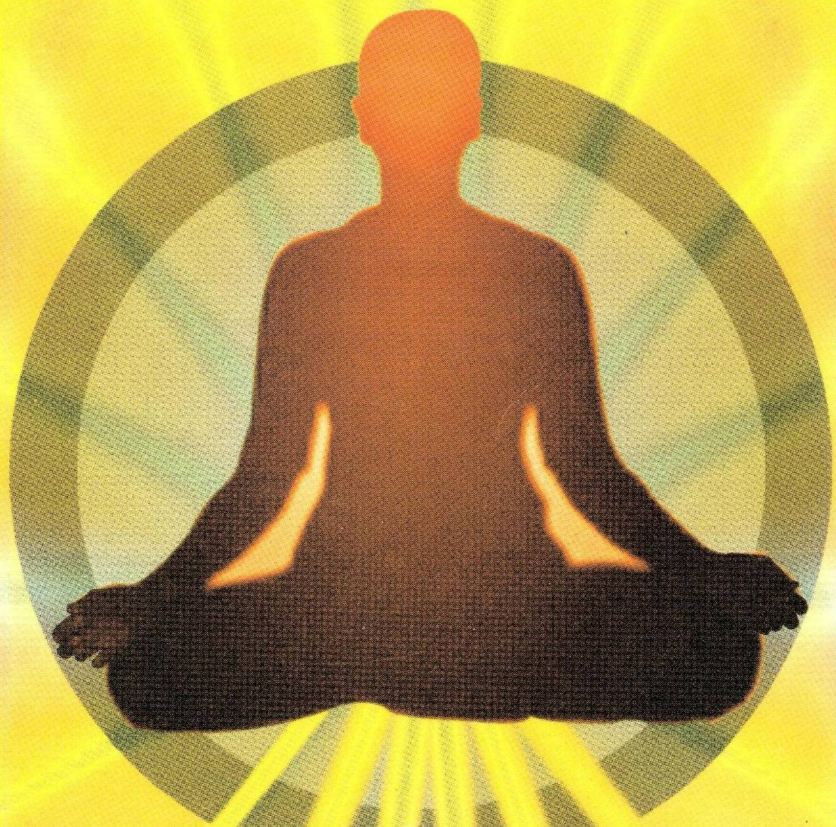


Yoga Sádhaná

The Spiritual Practice of Yoga



Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti

YOGA SÁDHANÁ

YOGA SIDDHANTY

The pratiika represents in a visual way the essence of Ananda Marga ideology. The six-pointed star is composed of two equilateral triangles. The triangle pointing upward represents action, or the outward flow of energy through selfless service to humanity. The triangle pointing downward represents knowledge, the inward search for spiritual realization through meditation. The sun in the centre represents advancement, all-round progress. The goal of the aspirant's march through life is symbolized by the swastika, which means spiritual victory.

YOGA SÁDHANÁ

The Spiritual Practice of Yoga

First Edition



Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti

YOGA SÁDHANÁ

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SUPREME COMMAND

Those who perform sadhana twice a day regularly – the thought of *Parama Puruṣa* will certainly arise in their minds at the time of death; their liberation is a sure guarantee. Therefore every Ananda Margi will have to perform sadhana twice a day invariably; verily is this the command of the Lord. Without *Yama* and *Niyama*, sadhana is an impossibility; hence the Lord's command is also to follow *Yama* and *Niyama*. Disobedience to this command is nothing but to throw oneself into the tortures of animal life for crores of years. That no one should undergo torments such as these, that everyone might be enabled to enjoy the eternal blessedness under the loving shelter of the Lord, it is the bounden duty of every Ananda Margi to endeavour to bring all to the path of bliss. Verily is this a part and parcel of sadhana, to lead others along the path of righteousness.

–*Shrii Shrii Anandamūrti*

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ROMAN SAṂSKRĀTA

Realizing the necessity of writing swiftly and of pronouncing the words of different languages correctly, the undernoted Roman Saṁskṛta (Sanskrit) alphabet has been adopted. Those not familiar with either the Devanagari alphabet or the Bengali alphabet, and those not familiar with Bengali pronunciation, please see the pronunciation keys starting on page x.

অ	আ	ই	ঈ	উ	ঊ	ঋ	ঌ	৯	ঐ	ঔ	ও	ঔ	অং	অঃ
অ	আ	ই	ঈ	উ	ঊ	ঋ	ঌ	লৃ	ল্ৰ	এ	ঐ	ও	অং	অঃ
a	á	i	ii	u	ú	r	rr	lr	lrr	e	ae	o	ao	am̐ ah

ক	খ	গ	ঘ	ঙ	চ	ছ	জ	ঝ	ঞ
ক	খ	গ	ঘ	ঙ	চ	ছ	জ	ঝ	ঞ
ka	kha	ga	gha	ṅa	ca	cha	ja	jha	ña

ট	ঠ	ড	ঢ	ণ	ত	থ	দ	ধ	ন
ট	ঠ	ড	ঢ	ণ	ত	থ	দ	ধ	ন
ṭa	ṭha	ḍa	ḍha	ṇa	ta	tha	da	dha	na

প	ফ	ব	ভ	ম	য	র	ল	ব
প	ফ	ব	ভ	ম	য	র	ল	ব
pa	pha	ba	bha	ma	ya	ra	la	va

শ	ষ	স	হ	(
শ	ষ	স	হ	ক্ষ
sha	śa	sa	ha	kśa

অঁ	জ্জ	ঝষি	ছায়া	জ্জান	সংস্কৃত	ততোহহং
অঁ	জ্জ	ঝষি	ছায়া	জ্জান	সংস্কৃত	ততোহহং
aṅ	jja	rśi	cháyá	jjánána	saṁskṛta	tato'ham̐

a á b c d̄ d e g h i j k l m n̄ n̄ o p r
s ś t ŧ u ú v y

It is possible to pronounce the Saṁskṛta, or Sanskrit, language with the help of only twenty-nine letters of Roman script. The letters “f”, “q”, “qh”, “z”, etc., are required in the Arabic, Persian, and various other languages, but not in Saṁskṛta.

“da” and “dha”, occurring in the middle of a word or at the end of a word, are pronounced “ra” and “rha”, respectively. Like “ya”, they are not independent letters. When the need arises in writing non-Saṁskṛta words, “ra” and “rha” may be written.

Letters newly added to the Bengali alphabet in order to render certain words of foreign languages:

ক	খ	জ	ড	ঢ	ফ	য়	ল	ৎ	অঁ
qua	qhua	za	ra	rha	fa	ya	lra	t	an

SANSKRIT PRONUNCIATION KEY

This key is a guide to the pronunciation of the Sanskrit words in this book. In the cases of those words of other languages (such as Bengali and Hindi) romanized in this book, the pronunciations will be similar but not exactly the same.

a = “a” in “mica”

á = “a” in “father”

i = “i” in “folio”

ii = somewhat prolonged *i*

u = “u” in “lute”

ú = somewhat prolonged *u*

r (alone or followed by consonant) = *ri* in Spanish *carido*

rr = *rrí* in Spanish *corrida*

lr = *l + ri*

lrr = *l* + *rri*

e = “e” in “cachet”

ae = “ai” in “kaiser”

o = “o” in “open”

ao = “au” in “sauerkraut”

m̄ = a nasalization of the preceding vowel, sometimes similar to “ng” in “sung”

h (following vowel, but not followed by a vowel) = aspirated version of the vowel, or *ha* sound appended to the vowel. E.g., *vah* = either *va* with aspiration (expelling breath), or *vaha* sound.

kh, gh, ch, jh, th, dh, th, dh, ph = aspirated versions of consonants (expelling breath)

uṅa = nasalized “wa” (“a” in “mica”). Combining form *uṅ* before *k, kh, g, gh* = “n” pronounced naturally for that location.

iṅa = nasalized “ya” (“a” in “mica”). Combining form *iṅ* before *c, ch, j, jh* = “n” pronounced naturally for that location.

t̄ = cerebral “t” (tip of tongue touches centre of palate)

d̄ = cerebral “d” (tip of tongue touches centre of palate)

n̄ = cerebral “n” (tip of tongue touches centre of palate)

t = dental “t” (tip of tongue touches upper teeth)

d = dental “d” (tip of tongue touches upper teeth)

y at beginning of word = “j” in “jump”. In middle of word = “y” in “you”.

v at beginning of word = “v” in “victory”. In middle of word = “w” in “awaken”.

sh = palatal “s” (tip of tongue touches back of palate), “sh” in “shall” or “ss” in “issue”

ś = cerebral “s” (tip of tongue touches centre of palate), “sh” in “shun” or “bush”

kś = either aspirated version of “k” (expelling breath), or “k” + “sh”

ṅ (preceded by vowel other than *i* or *u*) = nasalization of vowel

jiṅa = "gya" ("a" in "mica")

jiṅá = "gya" ("a" in "father")

BENGALI PRONUNCIATION KEY

This key is a guide to the pronunciation of the Bengali words in this book. In the cases of those words of other languages romanized in this book, the pronunciations will be similar but not exactly the same.

a = "aw" in "awning" or "o" in "open." As the first vowel in a word, *a* is usually like "aw", unless the subsequent vowel is *u/ú*, *i/ii*, *o*, or *ao* (e.g. *bandhu*, "friend"). When *a* is word-initial and expresses negation (English "not"), then its pronunciation is "aw", regardless of what vowel follows (e.g., *asiima*, "boundless," pronounced "awsheem"). In most remaining cases, *a* is like "o" in "open." A significant percentage of Bengali words end in silent *a*. In such cases, *a* has not here been transliterated. However, in poetry, such as Prabháta Saṁgiita, a silent *a* is often actually pronounced for metrical purposes. When word-final *a* is not silent, it is pronounced like "o" in "open" (e.g. *shatata*, "constantly," pronounced "shawtoto"). When word-final *a* is not silent, or should be pronounced for metrical purposes, it has here been transliterated (*a* appears) and is pronounced like "o" in "open". *Kona*, *kena*, *tava*, *yába* and *dekhecha* are further examples of words ending with this "o" sound.

