in *prāṇa*. Then the gaze is fixed without looking, *drṣṭiḥ sthiraḥ vinā avalokanam*, this is fixing the gaze in infinity without concentration on an external or internal object. The next is when the mind is still without any support, *manah sthiraḥ vinā avalambanam*, here mind is still and without any thoughts but for this we do not take the support of anything be it breath, sounds, vibrations, light, mantra, yantra, maṇḍala or images. When these three states are achieved at once, then that is the state of Khecarī, *sā tu khecarī sthitiḥ*. So the real Khecarī is same as Samādhi. However this Khecarī *mudrā* is a step towards that Khecarī.

GURU PRAṆĀMA

This is a unique Kriyā-yoga technique known as Bowing Down to the Masters, *guru praṇāma*, generally not found in other systems. This is a combination of devotion with concentration, breath technique, *mudrā* and *bandha*. Before understanding Guru Praṇāma we should understand the Yogic-lock Technique,

Yogamudrā, taught in traditional Haṭha-yoga systems. In *Yogamudrā*, one sits in lotus posture, *Padmāsana*, with spine straight and both the hands locked with fingers and palm, kept either in the front on the heels or in the back. Then he exhales slowly, bends forward and touches the forehead on the ground. If he remains in the posture for a period, he can breathe normally. Then comes back to sit up position while inhaling. In *Guru Praṇāma* one has to inhale and then bow down.

Technique: In *Guru Praṇāma*, one sits cross-legged with the spine straight, tongue rolled up, eyes closed and chin gently locked. The lotus posture, *padmāsana*, is preferred. Regarding the postures for meditations the scriptures generally prescribe four postures as it is said,

siddham bhadram tathā simham padmam ceti catuṣṭayam. (Db. U, 43)

siddham padmam tathā simham bhadram ceti catuṣṭayam. (YTU, 29)

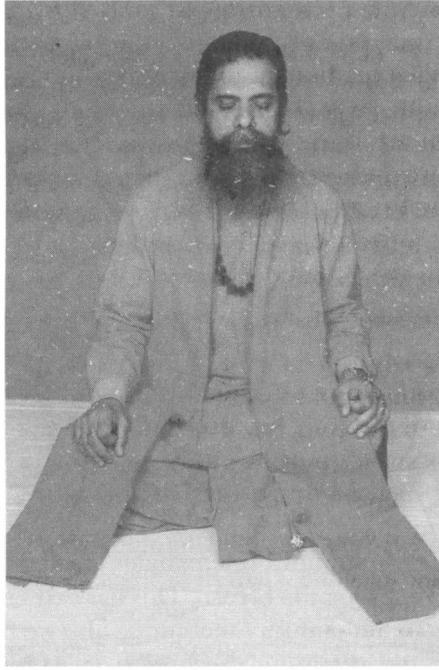
Siddha (posture of *siddha*-s or posture of success), *siddham*, *padma* (lotus posture), *padmam*, also *simha* (lion posture), *tathā simham*, and *bhadra* (gentle posture), *bhadram ca*, are the four postures, *iti catuṣṭayam*.

· However, the two postures are most important for practice of meditation and are highlighted in the scriptures as,

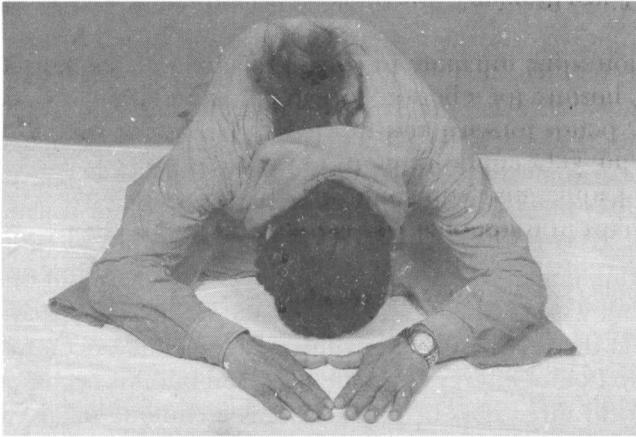
ekam siddhāsanam proktam dviṭīyam kamalāsanam. (YCU, 3; GS, 1.9)

One, *ekam*, is said to be, *proktam*, the posture of Siddhas, *siddhāsanam*, the second, *dviṭīyam*, is the lotus posture, *kamalāsanam*.

In the opinion of the present author, for *Guru Praṇāma* the lotus posture is the best and for *Kriyā* breath practice the posture of siddhas is the best. However those who cannot sit in a posture can sit cross-legged (Fig. 5.3a) or in a chair keeping the spine straight. To keep the spine straight is more important than leg positions in a posture. First the practitioner fixes the attention the coccyx center, *Mūlādhāra*, and this is the Master of Smell. Master of smell is Lord Gaṇeśa. The long nose or trunk of the Elephant-head God represents smell. There is predominance of the earth element at this center. Persons with devotional nature establish the Lord Gaṇeśa, who is worshiped first. Gaṇeśa is the son of Divine Mother Pārvatī. He guards the door of the Divine Mother Śakti, and *Mūlādhāra* is the first center to be pierced for the *prāṇa* or Śakti to ascend. The *Mūlādhāra* is the first door. While concentrating at *Mūlādhāra* the devotee may feel inner light, subtle vibration or inner sound depending upon his state of meditation, and these become good medium for concentration. One can also merge the *Om* sound with the inner rhythm during practice of concentration as described in Step II (p. 264) of *Nābhi Kriyā*. Beginners generally do not have this feeling and can either concentrate simply at the point of coccyx or concentrate at there on their breath. It is good to start with concentrating on the breath at the center. Those devotees with strong devotional background to start with the *kriyā* technique can visualize Lord Gaṇeśa, repeat a *mantra* of the Lord or can concentrate on



(a)



(b)

Fig. 5.3. Guru Praṇāma: (a) Positions 1 and 3; (b) Position 2

the *yantra* of the Lord. Nowadays some Kriyā-yoga teachers are asking to concentrate on the lineages of Kriyā-masters putting their immediate master in the first center, master of the master, *paramaguru*, in the second center and so on. Since human beings are emotional in nature these sorts of concentration on

gods or gurus helps a lot in the beginning but in later stages of their practice they have to leave these practices and only have to concentrate at the point with breath or subtle breath. Our goal is to reach a “no thought state.” We have earlier discussed that the Kriyā-yoga is a practice of equanimity of mind, *samatānuvandhī*, where as the way of devotion is based on attachment and affection, *mamatānuvandhī*. However, we can take to meditation based on attachment and affection, *mamatānuvandhī dhyāna*, in the beginning for our speedy growth and later the practitioner realizes that all everything is One, and then emotion, *mamatā*, merges in equanimity, *samatā*.

After practicing concentration for a while the practitioner takes a long and deep breath from Mūlādhāra up to the crown center, Sahasrāra, retains the breath and bows down to touch the forehead on the ground in the front (Fig. 5.3b). Then he sits up (Fig. 5.3a) and exhales long and deep from Sahasrāra to Mūlādhāra. This is the technique of Guru Praṇāma. Here the in-breath and out-breath are like those of Kriyā Proper I. (*Vide infra*, “The Process is Repeated with All the *cakra*-s,” p. 275.)

Benefits and Effects: In Yogamudrā one exhales and bows down but here one inhales and bows down retaining the breath. This has extra advantages in addition to those in Yogamudrā. In Mahāmudrā technique also we find bending the body forward after inhaling and retaining the breath (*vide infra*, p. 293). So Guru Praṇāma technique also gives some benefits of Mahāmudrā whereas this is not so hard like Mahāmudrā. So even aged persons, who cannot practice Mahāmudrā can practice this. The disorders of abdomen are removed in both Yogamudrā and Guru Praṇāma. But here the abdominal cavity is contracted while the extra benefits over Yogamudrā are the expansion of thoracic cavity and the capacity of lungs to hold more air is increased. There is pressure on the diaphragm due to retention of breath and contraction of abdomen, so the diaphragm and abdominal organs get gentle message and more blood supply when normal position is regained. This Kriyā is so strong that the face of a new practitioner becomes almost red during practice showing that there is a large amount of blood flow to the head region. The brain cells get stimulated. A beginner may feel that the mind is blank at the very first Kriyā. Some may feel little uncomfortable for the first time due to flow of energy to the head region but this becomes normal and relaxing in two to three days of practice. This technique takes away the *tamas* quality of the body. Guru Praṇāma enhances the capability of the practitioner for long and deep breath. After a period of practice the practitioner can feel the ascending and descending Prāṇic currents within the spine while inhaling and exhaling. Due to bending again and again the spine becomes flexible, and this is an exercise for joints between vertebrae. The spinal cord becomes elastic. The heat is generated due to bowing down and felt inside the spine. This magnetises the spine with energy. The spine is like a water filled tube continuing at the top

with the brain. At the top is the third ventricle of the brain and is believed to contain a minute vacuum or pure ether element, *śūnya dhātu*, i.e., pure form of *prāṇa*: *śūnya dhāturbhavet prāṇaḥ*, vacuum element becomes *prāṇa*. Due to bowing down this ether element, *śūnya dhātu*, that is at the top of the liquid filled tube tends to move downwards thereby recharging the entire spinal cord with *prāṇa*. The Prāṇic energy named *kunḍalinī* in yoga and tantra is at the top at Sahasrāra as well as at the bottom below the Mūlādhāra. The *kunḍalinī* at the top now rejuvenates the entire spinal cord from the top.

Contraindication: Those who have backache problems should avoid forward bending. They can do the breath technique without bowing down. They can cure their backache problem by yoga therapy and then can practice bowing down. Persons suffering from acute hypertension should not do this technique in the beginning. They should first do breath techniques like Haṁsa Sādhanā and after being relieved from the hypertension can do this technique. Then this technique becomes helpful in containing hypertension and in stress management.

Variations: Here it may incidentally be mentioned that some masters in recent past have made little modifications in this technique though they may claim their technique as the original one. They teach to rotate the body from left to right in an anti-clockwise manner while bowing down and sitting up. Some even added to bow down left, right and middle. In our opinion these are complicating a simple technique. Moreover in a meditation technique body movements and shakings should be kept to a minimum as these distract the mind instead of calming down. Here though bending movement is done to energize the spinal cord, un-required body movements are of no help.

The Process is Repeated with All the cakras: The same process of bowing down is repeated with all the seven centers. The second center, Svādhiṣṭhāna, is the Master of Taste. There is predominance of the water element at this center. A devotee establishes Goddess Kālī here. The emerging tongue of Divine Mother Kālī represents taste. The Sun-god represents vision. The third center, Maṇipūra, is the Master of Vision. The fire element is predominant at third center. A devotee establishes the Sun-god here. The fourth center, Anāhata, is the Master of Touch or Sensation. The air element is predominant at the fourth center. Here Lord Viṣṇu, the sustainer is the presiding deity of this center. The fifth center, Viśuddha, is the Master of Sound. There is predominance of the ether element at this center. The devotees establish Lord Śiva here. In this way the chief five gods of Indian society are worshiped by the Kriyā-devotees. But in the context of the body, the five gods are smell, taste, vision, touch, and sound.

In other systems of yoga and particularly in a system of Śrīvidyā techniques the practitioner establishes the Five Manifested Lords, *pañca sambhu* (Śambhu is the lord causing happiness and granting prosperity), in the lower five centers. They

are Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Maheśvara, and Sadāśiva established in Mūlādhāra, Svādhiṣṭhāna, Maṇipūra, Anāhata, and Viśuddha *cakra*s, respectively. Above these, in the Ājñā *cakra* is Sadākhyāśiva, and this is also *Ardhanārīśvara*, half-Śiva and half-Śakti. But here it appears that as if Śakti has taken the other half, i.e., Śiva. This is both Śiva and Śakti, God and Goddess of Desires, *Kāmeśvara* and *Kāmeśvarī*, in their eternal sports for creation. According to *Bhairavayāmalatantra*, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, and Maheśvara are four legs of the bed and Sadāśiva is the bed on which is established the Divine Mother *Mahātripurasundarī*, the Great Beauty of Three Worlds, viz., the earth, the intermediate space, and the heaven. This is Śakti, and this is the Cosmic Energy named Prāṇa. This is above the five elements. From Her emerge the five elements. She is the cause of creation. At the crown center, Sahasrāra, is the Transcendental Lord, *Paramaśiva*. The present author does not know if these systems follow breath based bowing like Kriyā-yoga traditions, though some do bowing as done in Yogamudrā.

In the Kriyā-yoga Guru Praṇāma technique, a devotee establishes Kṛṣṇa the Life Force, *Prāṇakṛṣṇa*, at the sixth center, Ājñā *cakra*. This is God the Son, this is the seat of Christ consciousness. This is same as *Ardhanārīśvara* or *Mahātripurasundarī*. At crown center a *kriyāvān* establishes his personal God, *iṣṭadeva*, as the Self of all, *Ātmārāma*. This is God the Father, *paramapitā*. The seventh bowing down in this technique is known as “Bowling Down to the Sought Deity,” *Iṣṭa Praṇāma*. We may find outer differences in names and deities but the principle is same. There is no place of sectarianism; it is all about the story of our inner self.

HAṂSAḤ SĀDHANĀ

This technique has also been known in various other names, viz., Soham Sādhanā, Soham Japa, Ajapā Japa, Ajapā Gāyatrī, Prāṇāpāna Smṛti, and Prāṇa Vikṣaṇā. This technique is found in almost all systems of yoga, tantra and traditions of saints, *santaparamparā*. This is described in almost all yoga treatises. The Kriyā-yoga is the Haṁsaḥ-yoga.

Haṁsaḥ: Śiva is *ham* and Śakti is *sa*. Haṁsaḥ is uniting Śakti with Śiva. Śiva is the Transcendental Self, this is the still form, and this is the Knowledge. Śakti is the activating power of Śiva, and this appears in the form of will, *icchā*, knowledge, *jñāna*, and action, *kriyā*. Haṁsaḥ is *Om*; when the ego, *aham*, and the action, *sa*, of the Haṁsa or *aham saḥ* (I am He) merge then there remains only the Knowledge or *Om*. It is said,

kriyā icchā tathā jñānam brāhmī raudrī ca vaiṣṇavī,
tridhā mātrāsthityatra tatparam jyotiromiti. (YCU, 86)

Action, will and knowledge are, *kriyā icchā tathā jñānam*, Brāhmī, Raudrī, and Vaiṣṇavī, *brāhmī raudrī ca vaiṣṇavī*, established in three letters (viz., *a*, *u*, and *m*)

there, *tridhā mātrāsthītiryatra*, beyond that is the light (knowledge), *tatparam jyotiḥ*, and this is Om, *omiti*.

These three powers, viz. the Power of Brāhma (*Brāhmā*), the Power of Rudra (*Raudrī*) and the Power of Viṣṇu (*Vaiṣṇavī*) are the three letters of *Om*. These three letters or these three powers are *saḥ* of *Haṁsaḥ*. The Supreme Ego Principle is *ham*, and this is Śiva. When identified with the individual body and the mind this is the ego, *aham* or *ātmā*, and this is the individual self, *jīva*. When identified with the cosmic body and the cosmic mind this is the Cosmic self or the God, *Īśvara* or *Viśvātmā*; and in its transcendental state this is the Transcendental Self, *Śiva* or *Paramātmā*. This *Paramātmā* is the “no letter,” *amātra*, or the fourth quarter of *Om* (see *supra*, “The Four Quarters,” p. 223). The *ham* of *Haṁsaḥ* remains in the states, viz., the individual self, *ātmā*, the Cosmic Self, *Viśvātmā*, and the Transcendental Self, *Paramātmā*. By practice of *Haṁsaḥ* the individual self is to be merged with the Cosmic Self and subsequently, with the Transcendental Self. Though all the three powers, viz. action, will and knowledge, *kriyā*, *icchā*, and *jñāna*, are known as the *Prāṇa* but the power of action, *kriyā*, is most important from the yogic practice point of view, hence this *Kriyā* generally referred as the *Prāṇa*. By the activity of the *Prāṇa*, known as *prāṇakarma* or *kriyā*, Śakti (the activating power of Śiva) merges with Śiva. This is the Knowledge. *Haṁsaḥ* is *prāṇakarma*. *Haṁsaḥ* is breath. *Haṁsaḥ* means knowledge. The word is derived from *hantvā* or one who kills. *Haṁsaḥ* kills the bondage of ignorance. By halting the actions of mind, *Haṁsaḥ* removes the ignorance of identification of Self with body and mind, and hence becomes the cause of establishing the individual self in the Transcendental Self. It is said,

*jāgrannetradvayormadhye haṁsa eva prakāśate,
sakāraḥ khecarī proktastvampadam ceti niścitam.
hakāraḥ paramesaḥ syāttatpadam ceti niścitam,
sakāro dhyāyate janturhakāro hi bhavetdhrvam.* (YCU, 82 and 83)

That *Haṁsa* manifests, *haṁsa eva prakāśate*, in the point between the two eyes at the waking state, *jāgrannetradvayormadhye*. The letter-*sa* is said as *khecarī*, *sakāraḥ khecarī proktaḥ*, and that surely is the word “you,” *tvam padam ceti niścitam*. The letter-*ha* is the Transcendental Lord, *hakāraḥ paramesaḥ syāt*, and is surely the word “That,” *tat padam ceti niścitam*. When a being meditates on the letter-*sa*, *sakāro dhyāyate jantuh*, he surely becomes the letter-*ha*, *hakāro hi bhavetdhrvam*.

Here it is established that the breath-practice or *Haṁsaḥ* leads to the Knowledge. The point between two eyes is the *Ājñā cakra* and this is the seat of *Haṁsaḥ*. The respiratory point is in Medulla of our brain. By breath-practice the *Prāṇa* ascends through the spinal cord and establishes at the *Ājñā cakra*. We do this practice in waking state and are conscious about the convergence of *Prāṇa* at the *Ājñā cakra* during our practice. This convergence of the life-force at the Medulla center is the entry point into “no thought state.” Of course in deep sleep

state Prāṇa or Haṁsaḥ remains there but we are ignorant about it. The letter-*sa* of Haṁsaḥ is said as Khecari here. Khecari means the vital energy, the Prāṇa, and this is Śakti. Since this Śakti moves in the ether, *kha*, hence called Khecari. Here *sa* is the inhalation. In this verse *sa* also includes *ha* or the exhalation. This *sa* is compared with the word “you” (or *tvam pada*) of the Vedānta. Here *ha* is the breathless state and this is the pure Prāṇa. This comes after the breath-practice or *Haṁsaḥ Sādhanā*. In a “no thought” state due to stillness of the breath, identification of the self with body and mind is not possible. So the individual self, *jīvātmā*, is merged in the Transcendental Self, *paramātmā*, and that is the letter-*ha* as the Transcendental Lord, *hakārah paramesaḥ*. This *ha* is compared with the word “That” (or *tat pada*) of the Vedānta. This shows similarity between the contemplation of “Thou art That” (*tattvamasī*) in the Path of Knowledge with “That is I” (*soham or saḥ aham*) practice in the Path of Yoga. This *haṁsa* is the indwelling self. So it is said,

prāṇinām dehamadhye tu sthito haṁsaḥ sadā'cyutaḥ,
haṁsa eva param satyam haṁsa eva tu śaktikam. (BVU, 60)

The ever imperishable (or not fallen from its form), *sadā'cyutaḥ*, Haṁsa is established, *sthito haṁsaḥ*, verily inside the bodies of the beings, *prāṇinām dehamadhye tu*. The Haṁsa is the Supreme Truth, *haṁsa eva param satyam*, the Haṁsa is the form of energy (or Śakti), *haṁsa eva tu śaktikam*.

From above we learn that the Haṁsa is the Prāṇa, this is both Śakti and Śiva. This is also the individual self as well as the Cosmic Self.

The Glory of Haṁsa: This technique and knowledge of Haṁsa has been praised in various ways in the scriptures,

anayā sadṛśī vidyā anayā sadṛśo jāpaḥ,
anayā sadṛśam puṇyam (jñānam) na bhūtam na bhaviṣyati.
(YCU, 34; Db. U, 64–65; GS, 1.44)

There is no technique like this, *anayā sadṛśī vidyā*, there is no repetition like this, *anayā sadṛśo jāpaḥ*. There is no auspicious deed (knowledge) like this, *anayā sadṛśam puṇyam(jñānam)*, neither in the past nor in the future, *na bhūtam na bhaviṣyati*.

Again it is said, *haṁsavidyāmṛte loka nāsti nityatvasādhanam*, there is no other practice to attain the state of eternity in this world like the immortal knowledge of *haṁsa* (BVU, 26). Further, *haṁsahamseti yo bruyāddhamso brahmā hariḥ śivaḥ*, one who speaks this *haṁsa-haṁsa* (means engaged in the practice of exhalation and inhalation), that Haṁsa (or that person) is like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva (BVU, 34). Furthermore,

haṁsa eva param vākyam haṁsa eva tu vaidikam,
haṁsa eva paro rudro haṁsa eva parātparam. (BVU, 61)

Haṁsa is the supreme speech, *haṁsa eva param vākyaṁ*, haṁsa is the essence of the Vedas, *haṁsa eva tu vaidikam*. Haṁsa is the Transcendental Rudra, *haṁsa eva paro rudro*, haṁsa is the Transcendental Self, *haṁsa eva parātparam*.

*sarvadevasya madhyastho haṁsa eva mahēśvaraḥ,
pṛthivyādiśivāntam tu akārādyāśca varṇakāḥ. (BVU, 62)*

Among all the gods (means the sense organs, organs of action and the mind), *sarvadevasya madhyastho*, haṁsa is verily the Supreme God, *haṁsa eva mahēśvaraḥ*. From the earth up to the Transcendental Self, *pṛthivyādiśivāntam*, verily, *tu*, the haṁsa is established among the letters *a* and others, *akārādyāśca varṇakāḥ*.

The Prāṇa Haṁsa is the Supreme Controller and all other gods, organs and mind, are under the control of Prāṇa. This the Cosmic Energy, the Prāṇa is involved in the Transcendental Self and this Prāṇic energy has manifested as elements up to the earth element. This Prāṇic energy is the subtle ether element as sound and hence this is all the letters from *a* to *ḥṣa*. All these fifty basic sounds or *mātṛkā-s* are Haṁsa; here Haṁsa is the subtle Prāṇa. The exhalation and the inhalation are Haṁsa and the subtle Prāṇa is also Haṁsa. The practice of Haṁsa or the practice of exhalations and inhalations takes to the state of subtle Prāṇa. So feeling the *vyāna vāyu* as vibrations in the body is also Haṁsa. Listening to the internal unhurt sounds is also Haṁsa. *Om* is Haṁsa and Haṁsa is *Om*. Meditation on *mātṛkā-s* is also haṁsa. The fifty basic sounds or *mātṛkā-s* are expansion of *Om*. Then there is further expansion to all names and forms. All articulate sounds are exhalations, products of Haṁsa. To return to our original state from the worlds of names and forms we have to return to Haṁsa, and the first Haṁsa Technique is the breath-practice; practice of the exhalation, *ham*, and the inhalation, *saḥ*.

The Form of Haṁsa: This Haṁsa has been described as,

*hakāreṇa bahiryāti sakāreṇa viśetpunaḥ,
hamsahamsetyamum mantram jīvo jāpati sarvadā.
(Db. U, 61–62; GS, 1.41; YCU, 31)*

The breath goes out, *bahiryāti*, with the sound-*ha*, *hakāreṇa*, and again enters back, *viśetpunaḥ*, with the sound-*sa*, *sakāreṇa*. The individual self, *jīvo*, always repeats, *jāpati sarvadā*, the mantra, *mantram*, “haṁsa-haṁsa” like this, *hamsa-hamsetyamum*.

This verse is almost repeated in all yogic scriptures. *Ham* is the exhalation and *sa* is the inhalation. This is natural sound of our breath. If we silently and closely observe our breath we can know this. Our breath is always repeating *haṁsa*, *soham*; this inner repetition of non-repetition, *ajāpā jāpa*, is going on from birth to death. This has been said as; “*ajāpā nāma gāyatrī yoginām mokṣadā sadā*, this has been named as the Ajapā Gāyatrī that gives liberation to the yogis.” (*Db.U, 63; GS, 1.43; YCU, 33.*) This natural repetition of *ham* and *sa* is going without our

knowledge. This has to be brought to our knowledge, and this breath awareness is the key to the practice. By the practice of exhalation and inhalation, *ham* and *sa*, the motions of exhalation and inhalation are halted. This is suspension of breath and at this state the actions of mind are also halted. This state is called *kevala kumbhaka*, automatic holding of breath. This happens by *haṁsa* practice and also by *kriyā* proper breath practice. This according to Rṣi Patañjali, is the state of *prāṇāyāma* and here the motion of exhalation and inhalation is halted, *śvāsapraśvāsayorgativicchedaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ* (Ygs., 2.49). Since the mind is absorbed into the breath, this would result in inhibiting the actions of mind thereby reflecting the Self in a still and transparent mind.

One saint poet sang in Oḍiyā,

*bāimana ho, basi haṁsaku khelā, basi haṁsaku khelā, haṁsa uḍigale haṁsa uḍigale
haṁsa uḍigale, buḍiva bhelā.*

“Oh mad-mind, sit and make the *haṁsa* sport, once the *haṁsa* flies away then the vessel would sink.”

The mind is to be stabilized and we have to inhale *sa* and exhale *ham*, we have to make the *Haṁsa* sport. We have to do this while living in this body. Once the breath, *haṁsa*, departs this body then the body vessel would sink and we cannot continue our spiritual journey to our destination. So while living in this body we have to do *Haṁsa Sādhanā* to attain equanimity and knowledge.

CONTEMPLATION ON HAṂSA

- a. **The Devotional Way:** The meaning of the Sanskrit word *haṁsa* is “I am That” and *soham* means “That is me.” A mental contemplation identifying the individual self, *jīva*, with a Personal God helps the practitioner in rapid progress. Since most of us are emotional beings a love for a Personal God inhibits all worldly attractions of our mind. But we should establish our Personal God as the Cosmic Self. This is mixing the way of yoga with the way of devotion. Here also there is little difference so far the contemplation is concerned. In *haṁsa* or “I am That,” “I” take precedence over “God,” and in *soham* or “That is I,” “God” takes precedence over “I.” Devī Candrāvalī was almost equal to Devī Rādhā in all other qualities. Devī Candrāvalī believed “Kṛṣṇa belongs to me” but Devī Rādhā believed “I belong to Kṛṣṇa.” So Rādhā excelled. “Soham contemplation” is better than “*haṁsa* contemplation.”
- b. **Way in the Path of Knowledge:** Believers in the path of knowledge can find unity of the individual consciousness, *tvaṁ pada*, with the principle called “That,” *tat Pāda*, i.e., the Cosmic Consciousness or the Transcendental Consciousness along with the breath awareness. This is unifying mental contemplation along with the breath practice. With mental contemplation and establishing unity with the Ego Principle along with

breath and merging our “little ego” with “That,” the practice becomes the best form of worshiping the Ego Principle, *ahaṁgraha upāsana*. This is combining the Path of yoga with the Path of Knowledge. But here is a danger; if one has not purified his mind then he can wrongly accept his limited ego as the Supreme Ego Principle. Then there is a chance of downfall for the practitioner. So in the beginning it is better not to jump to the path of knowledge.

- c. **The Yogic Way:** First our mind must be made pure by practice of *hamsa*. We should practice it without any mental contemplation of the Cosmic Self or the Transcendental Self in the beginning. We should simply practice inhalation and exhalation and watch the breath along with natural sound vibrations of breath *ham* and *sa*. Thoughts would appear but we should not attend to them, and should practice to bring our mind again and again from thoughts to *ham* and *sa*. No mental chanting of *ham* and *sa* is even required; our breath is doing that for us. Only we have to put our mind to *ham* and *sa*. This would absorb the actions of mind. This is the pure yogic way of practice and this becomes a practice of equanimity of mind, *samatva abhyāsa*. After a period of practice and when the practitioner develops a pure mind he can practice mental contemplation finding unity with the Cosmic Self or the Transcendental Self. The yogic way of contemplation is practicing the unity of the individual self with the Cosmic Self whereas the way of knowledge is contemplating the individual self with the Transcendental Self. The Cosmic Self exists due to the existence of the individual self, and once the individual self is merged, the Cosmic Self too does not exist.

Related Practices and the Kriyā Way: A related practice is found among Theravāda Buddhists, and this technique is mentioned as *ānāpāna sati*. This seems to be a Pāli name of Sanskrit *prāṇāpāna smṛti* like the use of *dhmma* for *dharma*, *kamma* for *karma*, and Gotama for Gautama. The difference in the technique is that they do not concentrate in *ham* and *sa* sounds of breath, nor do they resort to any active breathing. Simply they watch the breath as it is and do not attend to thoughts. If the mind goes away, when the practitioner becomes aware he brings it back to watch the breath again. Yogis also do this technique and named this as *prāṇāpāna smṛti* and *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā*. But this is the second part of *Hamsa Sādhanā* in the Kriyā-yoga. It is not possible for all the practitioners to simply watch the breath as it is from the beginning since the mind is like a restless monkey and does not stick to only one support. If one is able to watch the breath from the beginning stages due to practice in his previous life then it is well and good. But many practitioners need some extra support. First we have to do breathing on our own. Here we are in a mental state of a doer, *kartā bhāva*, in this state of practice. Then after sometime, we should leave active breathing and

simply watch our breath. Now we are in a mental state of an observer, *draṣṭā bhāva*. This is the *prāṇāpāna smṛti* or *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā* part of the Haṁsa Sādhanā. In this way the practice becomes easier. And when the breath is stopped so also the actions of mind, the practitioner comes to a state of witness, *sākṣi bhāva*.

A Probable Aberration: Here incidentally it may be mentioned that one of the largest, reputed and most revered school of Kriyā-yoga tradition that has done maximum work in propagating the Kriyā-yoga knowledge all over world, having a good number of followers in the country and aboard teaches the technique in a slight different way. They correspond inhalation to *ham* and exhalation to *sa*. But all the scriptures unanimously say the exhalation as *ham* and the inhalation as *sa* (*vide supra*, p. 279). All other schools of Kriyā-yoga, other traditions of yoga, traditions of saints, *santa-paramparā*, traditions of Siddhas and traditions of those following the path of knowledge all follow the scriptural way. Our natural observation is also that the exhalation is *ham* and the inhalation is *sa*. It is not understood why the technique is reversed like this. A technique either should have a scriptural sanction and/or a rationale behind it, and that should be explained. It is unbelievable to many and even to the mind of the present author that Paramahaṁsa Yogānanda had taught like this. A probability may be that while adopting the teachings of Paramahaṁsa Yogānanda, an aberration could have occurred, but we do not know the exact position. So far mental contemplation of *haṁsa* and *soham* is concerned this aberration does not matter. Again if one simply observes natural sound of breath without mental chanting of *ham* and *sa* this aberration also does not matter. But when the breath practice is done with mental chanting then there is no co-ordination of breath sounds with the mental chanting. However, we can say that over a period of practice the breath itself can correct the mistake. Again we find that even with this reversed technique, thousands of followers are being benefitted. This shows us that we should simply follow the breath and we are bound to progress in the path. Our breath takes care.

Haṁsa Technique, Step I: For practice of Haṁsa Sādhanā in routine meditation practice, a practitioner should sit calm and relaxed keeping the spine straight, do the Khecarī by rolling up the tongue (those who cannot stay with tongue rolled up can practice with tongue in normal position) and practice Guru Praṇāma and Iṣṭa Praṇāma. In leisure hours while relaxing or on travel, a practitioner can also practice Haṁsa Sādhanā, and in that case he needs not to do Guru Praṇāma and Iṣṭa Praṇāma. He can simply take a long and deep breath and then start practicing. The practitioner should concentrate at the Ājñā *cakra* first, and with a feeling of breath inside the spine he should inhale *sa* into the Ājñā *cakra* and exhale *ham* from the Ājñā *cakra*. No need to chant *sa* or *ham* even mentally, our breath is doing that for us. Simply listen to the internal natural exhalation sound *ham* and inhalation sound *sa*. Lengthen both inhalation and exhalation. The difference from the Kriyā Proper breath technique of the first

Kriyā and Haṁsa breath is that the Haṁsa breath is a silent Kriyā breath. A person sitting next to the practitioner would not hear the breath sound of the practitioner. The practitioner listens to the subtle internal sounds of the breath in Haṁsa Technique while in the Kriyā breath there is external sound of the breath. We can say, this is simple inhalation and exhalation, like Anuloma Viloma Prāṇāyāma, with addition of moving the attention inside spine and listening to the internal sounds of *sa* and *ham*. While practicing we shall find that after few breaths our mind slips away from the breath and is engaged in thoughts, and then when we become aware we have to bring our mind back to *ham* and *sa*. We should keep practicing to attend to each inhalation and each exhalation, and not to our thoughts. We should not be angry or get disappointed, as it is nature of the mind to remain with thoughts. Carefully and with patience we practice to train our mind to remain with breath. No breath should enter in or come out without our knowledge. The feeling of breath should be done inside the spine. If one is not able to feel the breath inside the spine he should simple concentrate on the breath. After a period of practice when his concentration capability develops then he can concentrate on the movements of inhalation and exhalation inside the spine. This practice of long and silent inhalation as *sa..a..a..a..* (lengthening of *a* and not as *sa, a, a, a..*) and long and silent exhalation as *ham..m..m..m..* (lengthening of *m* and not as *ham, m, m, m..*) is the first part of Haṁsa Sādhanā.

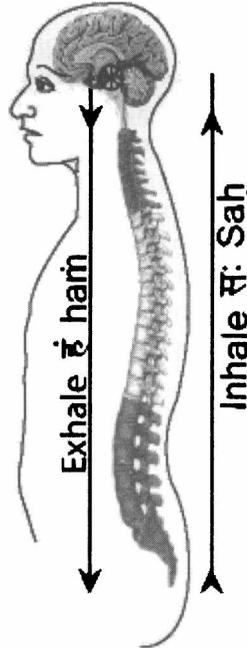


Fig. 5.4. Haṁsa Technique, Step I.

Kriyā Bhrāmari: After a period of practice this first step of Haṁsa, this would develop into Kriyā Bhrāmari. The practitioner will listen to the fine and sweet musical sound of breath like that of a bee. This is different from the Bhrāmari practiced in Haṭha-yoga where the nasal sound is produced from the mouth and throat. The Kriyā Bhrāmari is the sound of the breath and the practitioner does not produce it. This Bhrāmari sound develops after a period of practice. This fills the heart of the practitioner with indescribable joy.