á = "a" as in "father"

i and *ii* = "i" as in "folio"

u and *ú* = "u" as in "lute"

r (alone, word-initial, or between two consonants) = "ri" in

- Spanish "carido," or "rea" in "ream." In other cases, *r* resembles the English "r", but is a dental flap sound.
- rr*, *lr*, and *lrr* are not in common use in Bengali.
- e* = "e" in "cachet," but sometimes like "a" in "apple." The latter case is common when *e* is word-initial (e.g., *eka*, "one").
- ae* = "oy" in "boy"
- o* = "o" in "open"
- ao* = a diphthong that roughly begins in *o* and ends in *u*
- mí* = "ng" of "sung"
- h* (after a vowel and before a consonant) = silent in Bengali. In other cases, *h* is like "h" in "half."
- uṅ* (followed by a vowel) = "ng" of "sung" (e.g., *rauṅa*, "colour", *Báuṅálii*, "Bengalee"). Before *k*, *kh*, *g*, and *gh*, *ṅ* = *n* pronounced naturally for that location. Note that in some words, *uṅ* is preceded by the vowel *u*, resulting in an apparent doubling (e.g., *tuṅgádri*); in such cases the second *u* should be considered silent.
- c* = unaspirated *c* like "ch" in "chapter"
- iṅ* (before *c*, *ch*, *j*, and *jh*) = *n* pronounced naturally for that location. Note that in some words, *iṅ* is preceded by the vowel *i*, resulting in an apparent doubling (e.g. *shiṅjin*, "jingle"); in such cases the second *i* should be considered silent.
- t̄* = cerebral "t" (tip of tongue touches centre of palate)
- d̄* = cerebral "d" (tip of tongue touches centre of palate)
- n̄* = *n* (cerebral *n̄* is pronounced as dental *n* in Bengali)
- t* = dental "t" (tip of tongue touches upper teeth)
- d* = dental "d" (tip of tongue touches upper teeth)
- n* = dental "n" (tip of tongue touches upper teeth)
- kh*, *gh*, *ch*, *jh*, *th̄*, *d̄h*, *th*, *dh*, and *rh̄* = aspirated versions of consonants (expelling breath).

ph = usually like “f” in “farm,” but often an aspirated *p*
m = English letter “m.” However, immediately following a consonant, *m* is often silent (e.g., *smṛti*, “memory”).

y (word-initial, and sometimes also in subsequent positions) = “j” as in “jungle” (e.g. *yoga*). In middle positions, *y* is more commonly like “y” in “you.” Immediately following a consonant, *y* is silent, and causes a lengthening of the preceding consonant (e.g., *yogya*, “suitable,” pronounced “joggo”). Following a consonant, both *ya* and *yá* in combination form vowel sounds like “a” in “lap” (e.g., *sandhyá*, “evening” and *vyakta*, “expressed”). In the sequence *oyá*, *y* is pronounced like “w” in “award” (e.g., *páoyá*, “get”, *cáoyá*, “want”, *deoyá*, “give”).

v = “b” as in “boy,” hence equivalent to the Bengali letter *b*. However, immediately following a consonant, *v* is silent (e.g., *svatantra*, “free”).

s, *ś* and *sh* = “sh” as in “shall” (e.g., *sevá* “service,” *shata* “hundred,” and *ghośaná* “call”). However, when directly preceding an *r*, *t* or *th*, *s* and *sh* are pronounced like “s” as in “sound” (e.g., *shrii*, “glory,” and *sthána*, “place”).

kś = *kh*

ṛ = cerebral “r”

ṅ (preceded by a vowel other than *i* or *u*) = nasalization of vowel
jīṅa = English “go.” However, preceded by a vowel, the “g” sound is doubled (e.g., *ajīṅa*, “ignorant,” pronounced “awggo”).

jīṅá = “ga” in “gas.” However, preceded by a vowel, the “g” sound is doubled (e.g., *ajīṅána*, “ignorance”).

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Yoga in its true sense is the unification of the *átman*, the unit consciousness, with *Paramátman*, Supreme Consciousness; and the practices developed over millennia to achieve that unification are correctly called *yoga sádhaná*. *Yoga sádhaná* may be called "yoga" for short, but it is unfortunate when a few of its practices alone, omitting the higher and more subtle practices, are presented, sometimes for financial gain, as the whole of yoga. "Performance of a few asanas will not make one a yogi," as the author of these articles has said. And it is still more unfortunate when those physical practices, which are of such value in coordination with the higher aspects of yoga, become (in the process of separation from those higher aspects) misunderstood and consequently distorted. The articles in this book begin by correcting the popular misunderstandings of "yoga", but soon go beyond mere correction, as they guide and inspire us powerfully on our path toward unification with our true inner Self.

The practice of asanas and other physical yoga processes is undoubtedly extremely popular study in the world today. But that does not mean that everyone practising it has understood the profound significance and the tremendous influence that such practices can have on the human body, mind and spirit. Rather, to state in clear terms, the physical aspects of yoga are now being widely misapplied and misused. Such yoga has provided some an easy entry to a lucrative business. It is a matter of great regret that India, the land where Tantra and Yoga originated, lacks sufficient awareness of this matter.

The real meaning of *yoga*, as already mentioned, is *yoga sádhaná* [the spiritual practice of yoga]. This is because the practical aspect of yoga is of primary importance. *Yoga sádhaná* is for all, and is free from all kinds of discrimination. *Yoga sádhaná* is the strongest foundation, the greatest support and the supreme shelter of everyone's life. It is only through *yoga sádhaná* that human beings can merge their consciousnesses, their selves, with the Supreme Desideratum of their lives. (They can do this while discharging all their worldly duties and responsibilities.) *Yoga sádhaná* is inextricably linked to the three spheres of human existence – the physical, the psychic and the spiritual. Therefore, *yoga sádhaná* is not only physical or physico-psychic; it is also psycho-physical, psychic, psycho-spiritual and purely spiritual. For this reason, since its inception, this system has been bound by certain prescriptions encompassing all the foregoing features, and is organized in different stages in an orderly manner. It is a day-to-day practice, both individual and collective, covering the whole span of one's life. Regarding *yoga sádhaná*, it is always to be kept in mind that its prime aspect is the psycho-spiritual, or for that matter, the spiritual goal. Its other features constitute the essential practice of each of its lessons. These different lessons are the assisting principles that enable one to move forward to one's supreme goal. If one acts accordingly and keeps practising in a proper way, only then can *yoga sádhaná* enable one to attain fulfilment.

Lord Sadashiva is the founding father of *yoga sádhaná*. He is also the first Guru of *Tantra sádhaná*. In fact, *yoga sádhaná* is but the subtler aspects of *Tantra sádhaná*. Sadashiva is also the founder of different institutions of yoga such as *Rája yoga*, *Auśtáũgika* [eight-fold] yoga, *Rájádhirája* yoga, and so on. Many people have the misconception that

the great sage Patanjali, who was born only two thousand years ago, was the first to introduce *Auśtāuṅgika* Yoga, but this is an entirely wrong concept. After the departure of Sadashiva, the system of *yoga śādhaná* underwent much refinement and development in different times and in various ways. However, its main feature, a major part of it, appears to have remained secluded or beyond the reach of the common people. Now, fortunately, times have changed. Today, human beings have advanced greatly in the field of thoughts and ideas, and new horizons are opening up before us. Therefore, very soon the entire humanity will move forward more swiftly towards a brighter future, cherishing the higher and subtler values of life. For this reason, it is high time that *yoga śādhaná*, in its real form, be presented to people in the most appropriate manner, keeping in view the multidimensional needs of human beings.

A very important feature of *yoga śādhaná* is that its practice is bound to differ somewhat from person to person, in accordance with their physical and psychic structure and characteristics, as well as their personal circumstances. Therefore, some of its constituent elements will not be the same for all individuals. To impart lessons of yoga to a few hundreds or thousands of people sitting together is not merely foolhardiness; it is also misleading people. For the same reasons, it is easy to speak openly or write about the theoretical or philosophical aspects of *yoga śādhaná*, but it is extremely difficult to do the same about its practical features, although many people often venture into such an exercise.

Keeping in mind all the aforementioned factors, Shrii Shrii Ānandamúrtijii has presented his system of *yoga śādhaná* flawlessly and in a manner pertinent, in all respects,

to the needs of a spiritual aspirant. In various discourses he has thrown new light on the deeper significance of the spiritual practice of yoga and has lucidly and scientifically explained why and how its different elements are applicable for all ages and times. According to him, yoga cannot be practised by reading books alone; this is extremely dangerous. The individual has to consult with an *ácárya/á*, who has to guide the individual personally and will need to have a clear understanding of the individual's physical advantages and disadvantages. The *ácárya/á* has also to make an assessment of the individual's *saṁskáras*, family circumstances, and the time that the person is likely to be able to devote to the practice of yoga. Only then can they properly teach the person the right kind of sadhana in a manner that would be most appropriate to them. Therefore, each lesson of the different stages of *yoga sádhaná* designed by the Sadguru has to be learnt from an experienced *ácárya/á*, strictly in accordance with the directions given by that person. Probably because of the above reasons, in many of Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti's discourses on the practical aspects of *yoga sádhaná*, he has given certain clear instructions, keeping in view the changes that are likely to take place in the physiological anatomy of human beings and their psyche as they gradually move up the ladder of evolutionary progress from the present to the future. For a long time, we have increasingly felt the need of compiling the invaluable material and instructions on this subject, spread throughout Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti's numerous treatises, and publish them in the form of a book. Many of our readers were also expressing their intense desire in this matter. The present book is a result of our above two commitments. We feel extremely satisfied that we are finally able to hand this book to our esteemed readers.

It is admitted by one and all that whatever subject Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrtijii took up to enlighten humanity and whenever he did it, he sought to point to certain newer directions, as is the case with the material in the present book. In order to bring into public knowledge some characteristic features of *yoga sádhaná* which were hitherto unknown, he has meticulously analysed them in this book; at the same time (as has been said before) he has, on many occasions, made clear statements on the different aspects of its day-to-day practice. Those who are keenly interested in spiritual practice will be able to find in this book the kind of information that they may need of. Keeping this end in view, the whole book has been organized and its subject matters arranged accordingly.