Step II, Prāṇāpāna Smṛti or Prāṇa Vīkṣaṇā: After doing this Haṁsa Kriyā for about thirty minutes to one hour then the practitioner does not lengthen the breath. The breath becomes shorter and shorter automatically. The practitioner now watches the breath as it is. This is the second part of Haṁsa Sādhanā. This is known as *prāṇāpāna smṛti* or *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā*. This is watching *ham* and *sa*. Theravāda Buddhists do this practice by feeling the breath inside the nose. A Kriyā-yogi practices this by feeling the breath inside the spine, breath coming into and going from Ājñā *cakra*. But the principle of merging the mind into the breath is same. Here the spine gets magnetized with the life-force. The difference between *prāṇāpāna smṛti* and *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā* is that *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā* technique includes both *prāṇāpāna smṛti*, watching inhalations and exhalations, and *vyāna vīkṣaṇā*, watching vibrations within body (see below).

Step III, Inner Rhythm at Ājñā cakra: After a period for watching *ham* and *sa* the breath becomes very subtle, the outer breath is not distinguishable as this becomes very feeble. Now it is only the inner breath in the form of vibrations at Ājñā *cakra*. That inner rhythm at Ājñā *cakra* is also Haṁsa or you can say this as *Om*. One can feel this inner Haṁsa at the Ājñā *cakra* for a period. This is the third part of Haṁsa Sādhanā. This can be said as *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā* at Ājñā *cakra*. This technique of Haṁsa Sādhanā can take a practitioner even into the final state but this certainly takes the practitioner to a state of *sabīja samādhi*. A practitioner can just practice this with sincerity, observing righteouness, and feel the state within few days. This inner rhythm can be like pulsation, like sparkling vibrations, vibrations in a single direction or in all directions, like bursting of air bubble inside water, like bursting of shells of legumes, pulses or nuts and so on. Sometimes it is like drum beating.

One devotee from Delhi used to come to my master's ashram at Rishikesh during the years 2002 and 2003. He was not practicing through Kriyā-yoga tradition. However he was doing the Kriyā-yoga techniques, viz., Khecari *mudrā* and Haṁsa Sādhanā. He was concentrating only at the point of Ājñā *cakra*. This much he has learned from a monk and has no further guidance but he was continuing. His Ājñā *cakra* started vibrating and he was experiencing strong drum-beating sounds at his Ājñā *cakra*. He developed fear and was not able to practice properly thinking that something was wrong with him. He discussed with the persons who did not have much experience in meditation and was worried. I

listened to his conversation and explained him that there is nothing wrong with him or his brain. This is the effect of breath practice and concentration at Ājñā *cakra*. I advised him to concentrate on this sound and vibration, so that he would have better concentration and bliss. The gross sound would become subtle and pleasant. Next time when he came he was happy.

VYĀNA VĪKṢAṆĀ

The present author prefers to use the term *vyāna vīkṣaṇā* though normally the *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā* term is also used for this since *vyāna* is all pervading *prāṇa* in our body. This is to feel the *vyāna* or subtle life-force throughout the body. The *vyāna vīkṣaṇā* technique starts from there where the Haṁsa Sādhanā technique ends. As such the masters of the tradition do not teach this as a Kriyā-yoga technique but this technique helps a practitioner to progress in Kriyā-yoga and develops the understanding of the principle. This technique is very simple. At the third part of Haṁsa Sādhanā described above a practitioner feels the pulsation at the Ājñā *cakra*. In reality our entire body is vibrating with the life-force, *prāṇa*. This *prāṇa* acts within the entire gross body and is known as *vyāna vāyu*. Observing this *vyāna vāyu* throughout the body is known as *vyāna vīkṣaṇā*. From *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā* we come to this subtler form of practice. In the *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā* we observe *prāṇa* and *apāna*, and in *vyāna vīkṣaṇā* we observe *vyāna*. Since *vyāna* is a *prāṇa*, *vyāna vīkṣaṇā* is also *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā*. Generally yogis use the term *prāṇa vīkṣaṇā* rather than *vyāna vīkṣaṇā*. We have already started observing Prāṇic vibrations at the Ājñā *cakra* during the third stage of Haṁsa Sādhanā, and now we start doing this through out the entire body. A related technique named Vipaśvanā is found among Theravāda Buddhists. They used to move concentration and observe all sorts of sensations within the body be it heat or cold, pain or pleasure, stiffness or vibration, etc. After a period of practice unpleasant sensations become pleasant sensation all over the body. Most important aspect is not to create cravings or aversion for any sorts of sensations. One reason for most of the Kriyā Masters not teaching this technique may be that this is taught in a different form in higher Kriyās when a practitioner learns to feel the vibrations in the body along with the fifty sounds of Sanskrit alphabets known as *mātrkā*-s. In *vyāna vīkṣaṇā* we feel the vibrations without going into the meditation on sounds of letters.

Rationale and Need: The rationale and need behind such a practice is stabilizing the posture, *āsana siddhi*. As long as there is no success in a posture one cannot progress further in meditation. Our mind is always manipulating us, and it does not want to be controlled. It has been acting as our master since long and now it does not want us to be its master. Once the practitioner starts practicing the mind starts revolting. With the help of breath we try to train it but this mind is much more smarter than us, and now it starts manipulating us and distracting us in the form of bodyache, itching, rubbing and burning sensations and various

types of irritable sensations. One can sit hours in watching a movie or a cricket match, but there are no such sensations in the body, because this act is done by the desire produced in the mind and is satisfying to the mind and the sense organs. But within few minutes for sitting in a meditation, all the disturbances start. This is not the problem with the body; this is the problem with our mind.

So we have to act with the mind from the level where it is acting. Mind and Prāṇa are interrelated. All these aches, heaviness, itching, burning, rubbing, and irritating sensations are negative aspects of the *vyāna vāyu*. The smooth and soothing pulsation of Haṁsa or Om, we feel at the third part of Haṁsa Sādhanā at Ājñā *cakra* is the positive aspect of the *vyāna vāyu*. Only by acting at the level of Prāṇa or Vāyu we can control the mind; in Haṁsa Sādhanā we practice it at breath level or at the level of *prāṇa* and *apāna*, and in *vyāna vīkṣaṇā* we practice it at the level of *vyāna*. Now we act at the level of subtle *prāṇa* or *vyāna* to control our mind. Since our mental problems have descended up to body level, we have to feel this vibration throughout our body so that we should be able to sit long for meditation without reactions in the body.

Ṛṣi Patañjali says, *sthiraśukhamāsanam*, motionless and comfortable form of staying is a posture (*Ygs.*, 2.46). For meditation we need to sit stable and in an agreeable posture. If body is in motion, the mind also will be in motion; so it is important to fix the body. A proper meditation technique does not allow too much body movements. We need to sit straight with trunk, neck and head straight. *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* speaks,

samaṁ kāyaśirogrīvaṁ dhārayannacalaṁ sthiraḥ,
sampreksya nāsikāgraṁ svam diśāścānavalokayan. (Ś. Bg., 6.13)

Holding, *dhārayan*, the body, head and neck, *kāyaśirogrīvaṁ*, straight, *samaṁ*, steady, *acalam*, and remaining firm, *sthiraḥ*, keeping attention, *sampreksya*, at the tip of own nose (root of the nose at Ājñā *cakra*), *nāsikāgraṁ svam*, and, *ca*, not looking, *anavalokayan*, around, *diśaḥ*.

This is the posture for a meditation practice. Padmāsana and Siddhāsana are two well-known postures for this purpose (*vide supra*, p. 272). Those who cannot sit in these postures due to lack of practice or knee problems can sit in a chair, but holding the body, neck and head straight and steady is the most important aspect. By practice of these postures one trains body to sit for longer duration, but the root of main disturbances are in the mind, and the mind creates bodyaches and irritable sensations in the body; so simply physical practice of a posture is not a foolproof method. So we should act at the same level from where mind is acting. Disturbances in the mind are noticed in the body at the level of *vyāna*. So acting at the *vyāna* level we have to stabilize our posture. Again Ṛṣi Patañjali says, *prayatnaśaithilyā-nantasamāpattibhyām* (a posture is perfected) by relaxation of efforts and meditation on the infinite (*Ygs.*, 2.47). By practicing relaxation of

body a posture is perfected. This stops the shaking or irritations of the body, which is an obstacle to the state of meditation. So we have to practice relaxation or making the body effortless as we do in a corpse posture, *Śavāsana*. We noticed that practicing *Yoganidrā* in *Śavāsana* is much more relaxing. Here we move attention in the body and feel the vibrations, *vyāna*. But we also notice that the practitioners fall asleep in this technique due to *tamas* (*vide supra*, “*Yoganidrā*,” p. 261). Moreover, the meditation requires a sitting posture with body, neck and head straight. So the same relaxing we have to do in a sitting posture. This relaxing we do in *vyāna vīkṣaṇā*. Along with relaxation, meditation on infinite is suggested by Rṣi Patañjali. Yogic method of meditation on infinite is not a mental contemplation as one does in the path of knowledge. A yogi meditates on infinite *Prāṇa* within the body. It can be Om Technique, *Haṁsa Sādhanā* or *vyāna vīkṣaṇā*. Our skin is a vast organ on our body in comparison to other organs. So moving concentrations throughout the body by feeling vibrations or *vyāna* is a sort of meditation on the infinite within the finite body. By this relaxing technique opposites are conquered and a stable posture is established. So Rṣi Patañjali says, *tato dvandvānabhighātaḥ*, then one is not affected by the opposites (*Ygs.*, 2.48). Then the practitioner is not affected by the opposite conditions of pain and pleasure. Conquering opposites of attachments and aversions of our internal organ mind is our purpose to be free from afflictions, and here we climb the first step with different sensations of our body.

The Technique: Sitting in a posture with our body, neck and head straight we have to practice *Haṁsa Sādhanā*. When we come to the third step of *Haṁsa Sādhanā* and start feeling vibrations at *Ājñā cakra*, then we have to feel the same throughout our body from head to toes and vice versa. This is same as has been described in the technique of *Yoganidrā* its before (*supra*, p. 262). The only difference is that we do it in a sitting posture whereas we do the former in the supine posture. We start moving our attention in *Yoganidrā* technique from toes to head but here in a reverse order from head to toes. The present author has found that while observing vibrations throughout the body the breath also becomes rhythmic and very subtle. The sitting time enhances without changing legs or posture. Pain and irritating sensations vanish since the practitioner learns not to react.

OM TECHNIQUE, OM KAUSAHAḤ

Om (*Aum*) this letter is the Elevated One, this should be worshiped, *omīte-tadaḥśaramudgīthamupāsīta* (*Ch. U*, 1.1.1). Now surely which is the Elevated One that is *Prāṇava* (*Oṅkāra*, the syllable *Om*), *atha khalu ya udgīthaḥ sa prāṇavo*, which is *Prāṇava* that is the Elevated One, *yaḥ prāṇavaḥ sa udgītha*, in this way this Sun is the Elevated One, that is *Prāṇava*, *ityasau vā ādītya udgītha eṣa prāṇava*, by uttering this *Om* it moves, *omīti hyeṣa svaranneti* (*ibid.*, 5.1). The Sun and Om

are same. The entire solar system including all beings is Om. All the stars are Om. Om is the subtle form of Prāṇa that a human mind can understand. This Om is the Cosmic Energy, *Prāṇa*, taking the form of sound vibrations and is the core of creation. One who knows like this (Prāṇa as the Elevated One in the form of *Onkāra*) he fulfills the desires, *āgātā ha vai kāmānām bhavati*, the knowledgeable one who worships this un-eroded letter (Om), *ya etadevaṃ vidvānākṣaramudgūthamupāsta*, this is the spiritual science, *ityadhyātmaṃ* (Ch. U, 1.2.14). All modifications or the entire creation has speech as its basis, a name only, *vacārambhaṇām vikāro nāmadheyam* (ibid., 6.1.4). As the leaf exists there due to veins of the leaf in the same way all the speeches (or names) exist due to this sound Om, *tadyathā śankunā sarvāni paṃṇāni samīṛṇānyevamōṅkāreṇa sarvā vāk samīṛṇōṅkāra*, all these are the sound Om, all these, *evedaṃ sarvamōṅkāra evedaṃ sarvam* (ibid., 2.23.3). The *Amen* of Christians and the *Āmīn* of Muslims are nothing but *Om*. The long bell-sounds, *dīrghaghaṇṭanāda*, of temples and churches are nothing but *Om*. The Buddhists meditation on bell sounds is meditation on the Principle Om. However, the real *Om*, the fourth quarter of letter *Om* cannot be pronounced (*vide supra*, p. 221). Scriptures describe various types of worshiping on *Om*, and all are known as “Om Techniques.” All these techniques give positive results to cultivate virtues, calm the mind and attaining the Knowledge. One can chant *Aum* loudly or in whispering tone but this must be lengthened while pronouncing. Better if one takes a long and deep breath and then starts uttering *Aum* like a continuous long bell sound or conch sound. This would send vibrations through out the body. Every auspicious beginning begins with *Om*. A mental chanting of *Aum* is even better than loudly uttering or whispering. But Kriyā-yoga teaches subtle worshiping of *Om*, and here we shall discuss that which is generally followed in the Kriyā-yoga.

The entire creation is from sounds. Sounds are of four types, viz., *vaikharī*, *madhyamā*, *paśyantī*, and *parā*. *Vaikharī* is the articulate utterance, and this is the speech in general. The sounds we create through our speech and listen through our ear is known as *vaikharī*. This is the gross form of the sound. Traditional singing, chanting, *kīrtana*, and repetition, *japa*, of the names of God come under the spiritual practice following *vaikharī* speech. Here the doer-ship status, *kartābhāva*, of the practitioner is in full force. *Madhyamā* is the intermediate one. This is whispering or murmuring sound. This is either not-audible clearly or inaudible. Most of the traditional repetitions, *japa*, of mantras come under this category. The mental repetitions are also under this category. Here also the practitioner is in the state of a doer. The above two states of practice requires will and effort. The further subtle sound is *paśyantī*. This is the sound seen. Here the doer-ship and efforts become further minimized. This needs more concentration to listen. The practitioner is in a state of observer, *draṣṭābhāva*. The practice of Om Technique is done in this state. In a concentrated state of

mind due to the result of Haṁsa Sādhanā the practitioner observes the different internal sounds. This *paśyantī* sound is the subtle Prāṇa of the practitioner. This practice leads to a state of cessation of sounds, which is beyond the sounds. That sound is *parā*. *Parā* means beyond or that which transcends. The manifestations in the steps of creation, *ṣṣṭikrama*, were from *parā* to *vaikharī*. But in the steps of spiritual practice, *sādhanakrama*, the practitioner has to move from *vaikharī* to *parā*.

This Om Technique is almost a universal technique in traditions of saints, *santa-paramparā*, and in different yogic traditions in India. The present author learned this technique in his childhood at the age of twelve when his father gave him a book titled *Essence of Yoga* authored by the world famous yogi Swāmī Śivānanda Saraswatī, Founder of Divine Life Society, Rishikesh. The book had a small chapter on *Nāda Yoga*, the Yoga of the Sound, where this technique was described as listening to internal sounds by closing the ears in the six-faced seal, *ṣaṇmukhī mudrā*. The *Ṣaṇmukhī mudrā* is same as the light seal, *Jyoti mudrā*. (*Vide infra*, *Jyoti mudrā*, p. 319.) This becomes the light seal when pressure is given through index fingers on eyes bellow the eyeball, and Om Technique on exploration of internal divine sounds when the pressure is given on ear holes through the thumbs. One can simply close the ears by thumbs and listen to the divine sounds. The present author used to listen those divine sounds from his childhood though there was no regular and continuous practice on those childhood days. He also in his childhood days used to close his ears by folding left ear lobe on pillow and right ear lobe on right arm and listen to the sounds at bed time till fell asleep. This technique is known in different names in different traditions as *nādānusandhāna*, exploring the internal sounds, *nādaśravaṇa*, listening to the internal sounds, and *anāhatadhvaniśravaṇa*, listening to unhurt internal sounds. All these sounds are “Om.”

The Technique: One has to sit with spine straight in Padmāsana, the lotus posture, or in Siddhāsana, the posture of Siddhas, i.e., sitting by pressing the perineum by left heel, or else in Sukhāsana, normal cross-legged posture. Then he has to close the ears by the thumbs in *Ṣaṇmukhī mudrā*, or in a simple way by sitting in the meditative posture with a straight spine the practitioner should close the right ear by right thumb and left ear by left thumb. The elbows and shoulders should be in one straight line, chest little out and the shoulder blades gently touching each other. Give little pressure on ear holes by your thumbs. Here no need to place other fingers as in *Ṣaṇmukhī mudrā*. Either you can fist the rest four fingers of a hand or place them on your forehead. One can take support of a wooden T-shaped tool to rest hands so that he can sit longer in closing ears, and in that case he can bring elbows to the front for resting or else can use earplugs, *mudrā*, to close ears. Then he should concentrate at the Ājñā *cakra* and listen to subtle internal sounds preferably through the right ear.

Scriptures describe Om Technique: The Scriptures also describe the posture to listen unhurt internal sounds as the Seal of Viṣṇu, Vaiṣṇavī *mudrā*,

siddhāsane sthito yogī mudrām saṁdhāya vaiṣṇavīm,
śṛṇuyāddakṣiṇe karṇe nādamantargatam sadā. (Nb. U, 31)

A yogi establishing in the posture of siddhas, *siddhasane sthito yogi*, has to perform Vaiṣṇavī *mudrā*, *mudrām saṁdhāya vaiṣṇavīm*. Then he should hear through the right ear, *śṛṇuyaddakṣiṇe karṇe*, the ever-internal sounds, *nādamantargatam sadā*.

Vaiṣṇavī *mudrā* is same as Sāmbhavī *mudrā* (*infra*, p. 322). Here one learns to listen to the divine sound with open eyes and open ears. But this is done in later stages of practice. In the beginning the practice is done with closing the ears with thumbs.

Sound is the subtle ether element, and this is Śiva, the prime cause. This sound is in all the elements up to earth. This sound has become vibration in air element, and since this has taken the form of creation and inherent in the air element in the form of vital energy responsible for the sustenance aspect, i.e., Viṣṇu. Hence the *mudrā* is known as Vaiṣṇavī *mudrā*. In fact Śiva and Viṣṇu are one.

In this *mudrā* the practitioner has to listen to subtler internal sounds. No mental chanting is even required. This sound is a very good medium of concentration, and the mind merges in these sounds. In Upaniṣads it is said,

tailadhārāmivācchinnam dīrghaghaṇṭāninādavat,
avācyam praṇavasyāgram yastam vedam sa vedavit. (Db. U, 18)

One who knows that, *yastam vedam*, unutterable *Praṇava* in front of which, *avācyam praṇavasyāgram* (there is sound) without interruption like the flow of oil, *tailadhārāmivācchinnam*, like the long sound of a bell, *dīrghaghaṇṭāninādavat*, is a knower of the Vedas, *sa vedavit*.

Types of Sounds in Om Technique: This is a very good form of *laya yoga*, yoga of merging the mind. These *anāhatadhvani* or unhurt internal sounds are of various types in the beginning,

śrūyate prathamābhyāse nādo nānāvidho mahān,
vardhamāne tathābhyāse śrūyate sūkṣmasūkṣmataḥ. (Nb. U, 33)

In the beginning stage of the practice, *prathamābhyāse*, one hears, *śrūyate*, different types, *nānāvidhaḥ*, of great, *mahān*, sounds, *nādaḥ*. When the practice increases, *vardhamāne tathābhyāse*, (he) listens, *śrūyate*, subtle and subtler (sounds), *sūkṣmasūkṣmataḥ*.

Hamsopaniṣad define ten different sounds as, *ciṅṅīti prathamah*, “ciṅṅī” is the first, *ciṅṅīṅīti dvitīyah*, “ciṅṅīṅī” or “ciṅṅī ciṅṅī” is the second, *ghaṇṭānādastrīyah*, bell sound is the third, *śaṅkhanādaścaturthah*, conch sound is the fourth,

pañcamastantrīnādah, sound of stringed instruments or lute sound is the fifth, *ṣaṣṭhastālanādah*, cymbals sound is the sixth, *saptamo veṇunādah*, flute sound is the seventh, *aṣṭamo mṛdaṅganādah*, mṛdaṅga or double-drum sound is the eighth, *navamo bherīnādah*, kettle-drum sound is the ninth, *daśamo meghanādah*, thunder sound is the tenth (HU, 16). However *Nādabindūpaṇiṣad* describes the sounds in three sets, *ādaḥ jaladhijīmūtaberīnirjharasambhavaḥ*, in the beginning there are the sounds of sea, thunder, kettle-drum and mountain spring, *madhye mardalaśabdābhō ghaṇṭākāhalajastathā*, in the middle there are sounds of double-drum, bell, large-drum, *ante tu kimkiṇīvaṃśaviṇābhramaraṇiḥsvanaḥ*, at the end there are sounds of small hand bell or ornaments, flute, lute and bee (Nb. U, 34 and 35). This seems to be a description in a reverse order from the *Hamsopaṇiṣad*.

However from the experience of the present author finds that the normal sound comes in the beginning are *ciṇi*, *ciṅciṇi* or *ciṇi ciṇi*. This can be compared with the sounds of honeybee, bumblebee or insects like crickets singing in a forest. Then the next sounds can be, as if one is pressing one rid of a harmonium, like that of a hand bell used in worshipping rituals, like a big bell used in temples, like that of cymbals, like blowing of a conch, like sounds of stringed instruments viz., lute, guitar, etc., like double-drum sound or that of kettle-drum or large-drum beating, like a mountain spring, like roaring of sea and so on. However one may get a sound, say that of lute in the beginning and so on. After a period of practice these sounds can come to the practitioner automatically without closing the ears during meditation or at any time when mind is calm. During meditation if one practices concentration on breath or vibration then this sound goes to background, and when again one concentrates on sounds it comes to the forefront. Generally when one listens to a gross internal sound he can hear another subtle internal sound in the background. On concentration of the subtle sound that comes to the forefront and another subtler sound may appear in the background. One can shift concentration from gross to subtle and vice versa: *ghanamutsrjya vā sūkṣme sūkṣmamutsrjya vā ghane*, leaving the gross one has to concentrate on subtle and leaving the subtle again has to concentrate on gross (Nb. U, 37). Though normally one should explore more and more subtle sounds, this has been said for the purpose of continuing the practice for a long duration of sitting. This enhances the concentration and capability for finding subtler sounds. One may hear multiple sounds at a time. Normally one hears the sounds through the right ear but can also hear through the left ear occasionally. One can hear a sound coming through both the ears, and at times there are two different sounds coming through two years. At period of high concentration one may hear the sound from the *Ājñā cakra*, or the point of concentration and sometimes through the hindbrain, *cerebellum*. In this way over a period of practice one hears subtler and subtler sounds and the mind is so absorbed that he remains the entire sitting of meditation with sounds only. There is manifestation of joy. One should not

think that he has succeeded in winning over the mind due to these experiences as the merged mind appears again and again. So we need constant practice.

Finally, one has to merge in the Brahman, which is beyond all the sounds. It is said,

*niḥśabdāṃ tatparam brahma paramātmā samīyate,
nādo yāvanmanastāvannādānte'pi manonmanī.* (Nb. U, 48)

The Brahman, *brahma*, is beyond, *tatparam*, the silence, *niḥśabdāṃ*, the state is of the Supreme Self, *paramātmā samīyate*. Till there is sound there is the mind, *nādo yāvanmanastāvāt*, at the end of sounds the mind becomes “no mind,” *nādānte'pi manonmanī*.

Even when the practitioner concentrates on the internal subtle sounds it is the mind that recognizes; this shows the existence of mind. So this is not the supreme state. When the mind completely merges with the subtle sounds then the sounds also do not exist. That state is the goal.

Haṃsa Sādhanā is also Om Technique: “Haṃsa Sādhanā” is also known as “Om Technique” in the Kriyā-yoga; *om kauśalaḥ haṃsa sādhanā*, Om technique is Haṃsa Sādhanā. The key to the Om technique lies in Haṃsa Sādhanā. There is no difference between the sounds *Om* and *Haṃsaḥ* or *Soham*. It is said in *Hamsopanīṣad*: *evaṃ sarvaṃ hamsavaśāttasmānmano haṃsa vicāryate*, that mind is under the haṃsa and that haṃsa should be contemplated (*HU*, 15). By the practice of the Haṃsa Sādhanā, all the moods of mind settle down and then the internal sounds appear automatically; one need not close the ears by thumb or ear plugs. Upanīṣads speak: *sakāraṃ ca hakāraṃ ca jīvo japatī sarvadā*, a being always repeats the letters *sa* and *ha* (*BVU*, 16). In the form of inhalation we repeat *sa* and in the form of exhalation we repeat *ha*. By practice of this breath technique named *haṃsa* one reaches to a state of stillness of breath, *kumbhaka*. In that state one moves from the air to the ether. Thought waves of the mind are merged. Then the practitioner listens the unhurt divine sounds and his heart is filled with joy. So it is said,

*nabhashtam niṣkalam dhyātvā mucyate bhavabandhanāt,
anāhatadhvaniyutam haṃsam yo veda hṛdgatam.* (*BVU*, 20)

He who knows the haṃsa, *haṃsam yo veda*, associated with the unhurt sound, *anāhatadhvaniyutam*, inside the heart, *hṛdgatam*, is liberated, *mucyate*, from the bondage, *bandhanāt*, of manifestations, *bhava*, meditating, *dhyātvā*, at the pure principle, *niṣkalam*, in the ether, *nabhashtam*.

*svaprakāśacidānandaṃ sa haṃsa iti gīyate,
recaṅgam pūrakam muktva kumbhakena sthītaḥ sudhīḥ.* (Ibid., 21)

That is sung as haṃsa, *sa haṃsa iti gīyate*, which is the Self manifested, Consciousness and Bliss, *svaprakāśacidānandaṃ*. A Wiseman, *sudhīḥ*, being freed

from exhalations and inhalations, *recakam pūrakam muktvā*, establishes in the stillness of breath, *kumbhakena sthītaḥ*.

Again it is said: *evam sarvaṃ haṃsavaśānnādo daśavidho jāyate*, all these sounds are under haṃsa and become ten types (HU, 16). If one sincerely practices the Haṃsa Sādhanā then the Om technique will emerge automatically, and this is the experience of many practitioners. When one repeats *haṃsaḥ* or *soham* one after another, or concentrates on the sounds of exhalations and inhalations then with merger of the breath in subtle *prāṇa* both *ha* and *sa* merge. There is only *Om* and *ḥ* (*visarga*), only the infinite divine sound, the cause of creation remains. Again it is said: “*mānasam haṃsaḥ so’ham haṃsa iti*, the Brahman or Mānasa-haṃsa is haṃsa and soham; *tanmayayajño nādānusandhānam*, to practice oneness with it one should search the internal divine sounds: *tanmayavikāro jīvaḥ*, deviated from the state of oneness is the individual self.” (PBU, 1.12.) One who is established in *soham* or “That is me” has attained the Self. For that we need the Haṃsa Sādhanā. The state of oneness of the individual self with the Cosmic Self comes through searching the internal unhurt sounds. The mind along with the thoughts merges with that. The state of the individual self is a deviation from the state of oneness with the Cosmic Self. Haṃsa is the form of the Transcendental Self, *paramātmavarūpo haṃsaḥ*, Haṃsa moves inside and outside, *antarbahīscarati haṃsaḥ* (ibid., 1.13). Haṃsa and Om are undifferentiated, *haṃsapraṇavayorabhedah* (ibid., 1.19).

MAHĀMUDRĀ

We find the descriptions of Mahāmudrā in the scriptures like *Dhyānabindūpaniṣad*, *Yogacūḍāmanyaupaniṣad*, *Sāṅḍilyopaniṣad*, *Grahaṃyāmala*, *Haṭhayogaṇḍīpikā*, *Gheraṇḍa Saṃhītā*, *Goraḁṣa Saṃhītā*, and other yogic scriptures. Though there are minor differences in descriptions but the basic principle and practice is same. This is described as,

vakṣonyastahanuḥ praṇīḍya suciram yonim ca vāmāṅghriṇā hastābhyāmanudhārayanprasaritam pādām tathā dakṣiṇam, āpūrya śvasanena kuḁṣiyugalam badhvā śanai recayetseyam vyādhivināśinī nanu mahāmudrā nṛṇām procyate. (sumahatī mudrā nṛṇām kathyate) (Db.U, 93; YCU, 66).

Pressing the chin against the chest, *vakṣonyastahanuḥ praṇīḍya*, for long, *suciram*, and left heel against the perineum, *yonim ca vāmāṅghriṇā*, holding the stretched right leg by hands, *hastābhyāmanudhārayanprasaritam pādām tathā dakṣiṇam*, filling both the lungs by breath, *āpūrya śvasanena kuḁṣiyugalam*, holding then releasing the breath slowly, *badhvā śanai recayetseyam*, that has been said as Mahāmudrā by humans which kills the diseases, *vyādhivināśinī nanu mahāmudrā nṛṇām procyate*.

This description of Mahāmudrā shows the basic features of the technique, however we find many variations in the technique keeping the basic principle intact.

The Technique: In the Kriyā-yoga traditions though we find variations but generally the *mudrā* is done as follows:

- (i) The practitioner should sit on the left heel folding the left leg, the right leg in the front resting on toes and pull the right leg towards the body by both hands so that right abdominal cavity is compressed. Chin gently locked (Fig. 5.5.1). Concentrates at the first center, Mūlādhāra *cakra*, and inhales long and deep from Mūlādhāra to Sahasrāra. Then holds the breath and stretches the right leg in front and sits pressing the left heel against perineum. Then bends forward to hold the big toe of the right leg in index finger and thumb of both hands trying to touch the knee with forehead (Figs. 5.5.2 and 5.5.3). Then the practitioner sits up on the left heel and pulling the right leg towards the body as in the beginning (Fig. 5.5.1). Now exhales long and deep from Sahasrāra to Mūlādhāra *cakra*-s.
- (ii) Next the practitioner changes the legs and sits on the right heel folding the right leg, the left leg in front resting on toes and pulls the left leg towards the body by the both hands so that left abdominal cavity is compressed. Chin gently locked (Fig. 5.5.4). Concentrates at the second center, Svādhiṣṭhāna and inhales long and deep from Svādhiṣṭhāna to Sahasrāra. Then holds the breath and stretches the left leg in front and sits pressing the right heel against perineum. Then bends forward to hold the big toe of the left leg in index finger and thumb of both hands trying to touch the knee with forehead (Figs. 5.5.5 and 5.5.6). Then the practitioner sits up on the right heel and pulling the left leg towards the body (Fig. 5.5.4). Now exhales long and deep from Sahasrāra.
- (iii) Next the practitioner sits on the hips, both the legs in front resting on toes and pulling both the legs towards the body by the both hands so that entire abdominal cavity is compressed. Chin gently locked (Fig. 5.5.7). Concentrates at the third center, Maṇipūra and inhales long and deep from Maṇipūra to Sahasrāra. Then holds the breath and stretches both the legs in front and then bends forward to hold the both big toes with index finger and thumb of both hands trying to touch the knee with forehead (Figs. 5.5.8 and 5.5.9). Then the practitioner sits up on the hips and pulling the both leg towards the body (Fig. 5.5.7). Now exhales long and deep from Sahasrāra.
- (iv) Like that of the step as in (i) above but beginning with concentration at the fourth center, Anāhata.
- (v) Like that of the step as in (ii) above but beginning with concentration at the fifth center, Viśuddha.
- (vi) Like that of the step as in (iii) above but beginning with concentration at the sixth center, Ājñā.

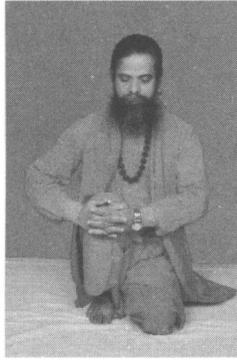


Fig. 5.5.1. Mahāmudrā Step i.a and Step i.c.



Fig. 5.5.2. Mahāmudrā Step i.b (front view).

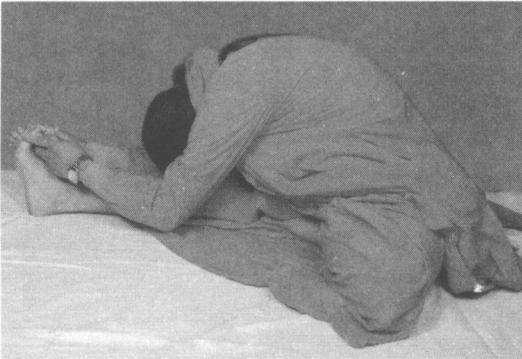


Fig. 5.5.3. Mahāmudrā Step i.b (side view).

Some Kriyā Masters teach this technique without moving attention to the *cakra*-s and/or inside the spine along with the inhalation and the exhalation. But the Kriyā way is at least to move attention inside the spine while inhaling and exhaling.

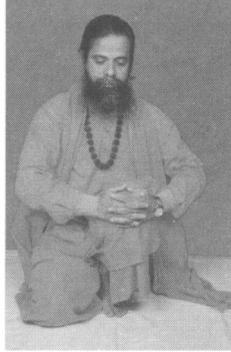


Fig. 5.5.4. Mahāmudrā Step ii.a and Step ii.c.

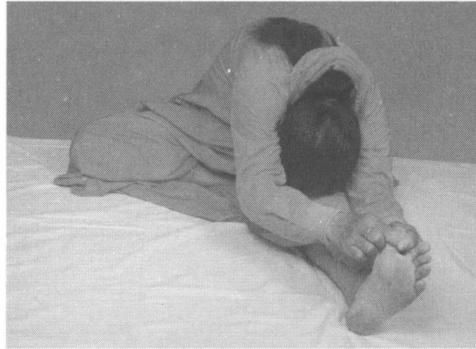


Fig. 5.5.5. Mahāmudrā Step ii.b (front view).

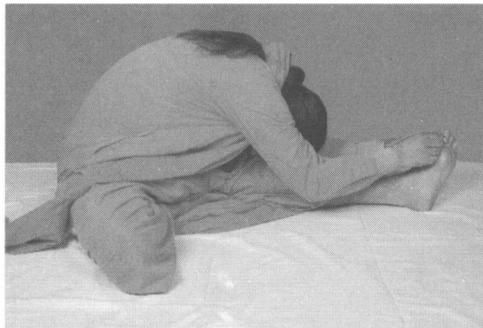


Fig. 5.5.6. Mahāmudrā Step ii.b (side view).

The inhalations and exhalations in Mahāmudrā are like those of Kriyā Proper I.

Contraindication: Since this *mudrā* has strong effects of contraction and relaxation on abdominal cavity and lower abdomen this is to be avoided by women during menstruation and pregnancy. Those who are suffering from backache problems should not do Mahāmudrā. They should consult a physician or a physiotherapist

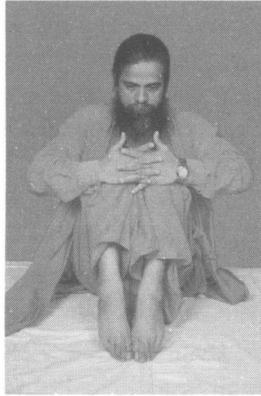


Fig. 5.5.7. Mahāmudrā Step iii.a and Step iii.c.

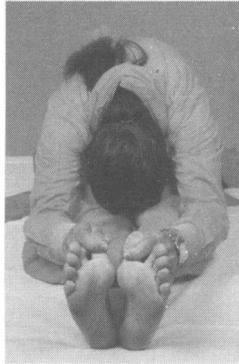


Fig. 5.5.8. Mahāmudrā Step iii.b (front view).

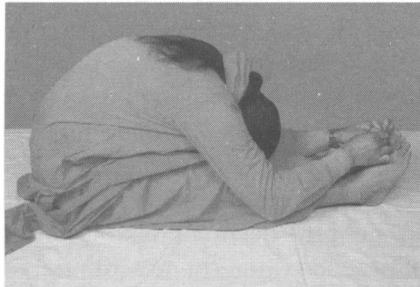


Fig. 5.5.9. Mahāmudrā Step iii.b (side view).

to cure their backache problem. The practice of postures like Bhujāṅgāsana, Salabhāsana, Dhanurāsana, Uṣṭrāsana, Ardhadakrāsana, and Cakrāsana help to cure the backache problem. Sometimes forward bending postures like Yogamudrā are combined with backward bending postures like Cakrāsana to cure backache. One can take the help of a yoga-therapist instead of trying on his self. After

curing the backache problem one can do Mahāmudrā if allowed by the physician. Those suffering from acute hypertension should not do this technique in the beginning. First, they should practice breath technique like Haṁsa Sādhanā for a period and after being relieved from the hypertension can do this technique. Then this technique helps in stress management and curing hypertension.

A Variation: We find that some masters introduced some variations like lying down in supine position during Mahāmudrā, then sitting and massaging the legs, etc. This seems to be a good innovation so far aged and sick persons are concerned but generalizing this variation and use of this variation by young practitioners in particular is simply diluting a strong and effective technique.

Benefits: Almost all the benefits of Guru Praṇāma technique are found in Mahāmudrā. This is much more stronger technique than Guru Praṇāma so far the body fitness and removal of diseases and arousing the *prāṇa* or *kuṇḍalinī* are concerned. But each technique has its own uniqueness. Concentration for a while at each *cakra* and devotional aspect of Guru Praṇāma makes Guru Praṇāma different from Mahāmudrā. Moreover the bending after holding breath is simpler in Guru Praṇāma than Mahāmudrā and can be practiced by all if one does not have a severe backache problem. In Mahāmudrā the alternate contraction of right and left abdominal cavities and then contraction of the entire abdominal cavity massages the abdominal organs, supplies more blood and rejuvenates abdominal organs. The expansion of the thoracic cavity due to inhalation and retention of breath increase the capacity of lungs to hold more air. There is pressure on the diaphragm due to the retention of breath and contraction of abdomen, so the diaphragm and the abdominal organs get gentle message and more blood supply when normal position is regained. This *kriyā* is strong enough to increase sufficient blood flow to the head region. Brain cells get stimulated. This practice removes the *tamas* quality of the body. This also enhances the capability of the practitioner for long and deep breath. Pressure at perineum in this technique arouses the vital energy, *prāṇa*, to flow upward inside the spine. After a period of practice the practitioner can feel the ascending and the descending prāṇic currents within the spine while inhaling and exhaling. Due to bending again and again the spine becomes flexible and the spinal cord becomes elastic. After a period of practice when the practitioner sits silently just after the performance of the technique, he can watch the *prāṇa* moving up down within the spinal cord. The practitioner comes to a meditative state with the mind calming down. This technique has effect on brain, spinal cord, spine, lungs, heart, ribs, diaphragm, stomach, liver, pancreas, large and small intestines, kidneys, adrenals, urinary bladder, uterus, legs, knees and almost all organs. This technique helps very much in stress management, the organs previously not getting sufficient energy due to stress effects now get abundant energy.

KRIYĀ PROPER I

This is the real practice of *prāṇāyāma*. Hence some refer it as Kriyā Prāṇāyāma, Kriyā Kuṇḍalinī Prāṇāyāma and so on. Normally this is referred as Kriyā in the Kriyā-yoga. Since long the Vedic ṛsis found a simple technique that by controlling the breath one can have control on sensualities and mental modifications; Oh good-looking one, the mind is surely under the prāṇa, *prāṇabandhanam hi soumya manaḥ* (Ch. U, 6.8.2). Again the same is said as,

*rajjubaddho yathā śyeno gato'pyākṛṣyate punaḥ,
guṇabaddhastathā jīvaḥ prāṇāpānena karṣati.* (YCU, 29)

A bird, *syenaḥ*, as being, *yathā*, bound with a rope, *rajjubaddho*, again, *punaḥ*, pulled, *ākṛṣyate*, after leaving, *gataḥ api*, in the same way, *tathā* the individual self, *jīvaḥ*, being bound to the qualities (of the Nature), *guṇabaddhaḥ*, is pulled, *karṣati*, by the exhalation and the inhalation, *prāṇāpānena*.

Mind runs till the breath is running. It is the same Principle; the Cosmic Self has become the individual self within a body due to identification with mind and body, and is governed by the three qualities of the Nature. Since the mind is bound to *prāṇa*, we have to control the mind through *prāṇa*. If the breath is still then the mind is still. This is the principle behind Haṁsa Sādhanā and Kriyā Proper. To make our breath still, first thing we need is deep breathing. Thereby we have sufficient oxygen in our body to carryout the body in living condition during the breath suspension period. In that state of *samādhi* though body lives with less energy reducing all vital activities to the minimum but still then the body must have some resources of oxygen stored for those minimum activities to be sustained. In the Kriyā practice we learn to breathe properly.

The Respiratory System: The instrument within our body for breathing is the Respiratory System. It is broadly divided into upper respiratory tract and lower respiratory tract. The upper respiratory tract consists of nose, naso-pharynx and the larynx. The inner lining of these are lined by a mucous membrane covered by ciliated columnar epithelial cells with rich blood supply so that when in-breath enters the lungs it attains the body temperature and is saturated with water vapors. The ciliated epithelium of the sticky mucous membrane of the respiratory tract traps dusts and bacteria, and propels them outside. Larynx at the lower end of the upper respiratory tract is the organ of sound production; this is also responsible for cough reflex preventing those larger foreign particles to enter inside, which cannot be stopped by the cilia of the ciliated epithelium.

The lower respiratory tract consists of trachea, bronchi and lungs. Trachea is almost in the midline and bifurcates into *right main bronchus* and *left main bronchus*. Right main bronchus is subdivided into *upper lobe bronchus*, *middle lobe bronchus* and *lower lobe bronchus*. Left main bronchus is subdivided into *upper lobe bronchus* and *lower lobe bronchus*. The left lung has two lobes and the right lung differs

from the left lung in having three lobes (Fig. 5.6). Each lobe is made up of two or three broncho-pulmonary segments except right lower lobe that has five such segments. A *broncho-pulmonary segment* consists of broncho-pulmonary lobules that are the basic structures of lung. The two left lobar bronchi and the three right lobar bronchi divide and subdivide to form branches till the terminal bronchi known as *respiratory bronchioles* are reached. Each respiratory bronchiole connects to a cluster of alveoli within a broncho-pulmonary lobule. Alveoli (Fig. 5.6) is a tiny air vesicle made up of a single layer of flattened epithelial cells in contact with pulmonary capillaries for exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide between the air inside the alveoli and the blood in the pulmonary capillaries. In this way our blood gets oxygenated and carbon dioxide from the blood is released to the air in the alveoli that are finally expelled by exhalation. Then inhalation brings fresh oxygenated air from atmosphere to the alveoli through nose, naso-pharynx, larynx, trachea, bronchi and bronchioles.

Breathing through Mouth is not Desired: The air entering lungs must attain the body temperature and saturated with the water vapors (*vide* p. 299). So inhalation through mouth in a breath technique though makes the air saturated with water vapors but makes it cooler than the body temperature, so mouth breathing is not desired until and unless we need a cooling effect due to hot climatic conditions. Sītali, Sadanta, and Sītkārī Prāṇāyāmas are cooling breath techniques for summer season in hot countries like India. We learn that some organizations teach to inhale through the mouth and nose simultaneously during Kriyā so that it would produce a cool sensation deep in the throat. This is a modification of the original Kriyā breath technique. If this modification is for the purpose of feeling the cool sensation this can be felt inside the nose while inhaling by little more concentration practice though the feeling is more prominent inside the throat. Feeling cold and hot sensations are no doubt a method of concentration and persons with disturbed mind may not feel cool sensations inside nose while inhaling. In this way inhalation through mouth can be justified. But after a period of Haṁsa Sādhanā each practitioner should be able to feel cool sensation inside the nose while inhaling. Theravāda Buddhists learn to feel cold and hot sensations inside the nose in *ānāpāna sati*. Yogis also feel the same inside the nose; however in a hot climate during Indian summer yogis feel the same through throat while breathing through mouth to produce a cooling effect on the body. But in winter and in cold countries breathing through mouth are to be avoided. The next immediate purpose of the Kriyā breath after feeling cold and hot sensations is to concentrate in movements of *prāṇa* inside the spinal cord, and as the practitioner learns more, feels the *prāṇic* movements inside the spine and at the *Ajñā cakra*; then one does not concentrate in cold and hot sensations at throat or nose. At that stage there is no meaning in continuation of in-breath through mouth. We should remember that a sick person is fed through nose and breathes through mouth.

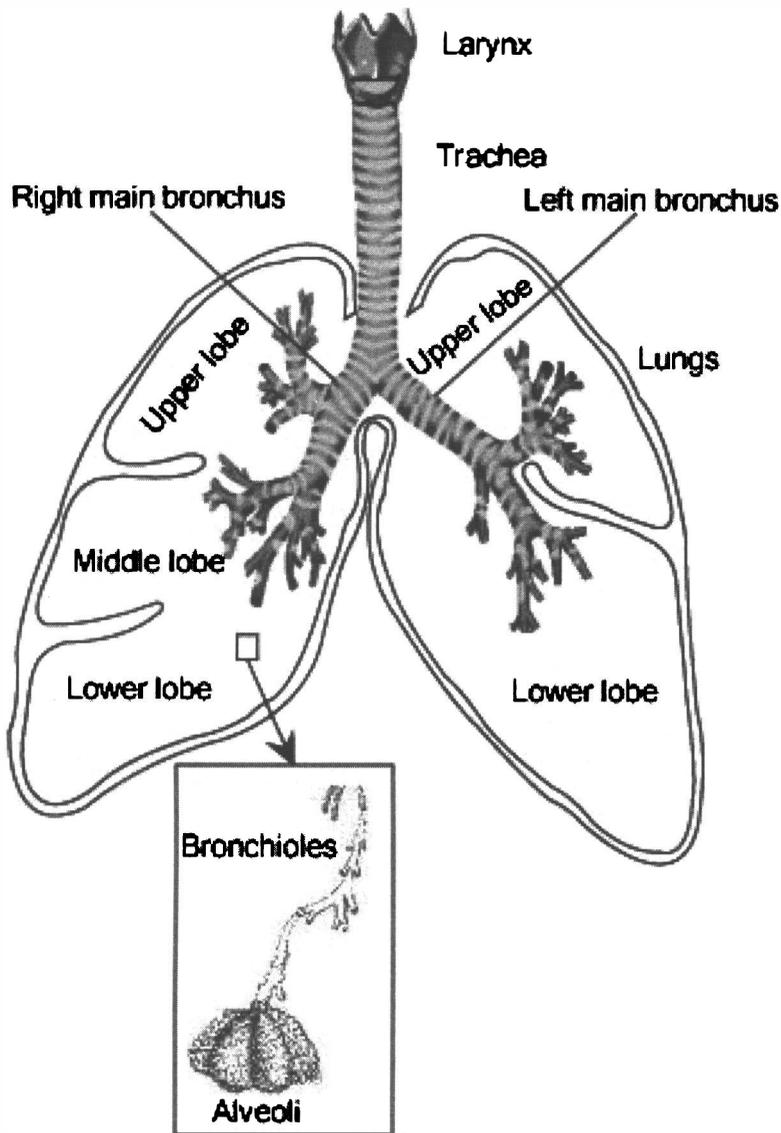


Fig. 5.6. Respiratory System showing trachea, bronchi and lungs.

Science and Spirituality of the Kriyā: Now with our average breathing that is known as “quiet respiration,” we draw and expel about one-sixth amount of air that can be inhaled or exhaled during a deep breathing. In average respiration, the air that enters in and comes out of the lungs is about 500 cc, and this is known as *tidal air*. In a deep breathing, one can inhale about 3000 cc of air known as *complemental air*, which includes the *tidal air*. Now our air intake capacity in deep

breathing is six times more than that of average breathing. Still then about 1000 cc of air remains inside the lungs, which is known as *supplemental air* or *reserve air*, and this can be expelled by forceful expiration. By forceful exhalation as done to achieve Uddīyāna Bandha one is able to expel even this reserve air. In this way the air ventilation is increased eight times more than average breathing. Even then a large quantity of air of about 1000 cc still remains inside the lungs, which is known as *residual air*. Now we see that in an average healthy person total lungs air holding capacity of 5000 cc. In an average breathing or quiet respiration, only 500 cc air is ventilated to make the blood oxygenated. This is just one-tenth of the total capacity. In Kriyā breathing we increase the ventilation from 500 cc to 3000 cc which is three-fifth of the total lungs capacity and six times more than average breathing. With forceful expiration we can even increase the ventilation up to 4000 cc but we cannot practice that for a long sitting. Normally inspired air contains on an average of 20.94% oxygen and 0.04% carbon dioxide, expired air contains 16.3% oxygen and 4% carbon dioxide, and alveolar air contains 14.2% oxygen and 5.5% carbon dioxide. By Kriyā we make the alveolar air more oxygenated and with less carbon dioxide and that in turn affect oxygen and carbon dioxide concentration in the blood leaving the pulmonary capillaries. In this way by Kriyā breathing we make our blood free of carbon dioxide and more oxygenated.

In our body all the biochemical reactions goes in a specific state of body fluids, the range of hydrogen ion concentration (pH) of body fluids being 6.8 to 7.2. Our body fluids contain buffers mostly phosphate buffers and bicarbonate buffers those maintain the above pH range. At pH 7 the body fluid is neutral and this becomes acidic when pH goes down bellow 6.8 and alkaline when pH goes up above 7.2. More carbon dioxide in blood forms carbonic acids that make the body fluids acidic and this is the cause of many diseases. This results in formation of endotoxins. This also results in mental irritability. More oxygenated blood and removal of carbon dioxide makes the body fluids alkaline. Another aspect is that excessive metabolism is due to more oxidation resulting in more carbon dioxide formation and making the body fluids acidic. In diseases like cancers etc. and in aging diseases the body fluids are acidic in nature and normally antioxidants like vitamins E, C, and beta-carotene, etc., help. We need to make our body fluids little alkaline and for that we need more oxygen and removal of carbon dioxide. Second thing by meditation we give rest to our entire body, which works like a super antioxidant and the metabolism is reduced to almost zero during *samādhi*. These two are the scientific principles of the Kriyā breath practice. We have already discussed the spiritual aspect of it in the previous chapters and stated that the mind is absorbed into *prāṇa*.

From the experience of the present author and from the experiences of many spiritual practitioners we learn that only the breath practice leads to a breathless

state, pulse rate and heart beat slows down coming to a state of near stoppage and sometimes even stopped. Scriptures also say the same; *samādhisiddhirīśvarapraṇidhānāt* (Ygs., 2.45); *Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā* leads to attaining *samādhi*. The Kriyā Proper I technique is the *Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā* (*vide supra*, “Understanding *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* Technique,” p. 121 and “*Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā*,” p. 122). How that happens? We can explain this as follows but this needs definite scientific study to establish. Removing the carbon dioxide from the body and making the blood oxygenated over a period of continuous practice make our body fluids alkaline and these remain at the pH of 7.2 levels and when these tend to cross this level further up, we do not need breathing anymore. So automatically there is stoppage of breath. Another aspect is the practice of concentration. Medulla is the seat of respiratory control and concentration at the Medulla center or the *Ājñā cakra* is responsible for respiratory rest and lowering the body metabolism by affecting the visceral organs through the Vagus nerve. Concentration at the *Ājñā cakra* leads to respiratory suspension. Again concentration has led to the rest of vital organs in the body and during the period of respiratory suspension we do not need more energy as the vital activities are under rest, hence there is less oxidation and amount of carbon dioxide produced is minimum. So when again the body needs oxygen and removal of carbon dioxide after a pause respiratory suspension, the respiratory movements start automatically. But for this state we need long term and uninterrupted practice. But most important aspect in case of *samādhi* is the conversion of vital resources into the conscious vital element and thereby gaining access to the Cosmic Consciousness. The Cosmic Consciousness is the energy pool (*vide supra*, “Spirituality of Longevity, Death and *Samādhi*,” p. 240).

Another aspect of long and deep breathing is that here we breathe only three breaths per minute at maximum whereas in average breathing it is fifteen to eighteen breaths per minute. So if a practitioner practices one-hour deep breathing exercise then he saves nine hundred breaths in that one hour of practice. This habit affects the other hours when the practitioner is not practicing, and during those periods the breath rate becomes slow. This is the clue to longevity and mental stability (*vide supra*, “Spirituality of Longevity, Death and *Samādhi*,” p. 240). With less breath we get sufficient amount of oxygen required which we do not get in average breathing.

The Kriyā Technique: To understand the technique of Kriyā Proper I, we should first understand the technique of Ujjāyī Prāṇāyāma. There are some variations of Ujjāyī but a simple way is followed. A practitioner should sit in a Padmāsana, Siddhāsana or any posture with an erect spine. Siddhāsana gives best results. Chin should be gently locked bending neck little forward and pressing the chin against throat gently so that glottis and throat is partially closed to create breath-way resistance to some extent. In this way head, body and neck would come to a

straight line. Now the practitioner should start inhaling slowly through both nostrils but long and deep with force. After inhalation the practitioner exhales in the same manner almost with equal time duration. Breathing should be done through nose, and not through mouth. The point of pulling in or pushing out the breath is not the nose here as some practitioners try to practice in the beginning; rather the point to pull in or push out the breath is from inside the throat. The breath-way resistance would reduce the speed of breathing; lengthen the breath and a sound of breath like the hissing of cobra would be produced automatically. This sound would be audible and this sound would continue throughout the processes of inhalation and exhalation. No sound should be created by mouth or throat. Some teachers and schools of Kriyā-yoga teach to create sound but that is not the technique. The sound produced is automatic and this is the sound of breath due to breath-way resistance.

This is the breathing portion of Kriyā Proper I but this is performed while moving the attention up and down inside the spine. This is done with tongue rolled up. Those who cannot remain in tongue rolled up state can bring it to normal position and practice. Here most important aspect is concentration inside the spinal cord. In Kriyā breath concentration is not kept in breath entering into lungs and coming out of lungs. Rather along with the in-breath the practitioner moves attention from base of the spinal cord up to fontanel. Again along with the out-breath the practitioner moves the attention from fontanel to base of the spine. The spine is the road and the breath is the vehicle to run in that road. In this way the mind is engaged in breath and withdrawn from sense objects so that the practitioner reaches the state of withdrawal of senses, *pratyāhāra*. This consequently leads to *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, and *samādhi*.

Swāmī Śivānanda Sarasvatī describes a related technique as Kuṇḍalinī Prāṇāyāma in his book *Kuṇḍalinī Yoga* where he asks to move concentration from Mūlādharma to Sahasrāra and vice versa along with inhalation and exhalation; but he did not ask there to breathe with sound like Ujjāyī; so may be simple Anuloma Viloma Prāṇāyāma with moving attention up and down inside the spinal cord. This is good and similar to Kriyā but the Kriyā is certainly a more strong technique. This one can practice after some rounds of Kriyā.

Some present day schools of yoga teach deep breathing in three sections, viz., abdominal breathing, thoracic breathing, and upper lobar breathing. Then they teach to combine these three for a complete yogic breathing. Kriyā Proper I is a complete yogic breathing. When this complete yogic breathing is done with chin locked producing hissing sound and moving the concentration up and down inside the spinal cord that becomes Kriyā Proper I.

In the tradition of Haṭha-yoga three locks, viz., Jalandhara, Mūlabandha, and Uḍḍiyāna are given much importance for arousing *kuṇḍalinī*, the Sleeping Life Energy. These three locks by way of muscular contraction arouse energy from

the nerves and redirect them in the reverse direction from organs towards the spinal cord. These are very powerful techniques for quick feeling of *prāṇa* at Mūlādhāra and directing the Prāṇa from Mūlādhāra to Sahasrāra inside the spinal cord. These techniques are done along with Prāṇāyāma. Due to sudden arousal of *kuṇḍalinī*, most of the Haṭha-yoga practitioners could not manage the energy and this creates negative effect since mind and body are not prepared to hold it. Hence this practice needs constant guidance of an expert Haṭha-yoga master and strict observance of rules. So in the Kriyā-yoga care has been taken for gradual arousal of the Prāṇa. By gently locking the chin we have effect of Jalandhara. In Kriyā Proper I breathing, we have mild effect of Mūlabandha and Uḍḍiyāna. If one exhales long and deep then he or she will observe that as the exhalation lengthens, there occur contraction of anal sphincter muscle and abdominal recti muscles. So Kriyā Prāṇāyāma leads to passive Mūlabandha and Uḍḍiyāna. In this way we receive the benefits of three locks but not as vigorously as in the Haṭha-yogic Kriyās. The result in the Kriyā is slow and steady and without problems since this gives time to body and mind to be capable to hold the aroused energy.

We have already said that Kriyā Proper I is Īśvaraṇidhāna Kriyā (*vide supra*, “Knowing the God, *Īśvaraṇidhāna*,” p. 119). Īśvara, Haṃsa and Om are same. Breathing when practiced with external sound of breath then this is Īśvara breathing or Īśvaraṇidhāna Kriyā. Breathing when practiced with internal sound of breath then this is Haṃsa breathing. When the breathing movements stop due to breathing practice and only the subtle internal sounds remain then this is Om technique. In Īśvaraṇidhāna Kriyā the inhalation sound is “ī” like *ī..ī..ī..ī..* (continuous lengthening of *ī* without break in between, not as *ī, ī, ī*), and the exhalation sound is “ra” like *ra..a..a..a..* (continuous lengthening of “a” of “ra” without break in between, not as *a, a, a*). This should be reminded here again that these sounds are not to be created by mouth or throat. These are natural breath sounds due to breath-way resistance. The *śva* or *sva* sound is very subtle and is in-between inhalation and exhalation (at the end of inhalation and beginning of exhalation) and the practitioner feels this after a period of practice at Ājñā *cakra* as if it is swallowing or galloping the breath. The sound is like that of bursting of a bubble or a drum beat. Here in-breath hits the Ājñā *cakra*. On further practice, a practitioner even feels this in-between exhalation and inhalation (at the end of exhalation and beginning of inhalation).

A Variation: However it is learned by the present author that a revered and reputed school of Kriyā-yoga teaches inhalation as “a” (AW) as *a..a..a..* (AAAWWW) and exhalation as “ī” (EE) as *ī..ī..ī* (EEEEEE). In some scriptures the two wings of Haṃsa are said as letter-*a* and letter-*u*: “*om akāro dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣa ukāraśtūtarah smṛtaḥ* (Nb.U, 1), the Haṃsa that is in the form of Om, the letter-*a* is the right wing and the letter-*u* is the left wing.” Had this been intended by

Paramahaṁsa Yogānanda then he could have said “a” and “u,” and not “a” and “ī.” This again seems to be same type of reversal as in case of Haṁsa (*vide supra*, “A Probable Aberration,” and Haṁsa Sādhanā, in “Haṁsa Technique, Step I,” p. 282), here “ī” or *EE* coming as exhalation instead of inhalation and “ra” or *AW* or “a” coming as inhalation instead of exhalation. We have to remember that these sounds are the natural sounds of breath; so a practitioner instead of being confused over these differences taught by different schools of Kriyā-yoga, rather should concentrate on the natural sounds of inhalation and exhalation be either “ī” and “a” or *AW* and *EE*. After a long period of uninterrupted practice the practitioner would find that there is no difference between the sound of inhalation and sound of exhalation.

The practice of concentration with inhalation up inside the spine and exhalation down inside the spine magnetizes the spine and the practitioner feels the Prāṇa ascending up to the Ājñā *cakra*. Since in initial days of practice this feeling is not there some master advice to inhale up through the back of the spine and exhale down through front of the spine. In this way the practitioner gives extra support to the mind and after a period of practice when the Prāṇa moves inside the spine there is no need for back and front attention. In this way when the practitioner feels the life energy inside the spinal cord attention is naturally withdrawn from sense organs, sensory nerves, organs of actions, muscles, visceral organs and motor nerves, and is concentrated within the spine. This is also in a way relaxing to these organs and the nerves but more than that, this is the withdrawal of mind from sense objects and directing these towards their origin, i.e., the Prāṇa. Further the Prāṇa withdraws from the spine to concentrate at the Ājñā *cakra* and leads to further calmness.

Prāṇāyāma: Understanding the principle of a breath mastery technique, *prāṇāyāma*, is very important to understand the Kriyā breath whether it is Haṁsa or Kriyā Proper I. In Upaniṣads it is said,

yathaiivotṭalanālena toyamākarṣayennarah,
tathaiivotkarṣayedvāyum yogī yogapathe sthitaḥ. (Db.U, 38)

The way, *yathaiiva*, a human, *narah*, draws, *ākarṣayet*, water, *toyam*, through a stem of lotus, *utṭalanālena*, in the same way, *tathaiiva*, a yogi, *yogī*, being established in the path of yoga, *yogapathe sthitaḥ*, lifts, *utkarṣayet*, the air, *vāyum*.

The stem of lotus is very long and is at least one to two meters, and the stem is spongy. In countryside we find children pluck a stem of lotus leaf and sip water. The urban people do not have this experience. Let them imagine sipping cold drinks through a long and spongy straw. This needs drawing air in a slow and steady way in a lengthening manner. That is the way to inhale air. Our spinal cord is the stem of the lotus through which breath is to be drawn. In the same manner the breath is to be exhaled. Again,

ardhamātrāmāka kṛtvā koṣṭbhūtam tu pañkajam,
karṣayennālamātreṇa bhruvormadhye layam nayet. (Db. U, 39)

Making (the sound) like that of ardhmātrā, *ardhamātrāmāka kṛtvā*, through the stem of lotus, *koṣṭbhūtam tu pañkajam*, (the breath) is to be pulled through the canal, *karṣayennālamātreṇa*, and merged bringing, *layam nayet*, inside the place between two eye brows, *bhruvormadhye*.

Om (Aum) is made up of four sounds, viz., *a, u, m*, and *ardhamātrā*. *Ardhamātrā* cannot be pronounced properly. However, it can be compared with lengthening nasal sound of a breath practice. When breath is drawn slowly constricting the breath-way by chin lock we have this breath sound. In such a manner the breath should be drawn till breath merges at the brain stem in a place corresponding to the point between two eyebrows. This is the respiratory center of the brain. This practice is to be practiced till the suspension of breath.

Ṛṣi Patañjali describes about the Kriyā or the Prāṇāyāma as: (1) “*pracchardana vidhāraṇābhyaṃ vā prāṇasya* (Ygs., 1.34), this is extended exhalation in one rhythm named *pracchardana* and special type of holding the air named *vidhāraṇa* of the breath, *vā prāṇasya*.” Extended exhalation in one rhythm is called *pracchardana* or throwing away in an extended manner. Though commentators put holding out breath after exhalation, *vāhya kumbhaka*, as *vidhāraṇa* but in the traditions of Kriyā-yoga *vidhāraṇa* is a special type of holding the air. This means automatic holding or suspension of the breath known as *kevala kumbhaka*. Here *pracchardana* or extended exhalation includes extended inhalation and doing so for long time, *dirghakāla*, uninterruptedly, *nairantarya*, practitioner attains breathless state. This is the Kriyā Proper I technique. By doing the action of breath, *kriyā*, as a doer, *kartā*, one will come to the state of an observer, *draṣṭā*, and at this state the practitioner cannot do Kriyā any more. He simply observes the breath, light, rhythm or sound. Then one due to the result of continuous practice will come to the state of witness, *sākṣī*, and this is the state of *kevala kumbhaka*, automatic holding of breath. This is further stated as: (2) “*tasmīn sati śvāsa praśvāsayogativicchedaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ* (ibid., 2.49), after perfection in postures the motion of exhalation and inhalation being halted is called Prāṇāyāma.” This is suspension of the movements of outgoing and incoming breaths. This is the state of being established in the breath mastery, *prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ*, as described in *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* as *apāne juhvati prāṇam* etc., “others pour the act of exhalation into that of inhalation and the act of inhalation into exhalation and when the motion of inhalation and exhalation are halted then they become established in breath mastery.” (Ś. Bg., 4.29.) Here the motion of exhalation and inhalation is halted, the mind is also halted, and this is the desired state of *kevala kumbhaka* in the Kriyā-yoga.

Further these practices have been elaborated in next two *sūtra*-s as: (3) “*vāhyābhyantarastambhavṛttiḥ deśakālasamkhyābhiḥ paridṛṣṭo dirghasūkṣmaḥ* (Ygs., 2.50),

that (Prāṇāyāma) has external, *vāhya*, internal, *abhyantara*, and stationary, *stambha*, operations, *ṛttiḥ*, all the three are observed, *paridṛṣṭaḥ*, in respect to space, *deśa*, time, *kāla*, and numbers, *saṁkhyābhīḥ*, become long, *dirgha*, and subtle, *sūkṣmaḥ*.” The inhalation is the internal operation, *pūraka*, exhalation is the external operation, *recaka*, and the retention of breath is the stationary operation, *kumbhaka*. These are three different types of Prāṇāyāma. In Kriyā-yoga the stationary operation is very limited in practice part, and is only restricted to holding of breath during bowing down in Guru Praṇāma, forward bending during Mahāmudrā, and neck and head rotation during Kriyā Proper II. Here fingers never close the nostrils. The practice of forcefully stopping the breath is done in Haṭha-yoga since *haṭha* means enforcement. So in the Kriyā-yoga practice the stationary operation, *stambha ṛtti*, is very short in-between inhalation and exhalation or in-between exhalation and inhalation. Again space, time and numbers regulate these three operations. In the Kriyā breathing the movements of concentration along with the breath, moves inside the spine. In static breath, concentration mostly remains at the Ājñā *cakra*. In Guru Praṇāma, Mahāmudrā and Kriyā-meditation successive concentrations at different *cakras* are made. In this way breath-techniques vary in accordance with space, *deśa*. Similarly, the duration, *kāla*, of inhalation, exhalation and static operation of breath makes the variations in Prāṇāyāma. In the Kriyā Proper I, this is extended inhalation and extended exhalation with very short retention, and when automatic retention occurs that depends on the time and duration of the previous practice. Again time, *kāla*, refers to timings of practice and duration of a sitting. Then this further depends on duration of practice and this is of very much help when the practice is for long periods of time, *dirghakāla*, and uninterrupted, *nairantarya*. How many rounds, *saṁkhyā*, of practice a practitioner practices also makes differences in the Kriyā. But another important aspect is that the inhalation and the exhalation should be made long, *dirgha*, and subtle, *sūkṣmaḥ*. This is the key to the practice of Kriyā Proper I. We have to breathe long and subtle, a coarse or sallow breathing is not beneficial. Such a long and subtle breath would pierce the *cakras* and the knots inside the spinal cord. Further at the last stage of *prāṇāyāma* when one establishes in breath mastery, *prāṇāyāmaparāyaṇāḥ*, is described as: (4) “*vāhyābhyantaraviśayā’kṣepī caturthaḥ* (Ygs., 2.51), the fourth type, *caturthaḥ*, is that transcends, *viśayā’kṣepī*, the external, *vāhya*, and internal, *abhyantara*.” This is the automatic suspension of breath, *kevala kumbhaka*. This transcends inhalation or internal operation, *abhyantara ṛtti*, and exhalation or external operation, *vāhya ṛtti*. This is achieved by practicing the previous types of internal operation and external operation regulated by space, time and number making them further long and subtle. This fourth type of Prāṇāyāma is the specialty of the Kriyā-yoga. This is the result of practice.

When such a breathless and thoughtless state is achieved then that results in, “*tataḥ kṣīyate prakāśā’varaṇam* (Ygs., 2.52), by that, *tataḥ*, the veil of manifestation, *prakāśā’varaṇam*, is thinned, *kṣīyate*.” This veil of manifestation covers the Knowledge. We are deluded by the manifestations through our sense-organs and mind. By practicing the *prāṇāyāma* and attaining the breathless state, which is also a thoughtless state again and again we enter into withdrawal of senses, *pratyāhāra*, concentration, *dhāraṇā*, meditation, *dhyaṇa*, and the transcendental state, *samādhi*. This develops the discriminating intellect, *viveka buddhi*. This weakens the *karma* that covers the Principle of Self due to misapprehension. Finally there is eradication of the false knowledge leading to liberation. This is the reason the yogic scriptures and the yogis over all ages praise the Kriyā or the Prāṇāyāma so much. There is no better austerity, *tapas*, than the Kriyā or the Prāṇāyāma. This is the inner heat, *tapas*, created by the breath practice. This burns all impurities of the body and the mind. This is the cause of destruction of the ignorance, *avidyā*, i.e., “I sense.”

Kriyā Meditation: The Kriyā Meditation is a part of the Kriyā Proper I. We have already discussed in the above that the Kriyā or the Prāṇāyāma varies according to space, time and number. In the Kriyā Meditation the concentration is first made at The Coccyx Center, Mūlādhāra *cakra* with the help of natural breath, light, inner rhythm/vibration or sound depending upon the state of the practitioner. One can also merge the *Om* sound with the inner rhythm during practice of concentration at a center. Then the practitioner should inhale a Kriyā inhalation with the breath sound of *ī* like *ī..ī..ī..ī..* un-interrupted from the Coccyx Center up to the Crown Center, Sahasrāra *cakra*, hold the breath for very short span of time and then exhale down with the breath sound of *ra* like *ra..a..a..a..* un-interrupted to the Coccyx Center. The feeling of *sva* would come over a period of practice. Next the practitioner has to concentrate at the Sacrum Center, Svādhiṣṭhāna *cakra* and to repeat the practice of meditation with breath, light, rhythm or sound, and then repeat the breathing as described above. Similar practices would continue with the Lumbar Center, Maṇipūra *cakra*, the Dorsal or Thoracic Center, Anāhata *cakra*, the Cervical Center, Viśuddha *cakra*, and at the Master Center, Ājñā *cakra*. When the practitioner comes to the Crown Center, Sahasrāra *cakra*, he should deeply inhale crossing the fontanel and should not come down or bring down the concentration to body by exhalation. The exhalation is slowly released and the practitioner enters to a state of deep meditation without any support or concentration on any thing. This deep state of meditation after Kriyā is known as Parāvasthā.