The author of this book has given adequate emphasis on certain aspects of *yoga sádhaná* in his discourses, and attempts have been made to present them in this book. Some of those are the purification of the *kośas* in relation to *yoga sádhaná*; bio psychology, yoga psychology and *yoga sádhaná*; the thoroughly practical *astáunḡa yoga sádhaná*; Bhakti yoga; Sadguru and *yoga sádhaná*; *diikśá*, *mantra* and *yoga sádhaná*; *yoga sádhaná* and *gandha parikramá* (the mystical olfactory sense in yoga); *Rájadhirája yoga sádhaná*; and *Viśheśa yoga sádhaná*. Among these, specifically in "The purification of the *kośas* and *yoga sádhaná*" and "Thoroughly Practical *Astáunḡa Yoga sádhaná*", the subject matter has been arranged more elaborately with extensive numbers of pages. This has been done, so that the reader can get a proper idea of the different essential parts of *yoga sádhaná*, together with the actual practices of *yoga sádhaná* given by the author. In the first four discourses, the focus has been made on the goal, dharma and *Íśá* of a yogi, why a yogi must certainly

be a theist, and the importance, for yogis, of discerning between proper and improper food. Subsequently, in two discourses further on in the book, the stages of *yoga sādhaná* have been explained, as well as the reasons why *hatha yoga* fails to help yogis to reach their spiritual goal. The subtle differences between Yoga and Tantra have been clarified in the discourse "Yoga and Tantra". The discourse entitled "Mysticism and Yoga" will certainly illuminate the understanding of those who are deeply interested in yoga, and "The Secret Gáyatrii Mantra of Life" will prove to be an essential guide for all spiritual aspirants in their daily lives. Finally, the discourse "Great Exceptions", directs the minds of *sádhakas* towards their special responsibility to create an ideal society, with their families and other united moralists, in this present turbulent world. It also indicates the author's strong optimism about the matter, and gives his encouragement to the courageous torchbearers of the new society to move ahead, overcoming all obstacles.

Apart from the present book, there is another popular book of the author on *yoga sādhaná* namely "Yoga Psychology". Interested readers can get a total view and guidance regarding *yoga sādhaná* from these two books. In the interest of the present book, four discourses from "Yoga Psychology" which are related to *yoga sādhaná* and suitable for the present book are included.

It has been mentioned earlier that the subject matters of the book have been arranged keeping in view the objectives with which the author has given discourses on yoga. Hence it has not been possible to follow the chronologies of discourses or excerpts have been taken. However, efforts have been made as far as possible to maintain chronological

order whenever there are several excerpts on one subject or from one chapter.

In the interest of accuracy, the author's explanations of certain Sanskrit, Bengali and other terminologies have all been retained in full.

Source references for all material in the book are provided in the footnotes at the end of each sequence of paragraphs.

Most of the materials compiled for the book are taken from various existing books of the author in circulation. Meticulous efforts have been made to improve the authenticity of those materials. For this reason careful editing has been done for all existing translations; thorough editing and changes wherever necessary have been incorporated also by directly listening to the tapes, particularly those which contain the author's English speeches.

On the other hand, certain discourses in the book like "Secret Gáyattrii Mantra of Life", "Mantra and Diikśá", "Gurudhyána on Gurucakra" and some bigger and small pieces have been newly translated from the original Bengali for this book.

Footnotes by the translators have all been signed "-Trans." Unsigned footnotes are those of the author.

Extensive footnotes have been given in the book in specific cases to give readers additional information related to *yoga sádhaná* which they may synchronize with the training they have received in the Ananda Marga sadhana given by the author.

Many readers are concerned that the author's discourses,

as published, should adhere as closely as possible to the precise wording the author used in speaking. For this reason, in the case of discourses given originally in English, the editors do not alter pronouns and other terms which the author in his lifetime considered "common-gender" words. As the author once said, "You know, 'man' is not only masculine gender, 'man' is common gender also. 'Man is mortal' – here 'man' means both male and female."

The author was a natural advocate of women's rights and on at least one occasion indicated that "lopsided justice" in language should be eliminated at some future date. In keeping with his guideline and with current trends, it is our policy in the case of translated discourses (where the published wording will necessarily be that of the translators) to use gender-neutral language.

Square brackets [] in the text are used to indicate translations by the editors or other editorial insertions. Round brackets () indicate a word or words originally given by the author.

The author used a particular shorthand for explaining the etymologies of words. Under this system, a minus sign (–) follows a prefix, and a plus sign (+) precedes a suffix. Thus *ava* – *tr* + *ghaiṅ* = *avatāra* can be read, "the root *tr* prefixed by *ava* and suffixed by *ghaiṅ* becomes *avatāra*."

The Sanskrit and Bengali pronunciation keys appearing in the "Roman Saṁskṛta" section, p. ix to xiv, are the work of Publications Department staff and those who have contributed their efforts. Publications Department is responsible for any mistakes.

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Every new translations is reviewed by a "first editor" who compares the English translation with the original Bengali or Hindi. Thereafter it is sent to the "second editors" to improve the standard of English. On completion of second editing, the final verification, which includes one more comparison with the original Hindi or Bengali, is done by the Publication staffs. . Other important functions include the coordination of these different steps and the development and management of a global distribution and sales network.

Some of those who have contributed to these efforts are as follows: Dr. (Prof.) Aditya Kumar Mahanty, has translated "Mantra and Diikśá", "Gurudhyána on Gurucakra" ("Guhyaguru"), , "Paramount Importance of Pránáyáma". Dr. Mohit K. Roy has translated "Secret Gáyatrii Mantra of Life", first five paragraphs of the chapter "Yoga Sádhaná and Gandhaparikramá", three paragraphs of the chapter on Sadguru ("Gurukaraña). Ácárya Priyashivánanda Avadhúta translated the 'Jálandhar Bandh' portion (first paragraph in "Asana, Mudrá and Bandh" and another portion, as well as done the

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If any defects are found, readers may be sure that they do not derive from the illustrious author, nor are they the responsibility of those who contributed to the work; rather they are the responsibility of the Publications staff alone.

For the paucity of time, we could not include the normal Sources section giving necessary details of each article. The Sources section is a part of our Publisher's Note normally included to render help to researchers. We regret this omission. We will rectify this in the next editions.

1st January 2010

PUBLISHER

The Spirit of Yoga

The subject of today's discourse is "The Spirit of Yoga".

What is yoga? There are so many interpretations and so many explanations and amplifications regarding yoga. The great philosopher Patanjali says, *Yogashcittavrttinirodhah* — that is, "Yoga means 'suspension of all psychic propensities'."

The word *yoga* comes either from the Sanskrit root verb *yuj* plus *ghaiṅ* suffix – *yoga*, [or from the root verb *yuiñj* plus *ghaiṅ* suffix – *yoga*].

Where the root verb is *yuj*, *yoga* means "addition" — two plus two is equal to four, this is addition. And when it is said that *Yogashcittavrttinirodhah* what is the addition? So this interpretation – *Yogashcittavrttinirodhah* – has got nothing to do with the meaning of the word *yoga*.

The human mind has several propensities. Under normal conditions there are fifty propensities, and each and every propensity has its own vibrational existence. Due to these fifty vibrational existences or expressions, there are fifty letters in the Vedic alphabetical order. From the first letter *a* to the last letter *kśa*, there are fifty letters, and they are known as *akśamálá*. And, because each and every vibrational expression has not only its acoustic value, but also a special colour (each and every sound, each and every vibration, has its own sound and at the same time has its own colour), these fifty letters are not only known as *akśamálá*, they are also known as *varṇamálá*, that is, they are a collection of *varṇas* or colours. Now, in case of suspension of certain propensities, there remains no acoustic expression, there remains no expression of colour or any other inference.

The meaning, or root meaning, of *yoga* is not only addition; it has a subtler meaning too, and that meaning [occurs when the derivation is] the root verb *yuiñj* plus *ghaiñ* (not *yuj* but *yuiñj*). In that case the meaning is not “addition” but “unification”.

[But] we see that as per the interpretation *Yogashcittavrttinirodhah* there is neither addition nor unification. *Cittavrttinirodha* means “suspension of mental propensities”, that is, fifty propensities under normal conditions and one thousand propensities under abnormal conditions. If all these propensities are suspended, what happens? There remains no universe of acoustics, and no universe of colour or any other inference. And not only that, due to the absence of propensities, the desire, the longing, to become one with something also vanishes. So this meaning is not acceptable to us. *Yogashcittavrttinirodhah* is a defective explanation or interpretation of *yoga*. A spiritual aspirant cannot accept such an interpretation.

Now some yogis say that *yoga* is not *cittavrttinirodhah*, but rather it is *Sarvacintáparityágo nishcinto yogá ucýate*. *Cinta* means “thought-wave”, so in full this means “Where there is no thought wave, that is, where there is no flow in the mind, the mind becomes movementless, the mind remains in a stage of composure.” That stage of *nishcinta* is known as *yoga*. Here also the word *yoga* [if so defined] has nothing to do with addition or unification. And *Sarvacintá parityágo nishcinto* is not the dharma of the mind. In this expressed universe, in this universal manifestation, everything moves. The mind also moves. The mind depends on three fundamental relative factors — time, space, and person. So movement is its first wont.

So when movement is its wont, how can it be flowless? Even in the expressed form of *Parama Puruśa*, that is, the *Saguña Brahma*, that is, [qualified] *Purusa*, there is movement, there is flow, there is the flow of love and compassion. So when there is the flow of love and compassion even in the mind of *Parama Puruśa*, how can there be a flowless mind in the microcosm? So the idea is basically defective. One may, due to disease or senselessness, be thoughtless for a short period, but that is not something natural. It is a sort of disease. While sleeping without dreaming, your mind is not associated with, any internal projection. But is it *yoga*? Certainly not. And it is said that because of this Cosmic flow of love and compassion for the entire creation, *Parama Puruśa* is *rasa* personified, that is, “flow personified”. The eternal flow personified is *rasa*. *Rasah vae sah* — “He is flow personified.” And that’s why we say that His movement of love and compassion for all created beings is the *rasasyamúlam*, the *rasaságara*, and every living entity, every animate and inanimate entity, is dancing according to the flow of that *rasa*, according to the vibrational expression of that *rasa*. And it is the *rásaliilá* of *Bhagaván*. So how can there be *nishcintah* in the human mind? So this explanation of *yoga* by those yogis is also fundamentally, rudimentally, defective. A spiritual aspirant cannot accept it. Now let us see what is the explanation of *yoga* by spiritual aspirants. What do the devotees, the *bhaktas* say?