Subtle Manifestations of Light, Sound and Vibration: After a period of practice of the Kriyā-breath and the Kriyā-Meditation, the practitioner feels the movements of *prāṇa* inside the spine. In the beginning one may experience heaviness or stiffness at the point of concentration in the *cakra*-s. Then the practitioner feels

the Prāṇa as the electromagnetic force of attraction, as if the area is being squeezed due to attraction of energy. The practitioner may experience sweet pain at the *cakras* inside spine. Later one feels vibrations from the point of concentration, sometimes very strong and sometimes mild. This vibration might be like pulsation or long waves of energy moving in different directions. This feeling generally first comes at Ājñā *cakra*. Next, one may feel this at Anāhata *cakra*. There is no definite rule that which center will be aroused first. One after one the centers are aroused depending upon the intensity of practice and positive or negative impressions from past lives. The experience of light and sound also comes at concentration on *cakras*. We need not have to be anxious or worried about the experiences, only we have to follow our breath. These three manifestations of light, sound and vibrations are subtle manifestations of our *prāṇa*, breath being the gross manifestation. Light is related to the fire element and Maṇipūra *cakra*, vibration is related to the air element and Anāhata *cakra*, and sound is related to the ether element and Viśuddha *cakra*. But we feel the three subtle manifestations in all the centers since all the elements are present in all the centers. There is no definite order in these three manifestations though it should have been light first followed by vibration and sound, from gross to subtle. In many practitioners it is sound first and for many it is vibration. These three are always there but as our mind calms down due to concentration by breath-practice we are able to feel them. Then these become further tools of concentration. Sant Kabira sings,

*rasa gagana gufā me ajhara jhare,
tāhi caḍhi haṁsa keli kare.*

From cave of the juicy sky, springs the non-spring and riding over that sports the Haṁsa.

*bin bāja jhaṅkāra uṭhī jahān,
samajha paḍe jab dhyāna dhare.*

The musical sounds come forth without the playing of musical instruments, and is understood when the mind is concentrated.

*binu cāmda ujari daraśe jahān,
tahān jyoti najara paḍe.*

Without the moonrise, the light is there wherever the vision goes.

By the practice of Kriyā and Haṁsa, i.e., Silent Kriyā a practitioner gains such experiences. When the Prāṇa ascends through the spinal cord and rises above the Ājñā *cakra* and rests in the cave of intellect in third ventricle, *brahmaṇḍa* then there is flow of joy throughout the body in the form of subtle vibrations. This has been described as the sport of Haṁsa and flow of nectar. This is Prāṇa rejuvenating the entire body and mind. Before that also one feels vibrations inside spine and in the *cakras*. In a state of silence a yogi listens to unhurt divine sounds, this also

one practices in Om Technique (*vide supra*, p. 287). One can experience the manifestations of soothing moonlight in a state of deep silence in closed eyes and also practices this in Jyoti Mudrā Technique (*vide infra*, p. 319).

Though rare some practitioners even feel taste and smell. Everyone generally feels taste with Khecarī. One can experience smell along with Khecarī and without Khecarī. In meditation some experience smell of burning incense sticks, flowers or burning of ghee in a fire ceremony, etc. due to previous impressions, *samskāra*. However, the smell and taste being gross in nature in comparison to light, vibration and sound, these two are not further used for practice of meditation. In some, there may arise very bad smell of rotten dead bodies or smelling of burning dead bodies, and the present author knows two such practitioners. One even saw the heaps of dead bodies along with foul smell in meditation. For them meditation became difficult due to this experience and are advised to continue with the meditation ignoring the experiences and without any hatred towards these feelings. Then after a period, the experiences did not manifest further and a pleasant smell manifested. In further higher state of meditation, the practitioner goes beyond all these smell, taste, light, sound, or vibration.

Kriyā-breath and Meditation Quickens Evolution: Science describes emergence of life from matter, and then gradual evolution of the life from simple unicellular form to a complex human structure with a developed intellect. This evolution is a continuous process and is going on. The present human being is not same as that existed thousands of years before and will not remain the same after thousands of years as on today. We have seen the evolution from inorganic matter to organic matter, then life like viruses, which are in-between living and non-living. Further there were developments of unicellular organisms where a single cell performs all the vital functions of life and this led to the evolution of multicellular organisms without differentiation of tissues, then we find development of multicellular organisms with tissue grade system followed by organ grade system. In this way after the development of invertebrate animals we find the development of proto-chordates and then vertebrates, viz., fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. The development of nervous system and the gradual complexity of the nervous system involved in higher animals is one of the important aspects of evolution and along with the development of brain we find the development of mind in the animals. Humans are superior in the nature is because they have a superb brain and a superb intellect. Now with this development of the faculty of intellect humans are manipulating even the nature. What can be a further process in evolution to its peak after the development of intellect? At present we do not visualize anything else than exhilarity in subtle inner faculties of intellect like morality, aesthetic sense, discriminating intellect and spiritual developments. The human civilization in general is lacking in complete development of these faculties. We find in the

human history and at least from the Vedic era that ṛṣi-s, saints and sages are able to develop these faculties among them and shown us a way that we can do this. This is the development of the discriminating intellect, *viveka buddhi*, within us, and that is still at its childhood in human civilization in general. Ṛṣi-s are able to develop that faculty within themselves. The more we develop our discriminating intellect more rational we would be. We will overcome the narrow “I sense” to merge in vast “I Consciousness.” We will find all the beings as the Self. We would develop universal love. Why should there be a war? Why should there be hatreds? Why should one be insensitive to the sufferings of others? These do not mean that there will be only light and no darkness. With the development of an intellectual human the unicellular organisms or wild animals do not perish. Each soul that has identified itself to a body-mind entity due to the ignorance or the Way of Nature, has to travel its journey within the Nature to reach the Ultimate. But one who has reached the status of a human being can quicken the process by a spiritual practice leading to strengthening the discriminating intellect so that one can get rid of sufferings. Liberation be it *mokṣa* of Hindus, *nirvāṇa* of Buddhists or Divine Kingdom of Christians is to be achieved here and that is not possible without universal love and without shedding the egocentric attitude. Until and unless the faculty of discriminating intellect is fully developed within us we cannot see all beings as the Self, and until and unless we merge our individual self into the Cosmic Self by diving into the Ocean of Consciousness we cannot attain a State of Bliss.

The spiritual view on evolution includes the scientific view but from spiritual point of view this is the Consciousness first. It is not that matter developed into consciousness rather it is consciousness that has become or appears to become everything. So the material evolution is secondary in nature. Matter is spirit involved. The Consciousness or the Self by a process of involution developed into ether, air, fire, water and earth, and then further by a process of evolution developed into living beings in progressive of development of vital power, mind, and intellect. Our minds and intellects are just distorted reflections of the Ever-existing Consciousness. So nothing new is to be formed. We need a clear-cut reflection of the Self and that is not possible with a mind in motion. The modifications of mind must stop for growth of the discriminating intellect, and that we do when we enter the state of Samādhi or Parāvasthā. That is the ideal state of mind.

The way matter appears to us is not the real state of matter. Matter is a bunch of energy always vibrating, and scientifically we understand this. The physical energies are gross energies in comparison to the mental and intellectual energies. We also understand this. We also understand that there is one energy principle that changes states. That one energy principle is called the Cosmic Energy or the Life-force, *Prāṇa*. Matter is a gross form of energy that almost appears static. The

Pure Consciousness called Śiva or Paramabrahma is also static. Of course matter is only the appearance of the basic Principle Śiva, but these two static forms are poles apart. Darkness is blinding to us, similarly, very strong light is also blinding to us. As these two blinding conditions are not same similarly, the state of static matter and state of static Śiva are not same. In-between there is Śakti or energy, always vibrating and leading to processes of involution and evolution. Depending on the state of vibration of the same basic Principle it can be said as a physical energy like electricity, magnetism or heat, or a vital energy carrying physiological functions in a living being, or else a mental energy like mind, intellect, ego, subconscious or discriminating intellect. So the entire evolution or creation is based on vibration or movement, in other words this is called as time, *kāla*. Over a long span of time evolution has taken place from unicellular organisms to humans with intellect.

For we humans in this earth time is based on rotation of earth around its axis and around its orbit covering the sun. A single rotation of earth around its axis makes a day and night, and around its orbit makes a year. The rotation of moon around the earth makes a lunar month. The solar system is inbuilt within our body. A human being is a miniature form of the universe. Twelve zodiac signs are within us. Our spine is the axis. Around it in 360° we find the twelve zodiacs. The yogic scriptures describe Ājñā *cakra* as the place of moon and sun, *candra* and *bindu*. The house of sun is Leo and the house of moon is Cancer. Saturn is at the farthest distance from the sun and mercury is nearest to the sun. The houses of Mercury are Gemini and Virgo, and the houses of Saturn are Capricorn and Aquarius. Śrīyukteśvarajī described the position of the zodiacs in Cosmic Astrology according to scriptures. Back of Mañipūra is Aries, back of Anāhata is Taurus, back of Viśuddha is Gemini, back of Ājñā is Cancer, front of Ājñā is Leo, front of Viśuddha is Virgo, front of Anāhata is Libra, front of Mañipūra is Scorpio, front of Svādhiṣṭhāna is Sagittarius, front of Mūlādhāra is Capricorn, back of Mūlādhāra is Aquarius, and back of Svādhiṣṭhāna is Pisces. In a single rotation of the earth around its axis known as diurnal movement of twenty-four hours it completes twelve zodiac signs in an average of two hours for each zodiac. Now in our single Kriyā-breath we complete 360° or twelve zodiacs in ascending up from Mūlādhāra to Ājñā and then descending down from the Ājñā to the Mūlādhāra. But it must be a concentrated breath means moving attention along with the breath. Then in a single Kriyā-breath a practitioner covers the evolution of human consciousness as done over a single day and night. In this way in one hour of Kriyā-practice a practitioner advances 180 days (60 min. × 3 breaths = 180). Since the mind is moon, if the breath of the practitioner is vserly much concentrated, the mind not at all fluctuating and moving along with the breath, then the practitioner can cover a lunar month in a single ascending and descending breath around the spine. If the mind merges with the breath then in a single Kriyā-

breath a practitioner advances one year or 360 days of evolution. This is the spiritual science of the Kriyā-breath.

A childish question may arise that our mind is always in motion, always in thoughts. Then remaining in thoughts is a good means to progressive evolution and what is the need of a spiritual practice? Answer to such a question is that a lunatic is always busy but does the work of a mad person yield anything? Is moving one step forward and one step backward is traveling any distance? The rotation of earth around its axis or around its orbit is in a definite direction, that is the reason we have day and night and a year. Suppose the earth would start moving back and front, little clockwise and then little anticlockwise without any definite direction, can we have a day and night or a year? So for all these movements, there are definite rules. The modifications of our mind known as *citta vṛtti-s* are without any definite rules like the work of a mad person. We need to give it a definite direction, and then only we can evolve. Devotees put their mind with a Personal God giving it a direction. Yogis put their mind with the breath and then with subtle breath giving it a definite direction. In path of knowledge, *jñānī-s* by process of mental contemplation give their minds a direction. Our true self is the Pure Consciousness, Pure Prāṇa. This is Parama Śiva or Paramabrahma. This is beyond solar and stellar systems. That is *Mahākāla*, the Great Time. There is no time, no movements, no involution and no evolution. All these evolutions and involutions are only reflections of that Principle. A practitioner can have the glimpse of that only in *nirbīja nirvikalpa samādhi*.

Arousing Prāṇa/Kuṇḍalinī by Kriyā Practice: Prāṇa never sleeps. We are in waking state due to the Prāṇa. We do all our works, perceptions, thinking, contemplation and spiritual practices due to the Prāṇa. We are in dreaming state due to the Prāṇa. In deep sleep it is the Prāṇa that awakes. But this Prāṇa is just a negligible amount of total Prāṇa that is manifested within us. A vast portion of the Prāṇa is sleeping within us. That is Śeṣanāga Ananta. *Ananta* means infinity, *śeṣa* means the left over and *nāga* means cobra. A cobra or snake is the symbol of energy. Snake is also the symbol of illusion since all this illusory world of manifestations is nothing but energy. After the utilization of a minute amount of energy for the creation whatever is left is Śeṣanāga. That Śeṣanāga is infinite power. This is same for the macrocosm and for the microcosm or our body. Lord Viṣṇu is sleeping on that Śeṣanāga. *Viṣṇu* means vastness, the Lord of the vast manifested creations, and that Viṣṇu is supported by Śeṣanāga Ananta, the infinite left out energy. That is also called Ananta Vāsuki, the legendary snake holding the earth means holding this body. That is the residual and unutilized Prāṇa within us. *Vāsuh* means the Supreme Being, the Soul of all, the Cosmic Self, and this is Viṣṇu. *Vāsura* means the earth. Vāsuki is the snake that holding the Lord Viṣṇu as well as the earth. Our physical body is a miniature earth and our individual soul is a miniature Viṣṇu. The infinite *Prāṇa* is holding our body

and soul. How much energy we can tap from that infinite source lodged within us is the arousal of Prāṇa. That has been said as arousal of sleeping *kuṇḍalinī*. It is said, *bhujāṅgākārarūpeṇa mūlādhāraṃ samāsritā* (VT, 1), the Śakti remains at the Mūlādhāra in the form of a snake or coiled form. Energy rests in a coiled form. By the Kriyā practice this energy is aroused. Guru Praṇāma, Mahāmudrā and Kriyā Proper I techniques are very important for the sleeping *kuṇḍalinī* to awake. We have discussed that in Kriyā Proper I technique, we have mild effect of the three locks, viz., Jalandhara, Mūlabandha, and Uḍḍiyāna. Guru Praṇāma and Mahāmudrā techniques make the spine flexible and elastic. All these techniques forces the breath to the lower abdominal area and thereby creating heat that arouses the sleeping energy lying in the *fillum terminale, caudae equinae*, and the nerves coming out of the lower part of spinal cord. It is said, “*vāyavāghātasādagniḥ svādhiṣṭhānagato jvalan* (VT, 4), by the hit of the breath the fire inside the Svādhiṣṭhāna starts burning.” And this is the first sign of arousal of Prāṇa.

The experience of the present author is that in initial days of strong practice by him there was a feeling of heat at Svādhiṣṭhāna region during September/October 2002. Svādhiṣṭhāna started burning, and on such experiences one can just touch the lower back in Svādhiṣṭhāna area and can feel the heat. One may think that something wrong is going on since such type of heat is normally found during fever, one can say this as a the fever of hip region. Every practitioner has to remember that a strong observance of sexual restraint is the essential precondition. At this stage even during meditation and at time of sleep or rest the practitioner visualizes strong white light like moonlight at Svādhiṣṭhāna. The jerks start in the body during meditation and also during rest or sleep. Sometimes these jerks or shakings are very strong. These indicate that the Śakti is searching a way to ascend. We should do more and more Kriyā practice and meditation. While practicing Kriyā Proper-I during November 2002 the present author felt that during long exhalation a wave of vibration was arising in-between Maṇipūra and Mūlādhāra and had an upward trend. This became prominent when exhalation was further lengthened. On further elongation of the exhalations there were contractions of anus. This had Aśvinī *mudrā* type effects. Normally the practitioners give emphasis on extended inhalation during the Kriyā practice and not so much on extended exhalation. On continuation of extended exhalation practice for a period the next experience was the arousal of Mūlādhāra. Mūlādhāra started vibrating strongly. It started sending sparkling electric currents. At first these vibrations were in different directions. Then this took an upward trend inside the spinal cord. This was different from normal pulsating vibrations found during concentration at a *cakra*. Every one of us has experience of mild electric shock while working with our domestic electrical appliances. That spreads from the point of contact. Suppose that is directed at a straight line within the

body, one can imagine what would be the effect. This was like that inside the spinal cord from Mūlādhāra, but not strong or shocking like physical electricity. So one should not fear at all. It is said, “*suṣumnāvadane śighraṃ vidyullekheva saṁsphuret* (YKU, 67), enters inside the face of Suṣumnā quickly like a sparkling electric current.” The face of Suṣumnā is base of the spine, Mūlādhāra. At first this cannot ascend up to long heights. It can end up with Svādhiṣṭhāna or Maṇipūra. It all depends on the practice and previous impressions on mind, *saṁskāra*-s. Our impressions of mind are imprinted on our spinal cord. In the beginning days of this activation, a practitioner may have this experience for most of the periods a day for few days. Then the rising electric currents would come up to Anāhata and on further practice would ascend up to the Ājñā. The present author felt the electric current like upward vibrations starting from the Mūlādhāra and ending at the Maṇipūra in the beginning and then ending at the Anāhata. During last half of January 2003 this became so prominent that he was feeling this wave of vibration always. During the period it reached the Ājñā. Then these currents became subtler and soothing. Soon the vibrations appeared very thin and powerful as if passing through the central canal of the spinal cord and these were no more associated with the contractions at Mūlādhāra. During the period the body was very much energetic and sleep reduced to all most two to three hours in a day. This period was also associated with breathless state during meditation. However, the Prāṇa also comes down and the awakened Śakti again rests bellow. The practitioner has to take it up during the Kriyā practice. The practitioner wonders why the achieved state was lost. But the principle of Yoga is to practice equanimity. We have to learn to remain calm in all different states either elevated or subdued without cravings. Experiences would come and go; the equanimity of mind is the most important thing. One can feel the ascending and the descending actions of Prāṇa during the Kriyā Proper I breath practice and can also know where the energy is blocked. When the practitioner does the Kriyā Proper II breath practice known as Ṭhokar Kriyā the blockages are removed. Now the Prāṇa can ascend up to the Ājñā *cakra* easily. The strong feelings of Prāṇic currents become very easy and smooth. The feeling of Prāṇic currents is not always like electric currents or electromagnetic waves. But in the beginning it is like this. It can be like an air bubble coming up inside water filled tube. Rarely it can be like a water channel spreading slowly in upward direction or as if an ant is climbing up. It can be like hopping, and those who practice *ṭhokar kriyā* they experience this hopping movement very much. It can be very fast like throwing arrow from the Mūlādhāra to the Ājñā. Sometimes the feeling of vibrations flowing upward may be in a slower rate from the Mūlādhāra to the Maṇipūra, and then above the Maṇipūra the rate becomes faster. However a practitioner has to remember that these experiences are not our objective, our objective is to attain a calm thoughtless state. Our aim is to find the Self in all.

Parāvasthā: The state after Kriyā, Parāvasthā, is a state to be achieved as a result of our Kriyā practice. We cannot practice the real Parāvasthā. This state dawns as a result of long uninterrupted practice. The real Parāvasthā appears along with automatic suspension of breath, *kevala kumbhaka*. However, after the practice of Kriyā, our breath slows down and mind becomes calm. We can practice to sit in that state of inner silence without any concentration, imagination or visualization. We need not attend even to our breath, light, sound or vibration, and need not remain in any *cakra*. We should try to remain in a “no thought” state after the Kriyā practice.

In *Vāmakeśvara Tantra*, Parāvasthā has been described in a poetic way as,

*rudragranthim tato bhītṛvā viṣṇugranthim bhinattyataḥ,
brahmagranthim ca bhītṛvaiva kamalāni bhinatti śat.* (VT, 5)

(The vital power, *kuṇḍalinī*), after piercing the Knot of Rudra, *rudragranthim tato bhītṛvā*, pierces the Knot of Viṣṇu, *viṣṇugranthim bhinattyataḥ*, and again piercing the Knot of Brahmā, *brahmagranthim ca bhītṛvaiva*, pierces the six lotuses, *kamalāni bhinatti śat*.

*sahasrakamale śaktiḥ śivena saha modate,
sā cāvasthā parā jñeyā saiva nivṛtikāraṇam.* (VT, 6)

Then Śakti, *śaktiḥ*, remains with Śiva in a state of bliss, *śivena saha modate*, at the thousand petal lotus, *sahasrakamale*, and that state has been known as the Parāvasthā, *sā cāvasthā parā jñeyā*, that is the cause of liberation, *saiva nivṛtikāraṇam*.

From the above description one may visualize an imaginary state as Parāvasthā, but real understanding would descend when one experiences it. How the Prāṇa ascends inside the spinal cord, how it pierces the six centers and three knots and how it remains above the Ājñā *cakra* are to be experienced by practice. The breathless state and the state of “no thought” are to be experienced. The state of bliss is to be experienced. After that one can understand any description or poetry on that state, otherwise one would land only in imagination.

Experiencing a Breathless State: To achieve this state one needs long practice. One should stay for a period in isolation giving at least eight to ten hours in a day for practice of Kriyā-breath and meditation or go for meditation retreats. Khecarī, Guru Praṇāma, Haṁsa Sādhanā, *prāṇa vīkṣaṇa*, Om Technique, Mahāmudrā, Kriyā Proper and Kriyā Meditation, Jyoti *mudrā* and Sāmbhavī *mudrā* are very important. More time should be given to Haṁsa Sādhanā and Kriyā Proper techniques. The feelings of the present author when for the first time he experienced such a state of breathlessness was a slow and gradual process and is as follows.

It may be last week of December 2002. In early morning hours I was meditating. After Guru Praṇāma, Haṁsa Sādhanā and Mahāmudrā, I was in Kriyā Proper.

Then I left these active practices and was observing breath. Sometimes it was slow, again taking speed, again slow, then very slow; it way like this. Suddenly I felt that for a moment, just for few seconds my heart beat stopped and again started. There was no thought other than watching the breath. I tried this in subsequent days but it did not happen. Again, may be after fifteen days in a similar situation this happened. It appeared that for a second the heart beat is stopped, but I was more cautious to observe and found that in actuality the heart rate was lowered and again after fifteen minutes just a tick sound, a pause, and further lowering of heart beat. In this way the heartbeat was very low with feeble breath appearing as if both have stopped. Again on twelfth of February 2003 at four o'clock in the morning I started doing Kriyā Prāṇāyāma after Mahāmudrā. As usual I was taking breath from the base of the spine to the top of the crown and coming down to the base of the spine with the breath without retention of breath. It passed about forty-five minutes and there was no complete retreat of thoughts in mind. I got some pain and changed posture from Padmāsana to Siddhāsana and continued with the Kriyā Prāṇāyāma. By this time this was not strong Kriyā breathing, it had become silent Kriyā breathing like Haṁsa breathing. Gradually thoughts had subsided. I found while inhaling up, upto the Maṇipūra and then even reaching before the Ājñā *cakra* at the Anāhata area suddenly the breath stopped, *kumbhaka* occurred without any effort. It was a complete breathless state. The total timing of the breathless state this time may be around two minutes, may be more but exact timing was not possible to determine. Then the abdomen started contracting and relaxing automatically and breathing started. Then inhalation and exhalation was going in a normal way and I was simply observing them without any active breathing. In the same sitting the breathless state was repeated three times. During that period the mind was blank except I was conscious to observe what was happening. Again on fifteenth of February 2003 I started meditating at three o'clock in the morning. On the previous day I was not able to enter into deep meditation due to pain in my body. First the sounds came and I concentrated on sounds at the Ājñā *cakra*, which started vibrating as usual. Soon there was a normal flow of breath as happens in deep sleep with some difference that here the breath rhythm was maintained. This also happened many times earlier and I used to watch the breath and rhythm. On this sitting four to five times breath stopped automatically and there was a state of *kumbhaka*, the duration of each breath suspension may be around two minutes. Here it may incidentally be mentioned that if the breath becomes like that of deep sleep the practitioner generally develops *tamas* and can sleep. Though this is very relaxing and there remains no thoughts but this is not meditation. So if one is not vigilant enough then should resort to active breathing, i.e., the Kriyā breathing. Again there was breath suspension three to four time during my night meditation on twenty-fifth of February 2003. Again on seventh of March 2003 while observing vibrations at the Ājñā *cakra*, after sometime I felt the heartbeat and then there was gradual

slowing down of heartbeat. Then I was no more interested to keep a record of these. In this way slowing down of heartbeat and breathless state starts operating in a practitioner. Such experiences become usual and even the heartbeat and breath stops automatically during the meditation practice and even during the time of rest and sleep, and again breath starts with a hopping inhalation or a sudden jerk in in-breath as done in the practice of the Kriyā Proper II or *Ṭhokar Kriyā*. The period of breath suspension becomes more and more on increasing the practice and the period is reduced when less time is given to practice. Breathless state is always associated with thoughtless state. But for the most of the period during practice for such breath stoppages, it is not complete stoppage of breath rather it is very feeble breath and a slow heart rate and pulse rate though it appears that breath and heartbeat have stopped, and the life-force concentrating mostly at the *Ājñā cakra* though sometimes the concentration can shift to the hind brain region. The complete stoppage of breath is not very frequent.

JYOTI MUDRĀ

Since the practitioner experiences divine light this has been named as the seal of the light, *Jyoti mudrā*. This is also traditionally described in yoga scriptures as the seal of the creation, *Yoni mudrā*, since the practitioner experiences the presence of whole universe within by this technique. This is also known as the six-faced seal, *Ṣaṣṣmukhī mudrā*, since two ears, two eyes, nose and mouth are closed in this technique traditionally. Though here nose is not closed from outside but is blocked from inside through tongue by *Khecari*. The practitioner sees the inner light through the third eye closing the external two eyes, sees the solar and stellar systems, the galaxies within. One experiences that whatever is outside in this creation is all within, the microcosm (or the body), *piṇḍa*, is a miniature model of the macrocosm (or the universe), *brahmāṇḍa*, and is just a reflection. The appearance of light is more brilliant and clear when the technique is practiced after the observance of silence in *Parāvasthā*.

The Technique in Scriptures: The technique is described in Upaniṣads as,

svastikāsanamāsthāya samāhitamanāstathā. (JU, 6.32)

Sitting in the crossed legged posture, *svastikāsanamāsthāya*, concentrate the mind, *samāhitamanāstathā*.

*apānamūrdhvamutthāpya praṇavena śanaiḥ śanaiḥ,
hastābhyāṁ dhārayetsamyakkarmādikaraṇāni ca. (Ibid., 6.33)*

Raising the *apāna* (inhalation) to the top, *apānamūrdhvamutthāpya* (this means inhale from the base of the spine to above towards the *Ājñā* and the *Sahasrāra*), slowly with *Praṇava* (Om), *praṇavena śanaiḥ śanaiḥ* (this refers to *Īśvara* *praṇidhāna* *Kriyā* of *Kriyā-yoga* since *Īśvara*, Om, and *Harṁsa* are same), and, *ca*, hold correctly, *dhārayetsamyak*, the organs like ears, *karmādikaraṇāni*, by the hands, *hastābhyāṁ*.

*aṅguṣṭhābhyām mune śrotre tarjanābhyām tu cakṣuṣī,
nāsāpuṭāvadhānābhyām pracchādya karaṇāni vai. (JU, 6.34)*

Sages, *mune*, should cover, *pracchādya*, the organs as *karaṇāni vai*, the ears by the thumbs, *aṅguṣṭhābhyām śrotre*, the eyes verily by the index fingers, *tarjanābhyām tu cakṣuṣī*, the nostrils, *nāsāpuṭa*, by placing, *avadhā*, through others, *anābhyām*.

*ānandāvīrbhavo yāvattāvanmūrdhani dhāraṇāt,
prāṇaḥ prayātyanenaiva brahmarandhram mahāmune. (Ibid., 6.35)*

Hold (attention or air) at the crown, *mūrdhani dhāraṇāt*, up to the period, *yāvāt*, till, *tavat*, there is manifestation of bliss, *ānandāvīrbhavo*. Oh great sage, *mahāmune*, the life-force enters verily, *prāṇaḥ prayātyanenaiva*, into the hole of the Brahman, *brahmarandhram*.

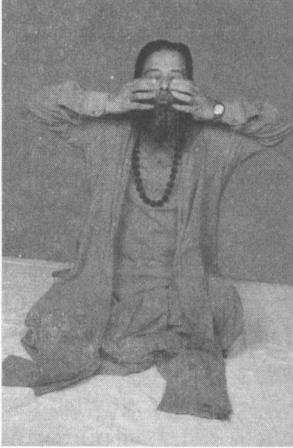


Fig. 5.7.1. Jyoti mudrā

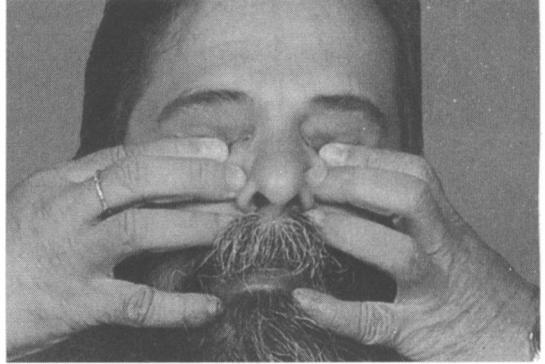


Fig. 5.7.2. Jyoti mudrā (enlarged view)

The Technique: The technique is very simple. Sitting in the meditative posture with a straight spine and tongue rolled up the practitioner should close the right ear by right thumb and left ear by left thumb. The elbows and shoulders should be in one straight line, chest little out and the shoulder blades touching each other gently. Then one should give gentle pressure from bellow the eyeballs (not on the middle or above) of the closed eyes with index fingers, left index finger pressing the left eyeball and right index finger pressing the right eyeball. The middle fingers are placed on the sides of the nostrils, ring fingers on the upper lip and little fingers on the lower lip. Then the practitioner has to inhale and exhale like the Kriyā Proper I breath, from each of the seven centers one after another starting from the Mūlādhāra. Even one would have the effects of light without Kriyā-breath but since this practice is done after Parāvasthā, which is a state of breath-silence it is required to do the technique with Kriyā. After the inhalations and exhalations the practitioner has to cover both the closed eyes

with concave palms and see the light, *jyoti*, inside. Remain in the state for a while or as long as the light lasts, and then remove palms covering the eyes. Bow down and offer your prayer/gratitude to the Divine and sit up.

Experiencing Light: The present author learned this technique in February 1994 and on the very first day he was amazed to see various types of lights, so much powerful and illustrious as if some beautiful firework is arranged. It was so enjoyable at the beginning that it surpassed any variety of fireworks in a *Dīpāvalī*, the festival of light, or in any other ceremony in India. It was as if there are lightening in the sky, as if so many stars appearing, various types of colors yellow, blue, golden, etc., and as if many suns are shining at a time. This was the first glimpse of the universe within. There were various types of visions of light as if one experiencing the different portions of the galaxy. The next experience was of powerful bright light as if many suns revolving, merging and forming a black hole. Subsequently, the vision of black hole became regular and varieties in color started diminishing. The golden disk like light appeared and in the middle of it appeared the black hole. Then golden light became white bright light with black hole in the middle. Then one day a small bright spot of about 1mm diameter appeared at the center of the black hole. In initial days, the vision of this bright spot within the black hole was irregular and then became regular but this did not take the shape of a five-pointed star as mentioned by some authors. Next, this bright spot became little elongated about 2 mm in size and from little above the middle point of the bright spot, single bright line emerge from one side, so the bright spot is now three-pointed. Then on further days another single pointed line emerged from the other side and now it became four-pointed, and looked like a line drawing of a miniature human being or like that of a cross. This is the actual experience of the present author. The lower portion of the cross can be compared to the trunk and two legs of a human joined together. The golden or bright white disk around the black hole was sometimes against the bluish background or a violet background. Sometimes a golden half-disk was observed above the golden or bright white disk. On disappearance of these it appeared like sky or sometimes like blue colored circles of faint lights moving on the sky. This experience proved the concept that we all are built with the same principle as that of cosmos and are one with it.

Significance: It is believed that the *Jyoti mudrā* eradicates the bad effects of planets in our lives and brings the results of our meditation into our daily life. But the results are much more and far greater. The miniature being we see inside the black hole is the Dwarf One, *Vāmana*. This is our Inner Lord inside the cave. This *Vāmana* is the Great Being, *Virāṭa Puruṣa*. This is *Vāmana* in the body chariot. In second day of lunar fortnight when the sun is in Gemini, *āśāḍha śukla dvitīyā*, there is the Car festival, *ratha-yātrā*, in Jagannātha Puri in the State of

Odisha at eastern part of India. Devotees gather to see the deity named Lord of the Universe, *Jagannātha*, on the chariot, *ratha*. It is said, “*rathe tu vāmanam dr̥ṣṭvā punarjanma na vidyate*, one who sees the Dwarf One (*Vāmana* or the Lord *Jagannātha*) on the chariot does not attend another birth, and is liberated.” In *Upaniṣads* it is said, “*ātmānam rathinam biddhi śarīram rathameva tu (Ka. U, 1.3.3)*, know the self as the master of the chariot and the body as the chariot.” We see Lord *Jagannātha* on the chariot and offer our devotion. Let the Lord of the Universe help us to see the Dwarf One within our body chariot. We have to see Him at our *Ājñā cakra* with light, with pulsation, with sound and then beyond light, sound and vibration. We have to see Him within the intellect. Then we are one with Him and there is no further birth. Once “I sense” is finished further birth ceases. For this the sun should be in Gemini, i.e., *Viśuddha cakra*, this means body is in the ether, *Viśuddha cakra* represents the ether element. The yogi becomes a disembodied, *videha*, while remaining in the body a yogi has to transcend the body. The moon or mind is on Cancer, at the *Ājñā cakra*, on its own house. We need a mind at own house, not a deflected mind. Then only we can see the Lord existing in our body temple or riding on our body chariot. That is the real *Jyoti mudrā*. Let this *Jyoti mudrā* lead us to that *Jyoti mudrā*, and this *Jyoti mudrā* gives us realization of that *Jyoti mudrā*. However, the days preceding the Car festival, *ratha-yātrā*, is called the celebration of eye, *netra utsava*, and the vision of new youth, *nava yauvana darśana*, when the sun remaining in Gemini the moon moves from Gemini to the Cancer and stays at Cancer. This is the *Prāṇa* named the mind since mind is a product of *Prāṇa* is also a *prāṇa*, ascending from the *Viśuddha cakra* to the *Ājñā cakra*. The eyes of Lord *Jagannātha* are not like the eyes of humans or other deity gods. In *Jyoti mudrā* we see the light exactly like that of eye of Lord *Jagannātha*, a black circle inside, around it a wide white ring and around it a red thin ring against a black background. Two eyes on the face are arranged in such a way as if one is the mirror image of the other. The body, *piṇḍa*, is the mirror image of the universe, *brahmāṇḍa*. The individual self, *jīva*, is the mirror image of the Cosmic Self, the Brahman. Both are infinite. In these ways all our festivals and deities represent our inner principle.

SĀMBHAVĪ MUDRĀ

This technique is practiced at the end of the meditation session. The purpose of this practice is to bring the meditative state for the rest of the times even when we are not sitting for meditation.

Technique in Scriptures: In the scriptures this technique has also been described as *Vaiṣṇavī mudrā*. This is described as,

*antarlakṣyaṁ bahirdr̥ṣṭirmimeṣonmeṣavarjītā,
eṣā sāvaiṣṇavī mudrā sarvatantreṣu gopitā. (Sa. U, 1.7.14)*

Attention is fixed inside, *antarlakṣyam*, gaze is outward, *bahirdṛṣṭih*, and without blinking of eyelids, *nimeṣonmeṣavarjitā*, that Vaiṣṇavī *mudrā* is like this, *eṣā sāvaiṣṇavī mudrā*, kept hidden in all the Tantras, *sarvatantreṣu gopitā*.

Technique: After the practice of Jyoti *mudrā* the practitioner sits straight and first fixes the attention inside and then slowly opens the eyes. Eyes are open but attention is inside. Here there are three variations. One is fixing attention inside the Ājñā *cakra*, the practitioner can have just the eyes open or else can have a peripheral outer vision not looking into any objects. If we look into the photograph of Śrīyukteśvarājī in meditative posture we find that he is looking inside though his eyes are open. Another type we find from the photograph of Lāhiḍi Bābā in meditative posture. Here the eyes are half-closed or half-open but outer gaze on tip of the nose and inner attention is inside the Ājñā *cakra* or the Sahasrāra *cakra*. The third type we find from the picture of Mahāvātāra Bābājī. The eyeballs are lifted up and towards the inner corners, and gaze is fixed on the Sahasrāra *cakra*.

If we practice the Sāmbhavī *mudrā* we can learn to meditate with open eyes, this would help us to meditate through out the day.

SECOND KRIYĀ TECHNIQUES

A practitioner should not step into this *kriyā* without a proper master and without being firmly established in the Haṁsa Sādhanā and the First Kriyā techniques. Success in Khecarī is very much required. In earlier days no master was teaching the Second Kriyā to his disciples, if the disciple had not mastered the Khecarī. It should be reminded again here that only a long period of uninterrupted practice gives the desired results. Simply reading the books or learning the techniques from a master yield nothing. Only after long duration and long-term practices, a practitioner knows about the Kriyā, otherwise he can simple remain in a state of hallucination that he knows the Kriyā.

In the Second Kriyā Techniques all the techniques of First Kriyā remain intact. Only there is addition to the Kriyā Proper Breath Technique and the Kriyā Meditation. There is some addition also to the Jyoti *mudrā* Technique. If we say the First Kriyā Techniques are basic foundations of the Kriyā-yoga, the Second Kriyā is the soul of the Kriyā-yoga. This is taught either in two or in three steps. Second Kriyā Breath Technique is a breath technique with the twelve-lettered Vāsudeva mantra. Second Kriyā Meditation follows second the Kriyā Breath Technique and that is a meditation at six centers from Mūlādhāra to Ājñā with the letters of the Vāsudeva mantra. The second part of Second Kriyā Meditation is known as Māṭṛkā Dhyāna. This has two parts, viz., Antarmāṭṛkā Dhyāna and Bahirmāṭṛkā Dhyāna. Most of the present day masters do not teach the Bahirmāṭṛkā Dhyāna part.

Here it may incidentally be mentioned that the Second Kriyā Technique taught by the Yogada Satsang Society is an extension of the Om Technique. Here the

practitioner listens to the inner sounds of honey bee, cricket, lute, bell and sea roar with concentration in lower five centers and symphony of sounds in higher two centers in a modified *Ṣaṅmukhī mudrā* by closing the ears with thumbs and rotating index fingers at outer corner of the eyes. Other traditions do not teach this as the Second Kriyā. The Second Kriyā Breath Technique with the twelve-lettered Vāsudeva mantra is taught in Yogada Satsanga as third and fourth Kriyā

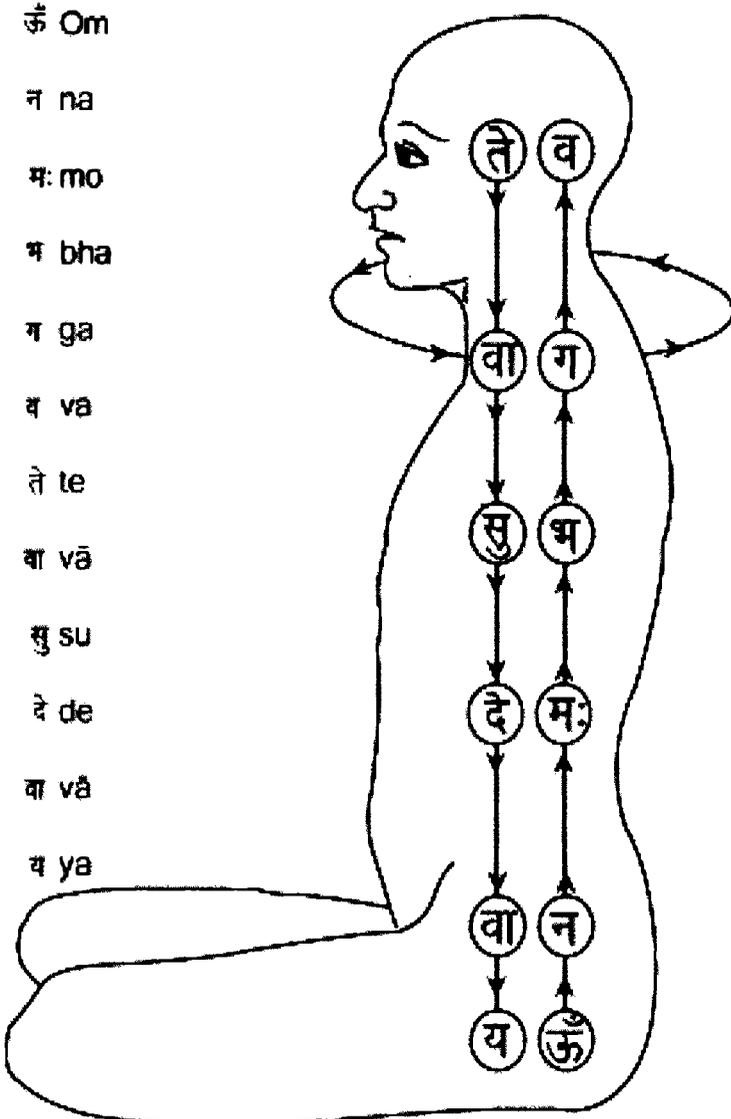


Fig. 5.8. Second Kriyā Breathing with Vāsudeva Mantra

with little difference from other traditions. The present author does not have much knowledge of Second Kriyā Meditation Techniques, viz., meditation with the Vāsudeva mantra, Antarmāṭṛkā Dhyāna and Bahirmāṭṛkā Dhyāna and the further higher Kriyā techniques are also taught or not in different schools of Kriyā-yoga including the Yogada Satsanga.

Kriyā Proper II, *Ṭhokar Kriyā*: Kriyā Proper II is the Second Kriyā Breath Technique. This is known as hitting breath technique, *Ṭhokar Kriyā*. One may not understand this from reading a description, this is to be seen and learned from a master. This is a breath technique with the twelve-lettered Nārāyaṇa Mantra “*Om Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*” as “*Om na mo bha ga va te vā su de vā ya.*” Here the practitioner splits the Kriyā Proper I inhalation into six with the first six letters (*Om to va*) of the mantra and lengthening the last part of the inhalation with the letter-*va*. Here inhalation hits each center beginning from the Mūlādhāra to end with the Ājñā. Then holding the breath the practitioner makes chin down, rotates the head and neck in anti-clock-wise direction from left to right, then chin up, and then exhales by splitting the exhalation into six with the other six letters (*te to ya*) of the mantra and lengthening the last part of the exhalation with the letter-*ya*. Here exhalation hits each center beginning from the Ājñā to end with the Mūlādhāra (Fig. 5.8). In the beginning one is permitted to practice only seven breaths. This technique arouses all the centers and the effect is felt on the very first day just after the practice. It is said that a single Kriyā Proper II breath is six times more powerful than a Kriyā Proper I breath. A practitioner who has not practiced the Kriyā Proper I properly for a long time cannot practice this correctly and also cannot reap the results of this technique. In earlier days this Kriyā was generally given to a Kriyāvān after success in Khecarī or at least after tongue touches the uvula, but nowadays this rule is not followed. But it is important to follow this rule for success.

The Effect and Experience: The effect of this Kriyā is so powerful that the present author can still remember the feelings when he practiced this for the first time. I was in my master’s ashram at Rishikesh and devoting full time to the practice along with one Swāmiji. It was October 2002, when my master came to the ashram on the fifteenth and sixteenth of October. In July 2002 I have asked him for higher techniques and he said that he would tell. Since he did not instruct me further I thought more practice is needed and I was concentrating more and more on practice only. This time I was hopeful. When I reminded him about my request on the morning of October 16, he remained silent and I believed this as his consent. I hoped that he would teach me before leaving but he did not, so I was broken. On the next day, i.e., October 17, 2002 after my morning meditation while I was in my room alone became more emotional and I cried like a child since there was a strong desire for higher techniques and success in meditation. During the period I was in an state of emotional devotion and I knew that the

emotion is not meditation though this helps a lot in initial stages of practice since a practitioner puts more effort. In the afternoon one guru-brother of my master who visited the ashram during the period called me and taught me the Second Kriyā Breath Technique and the meditation technique with the twelve-lettered mantra. I have never requested him for the techniques though once before I had discussed with him regarding meditation. I do not know if he was asked by my master to instruct me. I came to my room and practiced the breath technique for seven times and suddenly I found all my six cakras started vibrating at once. Previously I was feeling this at the Ājñā *cakra* only. After that my meditation took a new turn. At first it was difficult to do with the Kriyā Proper II but on practice the body system adjusted to it within seven days. After few days I found my Anāhata vibrating even during sleep or rest. The vibrations at Ājñā *cakra* became very smooth from the previous and the duration of feeling the inner rhythm during Haṁsa Sādhanā at the Ājñā *cakra* is increased. Contraction and relaxation of centers became smooth. Stiffness in spinal cord was removed completely and I found vibrations in entire spinal cord in any region wherever I concentrated. After fifteen days he taught me the entire Second Kriyā and said that though it should be given in steps but an eligible practitioner, *adhikārī sādhanaka*, can be given the entire set at a time.

The most important aspects of the Kriyā Proper II is that the Prāṇa starts hopping within the spinal cord and sincere practice leads soon to near breathless state or Parāvasthā. This is very helpful to those practitioners who practice to achieve complete breathless state. After a breathless state is achieved when again breath starts it starts with this hopping, as if the practitioner is inhaling a single hop or two hops as in this Kriyā.

Variations: In present times we find many variations to Kriyā Proper II Techniques. Some teach neck and head rotation differently keeping breathing procedure intact as described here above, first chin down and up, then left tilt and up, then back tilt and up, then right tilt and up, again chin down and up. Some other teach to split inhalation six times from Mūlādhāra to Ājñā with *om* to *va*, then rotate neck and head with *te* to *su* and then split exhalation three times from *de* to *ya* to finish at Anāhata. Another teach to inhale from Mūlādhāra to Sahasrāra without slitting the breath, then to hold the breath, bent head forward, then left, then back, then right, forward again and then lift head straight; then teach to exhale with four splits to Mūlādhāra, next round six splits to Svādhiṣṭhāna, next round ten splits to Maṇipūra, next twelve splits to Anāhata, next sixteen splits to Viśuddha and next two splits to Ājñā. With so many variations to higher kriyās we can only pray to Mahāvatāra Bābājī Mahārāja to save his teachings.

Meditation with Vāsudeva mantra: Next stage of this practice is the meditation at *cakra*-s with the mantra “*Om Namō Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*,” placing six letters,

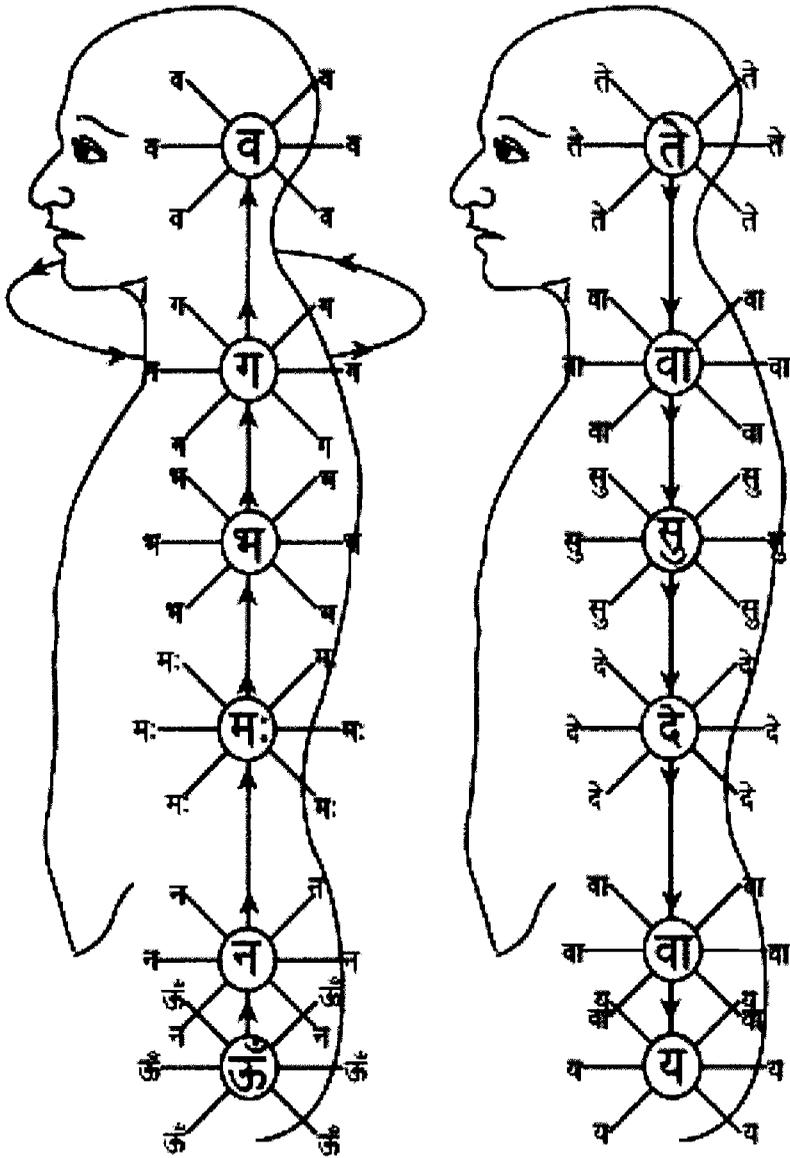


Fig. 5.9. Second Kriyā Meditation with Vāsudeva Mantra.

viz., *Om*, *na*, *mo*, *bha*, *ga*, and *va* up one in each center from the Mūlādhāra to the Ājñā and six letters, viz., *te*, *vā*, *su*, *de*, *vā*, and *ya* down from the Ājñā to the Mūlādhāra. The practitioner feels the vibrations of Prāṇa along with the sounds of the letter in each center. After meditating half cycle up from the Mūlādhāra to the Ājñā the practitioner rotates the head and neck but this rotation is not like

the rotation in the Kriyā. It is much slower keeping in pace with the pulsation at the Ājñā *cakra* with rest at front, left side, back, right side and again at front point during rotation. Then the practitioner meditates half cycle down from the Ājñā to the Mūlādhāra *cakra*-s. This is a process of concentration and then merging the mind with sounds and vibrations.

The Principle Behind the Mantra: *Om Namō Bhagavate Vāsudevāya* mantra is very popular in India and is practiced in many traditions in different ways. The normal practice of a mantra found in different traditions is verbal repetition or mental repetition. The verbal repetition is audible speech, *vaikharī vāñī*. Then the practitioner comes to the mental repetition and this is intermediate speech, *madhyamā vāñī*. By practicing again and again with faith and devotion a state comes when the practitioner does not have to repeat it any more by effort. This goes on automatically. The practitioner has to listen with concentration. Now the mantra is lively. The vital force, *prāṇa*, and the mind, *mana*, of the practitioner are now one with the mantra. This is the state of observer, *paśyantī*. The present author had this experience while he was mentally repeating *Om Namō Bhagavate Vāsudevāya* mantra as per normal practice of *japa* much before he learned the Second Kriyā Meditation Techniques.

In the Kriyā-yoga we place six letters of this mantra in ascending order and other six in descending order in six centers. Then sound vibration of each letter is mentally repeated synchronizing with pulsating vibrations felt at the center of concentration. In this way this becomes a psycho-vital technique of concentration. At this stage of practice the sound is intermediate, *madhyamā*, since this is done first mentally. Since the practitioner synchronizes the sound with vibration soon the state of observer is achieved. Now this becomes *paśyantī* sound and this can go on automatically. The normal type of repetition of a mantra or a syllable is simple mental. Here the practitioner takes the help of the vibration of mind, *citta spanda*. But in this technique of Kriyā-yoga the practitioner takes the help of both the vibration of mind and the vibration of vital force, *prāṇa spanda*, and integrates them. In this way a concentrated mind merges into the vital force and a state of “no mind” is achieved. •

This mantra is a discovery of the *ṛṣi*-s and has a very important place in various types of spiritual practices. This mantra is used in worshiping practices in general and also in worshiping practices as enumerated in Upaniṣads like *Rāmāpūrvatāpinyuṣaṇṣad* and *Nṛṣimhapūrvatāpinyuṣaṇṣad*. Devotees start reciting *Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā* and *Śrīmadbhāgavata Mahāpurāṇa* beginning with this mantra. Devarṣi Nārada has given the meditation technique with this mantra to the divine child Dhruva Kumāra, the son of King Uttānapāda and to the divine child Prahlāda, the son of Demon-king Hiraṇyakaśyapu.

The Inner Meaning of the Mantra: *Vāsudeva* means “the Self of all;” one who sits in every being. The general meaning of *Om Namō Bhagavate Vāsudevāya* is, “I

bow down to Lord Vāsudeva, the soul of all.” Since He is the soul of all He is also my soul. The letter *Om* is everything. *Om* is combination of three letters, viz., *a*, *u*, and *m*, and the no-letter, *amātraḥ*. It is said, *omkāra trimūrttaye namaḥ*, we bow down to the three deities in the form of *Om*. *Om* is the Lord of creation, Brahmā, the Lord of sustenance, Viṣṇu, and the Lord of dissolution, Rudra. *Om* is the three great powers as Mahākālī, Mahālakṣmī, and Mahāsarasvatī. *Om* is the power of will, *icchā śakti*, the power of action, *kriyā śakti*, and the power of knowledge, *jñāna śakti*. *Om* is beyond the three forms, and it is the Transcendental Lord. *Om* is past, present and future, and *Om* is beyond the time. *Om* is the waking state, the dream state and the deep sleep state, and beyond the three states as Turiya. *Om* is three qualities, viz., *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* and beyond the three qualities. *Om* is three bodies, viz., gross body, subtle body, and causal body and beyond the three bodies as the Self. *Om* is everything. The *Om* is established at Mūlādhāra *cakra* since *Om* is the basic foundation, *mūla ādhāra*. It is not the gross body as the basic foundation rather it is *Om*. The letter-*na* means that which negates the world of manifestation. This is nothing, or that does not exist. So nothing exists other than *Om*. The manifestations are nothing but a mirage. So the letter-*na* is said to be, “*bhuktimuktīprada śānta*, that gives enjoyments, liberation and is the form of tranquility,” (AU, 5), since being established in *na* one attains liberation. The *na* is to be established at Svādhiṣṭhāna *cakra*. Attachments and aversions are very strong at Svādhiṣṭhāna, and we have to establish *na* there. Then comes the letter-*ma* or *maḥ*, and *ma* means *mana* or mind. This is the root of all evils. The seat of the mind is the Maṇipūra *cakra*. The *ma* or the mind emerges from nothing; this does not have any real base of its own since this is a reflection of the consciousness. This *ma* is the cause of the world, cause of all pains and pleasures. So it is said, “*maṅkāra vidveṣimohanakara*, the letter-*ma* is one that is the form of aversion and delusion, *vidveṣimohanakara*.” (AU, 5.) All our cravings or desires are simply delusions. The mind is the cause of cravings and aversions. This mind seems to be infinite or *ḥ* since there seems no end to the desires. Once the actions of the mind are halted then this becomes deluder of aversions, *vidveṣimohanakara*, leading to a state of tranquility. The mind, which was the form of aversion and delusion, the same mind, now becomes deluder of aversions. The next letter in the mantra is *bha*, and *bha* represents *bhava* or creation. Mind is the cause of all creations, be it subtle or gross. The Cosmic mind is the cause of creation of the universe and the individual mind is the cause of desires and actions. The mind with ego sense is the cause of creation and hence the seat is at Anāhata *cakra*. It is said, “*bhaṅkāra bhūtaprasāntikara bhayānaka*, the letter-*bha* pacifies the elements and is furious.” (AU, 5.) The five elements intermix and react till they are stabilized in the form of gross manifestations, so the creation is said to be pacifying the elements, *bhūtaprasāntikara*. The manifestations in the form of thought waves or desires are binding in nature, hence said to be furious,

bhayānaka. The next letter is *ga*, and *ga* represents ether, *gagana* and motion, *gamana*. All our thoughts or desires move in the ether and merge in the ether. Hence the place of letter-*ga* is Viśuddha *cakra*. The letter-*ga* is said to be, “*sarvavighnaśamana mahattara*, pacifying all the obstacles and vast.” (AU, 5.) Thoughts arise as subtle sound waves from the ether and by our spiritual practice can merge these in the ether, and then it is pacifying all the obstacles. If that happens by our spiritual practice then this vastness sits within the heart or cave of the intellect as Lord Viṣṇu. The heart is the third ventricle above the Ājñā *cakra*. Since that does not happen without a spiritual practice then these thoughts or the ignorance sit as desires and actions within the heart. That seat or sitting is the letter-*va*. It is said, “*vāṅkāra sarvāṅgyānakara nirmala*, the letter-*va* satisfies all and is pure.” (AU, 5.) As the transcendental state, this is the form of all satisfaction and pure. At the state of desires and action, this satisfies the ego, mind and senses, and here though it appears impure but in reality this has not deviated from its pure form. The happiness one receives from sensual gratification or fulfillment of a desire, these also have their roots to the Bliss Principle. Again the next letter is *te*, and this *te* means “that,” that principle or that light, *teja*, which has become the individual self due to identification with the body and mind or with desires and actions. Or else if due to a spiritual practice there happens the merger of individual “I sense” with the “vast I-consciousness” then that principle sits at the Ājñā *cakra* in the form of the Cosmic Self. The seat of *te* is at Ājñā *cakra*. Now this *te* in a descending order becomes *vā* at Viśuddha *cakra*. The letter-*vā* represents vehicle, *vāhana*. This carries away the same state that is established, the state of desires or the state of renunciation or the Knowledge. The letter-*vā* means air, *vāta*, or “to blow,” which means to go or to move. And this state flows to the Anāhata, the center of knowledge and ego. The letter-*su* means well and good. This is maintenance of the same state at the Anāhata. Again in the mind center, Maṇipūra, this becomes the letter-*de*. The letter-*de* means to protect or cherish. We cherish or protect the same state in the mind center. Again we blow the same state represented by the letter-*vā* to the Svādhiṣṭhāna *cakra*, the center of “I Sense,” *asmitā*, love, emotion and sex. The letter-*vā* becomes peace, tranquility and bliss if it started with the cosmic state at the Ājñā *cakra*. Now the same *vā* becomes the cause of hurt and injury if it started with “I sense” at the Ājñā *cakra*. The letter-*vā* also means to hurt, injure or to cause a blow since the desires are the cause of the sufferings. Next at the Mūlādhāra, the center of the gross body, these characters transcend to body level. The letter-*ya* means one who goes or moves. The letter-*ya* also means fame, restraint, light, abandoning, meditation, and obtaining. We have to establish the pure *ya* at the Mūlādhāra: “*yaṅkāra sarvavyāpaka pāvana*, the letter *ya* is vast, spread everywhere and auspicious.” (AU, 5.) If we look from the beginning with Om and letter-*na* being established at the Mūlādhāra and Svādhiṣṭhāna we do not have any problem.

Problem started with letter-*ma* or mind at the Mañipūra. Then we become same according to the shape of our mind. So it is said, “*mana eva manuṣyānām kāraṇam bandhamokṣayoḥ*, mind is the cause of bondage and liberation for humans.” (*Bb. U*, 2; *SU*, 1; *Mai. U*, 4.3ff.) All it depends upon what type of belief-system we develop within us. If we believe us as a body entity or a mind entity then due to our narrow identification we are bound to suffer with our desires. But if we believe in “*vāsudevaḥ sarvamiti*, that Vāsudeva is all everything,” (*Ś Bg.*, 7.19), then we are one with everything. Vāsudeva is the innermost Self of all. One who finds unity with everybeing and everything for him, “*tatra ko mohah kaḥ śoka etatvamanuṣyataḥ*, what delusion and what sorrow can be there for such a one who sees oneness.” (*Īś. U*, 7.) But before this state of oneness, the beginning should be with “I bow down to Lord Vāsudeva, the Self of all, *Om Namō Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*.”

Mātrkā Dhyāna—The Principle: In Sanskrit *mātr* means mother and *mātrkā* means any thing coming or inherited from mother. The meaning of *mātrkā* generally implies a mother, a grand mother, a nurse, a source or origin, a divine mother, a *yantra* or diagram having miraculous effect on practice of concentration, a sacred syllable, *mantra*, and an alphabet, *varṇa*. In spiritual practice *mātrkā* term is normally used for alphabets or garland of alphabets, *varṇamālā*, though the term is often used for a goddess, *devī*, a mantra or a yantra. The alphabets are mothers. It is sound, which is the source of creation. This sound is just a vibration, *spanda*, and this is exuberating. In the Transcendental Lord, *Parama Śiva*, there is neither creation nor sustenance nor dissolution. With the creation of the sound the whole chain of creations, sustentations and dissolutions started. The prime sound is the Great Mother, *Mahāmātrkā*. This can be said as the Lord, *Śiva*, or as the Divine Mother, *Śakti*. So all the sounds can be said as *Śiva*, or as *Śakti*. But in the scriptures on Āgama or literatures on Tantra, the terms *śakti* or *mātrkā* are often used. The sound energy is the subtle ether element. The prime sound is one. We can say this as “no letter,” *amātraḥ* or “half letter,” *ardhamātrā*, of the sacred syllable *Om*. Though there is little difference between *amātraḥ* and *ardhamātrā*, *amātraḥ* can be said as the Transcendental Lord where as *ardhamātrā* can be said as both *Śiva* and *Śakti* combined. This is the Supreme Swan, *paramahansa*, and this has become the Hamsa, i.e., *ham* and *sa*. This is the point, *bindu*, of *Om*. This has become letters *a*, *u*, and *m*. This is the transcendental state, Turiya. This has become the waking state, the dream state and the deep sleep state. This is beyond time and this has become three periods of time, viz., past, present and future. This is the gross manifestation, the subtle manifestation and the causal manifestation, and beyond all the manifestations. The *a-kāra* or letter-*a* leads to the manifested world, *Virāṭa*, this is the waking state and the gross body, *akāro nayate viśvam* (*G Kā.*, 1.23), the letter-*a* leads to Viśvā. So also the letter-*u* leads to Taijasa, *ukāraścāpi taijasam* (*ibid.*, 1.23), this is the intermediate

world, the dream state and the subtle body. The letter-*m* again leads to Prājña, *makāraśca punaḥ prājña* (ibid., 1.23), this is the heaven, space within heart, the deep sleep state and the causal body. In “no letter,” *amātraḥ*, there remains no attainment, *nāmātre vidyāte gatiḥ* (ibid., 1.23). In *Bible* (New Testament, Book of St. John) it is said, “The word was with the God and the word was the God.” The word means the sound. For creation this basic sound called “no letter,” *amātraḥ*, has become fifty letters of Sanskrit. However, this is same for the alphabets of any language. The sound is the principle. The Sanskrit alphabets are more in a scientific order in expressing the sounds. A kid is first taught alphabets, then words and then sentences. An alphabet does not have any meaning, and here meaning and sound are undifferentiated. Then the words have meanings. The sentences have meanings with knowledge. However, this knowledge is the outer knowledge about the universe. This is the trend of creation; from one single sound to multiple sounds or alphabets, then combination of alphabets to form words with meanings and then knowledge in the form of sentences, thoughts or mind etc. Now in the spiritual practice this trend is reversed to return back to the origin. In speech or thoughts whatever knowledge and meanings are there, these are to be reversed to their root, if we have to go beyond the thoughts. Then only we can have the knowledge of the Principle. Now at the Principle the knowledge, the meanings and the sounds all merge. Then only the real Knowledge emerges.

In Upaniṣads we find spiritual practices on *Om*, Haṁsa and sounds, *nāda*. *Akṣamālikopaniṣad* deals on spiritual practices on these alphabets. So such spiritual practices have their root established in Upaniṣads. But meditations on alphabets are dealt more in the scriptures dealing with Āgama or the literatures on Tantra and form a part of the Yogic and Tantric spiritual practices.

We have discussed that the sounds or speech express in four states, viz., *parā*, *paśyantī*, *madhyamā*, and *vaikharī*. This is the order of creation, and this is descending order, *avaroha krama*. The transcendental speech, *parā vāk*, is the sound in form of the Brahman, *śabdabrahma*. This is the transcendental form of Śakti, *parā śakti*, and this is the Great Divine Mother, *Mahāmāṭṛkā*. But we are in the state of articulate utterance, *vaikharī vānī*. From this we have to go to the state of transcendental speech, *parā vāk*, through ascending order, *āroha krama*. We have to go to that state via medium speech, *madhyamā vāk*, and the sound that is seen, *paśyantī vāk*. At the transcendental speech, *parā vāk*, there is no more any spiritual practice. Our spiritual practice is with the medium speech, *madhyamā vāk*, and with the observed speech or the observed sound, *paśyantī vāk*. In *madhyamā* sounds, meanings and knowledge are separate, and at the end of *madhyamā* meanings and knowledge merge. In the observed sound, *paśyantī vāk*, sounds, meanings and knowledge integrate. This means the sound is the meaning and the same is the knowledge. This is the core part of the spiritual

practice. This is the science behind the practices of a sacred syllable, *mantra*. We have to remember that all these sounds or alphabets are mothers, *mātrkā*, energy, *śakti*, or the vital power, *prāṇa*. These are synonyms.

The alphabets are broadly classified into the vowels, *svara varṇa*, and the consonants, *vyañjana varṇa*. *Svara* means sound or tune. The vowels are the basic sounds. Without these the consonants cannot be expressed. Breath is also called *svara*. The vowels are the breath or life of the consonants. In Sanskrit literature there are sixteen vowels, and since these are pure sounds these are placed in the *Viśuddha cakra*. *Viśuddha* means pure and this is related to the ether element. A consonant or *vyañjana varṇa* means one that has been manifested, *abhivyāñjita*. The letter-*ka* is the first consonant, and this represents first manifestation. Hence Hiraṇyagarbha is represented by the letter-*ka*, “*kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema* (RV, 10.121.1), we should offer our oblations to one that is represented by the letter-*ka*, *ka asma*.” The letter-*ka* is the first consonant and represents all the consonants, “*yadvāva kaṁ tadeva khaṁ yadeva khaṁ tadeva kamiti* (Ch. U, 4.10.5), which is *ka* that is *kha*, and one which is *kha* that is *ka*.” This means these are one principle. In *ka* there is *kha*, *gaṁ* and *gha*, etc. Similarly, in *kha* there is *ka*, *ga* and *gha*, etc. Again it is said, “*prāṇo brahma kaṁ brahma khaṁ brahmeti* (ibid., 4.10.4), *prāṇa* is Brahman, *ka* is Brahman, *kha* is Brahman.” Here unity is shown between *prāṇa*, and the alphabets. In Āgama or Tantric literatures this has been said as Śiva. Śiva and the Brahman have the same meaning. All the consonants are Śiva. All the manifestations are nothing but Śiva or the Brahman because it is the same principle that has been manifested. The consonants, *vyañjana varṇa*, are half letters, *ardhamātrā*, *vyañjanam cārḍhamātrakam*. This is called *halant* and this cannot be pronounced. So all these Śiva or consonants are dead bodies, *śava*, without Śakti. The vowels are Śakti. The vowels are self-manifested sounds. The consonant-*k* depends upon the vowel-*a* to be manifested as the letter-*ka*, and is same for all the consonants. The first sound is the letter-*a*, *a-kāra*, and this is the first vowel. Lord Vāsudeva says, “*akṣarāṇāmakāro asmi* (Ś Bg., 10.33), of the letters I am the letter-*a*.” This letter-*a* is in deed all the speech or sounds. The letter-*a* has become all the vowels and all the consonants, and then the consonants in association of vowels become manifested sounds. Now these manifested consonant sounds and vowel sounds on permutation and combination form different words. Now the words have a meaning. So sound and meaning are separate. But in the beginning of the creation the meaning was integrated with the sound. Further, these words become thoughts or speech with knowledge. With all these knowledge-less knowledge and meaningless meanings of the outer world, we lost the real knowledge and the real meaning of our inner Self. Now we have to go back to that through our spiritual practice. We can do that through alphabets, *mātrkā*. Though these are categorized as Śiva and Śakti for understanding they are all Śakti or *Mātrkā* or

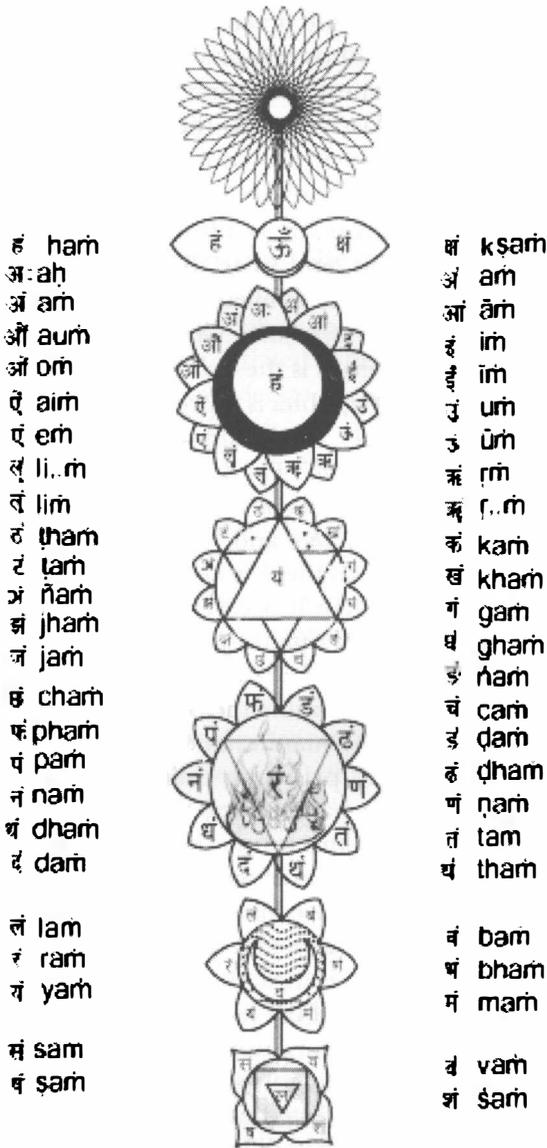


Fig. 5.10. Inner Mātṛkā Meditation. The placement of seed sounds in cakras.

they are all Śiva. In Tantra a term *yāmala* is used, which means a pair. These are both Śiva and Śakti. These are all mothers, *mātṛkā*.