As per the code of the *bhaktas*, *yoga* means *Saṅgyoga ityukto jīvátma-Paramátmanoh* — “The unification of *jīvátma*, that is, unit consciousness, with *Paramátma*, the Supreme, that is, *Puruśa*, is *yoga*.” If you take the meaning of *yoga* as derived from the root verb *yuj*, that is, “addition”,

the purpose is served. The unit becomes one with the Cosmic. And if the meaning of *yuiñj* is accepted [i.e., “unification”], the explanation is still more correct, because when the aspirant becomes one with the Supreme, there remains no separate entity of the unit — that is, it is fully unified, just like sugar and water making *sharbat*.

So the explanation of *yoga* by the devotees, by the *bhakti márgiis*, is correct. And the explanations by the Seshvara Sámkhya [Theistic Sámkhya, that is, the Patanjali school] or by the [other] yogis are defective. Both are defective. When *yoga* means “addition” or “unification” there must be two entities — the devotee and his Lord. In the first two explanations there remains not even a single entity. That is, regarding unification of whom, by whom, with whom, there is no clear explanation. Now we come to the conclusion that for the proper interpretation of *yoga*, two fundamental entities are necessary — the *bhakta* and *Bhagaván*. A yogi can never remain without his Lord. All the propensities, psychic propensities, of a yogi must not be suspended; rather all his propensities must be goaded unto the Lord. So here there is no question of suspension, but the question of proper diversion. Flow must be there and he should enjoy the divine flow of *rasa*. A yogi cannot, can never be, *nástika* [atheist], he must be *ástika* [theist]. A *nástika* cannot be a yogi; simply practising a few asanas will not make a man a yogi. *Yoga* means all the propensities moving towards the Supreme entity, that is, in the physical stratum, in the psychic stratum and in the spiritual stratum. In all the strata the only goal of his life, only culminating point of all his marches, is that Supreme Entity. And when He comes in close contact with the Supreme, he becomes unified with the Supreme, and there

the spirit of yoga is fully established. For the yogi, his desideratum, his point, terminating point, is his *Iśta*, and he moves towards the *Iśta* along the path of dharma.

What is dharma? *Dhriyate dharma ityáhuh sa eva paramamprabhuh* – The wont, the controlling qualifications or attributions that an entity must possess, are dharma. Dharma controls all the expressions of human life; that which controls all the expressions of life, all the expressions of entitative waves, is dharma. And for the proper movement of entitative flows, the proper movement of entitative expressions, there must be a parallelism with incantative expression. Existential movement must get its stamina from the incantative existence. And there cannot be any incantative stamina or incantative vitality if there is no object, no introspective goal, that is, if there is no *Iśta*. *Iśta* means the object whom you love most, whom you want most. And because of this *Iśta* there is a flow in your incantative body or incantative structure. The existential incantation, only under such circumstances can you maintain parallelism with your entitative existence. So *Iśta* is a must for movement, *Iśta* is a must for all sorts of development in all the strata of life. Not even in a single arena of life can you do anything concrete without the help of your *Iśta*. So wherever there is dharma, there must be *Iśta*. And *Iśta* is the primordial necessity for yoga. Nobody can remain, can live, can exist, without the help of *Iśta*. And the aspirant is a finite entity, but the *Iśta* of that aspirant is an Infinite Entity. And when due to yoga this finite aspirant comes in contact with that infinite *Iśta*, he acquires infinite strength, he acquires infinite psycho-spiritual stamina, he becomes victorious in all the arenas of his existence. So wise people, yogis, should realize

clearly and definitely that their entitative existence along with the incantative flow, is to move forward towards the Supreme goal, which is their *Iśta*. And the yogi should know the *Iśta*; the yogi should use a singular name for the *Iśta* and not two names or three names. Wherever the *Iśta* is in singularity in name and form and idea and ideation, and also in ideology, success is sure, success is fully assured.

There is a story in this regard. Once upon a time some devotees said to Hanuman, “Hanuman, you are a great devotee and you are a learned scholar also, and you know that “Náráyaña” means “Shriinátha”, “Shriinátha” means “Náráyaña”. (*Shrii* means Lakśmii, [so “Shriinátha”, “Lord of Lakśmii”, means Náráyaña.] Náráyaña and Jánakiinátha, that is, Rama, are the same, same entity; but you Hanuman, you always take the name of Rama and never take the name of Náráyaña. Why?”

Hanuman said:

*Shriináthe Jánakiináthe cábheda Paramátmani;
Tathápi mama sarvasvah Rámah kamalalocanah.*

You know fundamentally or rudimentally there remains no difference between Náráyaña and Ráma. *Nára* means *Prakṛti*, *ayana* means “shelter”. *Náráyaña* means “Shelter of *Prakṛti*”, that is, Cosmic *Puruśa*; and “Ráma” is derived *ram* + *ghaiṇ* = “Ráma”, that is, “the most attractive entity in the entire cosmos” – which is also *Parama Puruśa*. So “I also know”, said Hanuman, “that there is no rudimental difference between Rama and [*Náráyaña*], but you know my goal is a singular entity – singular in name, singular in idea and ideology and ideation. So Rama is my everything. I don’t know any Náráyaña.”

You are spiritual aspirants, hence you are yogis, and you should know that the only interpretation of *yoga* is *Samyogo yoga ityukto jivátma-Paramátmanoh*. All other explanations are baseless. And you should also remember that your movement towards your *Iśta* is your yogic practice, and your unification with your *Iśta* is your yogic goal, is the final desideratum of all the flows of all your psychic propensities. The question of suspension of psychic propensities does not arise.

*Kalyaṇamastu.**

15 July 1979 DMC, Ernakulam

The Dharma and *Iśta* of A Yogii

Now, what is *Iśta*? The word *Iśta* has two meanings: the entity which you love most, or which is your most favourite, is your *Iśta*. Now the question is, what do you love most or what is your most favourite object? Every microcosm has an existential I-feeling, and every such microcosmic I-feeling is an expression of the supreme I-feeling. Therefore, each microcosm has two "I's": one is the small "I", and the other is the greater "I". *Parama Puruśa* is the greater "I"; the small "I" is finite happiness, whereas the greater "I" is infinite happiness. Every microcosm desires finite happiness, but the dearest object of all is infinite happiness. Finite happiness is an individual's affair, whereas infinite happiness is a universal affair. Infinite happiness is that aspect of *Parama Puruśa* which is generally called the Personal God.

* The foregoing eight paragraphs are from *Subhāsita Saṅgraha Part 12*.— Editor.

According to philosophy, the Supreme Entity who controls this universe is *Parama Puruśa*; He is also the nucleus of the cosmological order. But the *Parama Puruśa* of philosophy, the hub of the universe, is a formless, impersonal entity, whereas human beings always prefer a personal God whom they can love, and to whom they can explain the pleasures and pains of their life. Human beings cannot feel extreme love and affection towards an impersonal God or [God] of philosophy because that is only a metaphysical concept, and the human heart cannot fully identify itself with an abstract idea. People cannot reveal the stories of their joys and sorrows, pains and pleasures, loves and affections, to an abstract idea. They want a personal God to whom they can fully convey their feelings and sentiments. This is an absolute necessity. Human beings do not search for their God in distant nebulae and meteors – they seek Him right near them, in their very midst. They want to accept Him totally as their shelter in life. In the play of abstract imagination, people may derive some temporary satisfaction, but not lasting peace. The God of philosophy cannot provide complete fulfillment of people's deep internal urges: they want One to whom they can open their hearts. Such an entity is one's *Iśta*.

What is the difference between dharma and *Iśta*? Dharma is defined as *Yah dhāraṇam karoti sa dharma* or *Dhriyate dharmah ityāhuh sa eva paramam Prabhuh* – “Dharma is that which sustains.” A microcosm is distinguished by its innate property. We say “this is oxygen” because it has such-and-such characteristics. We say “this is fire” because it has its own properties. Similarly, air also has its own unique properties. Thus every object in the universe is distinguished by its unique characteristics. If fire ceases to burn, we no

longer call it “fire”; if air stops blowing, we no longer call it “air”, because mobility is its inherent characteristic. In Sanskrit there are two words: *nila* and *niila*. *Niila* means “blue”, whereas *nila* means “fixed, stationary.” If air is immobile, then it becomes *nila* or stationary, and not *anila* [*anila*, literally “mobile”, is one Sanskrit word for “air”. Thus it is by their innate properties or characteristics that various property – bearing animate and inanimate, organic and inorganic, movable and immovable entities are distinguished from each other.

Human beings, animals and plants, all have life. Just as plants have certain common characteristics, animals too have certain common characteristics. Of the numerous differences between plants and animals, the major difference is that plants are relatively static, whereas animals are dynamic. Now, if plants become more dynamic, then they too will come within the category of animals. Now, what is the difference between human beings and animals? Human beings follow *Bhágavata* dharma but animals do not. The common characteristics shared by humans and animals are eating, sleeping and dying. But human beings have the unique property of *Bhágavata* dharma, which is lacking in animals. This is the speciality of human beings.

Now, if this unique characteristic is lacking in human beings, then they will degrade themselves to the level of animality; and if animals develop this characteristic then they will be elevated to the status of humanity.

What does *Bhágavata* dharma consist of? *Vistára* [expansion], *rasa* [flow], *sevá* [service], and *tadsthiti* [realization of the Supreme]. The first criterion of human

greatness is the spirit of expansion. Human beings want to give an aesthetic expression to all internal feelings and propensities; this is the first aspect of *Bhágavata dharma* – *vistára*.

Rasa means “flow”. Endless waves are emanating from the hub of the cosmological order, and surging in troughs and crests in all directions. These Macrocosmic thought waves are dancing according to the cosmic will of *Parama Puruśa*. Human beings are also dancing in the rhythm of these aesthetic waves, to the tune of the sweet musical cadence of *Krśńa*’s flute as He remains in the nucleus of the universe. This is the second aspect of *Bhágavata dharma*.

The third aspect is *sevá* [service]. Now, what is “service”? *Prañipátena pariprashnena sevayá*. Among animals there is no spirit of service, but among human beings it is certainly present. *Prañipátena* means “through total surrender”. *Pariprashnena* means “through proper queries”. And *sevayá* means “through service” – that is, *Parama Puruśa* is attainable through total surrender, spiritual queries, and selfless service. *Parama Puruśa* Himself does not require any service, but in this universe each and every created object is His progeny. If you serve the children of *Parama Puruśa*, if you serve the distressed and afflicted human beings, if you render all-round service to humanity in the physical, mental, mundane, supramundane, social and spiritual spheres of life, *Parama Puruśa* will surely be pleased. This is the real service to the Supreme. If you want to please a mother, simply serve her children and the mother will be pleased. This is the third aspect of *Bhágavata dharma*.