In Tantra we find a spiritual practice named *mātṛkā nyāsa*. *Nyāsa* means placing, planting or putting down. *Mātṛkā nyāsa* means placing or putting down the alphabets. This is done in ritual worshiping of a deity on *prāṇa pratiṣṭhā*, i.e.,

establishing the life. These alphabets are subtle vital energy, *prāṇa*. After the alphabets are placed in different body parts, *bahirmāṭṛkā nyāsa*, and the energy centers, *antarmāṭṛkā nyāsa*, on the deity, now the deity is lively and then devotees worship the deity. Before establishing the life, *prāṇa pratiṣṭhā*, it is just a statue and is not worshiped. So the worship is in reality is the worship of Prāṇa. In practices of Tantra a practitioner also does the same placing the letters on the body parts, *bahirmāṭṛkā nyāsa* and energy centers, *antarmāṭṛkā nyāsa* of the own body. In general traditions found nowadays, this is done almost in a ritualistic way. But the inner practices are the meditations on these letters, *māṭṛkā*. This is found in traditions of Tantra and as well as in traditions of Yoga.

This meditation starts with the fifty letters, which are fifty *prāṇa*-s. This starts with concentration of a letter or seed sound along with the vital vibrations in the body parts or in the energy centers in the brain and the spinal cord in the Kriyā-yoga. This becomes a psycho-vital technique as done in case of meditation with “*Om Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*” mantra. Again when the practitioners concentrates on one letter or rotates the letters one after another like a rosary then construction of a word is not possible. Hence thought process and desires, which are nothing but words and sentences with meanings and knowledge are inhibited. In a single-letter-sound or in rosary of single-letter-sounds, the sounds and meanings get integrated. When this spiritual practice is started, this is started with at the end of medium speech, *madhyamā vāk*, and goes to the observed speech or observed sound, *paśyantī vāk*. And finally the practitioner enters into the transcendent speech, *parā vāk*, and this is the sound in form of the Brahman.

Antarmāṭṛkā Dhyāna: In meditation on inner-*māṭṛkā*-s, the letters, *māṭṛkā*-s, are placed in the petals of the energy centers or lotuses. The two seed sounds, *ham* and *kṣam*, are placed in two petals of the two-petalled lotus of the Ājñā *cakra*. This Ājñā *cakra* is the field of Haṁsa, *haṁsa kṣetra*. The main seed sound of the center is *Om*. From here all the fifty letters manifest and are established in different centers. The sixteen vowel seed sounds, *aṁ, āṁ, iṁ, īṁ, uṁ, ūṁ, ṛṁ, r.ṁ, liṁ, li.ṁ, eṁ, aiṁ, oṁ, auṁ, am* (emphasis on *m*) and *aḥ* (emphasis on *h*), are placed in sixteen petals of the sixteen-petaled lotus of the Viśuddha *cakra*. In twelve petals of the twelve-petaled lotus of Anāhata *cakra* the twelve seed sounds, *kaṁ, khaṁ, gaṁ, ghaṁ, ṅaṁ, caṁ, chaṁ, jaṁ, jhaṁ, ṅaṁ, ṭaṁ, and ṭhaṁ* are placed. In ten petals of the ten-petaled lotus of the Maṇipūra *cakra* the ten seed sounds, *ḍaṁ, ḍhaṁ, ṇaṁ, taṁ, thaṁ, daṁ, dhaṁ, naṁ, paṁ, and phaṁ* are placed. In six petals of the six-petaled lotus of the Svādhiṣṭhāna *cakra* the six seed sounds, *baṁ, bhaṁ, maṁ, yaṁ, raṁ, and laṁ* are placed. In four petals of the four-petaled lotus of the Mūlādhāra *cakra* the four seed sounds, *vaṁ, śaṁ, ṣaṁ, and saṁ* are placed (Fig. 5.10).

At the end of the meditation on “*Om Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya*” mantra, the practitioner is at the Mūlādhāra *cakra*. With a long and deep inhalation like that of Kriyā Proper I, the practitioner ascends to the Ājñā *cakra* and starts meditating

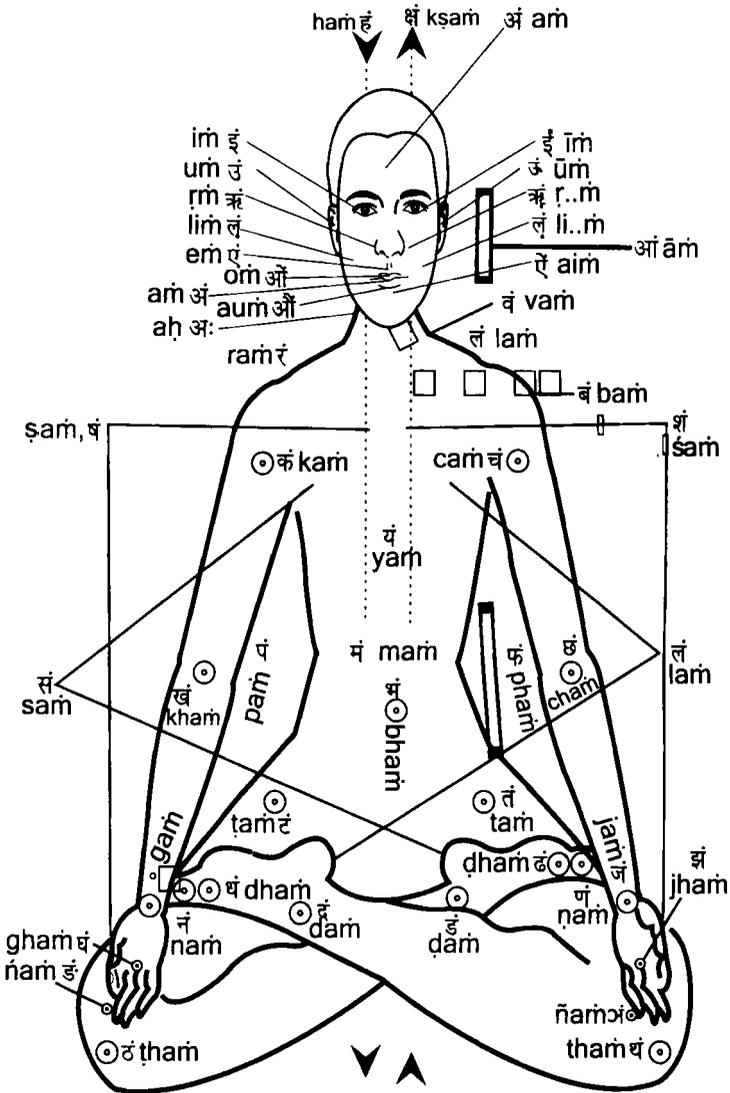


Fig. 5.11. Outer Mātrkā Meditation. The placement of seed sounds in human body.

with *ham* and *kṣam*. Then the practitioner comes to the *Viśuddha cakra* and starts meditating on *am*, *āṁ*, *im*, *īṁ*, *um*, *ūṁ*, *ṛm*, *ṛ..m*, *liṁ*, *li..m*, *em*, *aiṁ*, *om*, *aum*, *aṁ*, and *ah*. Then comes down to *Anāhata*, *Maṇipūra*, *Svādhiṣṭhāna*, and *Mūlādhāra cakras* one after another. The trend of creation, *śṛṣṭi krama*, is followed in the *Kriyā-yoga* traditions. In the traditions of *Tantra* we find both the trend of creation, *śṛṣṭi krama*, and the trend of dissolution, *samhāra krama*, in inner-mātrkā meditation.

We have discussed that all desires, mental modifications and thoughts are produced from these letters and now we go beyond these mental modifications also by the practice of meditation on these letters. All the impressions, *samskāra*, of our mind due to our previous actions, *karma*, are imprinted in these petals and lotuses. Now by the practice of inner-mātrkā meditation they are released and the practitioner gets free from those effects of *karma*-s both good and bad.

Bahirmātrkā Dhyāna: In outer-mātrkā meditation the seed sounds are placed in the body. The seed sound *am* is placed on the forehead, *lalāṭa*, the seed sound *ām* is placed on the face, *mukhabṛtta*, the seed sound *im* is placed in the right eye, *dakṣa netra*, the seed sound *īm* is placed in the left eye, *vāma netra*, the seed sound *um* is placed in right ear, *dakṣa karna*, the seed sound *ūm* is placed in left ear, *vāma karna*, the seed sound *ṛm* is placed in right nostril, *dakṣa nāsāpuṭa*, the seed sound *ṛ..m* is placed in left nostril, *vāma nāsāpuṭa*, the seed sound *līm* is placed in right cheek, *dakṣa kapola*, the seed sound *li..m* is placed in left cheek, *vāma kapola*, the seed sound *em* is placed in upper lip, *ūrdhvoṣṭha*, the seed sound *aim* is placed in lower lip, *adharoṣṭha*, the seed sound *om* is placed in upper teeth, *ūrdhvantapaṅkti*, the seed sound *aum* is placed in lower teeth, *adhodantapaṅkti*, the seed sound *am* (emphasis on *m*) is placed in the tongue, *jihvā*, and the seed sound *aḥ* (emphasis on *ḥ*) is placed in throat, *kaṅṭha*. The seed sounds, *kaṁ*, *khaṁ*, *gaṁ*, *ghaṁ*, and *ṇaṁ* are placed in right hand. The seed sound *kaṁ* is placed in the root of the right hand, *dakṣa bāhumūla*, the seed sound *khaṁ* is placed in the right elbow, *dakṣa kūrpara*, the seed sound *gaṁ* is placed in the right wrist, *dakṣa maṇibandha*, the seed sound *ghaṁ* is placed in root of the right fingers, *dakṣa hastāṅgulimūla*, and the seed sound *ṇaṁ* is placed in tip of the right fingers, *dakṣa hastāṅgulyagra*. The seed sounds *caṁ*, *chaṁ*, *jaṁ*, *jhaṁ*, and *ṇaṁ* are placed in the left hand. The seed sound *caṁ* is placed in the root of the left hand, *vāma bāhumūla*, the seed sound *chaṁ* is placed in the left elbow, *vāma kūrpara*, the seed sound *jaṁ* is placed in the left wrist, *vāma maṇibandha*, the seed sound *jhaṁ* is placed in root of the left fingers, *vāma hastāṅgulimūla*, and the seed sound *ṇaṁ* is placed in tip of the left fingers, *vāma hastāṅgulyagra*. The seed sounds *ṭaṁ*, *ṭhaṁ*, *ḍaṁ*, *ḍhaṁ*, and *ṇaṁ* are placed in the right leg. The seed sound *ṭaṁ* is placed in the root of the right leg, *dakṣa pādāmūla*, the seed sound *ṭhaṁ* is placed in the right knee, *dakṣa jānu*, the seed sound *ḍaṁ* is placed in the right ankle, *dakṣa gulpha*, the seed sound *ḍhaṁ* is placed in root of the right toes, *dakṣa pādāṅgulimūla*, and the seed sound *ṇaṁ* is placed in tip of the right toes, *dakṣa pādāṅgulyagra*. The seed sounds *taṁ*, *thaṁ*, *daṁ*, *dhaṁ* and *naṁ* are placed in the left leg. The seed sound *taṁ* is placed in the root of the left leg, *vāma pādāmūla*, the seed sound *thaṁ* is placed in the left knee, *vāma jānu*, the seed sound *daṁ* is placed in the left ankle, *vāma gulpha*, the seed sound *dhaṁ* is placed in root of the left toes, *vāma pādāṅgulimūla*, and the seed sound *naṁ* is placed in tip of the left toes, *vāma pādāṅgulyagra*. The seed sound *paṁ* is placed in the right side, *dakṣa pārśva*,

and the seed sound *phaṁ* is placed in the left side, *vāma pārśva*. The seed sound *baṁ* is placed in the back, *pr̥ṣṭha*, and the seed sound *bhaṁ* is placed in the umbilicus, *nābhi*. The seed sound *maṁ* is placed in the abdomen, *jaṭhara* and the seed sound *yaṁ* is placed in the chest, *hṛda*. The seed sound *raṁ* is placed in the right shoulder (right part), *dakṣāṁśa*, the seed sound *laṁ* is placed in the left shoulder (left part), *vāmāṁśa* and the seed sound *vaṁ* is placed in the hump at back between shoulders, *kakuda*. The seed sound *śaṁ* is placed from chest to the terminal portion of right hand, *hṛdayādi dakṣa hastāntam*, and the seed sound *ṣaṁ* is placed from chest to the terminal portion of left hand, *hṛdayādi vāma hastāntam*. The seed sound *saṁ* is placed from chest to the terminal portion of the right leg, *hṛdayādi dakṣa pādāntam*, and the seed sound *laṁ* is placed from chest to the terminal portion of the left leg, *hṛdayādi vāma pādāntam*. The seed sound *haṁ* is placed from the crown to the toes, *mūrdhādīpādāntam*, and the seed sound *kṣaṁ* is placed from toes to the crown, *pādadīmūrdhāntam*.

Similar to the meditation on inner-mātrkā, the meditation on outer-mātrkā is done with concentration of a letter or seed sound along with the vital vibrations in the body parts. Here meditation starts from the letter *aṁ* at the forehead. In this way the practitioner realizes that even the entire gross body is the Prāṇa. The characters that transgressed into the body level are released by the practice of this meditation.

Jyoti Mudrā in Second Kriyā: From Second Kriyā onwards, the technique of Jyoti *mudrā* is little modified. Keeping all the procedures of the First Kriyā Jyoti Mudrā Technique intact here the additions are the contraction and relaxation of the energy centers, *cakras*, done along with the inhalations and the exhalations. This technique is to be seen from the demonstration by a master. While inhaling from the Mūlādhāra the practitioner has to contract the center by contracting the anal sphincter muscle and while exhaling has to relax the center along with the relaxation of the muscle. While inhaling from the Svādhiṣṭhāna the practitioner has to contract the center by contracting the anal sphincter muscle and the perineum, and while exhaling has to relax the center along with the relaxation of the muscle and the perineum. While inhaling from the Maṇipūra the practitioner has to contract the center by contracting the abdomen by contraction of abdominal recti muscles, and while exhaling has to relax the center along with the relaxation of abdominal recti muscles. While inhaling from the Anāhata the practitioner has to contract the center by stretching the hands back so that the shoulder blades touch each other, and while exhaling has to relax the center by bringing the hands into the previous position. While inhaling from the Viśuddha the practitioner has to contract the center by stretching the hands back so that the shoulder blades touch each other, hold the breath, then left turn and jerk with the right hand, again right turn and jerk with the left hand, and then while exhaling has to relax the center by bringing the hands to previous position.

While inhaling from the Ājñā, the practitioner has to contract the center by pressing the lower jaw against the upper jaw, and while exhaling has to relax the center along with the releasing the pressure from the jaws. While inhaling from the Sahasrāra the practitioner has to contract all the six centers and while exhaling has to relax all the six centers.

The Second Kriyā practitioners need long sittings for their practices. So at the end the entire body is to be brought back to normal activity. The contraction and relaxations in the Second Kriyā Jyoti Mudrā Technique do that. Moreover, these contractions and relaxations are also the techniques to arouse the *kuṇḍalinī* to flow inside the spinal cord. But a practitioner who is not firmly established in the First Kriyā Techniques and the First Kriyā Jyoti Mudrā if practices this, will find the effect of light found on the First Kriyā Jyoti Mudrā Technique is now lost. One Kriyāvān who was a senior HRD manager of a company heading an unit requested my master for the Second Kriyā and was given. Then he regularly used to call me over phone complaining about the loss of the light-vision in the Second Kriyā Jyoti Mudrā. He was sad and used to say, “My Jyoti Mudrā was very beautiful. It was looking like the eye of Lord Jagannāth. Now it is gone.” He was a devotee of Lord Jagannāth and was emotionally attached. I explained him that since he did not practice properly the First Kriyā Techniques for long he was not able to get the result of the Second Kriyā. So it would be better if he could concentrate more on the First Kriyā Techniques.

THIRD KRIYĀ TECHNIQUES

In Third Kriyā, the Kriyāvān remains elevated to the higher centers, and then he firmly establishes his Prāṇa at the Ājñā *cakra*. One should not misconceive this as physical levitation. This is the levitation of the life-force to remain in the higher centers and not to fall down. The Third Kriyā Breath Technique is also a *Ṭhokar Kriyā*, but here this is only practiced on the three higher centers, viz., Anāhata, Viśuddha, and Ājñā. The breath is shortened (Fig. 5.12.) The breathing has some similarity with the Second Kriyā breathing. After having abundant life-force in the body by the practice of the First and Second Kriyā Breath Techniques, the practitioner now learns to shorten the breath in a way to practice the breathless state in the Fourth Kriyā. Here in the breathing after the inhalation, the retention is practiced, which is similar to the Second Kriyā but the neck rotation is a different one. One should see the exact technique from a master, the description may not give a complete idea. This helps to lock the life-force at the Ājñā *cakra*. A Third Kriyā breath practitioner can remain always at the Ājñā *cakra* along with other works in his day-to-day life. He feels the divine presence of his *prāṇa* in his working, resting and other hours. The fluctuations of the mind are decreased. In the Third Kriyā meditation the Kriyāvān proactively arouses different parts of the brain and taps further the unexplored energy for creativity (Fig. 5.12.) Even without that meditation, a Kriyāvān remains in a meditative state throughout the

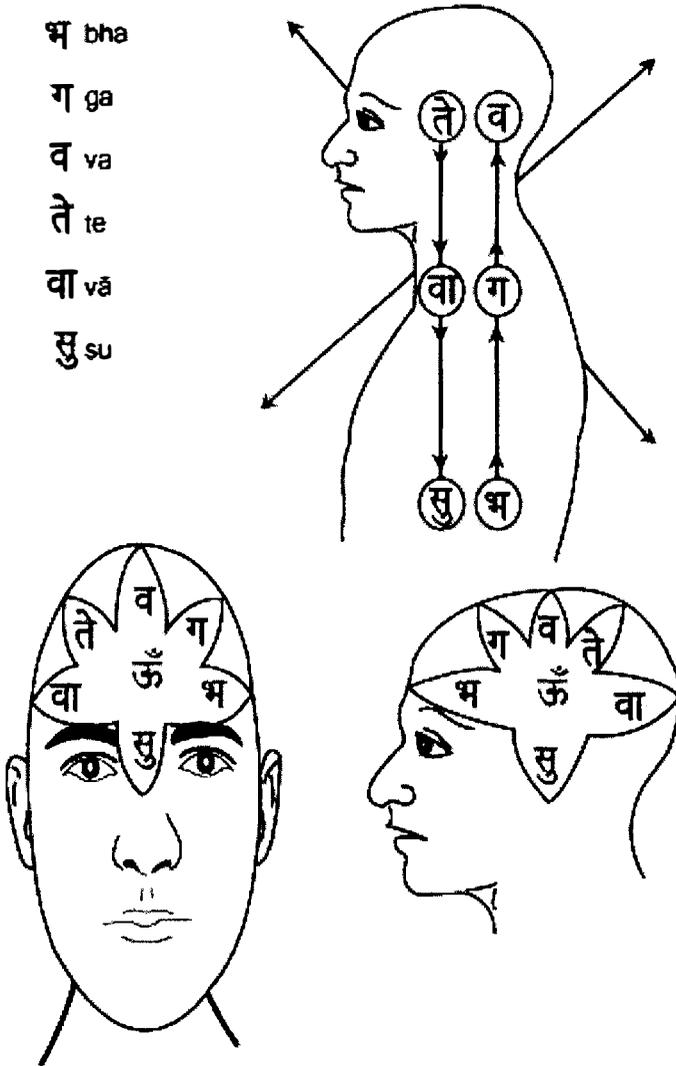


Fig. 5.12. Third Kriyā breathing and Meditation.

day and feels his *prāṇa* at the *Ājñā cakra*. The mind now cannot delude the practitioner.

THE FOURTH KRIYĀ

This is the subtlest Kriyā. This is the real *Haṁsa* and this is the subtlest *Haṁsa*. This practice makes one the Supreme Swan, *paramahaṁsa*. A Kriyāvān, who is not firmly established in the *Haṁsa Sādhanā*, the First and Second Kriyā practices,

cannot practice this Kriyā even if he is given all the instructions. He has to come down and start afresh with the First and Second Kriyā practices. The minimum requirements for this practice is the long and uninterrupted First and Second Kriyā practices, and the Prāṇic Energy must be flowing within the central canal of the spinal cord, *canalis centralis*, very smoothly and soothingly like sparkling electric current from the Mūlādhāra to the Ājñā *cakra*. The Kriyāvān should be able to feel this without the outer breath, and if he has not been rich with sufficient Prāṇa he will breathe during the practice. Now this breathing becomes an obstacle and he realizes why the inhalation and the exhalation are said to be companions of distractions: “*duḥkhadaurmanasyāṅgamejayatvaśvāsapraśvāsā vikṣepasahabhvaḥ* (Ygs., 1.31), sorrow, dejection, restlessness of body, inhalation, and exhalation are companions of distractions.” Only after achieving this state of breath mastery, then the said Kriyāvān can practice this Kriyā. So practice of one principle, *ekatattvābhyaśa* (Ygs., 1.32) is very important and that one principle is Īśvara. Without a strong foundation of Īśvarapraṇidhāna Kriyā it is not possible to practice the Fourth Kriyā.

It is very important that a Kriyāvān must observe righteousness, be faithful and sincerely practice the Kriyā-s under the guidance of a master who have atleast traveled some path on this line. Generally, practicing these from reading a book is discouraged. This book is only to supplement the spiritual quest and to analyse the progress, analyse, if any error has been made or not during the practice.

Epilogue

We all want happiness in our lives. Nobody wants misery. Why it is so? Because we are made up of the principle named Infinite Bliss. Everybody wants to be immortal, so one is after name and fame. Even some want to be immortal with their physical body. Why? Because we are made up of the principle named Truth, the Pure Existence, and hence we are basically immortal in our core component. So we want immortality. But alas, we suffer from misery and we are never happy in our life. We die and even much before the physical death of the body, we die many times. Being the children of the King, we become beggars. Such is our sorry-state, and who is to be blamed for such a pitiable situation of ours. Is this a cruel God sitting in a distant heaven and ruling over us like a colonial ruler, and the same God that made us imperfect while creating and now punishing us for our imperfection? Then what shall we do with such a God? This cannot be certainly like this. Neither the scriptures say so nor the realized persons ever taught like this. God has made us with the same principle that He is. He is both causal cause and material cause of the creation. How can we become imperfect? Have it not been so, we should never aspire for bliss and immortality. But we do aspire, because that is the real substratum we are reflecting in our lives. Since the God is full of Bliss we reflect bliss. Since the God is pure Consciousness we reflect consciousness. Then why in our lives there are sorrows, failures, frustrations, anger, poverty, diseases, and death? This question has always haunted the human mind over the ages and it searched for the answer. The answer comes that this is due to Ignorance, forgetting our true identity and indentifying with body-mind interactions, and thereby contracting “the Vast I-Consciousness” to “a narrow I sense” resulting in desires and actions. And then the infinite principle though we are, we appear to be finite and bound by limitations to experience mortality and unhappiness. Hence we need a true answer in our identity. We need knowledge to overcome Ignorance, the knowledge of the Self. This “narrow I sense” has been named as ego, and this is a product of ignorance. A product of ignorance is ignorance and since ignorance has taken the form of desires, to quiet our mind where the desires manifest either we have to satisfy our desires or we have

to overcome our desires. We have tired, tried and tried to satisfy our desires by enjoyments of various forms from material to philosophical but desires are ever unfinished. Desires and ignorance are same. So we have no other option but to overcome the desires. For that we need discriminating intelligence and that can only grow in a quiet mind, in a mind without volitions. Hence our practice is to achieve such a state of mind. Mind is a product of consciousness but due to ignorance or covering quality of consciousness it has been a breeding ground of desires and actions to fulfill those desires, thereby creating darts and whirlpools in mind, as a result the Knowledge is not reflected.

From the experience of enlightened ones and from the scriptures we learn that such a state of mind without volitions is achievable. Even from our own life we learn that this is possible since every day we enter into deep sleep when there is no mind and only our life-force is awake. Our mind takes rest in the lap of the life-force. Since that happens in sloth we only have the feeling of bliss after the deep sleep but not the knowledge of the Self. So our practice is to perform the same in waking-state. That is our spiritual practice. We have to merge our mind with our life-force while awake, then that is the transcendental state and is the state of knowledge. This increases our discriminating intelligence that develops the capacity of our mind to hold the Truth. Then the activities of a noble mind make it free from the darts and volitions, the veil of ignorance or covering disappears due to knowledge of the Self. The Self is reflected upon such a mind and we have our true identity. That is Knowledge. Then we are in the Ocean of Bliss, in the Ocean of Immortality, in Consciousness.

The auspicious resolves we make, the acts we perform and the techniques we practice to achieve such a state of mind is known as Kriyā-yoga. And at the centre of all these practices is our breath, since the breath is the manifestation of our life-force where we have to merge the mind. Such breath based practices have been declared again and again in the scriptures and by the saints over the ages. This has been illustrated in the entire length of this book. Preparing ourselves for such a practice based on the life-force we need certain basic prerequisites like auspicious resolves, noble faith, devotion, following righteousness, observing certain observances and self-effort. We also need to understand the principles and practices involved in such a spiritual practice. All these have been discussed in the second chapter of this book. By following a breath practice with auspicious resolves and noble faith we shall gradually acquire all the other virtues discussed therein. Another important aspect for the practitioners of yoga or the Kriyā-yoga is to understand the body principle. We must understand different components of our physical, subtle and causal body as these are related to our spiritual practices. We must understand the activities of different vital breaths and should have knowledge on different energy centers in our body to facilitate our spiritual practice. Moreover, an understanding of our life and death is of utmost important

from spiritual point of view. The discussions in third chapter of this book are aimed to quench such quest.

The most important part of our search for knowledge is the practice, the practice, and the practice. And for this we must be ready to walk on a razor's edge. Due to our long standing habits from our present and past lives we do not want to walk on such a path. Our mind provides us so many ifs, buts and escape routes. Again we need one guide to show us the way, and no doubt here it becomes really difficult if one is not a casual seeker. With all these odds we have to walk in this path if we want to overcome the miseries in our life. Then come the techniques and we need a right technique which must have a rational and sanction of the scriptures. The fourth chapter of this book tries to describe such techniques practiced in the Kriyā-yoga traditions citing the scriptures and discussing the rationality and scientific processes involved therein. Though these are said to be hidden techniques, but we find how our scriptures are loud in describing them for the benefit of the mankind. I have already expressed my viewpoint about these secrecy aspects in the Preface of this book. From these discussions on the techniques we find how many variations are cropping up in these techniques. It is not possible to discuss and also not desired to discuss all those that is going on in the name of yoga or the Kriyā-yoga in present days. Some are distort types and some may be logical keeping an eye on the particular audience. I have no knowledge of all the variations found in a Kriyā-yoga technique. I have discussed those I came to know from different sources. Though improvements and innovative variations are always welcome to help mankind keeping the basic character and rational of such a practice intact but one should not sell those as original techniques. I have discussed the techniques as I have learned from the masters of the tradition and based on experiences from my practice. I have tried to test their authenticity from the declaration of the scriptures. I do not know if these are exactly same as taught to Lāhiḍi Bābā by Mahāvātāra Bābājī. The seekers and readers are to use their logic, discriminating ability and free will to find out the rationality and the scriptural domain of these techniques from the discussions on them in this book. I have seen the confusion among the Kriyāvāns regarding the variations in the techniques found among different present day teachers and schools of Kriyā-yoga, all claiming theirs' to be the original one. These developments further question the secrecy aspect of the techniques in the present day society of information. So the techniques should be discussed with the rationale behind these. However, I hold the view that the techniques should be learned from a master who has already traveled at least some distance in this path. Another alarming fact in present day society is that we find many Kriyā-masters declaring themselves as direct disciples of Mahāvātāra Bābājī. They may or may not belong to a tradition. They are found in different holy places in India and also in abroad. The secrecy aspect of the techniques help them to teach

funny things and distorted ones. So it becomes a necessity to discuss these techniques.

Another aspect regarding the techniques is that do we need so many techniques. The scriptures describe many; even a single scripture describes many techniques. Again it is said that a single technique can give you the desired results. Then why there are so many techniques? If one technique is complementary or supplementary to another then we have to learn both the complementary and supplementary techniques along with the core technique to facilitate progress in the path. We find such complementary and supplementary techniques are added to a core technique in the Kriyā-yoga and other systems. There are certain preparatory techniques. Those are also to be practiced. Again we find that all these techniques do not fall to a set of above category. Then why there are different core techniques? If we look into them we find all are aimed at merging the mind, *manolaya*, into the life-force. Purpose is same but techniques are different only because we want to give variety to our mind. Since our mind outsmarts us in finding a clue not to follow a spiritual practice and prevails upon us, we have also to find different means to control our mind. We cannot use force with our mind to make it more reactionary. Mind is to be merged indirectly, and for that we have to take the help of our mind along with the life-force. With different techniques we give variety to our mind as the mind has a habit of not clinging to one thing; here we also use that aspect of mind to contain the mind. Otherwise, only one technique, e.g., Haṁsa Sādhanā can solve our purpose. If one is extremely determined he/she can do either with Haṁsa Sādhanā or with Kriyā Proper I. If any school of Kriyā-yoga is not teaching all the techniques that does not mean that the followers do not get the desired result. We find a desire among many Kriyāvāns to know as many as techniques without giving justice to the practice part. It is always better to practice one technique than knowing many. Only the practice gives the actual knowledge about the technique. If someone's understanding in spirituality has increased that is only due to practice, and not due to listening, reading or simply knowing features of a technique. So when a school of Kriyā-yoga or a master does not teach or even if they do not know all the techniques, one should not find fault with those schools or masters. We knew some schools of Kriyā-yoga do not teach Guru Praṇāma but since they teach Mahāmudrā, many effects of the Guru Praṇāma are taken care. Many schools and masters do not teach Nābhi Kriyā, and we have discussed in the concerned chapter how it is taken care by other techniques. Some schools do not teach Khecarī *mudrā*. But it is always beneficial to practice the Khecarī as it helps in speech restraint and energy conservation. Some schools and masters do not teach the meditation with the twelve-lettered mantra, the inner-māṭṛkā meditation, the outer-māṭṛkā meditation, the Third Kriyā and the Fourth Kriyā as discussed in this book. But if the followers of those schools and masters are practicing Haṁsa Sādhanā, Om Technique,

Kriyā Proper I sincerely, then these techniques will take them to the transcendental state. And also the Mother Nature, the Gurus and the Siddhas will take care to such a Kriyāvān if he/she needs further techniques for his/her spiritual journey. My own experience is that the Mother Nature takes care to provide more techniques than one can practice. She never neglects in showering Her mercy to an earnest seeker, it is we who neglect in our practice. We have to concentrate on the practice and qualify ourselves for the knowledge.

Last but not the least, I like to say that if this book ever helps even a single seeker in his/her spiritual journey then my labor is a success one. I pray the Divine Mother, God and Gurus for this.

Glossary

<i>Abhaya</i>	Fearlessness
<i>Abhedadarśana</i>	To see “no difference”
<i>Abhiniveśaḥ</i>	Inherent involvement, that springs naturally
<i>Abhirāma</i>	Referring to Rāma, delightful, state of bliss
<i>Abhivyañjana</i>	Manifestation, pronounced
<i>Ābhyantara</i>	Internal
<i>Abhyāsa</i>	Practice
<i>Adana</i>	Knowing or enjoying senses, viz., sound etc.
<i>Adha</i>	Bellow
<i>Ādhāra</i>	Foundation, food
<i>Ādhāra cakra</i>	The Cocyx Center, Mūlādhāra <i>cakra</i>
<i>Adha-sahasrāra</i>	Sahasrāra at bellow, the point at perineum or <i>kanda</i>
<i>Ādhi</i>	Mental suffering, agony, anxiety
<i>Adhibhūta</i>	In the context of elements, viz., earth, water, fire, etc.
<i>Ādhibhautika</i>	Relating to beings, caused by animals, inflicted by beings, in the context of form, derived from elements
<i>Adhidaiva prāṇa</i>	Prāṇa in context of gods
<i>Ādhidaivika</i>	Relating to gods, in the context of gods, caused by gods
<i>Adhiṣṭhāna</i>	The place where something is established, to take a seat, dwelling in
<i>Adhyāroḥpa</i>	Thrust, attributing the properties of one thing on another
<i>Adhyāsa</i>	Wrong attribution, false identity
<i>Adhyāsa nīrāsa</i>	Negating the false identity
<i>Adhyātma</i>	Spiritual science, concerning self, related to our inner body, spiritual sciences in body context
<i>Adhyātma prāṇa</i>	<i>Prāṇa</i> in body context
<i>Adhyātmaprasād</i>	Bliss of the Self, state of bliss

<i>Ādhyātmika</i>	Spiritual, relating to self, in the body context, arising within the self
<i>Adhyavasāya</i>	Working hard, trying, attempting
<i>Ādi</i>	Beginning, first, first-born, primitive
<i>Ādihamśaḥ</i>	The first swan
<i>Aditi</i>	One that is responsible for knowing, <i>adana</i> , Power of Consciousness, one that has manifested as <i>Prāṇa</i> , Śakti, who comprises of all gods, mother of gods, mother of Lord Vāmana, the daughter of Dakṣa.
<i>Āditya</i>	Sun, son of Aditi
<i>Adreśyam</i>	Cannot be perceived
<i>Advaita</i>	Oneness, non-duality, Philosophy of Non-dualism
<i>Ādyāśakti</i>	The First Power, <i>Śakti</i>
<i>Āgama</i>	A traditional doctrine, a scripture, sacred knowledge, a literature on Tantra, the Vedas, coming, arrival, birth, origin, source, authoritative testimony
<i>Āgamācārya</i>	A teacher in Āgama, a teacher in Tantra
<i>Agnideva</i>	Lord Fire, the Fire-god
<i>Agniḥ</i>	Fire, Lord Fire, knowledge
<i>Agnisāra</i>	Cleansing through movement of the abdominal wall also called <i>Vahnīsāra</i>
<i>Agrāhyam</i>	Cannot be grasped
<i>Aham</i>	I, ego
<i>Ahamkāra</i>	Ego
<i>Ahamkāra tattva</i>	Ego Principle
<i>Aham saḥ</i>	I am He
<i>Āhāraḥ</i>	Food, diet
<i>Ahimsā</i>	Non-violence
<i>Ahorātra</i>	A day and night
<i>Ajapā</i>	Non-repetition
<i>Ajapā japa</i>	Repetition of non-repetition, <i>soham</i> , <i>hamśa</i>
<i>Ajñā</i>	Ignorant
<i>Ājñā</i>	Command, order
<i>Ājñā cakra</i>	The sixth center, the Master Center, the Medulla center, also called as the pituitary center
<i>Ajñāna</i>	Ignorance
<i>Ākāśaḥ</i>	Sky, ether
<i>Akliṣṭa</i>	Painless

<i>Akṣara</i>	Un-eroded, alphabet, basic sound
<i>Alabdha</i>	Not achieved
<i>Alabdhabhūmikatva</i>	Non-attainment of a state
<i>Alambuṣā</i>	One of the subtle vital channels corresponds to facial nerve
<i>Ālasya</i>	Laziness
<i>Amātraḥ</i>	“No letter,” Lord the Pure Existence
<i>Amṛta</i>	No death, immortality, the divine nectar
<i>Amūrta</i>	Not manifested, not taken a form
<i>Ānanda</i>	Bliss
<i>Ānandabhuk</i>	Enjoyer of bliss
<i>Ānandamaya Kośa</i>	The Bliss Sheath, one of the five sheaths covering the self, the innermost sheath
<i>Anādi</i>	Beginning-less, without a beginning, unborn
<i>Anāhata</i>	The fourth energy center, the thoracic/dorsal center, the unhurt sound
<i>Anāhatadhvani</i>	Unhurt internal sound, divine sound
<i>Anāhatadhvani-śravaṇa</i>	Listening to unhurt internal sounds
<i>Anāma</i>	One who has no name
<i>Ananta</i>	Infinity, the legendary snake
<i>Ānanda-rūpā</i>	Form of bliss
<i>Anaṅvān</i>	A load carrying bull
<i>Ānāpānasati</i>	Observation or awareness of exhalation and inhalation, a Pāli word for breathing awareness
<i>Anātma</i>	Non-self
<i>Anavasthitattva</i>	Unable to remain in a state, instability to retain
<i>Aṅga</i>	Limb, body
<i>Aṅgamejayatva</i>	Restlessness or shaking in body
<i>Aṅgirā</i>	A famous sage
<i>Aṅgīrasa</i>	Essence of the body, <i>prāṇa</i>
<i>Aṅguṣṭha</i>	Thumb, finger
<i>Aṅguṣṭha pramāṇa</i>	Like the size of a thumb
<i>Anitya</i>	Transient, temporary, impermanent
<i>Aṅkuśa</i>	Hook
<i>Anna/ annam</i>	Food
<i>Annamaya Kośa</i>	The food sheath, the first sheath or the outermost sheath covering the self, physical body

<i>Antaḥ</i>	Inner, inside
<i>Antaḥprajñāḥ</i>	The consciousness directed to internal objects
<i>Antaḥkaraṇa</i>	Inner instrument, mind
<i>Antaḥkarana catuṣṭaya</i>	Four inner instruments, viz., <i>mana</i> , <i>buddhi</i> , <i>ahaṁkāra</i> , and <i>citta</i>
<i>Antarātmā</i>	The indwelling Self
<i>Antarāyah</i>	Obstacle
<i>Antarmāṭṛkā</i>	Inner-māṭṛkā-s. See also <i>māṭṛkā</i>
<i>Antarmāṭṛkā-nyāsa</i>	The letters or seed sounds, <i>māṭṛkā</i> -s, are placed in the petals of the energy centers or lotuses
<i>Antarmāṭṛkā dhyāna</i>	Meditation on the letters or seed sounds, <i>māṭṛkā</i> -s, in the petals of the energy centers or lotuses inside spinal column
<i>Antarṇṇijā</i>	Internal worship, worshipping in mind
<i>Antarśauca</i>	Internal cleanliness, cleansing mind
<i>Antartrāṭaka</i>	Inner-trāṭaka, a technique of concentration in the energy centers within the body
<i>Antaryāmī</i>	The inner controller
<i>Anumāna</i>	Inference, inferred
<i>Anusvāraḥ</i>	The nasal sound that follows to a preceding vowel
<i>Āpaḥ/āpo</i>	Water
<i>Āpāna</i>	Inhalation, one of the five vital airs in the body, vital air responsible for excretion, etc.
<i>Aparabrahman</i>	Inferior Brahman, inferior to the Transcendental Lord
<i>Aparā</i>	Inferior
<i>Aparā vidyā</i>	Inferior knowledge
<i>Aparigraha</i>	Not to gather many, not to covet things, contentment with minimum
<i>Aparokṣa</i>	Non-indirect
<i>Aparokṣa jñāna</i>	Non-indirect knowledge, knowledge based on experience and not mere intellectual knowledge
<i>Āpitaḥ</i>	Attains
<i>Āptakāma</i>	One who had conquered desires
<i>Āpuṇya</i>	Not-noble, sin
<i>Ara</i>	Spoke of a wheel
<i>Arcana</i>	Worshipping, offering
<i>Ardha</i>	Half
<i>Ardhamātrāḥ</i>	Half-letter of <i>Aum</i> , <i>m</i> , <i>bindu</i> , nasal sound that follows <i>Aum</i>

<i>Ardhanārīśvara</i>	Lord Śiva, half Śiva and half Śakti, both masculine and feminine
Arjuna	The third Pāṇḍava
Āroha	Ascending
Āroha krama	Ascending order
Artha	Wealth, money, meaning
Āsana	Posture, the third limb of yoga
Āsana-siddhi	Stabilizing the posture
Asaṅga	Non-attachment
Asaṅga bhāvana	State of contemplation of non-attachment
Aśauca	Un-cleanliness
Asmitā	Egoism or “I sense”
Āśrama	A monastery, a stage of life, viz., <i>brahmacharya</i> , <i>gārhaṣṭhya</i> , <i>vānaprastha</i> , and <i>yatīvrata</i> or <i>saṁnyāsa</i>
Aṣṭācakram	Eight wheels
Aṣṭaprahara	Eight <i>prahara</i> , a day and a night
Asteya	Non-stealing
Asu	The vital energy, the vital energy engaged in sense enjoyments
Aśuci	Impious
Asura	A demon, man with demonic qualities
Āsurī-ṛtti	Demonic quality
Aśvinīkumāra	God granting health, longevity, recovery from illness
Atharva	<i>Atharvaveda</i> , the fourth Veda
Atharvā	Name of a sage
Ativādī	A tall talker
Ātma/Ātmā	Self
Ātma darśana	Self-realization
Ātma dā	The cause of Self/Knowledge
Ātmajñāna	Knowledge of the Self
Ātmakṛīḍa	One who sports in the Self
Ātman/Ātmā	Self, individual self, Cosmic Self, Transcendental Self
Ātmanivedana	Self-surrender to God
Ātmārāmaḥ	Sporting in the bliss of the Self
Ātmaratiḥ	One who engages in the Self for his pleasure
Ātmatattva	The Principle called Self
Aum	The essence of all, the Lord, the Brahman, the Cosmic Self, the Transcendental Self, the four quarters of life,

	viz., waking state, dream state, deep sleep state and transcendental state, the mystic sound
<i>Āvaraṇa</i>	Covering
<i>Auśadhīḥ</i>	Medicines
<i>Avacetana</i>	Subconscious
<i>Avara</i>	Here, effect
<i>Avaroha krama</i>	Descending order
<i>Avatāra</i>	An incarnation
<i>Avidyā</i>	Ignorance
<i>Avirati</i>	Non-abstention
<i>Avyakta</i>	Unmanifest, Primordial Nature
<i>Avyaya</i>	Uneroded, not eroded
<i>Ayamātmā brahma</i>	This Self is Brahman
<i>Āyatana</i>	Foundation, area, abode
<i>Bahiḥ</i>	Outside, external
<i>Bahirmātrkā</i>	Outer-mātrkā-s. See also <i>mātrkā</i>
<i>Bahirmātrkā nyāsa</i>	The letters or seed sounds, <i>mātrkā</i> -s, are placed in the body parts
<i>Bahirmātrkā dhyāna</i>	Meditation on the letters or seed sounds, <i>mātrkā</i> -s, in the body parts
<i>Bahirpūjā</i>	External worship, rituals
<i>Bahirtrāṭaka</i>	Outer-trāṭaka, concentration at flame of a lamp
<i>Bahiḥsprajñāḥ</i>	The consciousness directed to external objects
<i>Baladā</i>	The giver of strength
<i>Bāhya</i>	Outer, superficial
<i>Bandha</i>	Bondage, lock, a yogic posture of lock for holding breath
<i>Bhadra</i>	Gentle, benedictory, kind, favorable
<i>Bhadrakālī</i>	Goddess Kālī, who is blissful to Her devotees
<i>Bhagavān</i>	A title applied to gods, a god, a glorious being
<i>Bhagavatī</i>	A title applied to a goddess, Devī, Śakti, Divine Mother
<i>Bhakta</i>	A devotee
<i>Bhakti</i>	Devotion
<i>Bhāṣaṇa</i>	Speech, talk
<i>Bhava</i>	Creation, manifestation, birth
<i>Bhāva</i>	Emotion, emotional devotion
<i>Bhavasāgara</i>	Ocean of manifestation, world

<i>Bhaviṣyat</i>	Future
<i>Bhavya</i>	Present
<i>Bhedana</i>	To pierce, piercing
<i>Bhīma</i>	Furious, the second Pāṇḍava
<i>Bhrāmarī</i>	Breathing with the sound of a bee
<i>Bhrāntidarśana</i>	Delusion, false vision, wrong knowledge
<i>Bhr̥gu</i>	Name of a sage
<i>Bhubaneśvarī</i>	Goddess of the universe
<i>Bhumā</i>	The Supreme Brahman
<i>Bhūmi</i>	Earth
<i>Bhūmikā</i>	Role, a character, a stage/state of life
<i>Bhūrloka</i>	The world of earth, the lowest of the seven worlds from <i>Bhūr</i> to <i>Satya</i>
<i>Bhūta/bhūtaḥ</i>	Past, elements, beings
<i>Bhuvana</i>	World
<i>Bhuvvarloka</i>	The world of intermediate space, in-between physical world and astral world
<i>Bīja</i>	Seed, seed sound
<i>Bindu</i>	Point, beginning point
<i>Brahma/Brahman</i>	The Truth, Knowledge, Infinity and Bliss Principle, the Transcendental Lord
<i>Brahmā</i>	The creator, the first god of the Trinity
<i>Brahmacarya</i>	Continenence, sexual restraints, celibacy, dwelling in Brahman, a stage of life, viz., student life
<i>Brahmacārī</i>	One who observes continence, a celibate
<i>Brahmagranthī</i>	Knot of Brahmā
<i>Brahmajñāna</i>	Knowledge of the Brahman
<i>Brahmaṣurī</i>	House of the Brahman
<i>Brahma Nāḍī</i>	One of the subtle vital channels corresponds to <i>canalis centralis</i>
<i>Brahma nirvāṇa</i>	Liberation in Vedānta, establishment in Pure Existence
<i>Brahmaṇa</i>	A portion of Vedas/Upaniṣads, a Brahmin, a person from teaching class
<i>Brahmāṇḍa</i>	Universe, world
<i>Brahmarandhra</i>	The hole of the Brahman, the tenth door
<i>Brahmavid</i>	A knower of the Brahman

<i>Brāhmī</i>	Power of Brahmā, Divine Mother with power of action
<i>Brāhmīsthiti</i>	Establishment in the state of Brahman
<i>Bṛhat</i>	Great, big
<i>Bṛṣaparvā</i>	A demon king
<i>Buddhi</i>	Intellect
<i>Buddhimaya Kośa</i>	See <i>Vijñānamaya Kośa</i>
<i>Buddhisattva</i>	Intellect stuff, mind stuff
<i>Cakra</i>	A wheel, energy center within body
<i>Cakṣu</i>	Eye, organ of vision
<i>Candra/candramā</i>	Moon
<i>Candra nāḍī</i>	The nerve dependant on moon, Idā
<i>Caturdaśī</i>	Fourteenth day of a fortnight
<i>Chāyā</i>	Shadow
<i>Chāyāmaya puruṣaḥ</i>	Person in the form of shadow
<i>Chedana</i>	Cutting
<i>Cit</i>	Consciousness
<i>Citrā</i>	Citrā <i>nāḍī</i> , one of the subtle vital channels
<i>Citta</i>	All the faculties of mind, the mind-stuff
<i>Cittaprasāda</i>	Mind full of bliss
<i>Citta spanda</i>	Vibration of mind
<i>Cittaśuddhi</i>	Purification of mind
<i>Cittavikṣepaḥ</i>	Distraction of mind
<i>Cittavṛtti</i>	Actions of mind
<i>Citti-śakti</i>	The Power of Consciousness
<i>Daiva</i>	Fate, caused by or coming from gods, divine power
<i>Daiṇī vṛtti</i>	Divine quality
<i>Dakṣa</i>	A Prajāpati, the god presiding over creation, able one
<i>Dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ</i>	Left wing, left side
<i>Dakṣiṇāyana</i>	Southern
<i>Dakṣiṇāyana mārḡa</i>	Southern Route, Southern Path
<i>Dama/ Damana</i>	Control or to have control over senses and sense-organs
<i>Dāna</i>	To donate, donation
<i>Daṇḍa</i>	Stick
<i>Daṇḍa Dhauti</i>	Cleansing cough etc. by a soft stick of banana plant etc.
<i>Daṇḍadhārī</i>	One holding the stick, <i>daṇḍa</i> , Lord Yama
<i>Danta</i>	Teeth

<i>Dantamūla</i>	Base of teeth
<i>Dantamūla Dhauti</i>	Cleansing the base of the teeth
<i>Darśana</i>	Vision, philosophy
<i>Daśama</i>	Tenth
<i>Daśama dvāra</i>	Tenth door, fontanel, <i>brahmarandhra</i>
<i>Dāsya bhāva</i>	A state of being His servant
<i>Daurmanasya</i>	Dejection, frustration caused due to non-fulfillment of a desire
<i>Dayā</i>	To be kind, kindness
<i>Dehi</i>	Embodied being
<i>Deva</i>	A god, divine, celestial being, deity, shining, man with divine qualities, a sense-organ in our body
<i>Devadatta</i>	God-given, one of the subsidiary vital breaths responsible for yawning and drowsiness, name of the conch used by Arjuna
<i>Devaloka</i>	World of gods, heaven
<i>Devarṣi</i>	A sage/seer among gods, Sage Nārada
<i>Devasuṣayaḥ</i>	Divine openings, divine doors
<i>Devātmaśakti</i>	The Power of God the Self
<i>Devayāna mārga</i>	The Northern Route, <i>uttarāyaṇa mārga</i>
<i>Dhanañjaya</i>	One of the subsidiary vital breath that does not leave the body even after the death, also responsible for cough, maintaining luster of the body etc., a name of Arjuna
<i>Dhārā</i>	Current, water current, tradition, flow of time
<i>Dhāraṇā</i>	Concentration, the sixth limb of yoga
<i>Dharma</i>	Divine, nobility, religion, nature
<i>Dharma-kṣetra</i>	Divine field
<i>Dhātu</i>	Element, metal
<i>Dhātu vaiṣamya</i>	Instabilities in three elements, viz., air, fire, and water in the body
<i>Dhauti</i>	Washing, a yogic technique of cleansing alimentary tract
<i>Dhīra</i>	A person with discriminating intellect, a person with knowledge
<i>Dhṛtarāṣṭra</i>	The blind king of epic <i>Mahābhārata</i> , blind mind, mind without discriminating intellect
<i>Dhyāna</i>	Meditation, the seventh limb of yoga
<i>Dhyeyākāra</i>	Form of concentration

<i>Dīkṣā</i>	Initiation
<i>Dīpāvalī</i>	Festival of light in India
<i>Dīrghaghanṭanāda</i>	The long bell-sound
<i>Dīrghakāla</i>	Long duration of time
<i>Diśa</i>	Direction
<i>Dohana</i>	Milking
<i>Draṣṭā</i>	One who sees, seer, visionary, observer
<i>Draṣṭā bhāva</i>	State of an observer
<i>Dravya</i>	Materials, material objects
<i>Dravyayajña</i>	Offering of material objects in a sacrificial fire
<i>Duḥkha</i>	Misery, sorrow
<i>Dvaita</i>	Duality, Philosophy of Dualism
<i>Dvandvaḥ</i>	Pair of opposites (for example pain and pleasure)
<i>Dvandvātītaḥ</i>	Beyond the pairs of opposites
<i>Dvādaśākṣarī</i>	Twelve-lettered
<i>Dveṣa</i>	Aversion
<i>Dviija</i>	A twice-born, a Brahmin
<i>Dyu</i>	Heaven, glowing
<i>Dyuloka</i>	Glowing world, heaven
<i>Ekāgra</i>	Concentrated
<i>Ekaḥ/Eko</i>	One
<i>Ekanemi</i>	One axle
<i>Ekatattva</i>	One Principle
<i>Ekatattvābhyaśaḥ</i>	Practice of a Single Principle
<i>Evāyamādarśe- puruṣaḥ</i>	Person inside the mirror
<i>Evāyamaṃsu puruṣaḥ</i>	Person in water, a water body
<i>Gamana</i>	Motion, journey
<i>Gāndhārī</i>	One of the subtle vital channels corresponds to optic nerve to left eye, queen of Dhṛtarāṣṭra
<i>Gaṇeśa</i>	The god to be worshiped first, one of the five gods, son of Divine Mother Pārvatī
<i>Gārhasṭhya</i>	A stage of life, viz., family life
<i>Gauṇa</i>	Secondary
<i>Gāyatrī</i>	An ancient meter of twenty-four syllables, any hymn composed in the Gāyatrī meter

<i>Gāyatrī mantra</i>	A very sacred verse to be repeated by a Brahmin on everyday
<i>Gheraṇḍa</i>	Sage Gheraṇḍa, a famous yogi
<i>Gheraṇḍa Samhitā</i>	Treatise on yoga by Sage Gheraṇḍa
<i>Giri</i>	A title of Daśanāmī saṁnyāsins (monks), mountain
<i>Gopī</i>	Maids of Gopa, a cowherdess of Gopa, one who loves Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is engaged in Divine Sport with Kṛṣṇa
<i>Gorakṣanātha</i>	Guru Gorakṣanātha, a famous yogi from whom the Nātha sect had its origin
<i>Gorakṣa Samhitā</i>	Treatise on yoga by Guru Gorakṣanātha
<i>Granthī</i>	Knot
<i>Granthitraya</i>	Three knots
<i>Guhā</i>	A cave, cave of intellect, the third ventricle
<i>Guru Parvat</i>	Mount of the Master, a point above Ājñā <i>cakra</i>
<i>Guru Praṇāma</i>	Bowing Down to Masters, a unique Kriyā-yoga Technique
<i>Ha</i>	The letter- <i>ha</i> , Śiva, moon, sky
<i>Haimavatī</i>	Goddess Pārvatī, daughter of King Himālaya, golden effulgence
<i>Hakāra</i>	The letter <i>ha</i> , the sound <i>ha</i>
<i>Ham</i>	Exhalation, Śiva
<i>Haṁsa</i>	A swan, breath, exhalation and inhalation, one who kills the bondage of ignorance, knowledge, discriminating intellect, I am That, the individual self, the Supreme Self
<i>Haṁsa Sādhanā</i>	A Kriyā-yoga Technique of breath practice and breath awareness, observing exhalation and inhalation
<i>Hara</i>	Śiva, the third god of the Trinity, the Lord, a god, Cosmic Self, taking away, one who takes away
<i>Hari</i>	Viṣṇu, the second god of the Trinity, the Lord, a god, Cosmic Self, the god who takes away
<i>Hastijhvā</i>	One of the subtle vital channels corresponds to optic nerve to right eye
<i>Haṭha</i>	Enforcement
<i>Haṭha-yoga</i>	Tradition of yoga based on postures, locks, seals, cleansing techniques and breathing techniques
<i>Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā</i>	A treatise on Haṭhayoga
<i>Hemanta</i>	The late autumn
<i>Heyāḥ</i>	To be destroyed, to be abandoned

<i>Hiraṇyagarbha</i>	The golden womb of Unmanifest, The First Born, Lord Brahmā, the Creator, the Cosmic Lord, the thread Self in all beings, the Vital Force, the sum total of all powers of action, all powers of will and all powers of knowledge
<i>Hiraṇyakaśyapu</i>	A demon king
<i>Hṛdaya</i>	Heart, intellect, cave of intellect, the third ventricle
<i>Hṛdaya cakra</i>	The Heart center, the cardiac plexus
<i>Hṛīm</i>	Called as <i>śakti praṇava</i> , Om or Praṇava for worshipers of Śakti
<i>Icchā</i>	Will, desire
<i>Icchāmṛtyu</i>	Death at will
<i>Icchā-śakti</i>	Power of will
<i>Idā</i>	One of the subtle vital channels in the body situated in the left side of Suṣumnā
<i>Idam</i>	This
<i>Indra</i>	The king of gods
<i>Indra-pada</i>	The post of the king of gods
<i>Indriya</i>	Organs, sense-organs and action organs
<i>Indriyajaya</i>	Winning over sense-organs
<i>Indriyanigrahaḥ</i>	Control of organs
<i>Īśā</i>	The Supreme Ruler
<i>Iṣṭa/Iṣṭadeva</i>	The sought deity of a person
<i>Iṣṭa Praṇāma</i>	Bowing down to the sought deity
<i>Īśvara</i>	The Cosmic Self, the Lord, God, the ruler of the universe
<i>Īśvara-praṇidhāna</i>	Devotion to God, surrender to God, contemplation of God, practice of God, to know God in totality, to determine God with certainty
<i>Īśvaratva</i>	Godliness
<i>Jagannātha</i>	Lord of the universe, presiding deity at Jagannātha Dhāma, Purī
<i>Jagaritasthānaḥ</i>	Waking state
<i>Jāgrata</i>	Awake
<i>Jāgratāvasthā</i>	Waking state
<i>Jalandhara Bandha</i>	A yogic technique of holding air by chin lock
<i>Jala-neti</i>	Cleansing the nasal passage by water
<i>Jana</i>	To be born, the cause, public
<i>Janarloka</i>	The world of creations, causal world

<i>Japa</i>	Repetitions, repetitions of a sacred syllable either verbal or mental
<i>Jāti</i>	Caste, species, race
<i>Jihvā</i>	Tongue
<i>Jihvāmūla</i>	Base of tongue
<i>Jihvāmūla Dhauti</i>	Cleansing base of tongue
<i>Jīva/jīvātmā</i>	An individual self that identifies itself with body-mind interactions
<i>Jīvanmukta</i>	The liberated one, liberated from life and birth
<i>Jñāna</i>	Knowledge, consciousness
<i>Jñānakhaḍga</i>	The knowledge sword
<i>Jñānakriyā</i>	Activities of knowledge
<i>Jñāna-mārga</i>	Path of knowledge
<i>Jñāna-śakti</i>	Power of knowledge
<i>Jñānayajña</i>	Practice of knowledge
<i>Jñānābhāsa</i>	False appearance of Knowledge, not established in Knowledge by experience
<i>Jñānendriya</i>	Sense-organs
<i>Juhvati</i>	Oblate, offer, sacrifice
<i>Jyoti mudrā</i>	The seal of light, a Kriyā-yoga Technique
<i>Ka</i>	The first consonant of Sanskrit, Lord Brahmā, Kāmadeva
<i>Kaca</i>	Son of Guru Bṛhaspati
<i>Kaivalyam</i>	Final emancipation, the one and only state, complete detachment, identification with the Supreme
<i>Kaivalya-yoga</i>	Yoga of the One and Only
<i>Kāla</i>	Time, period, era, the Death-god
<i>Kalāḥ</i>	A part
<i>Kālī</i>	The Mother Divine, consort of Śiva, the power of time
<i>Kālindī</i>	River Yamuna
<i>Kaliyuga</i>	The Dark Era
<i>Kalpa</i>	Period a creation lasts, 432 million years, era, Vedic rites
<i>Kāma</i>	Desires
<i>Kāma-bīja</i>	Seed of desires
<i>Kāmamaḥ</i>	Full of desires
<i>Kāmamaḥ puruṣaḥ</i>	Person the Lust
<i>Kāmarūpam</i>	Form of desires

<i>Kāmeśvara</i>	God of desires, God fulfilling desires, Śiva
<i>Kāmeśvarī</i>	Goddess of desires, Goddess fulfilling desires, Śakti
<i>Kanda</i>	Perineum
<i>Kapālabhātī</i>	A breathing technique of active exhalation and passive inhalation in quick succession
<i>Kapāla-kuhara</i>	The posterior nasal cavity above the palate
<i>Kapāla-neti</i>	Cleansing nasal passage by intake of water through nose and water comes out of mouth
<i>Kapālarandhra Dhauti</i>	Cleansing the palate
<i>Kapila</i>	A famous sage who is author of Sāṃkhya philosophy
<i>Karaṇa</i>	An instrument, a organ
<i>Kāraṇa śarīra</i>	Causal body
<i>Karaṇa vaiśamya</i>	Impairment of organs and systems in body
<i>Karmakriyā</i>	Activities of action
<i>Karma-saṃnyāsa</i>	Renunciation of actions/renunciation of results of actions
<i>Karmendriya</i>	Organ of action, viz., hands, legs, etc.
<i>Karṇa</i>	Ear
<i>Karṇarandhra</i>	Ear-hole
<i>Karṇarandhra Dhauti</i>	Cleansing ear-hole
<i>Kartā bhāva</i>	State of a doer
<i>Kārya</i>	Effect, work
<i>Kathāvācaka</i>	Story-teller, religious story-teller
<i>Kātyāyanī</i>	Daughter of Sage Kātyāyana, beginningless, not possible to know Her ancestry, Durgā, Divine Mother
<i>Kauśala</i>	Technique
<i>Kāyākalpa</i>	Rejuvenation of body
<i>Keli</i>	Sport, foreplay
<i>Kevala Kumbhaka</i>	Automatic holding of breath
<i>Kha/kham</i>	Ether, sky, the second consonant of Sanskrit, the letter- <i>kha</i>
<i>Khecari</i>	The vital energy that moves in the ether, the feminine or energy aspect of that moves in the sky, the Divine Mother
<i>Khecari mudrā</i>	Tongue rolled up to enter into the posterior nasal cavity above the palate
<i>Khyātiḥ</i>	Fame, accepting
<i>Kīrtana</i>	Singing/chanting the name and glory

<i>Kiśora</i>	Adolescent, adolescence, early youth
<i>Kliṣṭa</i>	Painful, difficult
<i>Kośa</i>	A sheath, a covering
<i>Krandana</i>	Crying
<i>Kriyā</i>	Act, action, activity, execution, the vital force, the breath, long and deep breath, a breath technique
<i>Kriyā Hatha-yoga</i>	Hatha-yoga done with breathing awareness
<i>Kriyā-rūpa</i>	Form of actions
<i>Kriyā-śakti</i>	Power of action
<i>Kriyāvān</i>	A practitioner of <i>kriyā</i>
<i>Kriyā-yoga</i>	The practice part of yoga, the science of Life-force, the action of life-force to clean our mind
<i>Kṛkara</i>	One of the subsidiary vital breaths responsible for sneezing
<i>Kṛṣṇa</i>	Lord Kṛṣṇa, the divine incarnation, the eternal Self within every being
<i>Kṣatriya</i>	Warrior class, a person from warrior class
<i>Kṣatriya-ṛtti</i>	Work of warriors
<i>Kṣetra</i>	Field, body
<i>Kṣipta</i>	Violated, in turbulence
<i>Kṣudhā</i>	Hunger
<i>Ku</i>	Bad
<i>Kubera</i>	God of wealth and prosperity
<i>Kuhū</i>	One of the subtle vital channels corresponds to nerve to procreative organ
<i>Kumārī</i>	A virgin, Divine Mother
<i>Kumbhaka</i>	Holding or retention of breath, stillness of breath
<i>Kumeru</i>	Southern mount, bad- <i>meru</i>
<i>Kuṇḍalinī</i>	Latent <i>prāṇa</i> , latent vital/ spiritual energy in a person
<i>Kuñjar Kriyā</i>	Ayogic technique of cleansing upper gastro-intestinal tract
<i>Kuntaḥ</i>	A spear
<i>Kuntī</i>	A queen of King Pāṇḍu
<i>Kūrma</i>	Tortoise, turtle, one of the subsidiary vital breath responsible for blinking of eyes
<i>Kuruḥ</i>	Action, to hurt
<i>Kūṭastha</i>	Unchangeable
<i>Lābhaḥ</i>	To gain, to acquire, profit

<i>Lakṣmī</i>	Goddess Lakṣmī, consort of Lord Viṣṇu, Divine Mother
<i>Lambikā-yoga</i>	Practice of Khecarī <i>mudrā</i> in traditional Haṭha-yoga system
<i>Līlā</i>	Sport of Divine, sport of God
<i>Liṅga-śarīra</i>	Subtle body, astral body
<i>Lokayati</i>	Sees
<i>Lolajihvā</i>	Emerging tongue
<i>Lolak tālu</i>	Uvula near soft palate
<i>Madhyamā</i>	Intermediate
<i>Madhyamā vāk/ madhyamā vāṇī</i>	Intermediate speech, murmuring sound
<i>Mādrī</i>	Second queen of King Pāṇḍu
<i>Mahābhārata</i>	The famous Indian Epic in Sanskrit literature authored by Sage Vyāsa
<i>Mahādeva</i>	The Great God, Lord Śiva
<i>Mahādevī</i>	The Great Goddess, Goddess Pārvatī, Kālī
<i>Mahākāla</i>	The great time, Lord Śiva
<i>Mahākālī</i>	The power of Mahākāla, Goddess Mahākālī, Śakti, cosmic energy
<i>Mahāmātrkā</i>	The Great Mother, the Divine Mother, the Prime Sound, Śakti
<i>Mahāmāyā</i>	The great illusory power, Divine Mother
<i>Mahāmudrā</i>	The great yogic postural seal, a Kriyā-yoga technique
<i>Mahāpralaya</i>	The great dissolution
<i>Mahāprāṇa</i>	The great vital power, Mother Nature, the Unmanifest
<i>Mahārāsa</i>	The great sport of the Divine, the great dance by Kṛṣṇa and gopīs
<i>Maharloka</i>	The raised world, the world of great ones
<i>Mahāśaya</i>	Title of reverence like “Sir” in English
<i>Mahat</i>	Cosmic Intelligence, Hiranyagarbha, intellect, great
<i>Mahātma</i>	A great soul, a noble person
<i>Mahātrīpurasundarī</i>	The Great Beauty of Three Worlds, viz., earth, intermediate space and heaven, Śakti, Divine Mother
<i>Mahāvīṣṇu</i>	The great vastness, the Transcendental Self
<i>Mahāyogeśvara</i>	The great lord of yoga, Śiva, Kṛṣṇa
<i>Mahēśa</i>	Lord Śiva, the third god of the Trinity, the Great Lord
<i>Mahēśvara</i>	The Great Lord, the Great <i>Īśvara</i>

<i>Mahiṣāsura</i>	A demon king
<i>Maitreyī</i>	Name of a woman sage who is wife of Sage Yājñavalkya
<i>Mamatānubandhī</i>	Based on love and affection
<i>Manana</i>	Mental analysis
<i>Manasā na manute</i>	Not comprehended through mind
<i>Maṇipūra/Maṇipūṛaka</i>	The third energy center, the lumbar center, the center corresponds to navel, one that is filled with jewels
<i>Manolaya</i>	Merging the mind, dissolution of mind
<i>Manomala</i>	Impurities of mind
<i>Manomaya Kośa</i>	The mind sheath, third of the five sheaths covering the soul, faculty of mind
<i>Mantraḥ</i>	A verse, sacred syllable
<i>Manu</i>	A Prajāpati to whom origin of human race is attributed, the Cosmic Mind
<i>Martyaloka</i>	World of death, earth, <i>mṛtyuloka</i>
<i>Maṭha</i>	Monastery
<i>Mātari</i>	Intermediate space
<i>Mātariśvā</i>	Air
<i>Māṭṛkā</i>	A mother, a divine mother, anything coming from mother, alphabets
<i>Māṭṛkā-nyāsa</i>	Placing or putting down the alphabets
<i>Māyā</i>	An illusion, the trifold power of Lord, <i>Pradhāna</i> , <i>Prakṛti</i> , <i>Avyakta</i> , <i>Śakti</i>
<i>Medhā</i>	Intellect
<i>Meru</i>	Axis, northern mount, Sumeru,
<i>Merudaṇḍa</i>	Axis-staff, spinal column, vertebral column
<i>Mīna</i>	A fish
<i>Mīna mārga</i>	Way of fish
<i>Mithyājñāna</i>	False knowledge, wrongly conceived
<i>Mitra</i>	Friend, a name of the Sun-god
<i>Moda</i>	Happy, happiness
<i>Mokṣa</i>	Liberation
<i>Mṛta</i>	Dead
<i>Mṛtasañjīvanī</i>	Knowledge of giving life to dead, medicine to rejuvenate body
<i>Mūḍha</i>	Dull

<i>Muditā</i>	Contentment
<i>Mudrā</i>	A seal, a special posture, a yogic postural seal
<i>Mūlādhāra</i>	Basic foundation, the coccyx center, the energy center at the base of spine, the first energy center
<i>Mūlāsodhana</i>	Cleansing rectum
<i>Mumuksu</i>	A seeker of liberation
<i>Mumuksutā</i>	Desire for liberation
<i>Muṇḍa</i>	A head, a cut head
<i>Muṇḍamālā</i>	Garland of heads
<i>Mūrta</i>	Manifested, taken a form
<i>Mūrti</i>	Statue
<i>Nābhi</i>	The navel
<i>Nābhi cakra</i>	The navel center, the solar plexus, the gastro-intestinal plexus
<i>Nābhi Kriyā</i>	A preparatory technique for Kriyā-yoga meditation
<i>Nabho mudrā</i>	See Khecarī mudrā
<i>Naciketā</i>	A divine child described in <i>Kaṭhapaniṣad</i> , the son of Vājaśravasa
<i>Nāda</i>	Sound, the internal sound
<i>Nāda śravaṇa</i>	Listening to internal sound, listening to divine sound
<i>Nāda yoga</i>	The yoga of the Sound
<i>Nāga</i>	Cobra, one of the subsidiary vital breaths responsible for expelling by eructation
<i>Nakula</i>	The fourth Pāṇḍava, a mongoose
<i>Nanda</i>	King of Gopa, fosterfather of Kṛṣṇa, bliss
<i>Nara</i>	Being, human
<i>Nārada</i>	A famous sage who is a sage among gods and a son of Lord Brahmā
<i>Naraka</i>	Hell
<i>Naulī Cālana</i>	See Naulī Kriyā
<i>Naulī Kriyā</i>	The abdominal muscle, <i>rectus abdominis</i> , which forms the front linear wall of the abdominal cavity is contracted, isolated and rolled
<i>Navadhā</i>	Nine modes, nine types, divided into nine parts
<i>Navadvāra</i>	Nine doors, viz., two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, mouth, anus, and procreative organ