Service is always unilateral or one sided: that is the major difference between service and business, for business is mutual – you give some money and take something, say, pulses in return. The transaction is mutual. But service is quite different: it is always unilateral. You give something to *Parama Puruśa* without asking for anything in exchange. When you offer everything unto *Parama Puruśa*, what else can He ask for? Moreover, who will ask? When you have offered everything to *Parama Puruśa*, then you have become one with *Parama Puruśa*, what else can He ask for? Moreover, who will ask? When you have offered everything to *Parama Puruśa*, then you have become one with *Parama Puruśa*, and obviously there cannot be anything left to ask for.

The fourth aspect of *Bhágavata* dharma is *tadsthiti*: it means “to merge your individual identity in Him, your Supreme Goal.” I have already said that *Parama Puruśa* is *Táraka Brahma*; He is your *Iśá*, your personal God. This is not a theoretical concept. The human mind can be delighted with some philosophical ideas, but the heart is not satisfied thus. This four-fold *Bhágavata* dharma is like a silver line of demarcation between human beings and animals. *Bhágavata* dharma is the human dharma, *mánava* dharma; besides this there is no other dharma for humanity.

In the *Bhágavad Gītá*, Lord Krśna proclaimed, *Shreyán svadharmo viguñah paradharmát svánuśthitát*. What is *paradharmá* or “others’ dharma”? Here *paradharmá* means that dharma which is followed by plants and animals. The dharma of human beings is *Bhágavata* dharma. Animals and plants also have their own dharma, but this should not be

followed by human beings. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa further declared, *Svadharme nidhanam śhreyah paradharma bhayāvaha*; “Death is preferable to the neglect of one’s own dharma: one should never follow another’s dharma”. Out of ignorance, some people misconstrue *paradharma* to be Hindu dharma, Islamic dharma, Christian dharma, and so on, but this is not correct; *paradharma* means “the dharma of animals and plants”.

Human dharma is one, and that is *Bhāgavata* dharma. And *Iśta* means “the personal God with whom all unit beings can establish a relation of love and affection, to whom they can reveal their pains and pleasures, and surrender themselves and take the safest shelter in Him”. That *Parama Puruśa*, that personal God, is not the God of philosophy. Human beings cannot establish a very close relationship with something theoretical. If one closely follows *Bhāgavata* dharma, the final result will be the realization of the Supreme, becoming one with one’s *Iśta*. Some time ago I said *Yato dharma tato iśtah, yato ista tato jayah*. When spiritual aspirants become one with their *Iśta*, they no longer remain as insignificant people; in that case their finite happiness is transformed into infinite happiness. Then with their limited strength they become able to perform gigantic tasks. So although there is a theoretical difference between *ādarśa* and *Iśta*, practically both are the same. Human beings can become one with their *Iśta* through the relentless pursuit of *Bhāgavata* dharma. Those who do not follow *Bhāgavata* dharma are almost like animals.

A mystic poet has said,

Kṛṣṇa bhajibār tare saṁsāre ānu

Miche māyāy baddha haye brkśa sama hainu.

[I came on this earth to worship *Krśńā* but I am engrossed in the bondages of *Māyā* and now has been converted a tree-like crude object.]

Human beings have come onto this earth only to follow *Bhāgavata* dharma, and not for any other purpose. You have many tasks to perform: whatever you do, you should always feel that all your actions are part of *Bhāgavata* dharma. Wherever you are, you must do something to remove the poverty and distress of the people in that area, to ameliorate their socio-economic condition. But even while discharging your duties thus, you should always remember that whatever you are doing is not a mundane duty, it is an inseparable part of your *Bhāgavata* dharma.*

20 July 1979, DMC, Bhuvaneshwar

* The foregoing thirteen paragraphs are from "Ādarsha and Iśā" of *Subhāśita Saṅgraha Part 12*. —Editor.

A Yogi Must Certainly Be A Theist

We have already discussed *yoga* and the real meaning of *yoga*. You cannot make a person a yogi just by teaching them a few *asanas*. *Yoga* means *Samyogo yoga ityukto jivátma-Paramátmanoh*. The fundamental goal of *yoga* is the union of *jivátma* [unit consciousness] and *Paramátma* [Supreme Consciousness]. It is the supreme unification of these two entities, and as a result the *jivátma* ceases to have a separate identity. The *yoga* effected by mixing sugar and salt is not the spiritual *yoga*. But if a sweet drink is made by mixing sugar and water, so that they become one, this is similar to spiritual *yoga*. In the sweet drink, one does not find the separate existence of sugar. This is not merely addition, it is unification.

In this context, one has to remember the fact that *yoga* occurs between *jivátma* and *Paramátma*. That means, *yoga* is meant for theists and not for atheists. *Yoga* is not for people who perform worldly actions under the influence of atheism. Whatever deeds small or big, good or bad, personal or social, or national, are done by an atheist, their philosophy of life is based on atheism. That person cannot pursue the path of *yoga*. According to the aphorism *Samyogo yoga ityukto jivátma-Paramátmanoh*, one has to accept the reality of *jivátma* and *Paramátma*. So the fact is that *yoga sadhana* [*yoga practice*] is possible only for theists.

Who is a theist? In ancient days, an *ástika* [theist] was considered to be a person who acknowledged the reality of

jīvātmā, *Paramātmā* and the Vedas. Subsequently in the Buddhist age, the word *āstika* underwent a change of meaning. According to the changed meaning, *āstika* came to be considered as one who accepts the reality of any one of the three, that is, *jīvātmā*, *Paramātmā* or the Vedas. *Veda* means "valid knowledge or real knowledge". *Veda* does not stand for a particular book. *Veda* means the highest knowledge, spiritual knowledge. This is the real meaning of *veda*. Suppose somewhere there are detailed instructions about how to steal or commit burglary. This is also a kind of knowledge. But such kinds of knowledge cannot be termed *veda*. Spiritual knowledge is the prime necessity, and I would say that from this perspective [that is, if we define *veda* in this way] that one who accepts the reality of *jīvātmā*, *Paramātmā* and the Vedas is a theist.

This is the correct explanation of the word *yoga*. The change in meaning that occurred in the Buddhist age was not at all helpful. How can spiritual progress be possible for one who accepts *jīvātmā* but does not accept *Paramātmā* or *veda*? In which direction then should the *jīvātmā* move? In order to advance spiritually, in which direction should the *jīvātmā* move? What will happen if the person does not think about *Paramātmā*? Likewise, if a person accepts *Paramātmā* but not *jīvātmā*, the individual's existence will be in danger. And where there is no *jīva* [unit self], even to talk about progress will be irrelevant. So a yogi has also to accept the reality of *jīvātmā*. And who will do the actual work of making the connection between *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*? This is the role of spiritual knowledge. So one is compelled to accept that spiritual knowledge has a role to play. Without

spiritual knowledge how can a person move ahead, how can a *jīvátma* progress towards *Paramátma*? So a theist is one who accepts *jīvátma*, *Paramátma* and *veda*. Here *veda* means “spiritual knowledge”, not pouring ghee as an oblation into the fire. Here *veda* signifies “knowledge about the process that helps the *jīvátma* to move towards *Paramátma*”. So a yogi has to be a theist. If someone says, “I am a yogi but an atheist, I do not believe in scriptures and texts”, then you will say – “No sir, you are not a yogi. You are committing hypocrisy in the name of *yoga*.” You should be careful about the frequent misuse of the word *yoga* nowadays.

In this connection you should remember one thing. In the Sanskrit language, the verbs *yuiñj* and *yuj* do not have identical meanings. *Yuj* means “to add”, while *yuiñj* means “to unify, to become one without any difference”. [In the same way], *jīvátma* and *Paramátma* become one. The *jīvátma* no longer has any separate identity. It has merged itself in *Paramátma*. *Brahmavid brahmaeva bhavati* – “One who knows *Paramátma* becomes *Paramátma* Himself.” He no longer has any separate existence. In the spiritual domain, *yoga* is used in this sense (in the sense of “unification” and not in the sense of “addition”). You should remember that maybe one has learnt a few *ásanas* such as *shīrśāsana*, *sarvāṅgāsana*, *pashcimottanāsana*, and so on, but does one thus become a yogi? It does not happen like this. It is not so easy to become a yogi.

Just as people have an existence in the physical sphere, they have an existence in the psychic sphere too. In the

physical sphere they have their quinquemental body. In the psychic plane they have their mind, and in the spiritual plane, they have their *átmá* [soul]. A person may develop the quinquemental body with a few exercises, but that will not make him or her a yogi. Progress in the physical sphere cannot lead to unification with *Paramátmá*. Similarly, a person tries to expand their mind through progress in the psychic sphere. One may come closer to *Paramátmá*, and even envision the possibility of merging in *Paramátmá*, but in spite of this, the mind functions within a fixed periphery. People operate in the world within the confines of a limited circumference. Because of this, they cannot completely merge in *Parama Puruśa*. There is a bondage, a boundary, around the mind. So, a yogi has to expand his or her mind and remove the bondage. This bondage is the bondage of *Máyá*. One can become a yogi only when this bondage is removed. Or 'y then will human mind and Cosmic Mind become one.

What is the method to remove such a bondage? If one says, "O *Mahámáyá*, please leave my mind of your own accord so that I can become one with *Paramátmá*," will *Mahámáyá* do it so easily? No, She will not do any such thing, because the function of *Mahámáyá* is to keep the *jīva* in bondage. If a person declares war against *Mahámáyá* and *Mahámáyá* gets vanquished in the battle, then the person may become one with *Paramátmá*. But the problem is – human beings are small creatures, their capacity is very limited. How can human beings, with their limited capacity, wage a war against *Máyá*, who is infinitely powerful? You must have noticed that human beings have

so many weaknesses, so many inadequacies. So Bhagaván Krśńa has said –

*Daevii hyeśá guńamayii mama máyá duratyayá;
Mámeva ye prapadyante Máyámetámantaranti te.*

This *Máya*’, though a tremendous power, is My power. It is not at all easy to wage war against *Máyá*. What is the way out? Only one who takes shelter in *Paramátmá* can escape from the clutches of *Máyá*. So the first and last thing is complete surrender.”*

Evening, 30 June 1979, Patna

* The foregoing nine paragraphs are from “Yogii Avashyae Ástika Haben” of *Ánanda Vacanámrtam Part 13*. – Editor

Stages of Yoga Sadhana

Trátaka

Trátaka yoga is “controlling the ocular vision”. It may lead to some supernatural vision.

Asanas

Sthirasukham ásanam (Patanjali). Asanas are calm, quiet and easy postures which are held with proper inhalation and exhalation. They exercise the nerves, tissues, glands and organs of the human body. While practising asanas one enjoys physical comfort and mental composure.

The regular practice of asanas keeps the body healthy and cures many diseases. Asanas control the glands, the glands control the secretion of hormones, and the secretion of hormones controls the propensities. So asanas help a *sádhaka* [spiritual aspirant] to balance the body and concentrate the mind.

We perform asanas for the following reasons:

1. To increase the flexibility of the body.
2. To rectify glandular defects and balance hormonal secretions in order to control the vrttis [propensities].
3. To balance the body and mind.
4. To withdraw the mind from undesirable thinking.
5. To prepare the mind for subtler and higher sadhana [spiritual practices].

We name asanas as follows:

- (1) Some asanas are similar to animal movements, so they are named after those animals; for example, *matsyamudrá* [fish posture], *garudásana* [bird posture], etc.
- (2) Some asanas have the characteristics of animal structures, so they are also named after those animals; for example, *kúrmakásana* [tortoise posture], etc.
- (3) Some asanas are named by the qualities of the asana; for example, *sarváuṅgásana* [shoulder stand; literally "all-limbs posture"]. The entire body is benefited by this *asana*.

There are mainly two types of asanas: *sváस्थ्यásanas* and *dhyánásanas*. *Sváस्थ्यásanas* are practised primarily for physical health and secondarily for spiritual elevation. *Dhyánásanas* are practised primarily for concentration of mind and meditation. *Dhyánásanas* include *padmásana* [lotus posture], *baddha padmásana* [bound-lotus posture], *siddhásana* [*siddha* posture, the posture of a perfected one] and *viirásana* [hero posture].

The difference between *sarváuṅgásana* and *vipariitakarāñii mudrá*: While practising *sarváuṅgásana* the mind is fixed at the point between the tip of the two big toes, whereas in *vipariitakarāñii mudrá* the mind is fixed at the tip of the nose or at the navel.

Mudrás, Bandhas and Vedhas

Mudrás are postures which exercise the nerves and muscles. *Mudrá* literally means "externalization of internal

bháva [ideation]”. There are only a few spiritual *mudrás* where the internal ideation is not externalized.

The practitioner of a *mudrá* may or may not enjoy physical comfort and mental composure. During the practice of *mudrás* one has to continue one’s conscious endeavour to remain in that posture, but in the case of asanas one need not.

Bandhas are also postures of a special type which exercise the nerves only. The practitioner may or may not derive physical comfort and mental composure. In practising a *bandha* one also has to continue one’s conscious endeavour to remain in the particular posture. *Bandhas* also influence the *váyus* [vital-energy currents] of the body.

Vedhas are almost the same as *bandhas*. *Vedhas* exert some influence on both the nerves and the vital airs [vital-energy currents].

Pratyáhára

Pratyáhára is derived from *prati* – *á* – *hr* + *ghaiṇ*. The word *áhára* literally means “assimilating” or “taking something within”. As a yogic practice, *pratyáhára* means “withdrawal of the mind from the external objectivity and goading that withdrawn mind toward *Parama Puruśa*”.

Práñáyáma

Práñáyáma is defined as: *Tasmin sati shvása prashvásayoh gaticchedah práñáyáma*. That is, “*Práñáyáma* is the process of breath control along with the imposition of the ideation of Supreme Consciousness”. It helps the mind in concentration and meditation.

The spirit of *pránáyāma* is *Pránán yamayati esáh pránáyāmah*. That is, the word *pránáyāma* literally means “controlling the *pránáh* [vital energy]”. The psycho-philosophy behind the practice of *pránáyāma* is that the spiritual aspirant tries to let the *pránéndriya* [ten vital-energy currents] remain in a state of pause so that the paused unit mind will merge into the ocean of consciousness.

There are two main types of *pránáyāma*: *hatha yaogika pránáyāma* and *Yudhiśthira pránáyāma*. When *pránáyāma* is done without fixing the mind on a particular point of concentration, and without imbibing Cosmic ideation, it is called *hatha yaogika pránáyāma*, but when *pránáyāma* is performed with the mind fixed at a particular point, along with Cosmic ideation, it is called *Yudhiśthira pránáyāma*. [The eldest Pandava, Yudhisthira, was the first person to popularize *pránáyāma* according to this method.]*

Recaka means “emptying”. When one exhales completely and keeps the breath out during the process of breathing, it is called *recaka*; when one inhales completely, it is *púraka*, and when one retains air inside the body, it is *kumbhaka*.

Dháraṇá

Dháraṇá is defined as: *Deshabandhashcittasya dháraṇá*. *Dháraṇá* literally means “locating the mind firmly in an area or region of the body”. This involves concentrating upon the respective controlling points of the fundamental factors located within the human body. That is, the mind is to be

* In Ananda Marga sadhana, there is practical and extensive use of *Yudhiśthira pránáyāma*.—Editor.

fixed on specific *cakras* [plexi] and engaged in Cosmic ideation.

Cakrashodhana

The word *shodhana* literally means “refinement” or “purification”. In spiritual meditation, *shodhana* is “concentration on the *cakras*”. It is a part of Ananda Marga sadhana which is not included in *astāunga yoga* [the eight-fold path of *yoga*]. [In *chakrasodhana* all the glands, nerves of the entire body and mind get vibrated]

Dhyāna

Patanjali defined *dhyāna* as: *Tatra pratyatyaekatānatā dhyānam* —“*Dhyāna* means ‘the unbroken flow of mind towards the supreme goal’.” So, *dhyāna* is “meditation on the Supreme Entity so that there is an incessant upward movement of the mind towards *Parama Puruṣa*”.

The inner side of the pineal plexus is called the “macro-pineal plexus”. In spiritual practices it has immense importance because it is at this plexus, the *Guru cakra*, that *dhyāna* is practised. The outer side of the macro-pineal plexus is outside the corporal structure; that is, it is outside the body.

Samādhi

Samādhi is the merger of the unit consciousness in Cosmic Consciousness. It is not a particular lesson; it is the result of all the above spiritual practices.

The attributional and non-attributional stances

Bhúmávyápte mahati ahamcittayorprañáshe saguñásthitih savikalpasamádhih vá

[When the *aham* and the *citta* merge into the Macrocosmic *Mahat*, the merger is called *saguñásthiti* or *savikalpa samádhi*].

Átmani mahadprañáshe nirguñásthitih nirvikalpasamádhi vá

[When the *mahat* merges into the *átman*, it is called *nirguñásthiti* (state of objectlessness) or *nirvikalpa samádhi* (the trance of indeterminate absorption, or total suspension, of the mind)].

Diikśá

Diikśá is defined as:

*Diipa jñánam yato dadyát kuryát pápakśayam tatah;
Tasmátdiikśeti sá proktá sarvatantrasya sammatá.*

“*Diikśá* is the process of initiation. It brings about spiritual illumination and burns up accumulated *saṁskáras* [mental reactive momenta].” When someone is initiated with only a prayer *mantra* [words or sounds repeated orally] without the *shuddhis* [visualizations for the systematic withdrawal of the mind], it is called *Vaedikii diikśá*. *Vaedikii diikśá* is not a spiritual cult or practical process. Its primary goal is to request *Parama Puruśa* to show one the path of spiritual progress.

When someone is initiated into the Tantric cult elaborately

with all *shuddhis*, it is called *Tántrikii diikśá*. *Tántrikii diikśá* is a practical spiritual cult. An *Íśta mantra* [a personal *mantra* repeated in meditation] and *Íśta cakra* [the *cakra* of meditation] are prescribed. The role of the guru is very important because the guru gives blessings to the spiritual aspirant. The goal is to become one with *Parama Puruśa*.

Om̐kára

The *om̐kára* is the combined acoustic sound of the entire process of creation, preservation and destruction. The divine sound *om̐kára* arises from the starting-point of creation (*Shambhúliuᅅga*).

Should a monk or hermit take intoxicating liquor?

No, because it increases the production of semen from lymph, and consequently the brain will not get sufficient lymph as nourishment to practise sadhana properly. Intoxicating liquor will affect the semen and lymph, which in turn will affect all the other glands. The entire nervous system will get agitated, and as a result mental concentration will be lost and sadhana will be impaired.*

* The foregoing thirty three paragraphs are from "Questions and Answers on Meditation" in *Yoga Psychology*.—Editor.

Purification of the Kośas, and Yoga Sádhaná

The Psychic Body of Brahma and the Seven Lokas

The beginning and end of *dhármika* sadhana hinges on only one point, and that is the purity and sanctity of its base (*ádhára*). The base alone is solely responsible for the privations and afflictions of humankind. If the base is firm, privations are not privations and afflictions are not afflictions.

A base is indispensable for every finite object. It is on account of the base that a particular object is distinguishable from others. No two living beings have an identical base. Every living being carves out a distinct base for its existence from the Universal Cosmic self, according to its *saṃskáras*. The root *ci* with the suffix *ghaiṅ* forms the word *káya*, which signifies "selection". From the mental body of the Supreme Brahma the living being carves out its base. The living being is the *mánas putra* or mental child of the Supreme Brahma. The mental body of the Supreme Brahma is created as a result of the domination of *Prakṛti* over the Supreme *Puruśa*. The physical body of the living being is a creation of *Prakṛti* and is bound to abide by the laws of *Prakṛti*.

The Infinite does not require a physical body, and has only a mental body. Only that which is not infinite needs to be bound or limited. *Prakṛti* is a combination of three distinct attributes namely, *sattva*, *rajah*, and *tamah*. It is on account of the influence of these attributes that *Puruśa*

realizes respectively "I am", "I do," and "I am the object." If only one of these three attributes of *Prakṛti* is influencing *Puruśa*, then there can be no change at all. The fact that *Puruśa* is constantly changing is evidence that not only one but all the three *guṇas* are operating throughout the universe.