<i>Navavidha</i>	Nine modes, nine types
<i>Neti</i>	Cleansing the nasal passage
<i>Neti neti</i>	Not this not this
<i>Nidhāna</i>	To determine or to know with certainty
<i>Nididhyāsana</i>	Contemplation, meditation
<i>Nimiṣa</i>	Blinking of eyes, a unit of time
<i>Nirbīja</i>	No seeds, without seeds
<i>Nirbīja samādhi</i>	<i>Samādhi</i> without seeds, <i>nirvikalpa samādhi</i>
<i>Nirguṇa</i>	Without <i>guṇa</i> or qualities, viz., <i>sattva</i> , <i>rajas</i> , and <i>tamas</i>
<i>Nirguṇa Brahma</i>	Śiva, the Transcendental Brahman, the Brahman beyond the qualities of Nature
<i>Nirodhaḥ</i>	To halt, to stop
<i>Niruddha</i>	Halted, at rest
<i>Nirvāṇa</i>	Liberation, emancipation, <i>mokṣa</i> , liberation in Buddhism
<i>Nirvicāra</i>	No thought state, thoughtlessness
<i>Nirvikalpa</i>	A state without alternative
<i>Nirvikalpa samādhi</i>	The supreme transcendental state
<i>Nirviṣaya</i>	Free from objects
<i>Nivṛti</i>	Renunciation
<i>Nivṛti dharma</i>	Path of renunciation
<i>Nivṛti mārga</i>	Path of renunciation
<i>Niyama</i>	Regulations, observances, the second limb of yoga
<i>Nyāsa</i>	Placing, putting down
<i>Om</i>	See <i>Aum</i>
<i>Om Kauśalaḥ</i>	Om Technique, a Kriyā-yoga Technique
<i>Pada</i>	Feet, post or position
<i>Pāda</i>	A foot, leg, a quarter, the one-fourth part or chapter, a part or chapter in general
<i>Padasevana</i>	Service of His (or to the deity) feet
<i>Padmāsana</i>	The lotus posture
<i>Pakṣaḥ</i>	Wing, side
<i>Pañca</i>	Five
<i>Pañcadeva</i>	Five Gods, viz., Gaṇeśa, Devī, Sun-god, Viṣṇu, and Rudra
<i>Pañcakośa</i>	The five sheaths, viz., Food Sheath, Vital Sheath, Mind Sheath, Knowledge Sheath, and Bliss Sheath

<i>Pañcakośa Parikramā</i>	Moving around in the five sheaths, a special type of pilgrimage
<i>Pañcamahābhūta</i>	Five gross elements, viz., ether, air, fire, water, and earth
<i>Pañca Śambhu</i>	Five Śiva, five Manifested Lords
<i>Pañcatanmātrā</i>	Five subtle elements, viz., sound, touch, vision, taste, and smell
<i>Pañcikaraṇa</i>	Division and intermixing of the fives
<i>Paṇḍā</i>	Knowledge, a temple priest
<i>Pāṇḍava</i>	A son of King Pāṇḍu
<i>Pāṇḍu</i>	King Pāṇḍu, King from the story of <i>Mahābhārata</i> , white with yellowish tinge
<i>Pāṇi</i>	Hand
<i>Para</i>	Beyond, supreme
<i>Parā</i>	Beyond, supreme
<i>Parā-bhakti</i>	Supreme devotion
<i>Parabindu</i>	Beyond the point, the Transcendental Self
<i>Parama</i>	Supreme
<i>Paramaguru</i>	Master of ones' immediate master
<i>Paramahansa</i>	Supreme swan, a title used for realized monks, a highest title in the monk order bestowed by one's Guru or one of the Śaṅkarācāryas, a monk in Turīya state
<i>Paramapitā</i>	The Supreme Father, God the Father
<i>Parama Śiva</i>	The Transcendental Lord
<i>Paramātmā</i>	The Transcendental Self
<i>Paramabrahman</i>	Supreme Brahman, Superior Brahman
<i>Parā-prakṛti</i>	Higher Nature, Supreme Nature
<i>Parā-śakti</i>	The transcendental form of Śakti
<i>Para vairāgya</i>	Supreme detachment
<i>Parāvasthā</i>	A state after practice of <i>kriyā</i> , breathless state, state of <i>samādhi</i> , state of bliss
<i>Parā vāk</i>	The transcendental sound
<i>Parā Vidyā</i>	Superior knowledge
<i>Parikramā</i>	Moving around
<i>Parokṣa jñāna</i>	Indirect knowledge, intellectual knowledge not based on experience
<i>Pārvatī</i>	Divine Mother, daughter of King Himālaya, Śakti
<i>Pāśa</i>	Trap made up of rope

<i>Paścāt</i>	Behind, on the back, backward, secondary
<i>Paśvaḥ</i>	Animals, beasts
<i>Paśyanī vāk</i>	The sound seen, subtle sound
<i>Patañjali</i>	A famous sage and author of <i>Yogasūtras</i> —Aphorisms on Yoga
<i>Pavana</i>	Air, Air-god
<i>Pavanaṣṭra</i>	Hanumān, son of Air-god, Bhīma
<i>Pāyu</i>	Organ of defecation, anus
<i>Piṇḍa</i>	Body, microcosm
<i>Piṇḍadāna</i>	A ritual of offerings to forefathers
<i>Piṅgalā</i>	One of the subtle vital channels in the body situated in the right side of Suṣumnā
<i>Pīṭha</i>	A seat, a seat of a religious head, a seat of a deity.
<i>Pitṛloka</i>	World of Manes
<i>Pracchardana</i>	Exhalation in an extended manner
<i>Pradhān</i>	The Main, Nature, Unmanifest, the head of a society
<i>Prahara</i>	Around three hours of time, one-fourth of a day or a night
<i>Praja</i>	Husband
<i>Prajāpati</i>	The god presiding over creation, the lord of creatures, cosmic mind
<i>Prajñā</i>	Knowledge
<i>Prajñānaghana</i>	A mass of consciousness, consciousness solidifies
<i>Prakāśa</i>	Light, manifestation, knowledge
<i>Prakṛti</i>	Mother Nature, nature
<i>Prakṛtilaya</i>	Merged in nature, a yogi merged in nature
<i>Prakṛtīvikṛti</i>	Nature and Modifications
<i>Prakṣālana</i>	Washing
<i>Pralaya</i>	Dissolution
<i>Pramāda</i>	Inertia, inaction, laziness
<i>Pramoda</i>	Exhilaration of happiness
<i>Prāṇa</i>	The Life-force, the vital power, the breath, exhalation, the Unmanifest, the Hiraṇyagarbha, the senses, the sense-organs, from Cosmic Self to sense-organs like nose
<i>Praṇāma</i>	Bowing down to touch head on the ground, show of reverence

<i>Prājña</i>	The third quarter of the Self whose sphere is deep sleep
<i>Prāṇakarma</i>	The action of life-force, the action of breath, the breath technique, the technique of exhalation and inhalation
<i>Prāṇakriyā</i>	Same as <i>prāṇakarma</i>
<i>Prāṇakṛṣṇa</i>	Kṛṣṇa the Life-force
<i>Prāṇamaya Kośa</i>	The life sheath, second of the five sheaths covering the soul, faculty of physiological activities
<i>Prāṇāpāna</i>	Exhalation and inhalation
<i>Prāṇāpānasmṛti</i>	Observation or awareness of exhalation and inhalation
<i>Prāṇapratīṣṭhā</i>	Establishing the life-force, ritual of establishing life-force in a deity
<i>Prāṇa spanda</i>	Vibration of vital force
<i>Prāṇavāyu</i>	The breath
<i>Prāṇavidyā</i>	The science or knowledge of the Life-force
<i>Prāṇa vikṣaṇā</i>	Observing the breath or vital airs, observing inhalation and exhalation
<i>Praṇava</i>	<i>Om, Aum</i> , the mystic sound
<i>Prāṇāyāma</i>	The breath practice, the breath technique, restraining breath, the fourth limb of yoga
<i>Praṇidhāna</i>	Contemplation, practice, to determine in totality, to know with certainty
<i>Prāṇopāsana</i>	The worship of the Life-force
<i>Prārabdha</i>	Fate, effects of actions of past lives on present life
<i>Prasava</i>	Birth, to give birth
<i>Prasupta</i>	Remain in dormant
<i>Praśvāsa</i>	Exhalation
<i>Pratiprasava</i>	The cessation of birth
<i>Pratiṣṭhā</i>	Established, establishment
<i>Pratiśrutkaḥ puruṣaḥ</i>	Person that listens, mind determining the sound
<i>Pratyakṣa</i>	Perception, perceived, real
<i>Pratyāhāra</i>	Withdrawal, withdrawal of senses, the fifth limb of yoga
<i>Praviviktabhuk</i>	Enjoyer of subtle objects
<i>Pravṛtti</i>	Way of nature
<i>Pravṛtti dharma</i>	Path of worldly happiness, path of desires
<i>Pravṛtti mārga</i>	Path of worldly happiness, path of desires
<i>Premāvatāra</i>	An incarnation of love

<i>Preyasī</i>	Beloved
<i>Prokṣaṇa</i>	Approaching or looking with intention
<i>Puccha</i>	Tail
<i>Puṇya</i>	Noble, nobility
<i>Pura</i>	A house, a body, filling, making full
<i>Pūra</i>	Act of inhalation, filling up, fulfilling
<i>Purāṇa</i>	Ancient or legendary history, religious scriptures
<i>Puruṣa</i>	Human, man, one who resides in a body, individual self, indwelling self, Cosmic Self, God
<i>Puruṣaviśeṣa</i>	Special <i>puruṣa</i> , Cosmic Self
<i>Puruṣārtha</i>	Goal of a man, whatever a man prays or wants, self-effort
<i>Pūṣā</i>	One of the subtle vital channels corresponds to auditory nerve to right ear
<i>Putramayaḥ puruṣaḥ</i>	Person in the form of son
<i>Rādḥā</i>	Consort of Lord Kṛṣṇa, path of renunciation
<i>Rāga</i>	Attachment, hankering
<i>Rajas</i>	One of the three qualities of nature, action
<i>Rājasika</i>	With <i>rajas</i> qualities
<i>Rajoguṇa</i>	The qualities of action
<i>Raktavasānā</i>	A goddess clad with blood-red cloth
<i>Rāma</i>	Lord Rāma, the divine incarnation, the eternal Self within every being, the state of bliss
<i>Rasa</i>	Fluid, taste, water
<i>Rāsa</i>	A kind of dance, divine sport, manifestation of bliss
<i>Rasa vaiśamya</i>	Disturbances in body fluids, impaired homeostasis
<i>Rasanā</i>	Organ of taste, tongue
<i>Ratha</i>	Chariot, the body-chariot
<i>Ratha-yātrā</i>	The chariot-festival or car-festival at Jagannātha Purī in the State of Odisha at eastern part of India
<i>Rātri Devī</i>	Goddess of night
<i>Raudrī</i>	Power of Rudra, Divine Mother with the power of will
<i>Rāvaṇa</i>	A demon king killed by Lord Rāma
<i>Rayiḥ</i>	The moon
<i>Recaka</i>	Act of exhalation
<i>Ṛg</i>	<i>Ṛgveda</i> , the oldest of four Vedas
<i>Ṛta/ṛtam</i>	The truth experience, righteousness, the Pure Existence

<i>Ṛtambharā</i>	Holding the truth
<i>Ṛtambharā prajñā</i>	Knowledge that holds the Truth
<i>Rudra</i>	Lord Śiva, the third god of the Trinity, the lord of dissolution, the furious one
<i>Rudragranthi</i>	Knot of Rudra, corresponds to <i>cerebral aqueduct</i> in the mid brain
<i>Sa/Saḥ</i>	Śakti, action, inhalation, he, that
<i>Śabda</i>	Sound
<i>Śabdabrahma</i>	Brahman in the form of sound
<i>Śabdajñānī</i>	A person having knowledge of words
<i>Sabija</i>	With seed
<i>Sabija samādhi</i>	<i>Samādhi</i> with seeds, <i>samādhi</i> with desires remaining in seed form
<i>Sadāsiva</i>	Śiva, Lord of Bliss for Ever
<i>Sadguru</i>	A realized master, a master who knows the Truth
<i>Sādha</i>	A practitioner, worshiper, performer
<i>Sādhana</i>	Accomplishing, effecting, performing, practicing, a means, an instrument, oxidation, penance
<i>Sāadhanakrama</i>	The steps of spiritual practice
<i>Sāadhanā</i>	Practice, worship, adoration
<i>Saguṇa</i>	With <i>guṇa</i> , viz., <i>sattva</i> , <i>rajas</i> , and <i>tamas</i> qualities
<i>Saguṇa bhakti</i>	Emotional devotion, devotion with <i>guṇa</i> or attributes
<i>Saguṇa Brahma</i>	Manifested part of the Brahman, the Nature that holds the qualities, viz., <i>sattva</i> , <i>rajas</i> , and <i>tamas</i>
<i>Saḥ/So</i>	He, that, inhalation, <i>śakti</i>
<i>Sahadeva</i>	The fifth Pāṇḍava
<i>Sahasra</i>	Thousand
<i>Sahasra ara</i>	See Sahasrāra
<i>Sahasrākṣaram</i>	A thousand letters
<i>Sahasrāra</i>	The crown center, the seventh energy center at fontanel, <i>sahasra ara</i> or a wheel of thousand spokes.
<i>Śaiva</i>	A worshiper of Śiva
<i>Sākalya</i>	Name of a Brahmin, materials used for oblations in a <i>yajña</i>
<i>Sakāra</i>	The letter- <i>sa</i> , the sound <i>sa</i>
<i>Sākhyā bhāva</i>	State of friendship behavior, a state of being His friend
<i>Sākṣī</i>	Witness

<i>Sākṣī bhāva</i>	State of a witness
<i>Śākta</i>	A worshiper of Śakti
<i>Śakti</i>	Power of Śiva, the consort of Śiva, Divine Mother, Nature, Unmanifest, cosmic energy, Life-force
<i>Śaktimān</i>	The owner of Śakti, one having power
<i>Śakti praṇava</i>	<i>Aum</i> in Śakti cult, the syllable <i>Hṛīm</i>
<i>Śaktipūjā</i>	Worship of Śakti, worship of Life-force
<i>Sama</i>	Control of mind, equal, equanimity
<i>Sāma</i>	<i>Sāmaveda</i> , the third of the four Vedas
<i>Samādhāna</i>	Fixing the mind, mind without volitions
<i>Samādhi</i>	The eighth limb of yoga, the transcendental state, superconscious state
<i>Samāna</i>	One of the five vital airs responsible for digestion, assimilation and distribution of food energy
<i>Samatā</i>	Equanimity
<i>Samatānubandhī</i>	Based on state of equilibrium
<i>Samatva</i>	Equanimity, equanimity of mind
<i>Samayācāra</i>	A branch of Āgama/ tantra dealing with internal worship and meditation having some similarity to Kriyā-yoga, also known as Śrīvidyā
<i>Sāmbhavī mudrā</i>	A special posture when gaze is outward but attention fixed inside, a Kriyā-yoga technique, also known as Vaiṣṇavī <i>mudrā</i>
<i>Śambhu</i>	Lord Śiva, the lord causing happiness and granting prosperity, manifested lord
<i>Sambhūtaḥ</i>	Born, created, to take birth
<i>Samhāra krama</i>	The trend of dissolution
<i>Samkalpa</i>	Resolve, making a vow
<i>Sāmkhya</i>	Sāmkhya philosophy propounded by Sage Kapila
<i>Samnyāsa</i>	Renunciation, a stage of life, viz., renunciate life
<i>Sampad</i>	Wealth
<i>Samskāra</i>	Impressions, latent
<i>Samskāraja buddhi</i>	Intellect born from the impressions carried inside the mind
<i>Samvit</i>	Consciousness
<i>Samyama</i>	Self-restraint

<i>Sanatkumāra</i>	A famous sage who is one among the first four humans and a son of Brahmā
<i>Śāṇḍilya</i>	Name of a famous sage who is an authority on devotion
<i>Sañjaya</i>	The charioteer of the king Dhṛtarāṣṭra of <i>Mahābhārata</i> , one who has control over senses, sense-organs and mind
<i>Śāṅkara</i>	The Lord who gives happiness to all beings, Lord Śiva.
<i>Śāṅkha</i>	Conch
<i>Śāṅkha Prakṣālena Kriyā</i>	A yogic technique of cleansing intestinal canal through water. See also <i>Vārisāra</i>
<i>Śāṅkhinī</i>	One of the subtle vital channels corresponds to nerves to anus and rectum
<i>Ṣaṇmukhī mudrā</i>	The six-faced seal, two ears, two eyes, nose and mouth are closed in this technique traditionally
<i>Santa paramparā</i>	Tradition of saints
<i>Santoṣa</i>	Contentment
<i>Sapta dhātu</i>	Seven body elements, viz., bone marrows etc.
<i>Saptāṅga</i>	Having seven limbs, seven limbs, seven parts
<i>Sarga</i>	World, a part or a chapter
<i>Śārīrah puruṣaḥ</i>	Person the Body
<i>Sarvagatam</i>	Entered inside everything and every being
<i>Sarvātma</i>	The Self of All
<i>Sarvātma-bodha</i>	A state of all things and all beings as own Self
<i>Śāstra</i>	Scripture
<i>Sat</i>	Truth, Pure Existence
<i>Ṣaṭ cakra</i>	The six centers, the six wheels
<i>Ṣaṭ cakra bhedana</i>	To pierce the six centers
<i>Sattva</i>	One of the three qualities of nature, calmness, nobility
<i>Sattvaguṇa</i>	The qualities of calmness, noble qualities
<i>Sattvaśuddhi</i>	Purification of mind
<i>Sāttvika</i>	With <i>sattva</i> qualities
<i>Satyaloka</i>	The abode of Truth, the highest of the seven worlds
<i>Satyayuga</i>	The noble era
<i>Śauca</i>	Cleanliness
<i>Saumanasya</i>	Delightfulness of mind
<i>Śavārūḍhā</i>	Standing on a dead body, vital force, Śakti, Kālī
<i>Śavāsana</i>	Corpse posture

<i>Śeṣa</i>	Leftover, end
<i>Śeṣanāga</i>	Infinite power, the legendary cobra holding the Lord and holding the earth
<i>Siddha</i>	Emancipated one, realized one, a divine being, having eight supernatural faculties, thoroughly proficient, a prophet, a seer
<i>Siddhāsana</i>	The posture of <i>siddha</i>
<i>Śīthīlīkaraṇa</i>	Loosening
<i>Śīthīlīkaraṇa Vyāyāma</i>	Loosening exercise
<i>Śiva</i>	The third god of the Trinity, the Lord, a god, Cosmic Self, Transcendental Self, auspicious, the Pure Existence, the Truth Principle
<i>Śiva-saṃkalpa</i>	Auspicious resolve
<i>Śivā</i>	The Mother Divine, consort of Śiva, the goddess Durgā, Pārvatī, Kālī
<i>Smaraṇa</i>	Remembering, remembrance
<i>Smṛti</i>	Memory, recollection in mind
<i>Snāna</i>	Bath
<i>Sohaṃ</i>	That is I, inhalation and exhalation
<i>Soma</i>	The Moon-god, moon
<i>Soumya</i>	Good-looking one
<i>Soumyā</i>	A good-looking woman, beautiful and radiating peace, charming gentleness, a goddess
<i>Spanda/Spandana</i>	Vibration, throb
<i>Śraddhā</i>	Faith, noble faith, devotion
<i>Śraddhāvān</i>	One who has noble faith, a person having devotion
<i>Śravaṇendriya</i>	Organ of listening, ear
<i>Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā</i>	The Song Divine, the famous scripture of Hindus dealing with teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna
<i>Śrīmadbhāgavata-mahāpurāṇa</i>	A famous scripture of Hindus authored by Sage Vyāsa dealing with devotion
<i>Śrī Śaṅkarācārya</i>	A famous eighth century spiritual preacher believed as an incarnation of Lord Śiva, propagated non-dualism and revived monastic traditions though opinions vary regarding his time from sixth century BC to ninth century AD
<i>Śrīvidyā</i>	Technique of worship and meditation according to Āgama

<i>Śrotra</i>	Ear, organ of hearing
<i>Sṛṣṭi</i>	Creation
<i>Sṛṣṭīkrama</i>	The steps of creation, the trend of creation
<i>Śruti</i>	Vedas
<i>Sthūla</i>	Gross
<i>Sthūla śarīra</i>	Gross body, physical body
<i>Sthūlabhuk</i>	Enjoyer of gross objects
<i>Striya</i>	Women
<i>Styāna</i>	Incompetence or incapability of mind, loosing interest
<i>Su</i>	Good
<i>Śubhecchā</i>	Good will
<i>Śuci</i>	Pious
<i>Śuddha samvitmaya</i>	Full of pure consciousness
<i>Śuddhikaraṇa</i>	Cleansing
<i>Śuddhikaraṇa kriyā</i>	Cleansing technique
<i>Śūdra</i>	Serving class
<i>Śūdra-vṛtti</i>	Work of serving class
<i>Sukha/sukham</i>	Happiness
<i>Śukrācārya</i>	Master of demons
<i>Sūkṣma</i>	Subtle, finer, thinned one
<i>Sūkṣma śarīra</i>	Subtle body, astral body
<i>Sumeru</i>	Northern mount, good- <i>meru</i> , the mount that is seat of bliss
<i>Śūnya</i>	Void, vacuum, zero
<i>Śūnya dhātu</i>	Vacuum element, pure ether element
<i>Śūnya nirvāṇa</i>	Liberation in Buddhism
<i>Suptāvasthā</i>	Deep-sleep state
<i>Surabhī</i>	Fragrance
<i>Sūryanamaskāra</i>	Salutation to the Sun-god, a set of yogic postures in succession used as a salutation to the Sun-god
<i>Sūrya nāḍī</i>	The nerve dependant on sun, Piṅgalā
<i>Suṣumnā</i>	Spinal cord
<i>Suṣumnā nāḍī</i>	Subtlest vital channel within the spinal cord
<i>Suṣupti</i>	Deep sleep, deep sleep state
<i>Sūtra</i>	Thread
<i>Sūtra Neti</i>	Cleansing nasal passage by a cotton thread or a soft rubber catheter

<i>Sūtrātma</i>	The Thread Self in all beings, the Hiranyagarbha, the <i>Prāṇa</i>
<i>Sva</i>	Self
<i>Svacchatā</i>	Purity
<i>Svādhiṣṭhāna</i>	The second energy center, the sacrum center
<i>Svādhyāya</i>	Study of scriptures, self-study, study of Inner Self
<i>Svapnasthānaḥ</i>	Dream state
<i>Svapiti</i>	Sleeps, attains the self
<i>Svara</i>	Vowel, sound, noise, breath, one that ascends
<i>Svaraḥ varṇa</i>	Vowels
<i>Svarloka</i>	The world of celestial beings, the astral world, heaven, world of gods
<i>Svarūpa</i>	One's own form, real nature
<i>Svarūpa jñāna</i>	Knowledge of the Self, knowledge of one's own nature
<i>Svarūpe sthiti</i>	Established in one's own form
<i>Śvāsa</i>	Inhalation, breath
<i>Svasamvedanarūpā</i>	The form of feeling the Self
<i>Swāmī</i>	A title used for monks and spiritual preachers, lord, master, king, husband
<i>Tadvanam</i>	His Adorable, Self
<i>Taijasa</i>	The second quarter of the Self whose sphere of activity is the dream state
<i>Tālavya kriyā</i>	The practice of Khecarī <i>mudrā</i> in Kriyā-yoga system
<i>Tamas</i>	One of the three qualities of nature, lethargy, darkness, ignorance, sloth
<i>Tāmasika</i>	With <i>tamas</i> qualities
<i>Tamoguṇa</i>	The qualities of darkness, inertia
<i>Tantra</i>	Occult culture, a branch of spiritual science, Śakti cult
<i>Tanu</i>	Body, attenuated, thin, decreasing
<i>Tāpa</i>	Heat
<i>Tapah/Tapas</i>	Austerities, practice of self-restraint, heat, inner heat generated by breath practice, penance, purification, performance of righteousness
<i>Tapas loka</i>	The world of austerities
<i>Tapasvī</i>	A performer of austerities
<i>Tat</i>	That
<i>Tat pada</i>	Cosmic Consciousness or Transcendental Consciousness

<i>Tattva</i>	The real nature of the human being, the true state, the basic principle, principle, Truth, reality
<i>Tattvamasi</i>	Thou art That
<i>Tattva vicāra</i>	To contemplate on the Principle
<i>Tat satyam sa ātmā</i>	That is Truth, which is the Self
<i>Teja</i>	Light, heat, fire
<i>Ṭhokar</i>	Hit, to hit, hitting
<i>Ṭhokar Kriyā</i>	A unique Kriyā-breath Technique known as hitting breath technique
<i>Titikṣā</i>	Toleration of adverse conditions
<i>Trāṭaka</i>	A yogic technique of concentration and cleansing of eyes
<i>Triguṇātīta</i>	Beyond the three qualities of nature
<i>Trinetra</i>	A goddess having three eyes
<i>Turiya</i>	The fourth quarter of the Self, the Self, the Transcendental State
<i>Tvacā/ tvak</i>	Skin
<i>Tvaṁ pada</i>	Individual consciousness, the individual self, <i>jīva</i>
<i>Ubhaya</i>	Both
<i>Udāna</i>	The air in body that has an upward trend, one of the five vital airs
<i>Uḍḍīyāna</i>	A yogic technique of concave depression of abdomen and expelling air
<i>Udgāthaḥ</i>	The elevated one
<i>Ujjāyī</i>	A breathing technique with hissing sound
<i>Umā</i>	Goddess Pārvatī, consort of Śiva, Mother Divine
<i>Upaniṣad</i>	The portion of Vedas dealing with Knowledge, Vedānta
<i>Upaprāṇa</i>	Sub-vital breaths, subsidiary vital breaths
<i>Uparati</i>	Withdrawal of mind from objects
<i>Upastha</i>	Organ of procreation
<i>Upāya</i>	Effort, self-effort
<i>Upāya pratyaya</i>	Based on self-effort
<i>Upeksā</i>	Indifference
<i>Ūrdhva/Ūrdhvam</i>	Upward, above, on the top
<i>Uṣā</i>	Morning
<i>Uṣā Devī</i>	Goddess of morning
<i>Uttaraḥ pakṣaḥ</i>	Right side, right wing

<i>Uttarāyaṇa</i>	Northern
<i>Uttarāyaṇa mārga</i>	Northern Path/Route
<i>Vāca</i>	Speech
<i>Vadana</i>	Face
<i>Vahni</i>	Fire, heat
<i>Vahnisāra</i>	A yogic technique of cleansing through movement of the abdominal wall, also called as <i>Agnisāra</i>
<i>Vaikharī vāk/vāṇī</i>	Articulate utterance, audible speech
<i>Vairāgya</i>	Detachment, renunciation
<i>Vaiṣāmya</i>	Instability, disturbance, difficulty
<i>Vaiśāradya</i>	Specialized one, expert
<i>Vaiṣṇava</i>	A worshiper of Viṣṇu
<i>Vaiṣṇavī</i>	Power of Viṣṇu, Divine Mother with the power of knowledge
<i>Vaiṣṇavī mudrā</i>	Seal of Viṣṇu. See also <i>Sāmbhavī mudrā</i>
<i>Vaiśvānara</i>	Fire, fire within body responsible for digestion, the first quarter of the Self whose sphere of activity is the waking state
<i>Vaiśya</i>	Business class, a person from business class
<i>Vaiśya-vṛtti</i>	Work of business class
<i>Vajrā</i>	Vajrā <i>nāḍī</i> , one of the subtle vital channels
<i>Vāk</i>	Organ of speech
<i>Vaman</i>	Vomit
<i>Vāmana</i>	Lord Vāmana, an incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu, the Dwarf One
<i>Vānaprastha</i>	A stage of life, viz., forest life
<i>Vandana</i>	Prostration
<i>Varcas</i>	Vigor
<i>Vāri</i>	Water
<i>Vārisāra</i>	A yogic technique of cleansing intestinal canal through water, also known as Śāṅkha Prakṣālana Kriyā
<i>Varṇa</i>	Alphabet, caste, color
<i>Varuṇa</i>	The Water-god, God of the Rain
<i>Vasiṣṭha</i>	Supreme, firmly established, one that sits and makes others sit, name of a famous sage and master of Lord Rāma
<i>Vasti</i>	Cleansing the rectum and large intestine

<i>Vastu</i>	Matter
<i>Vastuśūnyah</i>	A thing that does not exist
<i>Vāsudeva</i>	Lord Śrīkṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva, the God who sits in each being
<i>Vāta</i>	Air, vital airs in the body
<i>Vātasāra</i>	A yogic technique of cleansing abdomen through air
<i>Vāyu/ vāyuh</i>	Air, breath
<i>Veda</i>	The Vedas, sacred knowledge, holy learning, to know
<i>Vedānta</i>	The knowledge part of the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Vedānta philosophy, doctrine of non-dualism
<i>Vibhūti</i>	Power, superhuman power, exalted rank, ashes
<i>Vicāra</i>	Thought, thought process, mental analysis, judgment
<i>Vicāraṇā</i>	State of mental analysis or contemplation
<i>Vicāra prakriyā</i>	To adopt mental analysis, process of mental analysis
<i>Vicchinna</i>	Interrupted
<i>Videha</i>	Without a body, beyond the body, a disembodied yogi
<i>Vidhāraṇa</i>	Holding the air in a special manner, inhalation in a special manner
<i>Viduṣa</i>	Wise, learned one
<i>Vijñāna</i>	Special knowledge, knowledge, science
<i>Vijñānamaya Kośa</i>	The knowledge sheath, fourth of the five sheaths covering the soul, faculty of intellect and ego, also called <i>Buddhimaya Kośa</i>
<i>Vikāra</i>	Modification
<i>Vikṣaṇā</i>	Observation, to see, to feel
<i>Vikṣepa</i>	Distraction, turbulence
<i>Vikṣipta</i>	Violated at times
<i>Vilāpanī</i>	State of lamentation
<i>Viparyaya</i>	Catastrophe, deviated from own/real state
<i>Virāṭa</i>	Gigantic, vast, the Great Being, physical form of the Cosmic Lord
<i>Virāṭa Puruṣa</i>	The cosmic physical body, macrocosm, the Great Being, the physical form of the Cosmic Lord
<i>Vīrya</i>	Vigor
<i>Viśaya</i>	Objects
<i>Visargaḥ</i>	Beyond the world, the Infinity

<i>Viṣṇu</i>	The second god of the Trinity, the Lord, a god, the Cosmic Self, the Sustainer, vastness
<i>Viṣṇugranthī</i>	The knot of Viṣṇu
<i>Viśuddha</i>	Pure, free from vices or imperfections, the cervical center, the fifth energy center
<i>Viśvagatā</i>	Within the universe, entered inside the universe, Divine Mother
<i>Viśvamaṇa</i>	The cosmic mind
<i>Viśvarūpā</i>	Form of the universe, Divine Mother
<i>Viśvāmītra</i>	Name of a famous sage who attained the state of <i>Brahmarṣi</i> by austerities, friend of the universe
<i>Viśvātītā</i>	Beyond the universe, Divine Mother
<i>Viśvātmā</i>	Cosmic Self
<i>Viśvātmikā</i>	Soul of the universe, Divine Mother
<i>Viśvāsaḥ</i>	Trust, faith, belief
<i>Viveka/Viveka buddhi</i>	Discriminating intellect, discriminating between the eternal and non-eternals
<i>Viveka Khyāti</i>	Discriminating intellect resulting in enlightenment
<i>Vṛhaspati</i>	The master of gods, lord of speech, the Life-force
<i>Vṛṣa</i>	Bull
<i>Vṛtti</i>	Action of mind
<i>Vyādhiḥ</i>	Disease, sickness of body
<i>Vyāna</i>	The air that wholly pervades in the body, one of the five vital airs
<i>Vyāna vīkṣaṇā</i>	Observing the <i>vyāna vāyu</i> , observing vibrations in body
<i>Vyañjana</i>	Consonants, manifested sounds
<i>Vyaṣṭīgatā</i>	Within the individual, entered inside the individual, Divine Mother within the individual
<i>Vyaṣṭīrūpā</i>	Form of the individual, Divine Mother in the form of individual
<i>Vyāsa</i>	The famous sage and author of <i>Mahābhārata</i> , vastness, the master
<i>Vyāyāma</i>	Exercise, physically exercise
<i>Vyoma</i>	Ether, sky, space
<i>Yajña</i>	Sacrifice, an offering, an oblation, sacrificial rite, sacrificial fire, an act of worship, inner sacrifice of desires
<i>Yājñavalkya</i>	Name of a famous seer

<i>Yajur</i>	<i>Yajurveda</i> , the second of the Vedas
<i>Yakṣa</i>	A mysterious being guarding a treasure
<i>Yakṣapraśna</i>	Question put forth by a Yakṣa, an anigma, an unsolved question
<i>Yama</i>	Rules, restrains, the first limb of yoga, the Lord of Death
<i>Yāmala</i>	A pair
<i>Yantra</i>	A diagram having miraculous effect on practice of concentration
<i>Yāśasvinī</i>	One of the subtle vital channels corresponds to auditory nerve to left ear
<i>Yativrata</i>	<i>Samnyāsa</i> or renunciate life
<i>Yoga</i>	To join with our own source, the state when the actions of mind are halted, the state of <i>samādhi</i>
<i>Yogabhraṣṭa</i>	One who is deviated from the path of yoga or fallen from the path of yoga
<i>Yogāgni</i>	The fire of yoga
<i>Yogamudrā</i>	A yogic lock of bowing down in lotus posture
<i>Yoganāḍī</i>	A subtle vital channel in the body
<i>Yoganidrā</i>	Yogic sleep, a technique of body relaxation, <i>samādhi</i>
<i>Yogāsana</i>	Yogic posture, <i>āsana</i>
<i>Yogasūtras</i>	Aphorisms on yoga as spelled by the famous Sage Patañjali
<i>Yogavāśiṣṭha</i>	A scripture on Yoga and Vedānta that contains discourses between Lord Rāma and his master Ṛṣi Vāśiṣṭha
<i>Yogī</i>	One who is established in yoga, one who achieved state of <i>samādhi</i> , a practitioner of yoga
<i>Yogirāj</i>	A king among yogis, a title of reverence to yogis highly exalted in spiritual practice
<i>Yoni mudrā</i>	Seal of creation, same as <i>Jyoti mudrā</i>
<i>Yudhiṣṭhira</i>	King Yudhiṣṭhira, the crown prince Yudhiṣṭhira of <i>Mahābhārata</i> , the first Pāṇḍava, an embodiment of Dharma

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