1. Bhúrloka

Crudeness is dominant everywhere in the *páñcabhaotika* world, and the influence of *tamoguṇa* is the strongest here. In both the physical and the subtle body, all three *guṇas* or attributes of *Prakṛti* undoubtedly exist. Brahma has only a mental body and this *páñcabhaotika* world has been created as the crudest manifestation of this mental or subtle body. In every case not one but all these attributes occur, although in varying magnitude. The physical world is characterized by crudeness. *Tamoguṇa* is dominant, *rajaḥ* is ordinary and *sattva* is recessive. In Sanskrit this crudest manifestation of Brahma is called *bhúrloka*.

2. Bhuvarloka

Of the seven strata, the greatest crudeness exists in the *bhúrloka*. The next stratum or *bhuvarloka* is less crude than *bhúrloka*. Here, *tamoguṇa* is dominant, *rajoguṇa* is negligible and *sattvaguṇa* is ordinary. It is the mind which works in conception, concentration and meditation, as well as in distinctions of high and low. *Mano karoti karmáñi*.

This is the stratum of the mind engaged in the working of the physical body. All tendencies such as appetite, avarice, sleep and indolence, are related to the physical body. The vibrations or pulsations of these potentialities take place in *bhuvarloka*.

It is from this stratum that the crudest aspect of the mind is created and this is called the *káma-deha* or *kámamaya kośa*. Just as Brahma has no physical body, there is no *kámamaya* body capable of performing of the functions of [His?] the physical body. However, from the crudest mental manifestation of the mind of Brahma comes the creation of the *bhuvarloka*, as the stage which precedes the creation of the *bhúrloka*. Through the *bhuvarloka*, Brahma internally enjoys the *páñcabhaotika* world which He has mentally created.

3. Svarloka

It is *svarloka* which is called the *manomaya* world and it is in this stratum that a person experiences pleasure and pain. In Sanskrit, "heaven" or *svarga*, and the *svarloka* are synonymous. Pleasure-seeking persons perform righteous deeds motivated by the desire to attain heaven after relinquishing the mortal body. *Samśkáras* exist in this *manomaya* world or *manomaya-kośa*, which is also known as the "pure mental sphere". *Rajoguńa* exists in a minor degree and *sańśkáras* are generated in the *svarloka*. It is the popular belief amongst Christians, Muslims, Jains and ritualistic Hindus, that the fruits of virtuous deeds are enjoyed in *svarloka* or heaven.

4. Maharloka

Another name for *maharloka* in Sanskrit is the *atimánasa loka*, which means "the supramental sphere". Here, *rajoguńa* is conspicuous, *sattvaguńa* is less conspicuous and *tamoguńa* is insignificant. It is in this stratum that *sańśkáras* first pulsate. The human mind is propelled by its *sańśkáras* to undergo the reactions of its actions. The first vibration of

the collection of *saṁskāras* is created in this sphere. Suppose a person has to visit a cholera-stricken place. Before going there someone whispers to him that he too will contract cholera. On his going there, it happens that he actually gets cholera. This is the function of the *atimānasa* sphere. The first yearnings for sadhana or the initial throbbings of strong desire also take place in this sphere. It is here that the inspiration of the soul first becomes active. For this reason the potentialities of sadhana and the classifications for different persons germinate in this sphere.

5. Janarloka or Subliminal stratum

This is called the *vijñānamaya kośa*. True knowledge, wisdom and renunciation dominate this sphere. These attributes are sometimes conspicuous even in pleasure-seeking persons, but there are obstacles in the way due to the influence of *bhūh*, *bhuvah* and the other lower *lokas*. In *janarloka*, *sattvaguṇa* is most conspicuous, *tamoguṇa* is less conspicuous, and *rajoguṇa* is insignificant.

6. Taparloka

This is called *hiraṇmaya loka*. Here, *sattvaguṇa* is most conspicuous, *rajoguṇa* is less conspicuous and *tamoguṇa* least conspicuous. Knowledge is in an unmanifested state. Even the "I" feeling is not clearly manifest but it exists in a latent state. There are no English equivalents for the names of the spheres above the *janarloka*.

7. Satyaloka

In this *loka* the three *guṇas* are present but they are not manifest. Here *Puruśa* is dominant. *Puruśa* alone is manifest

in this sphere. *Satyaloka* is the state of *Nirguña* Brahma. In the manifested universe, there are seven regions. Except *satyaloka*, the other six spheres are refulgent on account of the variation in the proportions of the *guñas*.

The Base of the Living Being

All living beings need a base (*ádhára*). In the absence of a base, they merge into the ocean of the cosmos. Suppose there is a cup of water in a pond. So long as the cup exists, the water in the cup also exists, but if the cup is removed, the water in the cup will merge with that of the pond. The base of that water is the cup. It is only when the cup is removed that the water it contains merges with that of the pond. Similarly, the soul merges into Brahma when there is no base to embody it.

Even after the annihilation of the base from the *átmán*, the *saṁskáras* do not separate from the *átmán* or unit soul. How does this phenomenon occur? The *hirañmaya loka* is the subtlest body of the human being.

Annāmaya Kośa

The living being carves out a physical body for itself from the *bhúrloka*, that is, where *tamoguña* is presently dominant, *rajoguña* is ordinary and *sattvaguña* is negligible. Another name for this in Sanskrit is the *annāmaya kośa*. This body is formed through food. [The *annāmaya kośa* is not included in *pañcakośa*.]

Kāmāmaya Kośa

The mind works behind the body. The mind is formed by the *kāmāmaya kośa*, which is known as the “crude mental

body". Here *tamoguña* is dominant, *sattvaguña* is intermediate and *rajoguña* is insignificant... This *kośa* operates the body and is subtler than the crude physical body. [Thus] the portion of mind which deals with *indriyas* is named *kāmamaya kośa*. This *kāmamaya kośa* controls the physical longings of the microcosm [that is, hunger, thirst, sleep, etc.] ... The *kāmamaya kośa*, being the crudest in structure and in the case of the microcosm dealing with the external *paiñcabhūtas*, is called the "crude mind" or *sthūla manah*.

Manomaya Kośa

The force behind the *kāmamaya* body, that is, the crude mental body, is the *svarloka*, the mental sphere of the Supreme Brahma. Above the *kāmamaya* body there is an ordinary mind which is created by the *manomaya kośa*. In the *manomaya kośa*, *rajoguña* is dominant, *tamoguña* is ordinary and *sattvaguña* is insignificant... The *manomaya kośa* is subtler than the *kāmamaya kośa* and it has the capacity of recollection and contemplation (*smaraña* and *manana*).

Atimánasa Kośa

This layer is derived from the *Mahar loka* or supramental body of the cosmic mind. It is in this *kośa* that the *sañskáras* originate. The difference between good and bad *sañskáras* is also seen in this *kośa*. Here *Rajah* is dominant; *sattva* is less and *tamah* is least.

Vijiñanamaya Kośa

It is in this sphere that *sañskáras* exist. *Sattvaguña* is dominant, *tamoguña* is ordinary and *rajoguña* is insignificant. This mental sphere is known as the *vijiñanamaya kośa* and

this sphere is the *janarloka* of Brahma... In this *kośa* exists the knowledge of existence, the knowledge of "I". Here, *vaerágya* and *viveka* are also found. In this *kośa* the desire for *sadhana* arises.

Hirańmaya Kośa

This is also called *tapah loka* in individuals. In this *loka*, *sattva* is dominant; *rajas* is less and *tamah* is least. [*Hirańmaya* means "made of gold" – this state is as pure and radiant as gold.] ... In this *kośa*, the body, and even the knowledge of "I" are not much in evidence. The consciousness of individuality is present, but ill defined and unclear. This is the subtlest layer of mind, around the *átman*. In fact, the feeling of "I" is reflected in this *kośa* only because of its close proximity to the *vijñánamaya kośa*

... The *atimánasa*, *vijñánamaya* and *hirańmaya kośas*, being still more subtle and also being the rudimental stages of *sthúla* and *súkśma manah*, are collectively termed the "causal" or "astral" mind (*kárańa manah*). The psychological nomenclature of "conscious", "sub-conscious" and "unconscious" minds for the crude, subtle and causal minds does not appear to be correct. ... However, the division of the microcosm into a causal portion is merely a theoretical proposition. There is no separate existence of the unit causal mind from the Cosmic causal mind. In case the crude and subtle portions of the unit mind suspend their work by the process of *sadhana* or otherwise, the causal portion of the unit mind will not be able to maintain its separate identity; only the seeds of past actions will remain just to differentiate the microcosm from the Macrocosm. By a process of correct *sadhana*, the spiritual aspirant will feel that there is one causal mind in the universe. There is no

causal difference between the microcosm and the Macrocosm. Similarly, by the subtleness of projection, subtle and crude portions of the unit mind can connect themselves with the subtle and crude portions of the Cosmic Mind. The way to achieve this subtleness of projection is the process of yogic sadhana.

Satyaloka and the Means to be Established in Satyaloka

The *Satyaloka* is that state where nothing other than all-pervading absolute truth exists. There is no idea of dualism generated by crudeness, or as an outcome of degeneration. The soul in its subtlest form of body remains in that life-giving sphere of the eternal *Satyaloka*. Its position is above the *hirañmaya kośa*.

*Hirañmaye pare kośe virajāṁ Brahma niskalaṁ
Tacchubhraṁ jyotiśāṁ jyotiśtad yadātmavidorviduh.*

[Non-qualified or non-manifested Brahma resides above *hirañmaya kośa*. Its luminosity is white. Those who has realized this, say like that.]

On account of the influence of *Prakṛti*, the same Brahma contains all the seven spheres. That is, only for the manifestation of the seven-fold spheres have *mahatattva* etc. been created. It is from the *pāñcabhaotika* elements, the crudest manifestation of the mental body of Brahma, that the *jīvātman* carves out its physical *pāñcabhaotika* body or *annamaya kośa*, in accordance with its *saṁskāras*. With the aid of the *annamaya kośa* or the physical organs, the *jīvātman* seeks pleasure from the objects of the exterior world. In reality, there is all around a single undivided entity.

The difference between a unit soul or *jivátmán* and the universal soul or *Paramátmán* is radically connotative. With the connotation universal *Mahat* or universal *Aham*, He is the Supreme Brahma. He also becomes a unit soul as composed by the *páñcabhaotika* body acquired in accordance with the *sañskáras*.

Tayorvirodho'yam upádhi kalpito
Na vástvah kashchidupádhireśah.
Ishádyamáyá mahadádikáraṇam
Jiivasya káryam shrúu paiñcakośam.

Sadhana teaches elimination of this connotative difference.

Etávupádhipara Jiivayostayo samyag nirásena
para na jiivo,
Rájyam Narendrasya bhátasya khetafastayorapohena
bhato na rájá.

The person who may be called a king by virtue of his royal insignia (*upádhi*), may be called a wrestler if he holds a cudgel. For instance, Vishvanath will be known as a king if he is decorated with royal insignia, whereas he will be called a wrestler if he holds a cudgel. But Vishvanath remains the same Vishvanath on withdrawing the royal insignia and the cudgel. Likewise, the difference between *jíiva* and *Paramátmán* is on account of the difference in connotation. On eliminating the connotative difference from the unit it merges into Brahma.

Where there is no connotative distinction, there is *satya*, and that is the true recognition. This is the role of sadhana, to establish *satya* by revealing that which is untrue. The *lokas* and *kośas* are all degenerations, not the absolute truth.

The Distinction between Truth and Untruth

Satya is immutable. If it mutates it is no longer *Satya*. *Satya* is that which does not vary. It remains in one unaltered state for all time – past, present and future. Because of its immutable characteristic for all time – past, present and future – it is [not] only beyond the bounds of time (*kālātiita*) but also beyond the bounds of space (*deshātiita*) and beyond the bounds of form. It is beyond the bounds of time, space and form. It has no differences even in the different parts of its own being. Even one portion does not differ from another. Brahma or *Satya* is an indivisible, uninterrupted and immutable entity. *Satya* knows no differences. Then can there be any difference between Him and external objects? No, there can be no difference within or without. Nothing can exist beyond Him. That which is indivisible is infinite. Hence anything identical with Him shall also be contained within Him.

Satya knows no difference, whether of the same species (*svajātīya*) or of other species (*vijātīya*) or different parts of the same body (*svagata*). If a mango tree were supreme truth or *satya*, then other species of trees would be outside the realm of *satya*. Hence the mango tree cannot be the supreme truth, since it differs from other species of mango (*vijātīya bheda*), for example *bambaii*, *kishanbhoga*, and so on. Hence it is not the Supreme Truth. It is relative [truth] or untruth.

Relative truth, *āpekśika satya* or untruth (*asatya*) is dependent on time, place and form. The moon appears like a metal plate from a distance, but as somebody advances towards it, it appears to grow bigger. Then how big is it?

Largeness and smallness are governed by space. Hence, it is not the Supreme Truth, it is relative truth.

The nearest route from Bhagalpur to Monghyr would be westward, but one can reach Monghyr even if one goes eastward, around the circumference of the earth. The distance thus solely depends on space. How then can it be called the Supreme Truth? Those suffering from jaundice will find the colour yellow in whatever they see, normal persons will see the same things in their real colours. This is dependent on the person and consequently is not the truth.

It has been observed that place and form are not the Supreme Truth. Now, let us consider the time factor. To what extent can a historical event be called true? Suppose the *Mahábhárata* was fought 3253 years ago. Now, it is a fact that we see things through the aid of light. The stars in the sky became visible to you only when their light strikes your eyes. Suppose the light waves of the *Mahábhárata* age will take another eight hundred years to reach a certain star. If you look at the earth now, in this period, with the help of a telescope what will you see? You will see that the *Mahábhárata* has not yet been fought there and that it will not take place for another eight hundred years. What is past for one is present for another and future for a third. All these are relative truths. The same may be said with respect to sound as well. If a man speaks loudly, a normal person will feel that they are shouting, while a deaf person will say that they are speaking very softly.

Each of the spheres, namely, *atimánas*, *vijiñanamaya* and *hirañmaya*, is respectively one beyond the other. *Satya* is beyond even the last. When one is established in *Satya*, only then can one become the knower of the past, present and

future and ultimately of truth itself. For such a person there is no disharmony anywhere. Of course, it is difficult to establish oneself in Cosmic Consciousness, but once having been established in Brahma, a person gets extricated from all disharmony. Human beings can come to know the past, present and future by annihilating the mind through spiritual practices. The mind must be annihilated because it is a relative truth which prevents human beings from knowing the absolute truth.

Where there is action, there is motion. Time or *kāla* is the mental measurement of the dynamism in action. Where there is no action, there is neither mind nor time. If you are unconscious, then you will not be aware of the lapse of even three hours. Action and mind are relative truth and consequently time is also a relative truth. Time is dependent on space and person, and space and form are dependent on time. It is incorrect to say that time is eternity without end and without break or limit. Time cannot exist without space and person.

Human beings derive or try to derive pleasure from objects, great and small, but they cannot get eternal bliss from a relative truth. It is for this reason that sages devote themselves to that Entity free from the bondage of time. The body and mind are not free from the bondage of time; so it is foolish to pursue them. It is, of course, proper to take care of them but they are not to be the objects of devotion. One has to practise sadhana to establish oneself in the Entity which is free from the bondage of time.*

* The foregoing thirty-four paragraphs are from "The Base and Relative Truth" in *Subhāsita Samigraha Part 1*, "Kośa" in *Idea and Ideology*, and "Questions and Answers on Ananda Marga Ideology" in *Ananda Marga Philosophy in a Nutshell Parts 1-4*.—Editor.

Purification of the Kośas and Aśtāṅga Yoga

Kośa means *ādhāra* or “base”. Are the *saptaloka* [seven spheres] and *paiṅcakośa* [five sheaths] separate from the *ātman* (soul)? Is the relation between them that of the container and the contained? If we say, *Eko Brahma dvitīya nāsti*. (“There is only one Brahma and no other”), then of *ādhāra* and *ādhrta*, which is Brahma and which is not? If either the container or the contained is considered as Brahma, does that mean that the other is not Brahma? If it is argued that *saptaloka* and the *paiṅcakośa* are the base of Brahma, then the existence of some other entity outside of Brahma has to be acknowledged. For instance, suppose there is a person in a house. The house and the person exist separately. The house is the container and the person is the contained. Hence, the house is separate from the person.

In the *paiṅcakośā*, the *ātman* is the contained and the *kośa* is the container. Clearly the container must be bigger than that which it contains. There is nothing bigger than *Paramātman*; hence it cannot have a container. Should we then consider that *saptaloka* and the *paiṅcakośa* do not exist? That is correct, for the *saptaloka* are included in Brahma. Their aggregate is Brahma. The *jīva* is included in the *paiṅcakośa*. There is a subtle difference between the *jīva* and Brahma. In the *jīva* there are two types of “I” feeling – one is its mind created by *Máyā*, and the other is [[its knowledge-filled state – the reflected expression of *Paramātmā* Himself – that is, its (the *jīva*’s) *jīvátma*]]. The *jīvátman* is the real “I” feeling of the *jīva* or unit soul. Of the seven spheres, Brahma is unaffected only in the *Satyaloka*, and in

the remaining six *lokas*, Brahma is affected by *Máya*. It can also be explained in this way, that the six *lokas* are created within Brahma, which Itself pervades the expressed universe as imperishable Brahma. Brahma has no base.

Excepting *Satyaloka*, the remaining six *lokas* are created within Brahma, in the very midst of Brahma. Is it the case, then, that the light is different from its original source? The *saptalokas* are its evolution – these are the manifestation of Brahma – the relationship is not that of the container and the contained. The difference between the *jīvátman* and *Paramátman* exists only so long as there is the “I” feeling of the unit soul. (*jīva bháva*).

What is the relationship between *jīvátmán* and *Paramátman*? What is the *jīva* (unit soul)? The base of the physical body is the *kośas*. Here, the base is bigger than that which is based upon it. The *kāmamaya kośa* is bigger than the *annamaya kośa*. Then the *manomaya kośa* is bigger than the *kāmamaya kośa*. The *atimānas kośa* is bigger than even the *manomaya kośa*. The *vijñānamaya kośa* is larger than this. The *hirañmaya kośa* is bigger than the *vijñānmaya kośa* and the biggest of all is the *Satyaloka*. All of these aspects are limited to the unit soul and all of them are its base. Now, what is the relationship between the base and the based? The relationship is that of a subject and an object. For instance, the physical body is the object of enjoyment and the mind is the enjoyer. That is, our body is the object of enjoyment of our mind and the mind remains attached to it. The body is the base of the mind and the mind is intimately attached to its base.

Mahattattva is the pure “I” feeling of the subtlest state of the mind. Every *jīva* has this “I” feeling, and where the

átman assumes a special “I” feeling, it becomes *jíivátman*. Where the *átman* remains as the knower “I” of Shyam Babu, it is called Shyam Babu’s *átman*. In every living being, all the spheres – right from the *kámamaya* to the *hírammaya kośa* – are to be meditated upon. The knower behind the meditative power of the mind is the *átman*. The relationship of the *átman* and the mind is that of a subject and an object. The mind is the thinking subject of the body and the *Átman* is the knowing subject of the mind. Then, are there really innumerable souls, and what is the difference amongst them? The difference is that a soul is taken in different aspects due to the difference in its objects. When there is a singular knowing entity (*Saguña* Brahma) behind all minds, then taking the collective view, Brahma is the knower of all the knowers in the perishable and imperishable states (i.e. within or without the influence of *Prakṛti*) of the *jíiva*. *Saguña* Brahma is the knower, the perishable and the imperishable. He who is absolutely perishable and absolutely imperishable is Brahma. The fragmentary or reflected perishable, or fragmentary or reflected imperishable is *jíivabháva*. *Nirguña* is neither perishable nor imperishable. It is beyond these. It is absolutely liberated. ...

In day-to-day life people maintain their existence in the physical state. Crude matter forms the object of enjoyment of the mind. On account of crude matter being its object of enjoyment, the mind itself becomes crude. Humankind’s primary concern regarding food and clothes is the concern of the *kámamaya kośa* and so, inevitably, the mind associates with crude objects. In such circumstances, how can there be any opportunity for self-elevation? Animals are constantly associated with the crude.

Áhárnidrábhayamaethunaiṅca
Sámáyametad pashubhirnaránám,
Dharma hi teśámadhiko visheśo
Dharmenahiináh pashubhih samánáh.

The mental tendencies of appetite, sleep, fear and the sex urge are found among humans and animals. So what is the difference between the two? The distinction between humans and animals is that humans have a sense of dharma. Human beings practise dharma, but animals do not. A person who does not pursue the path of dharma in spite of being endowed with a human form is just like a beast.

Human beings advance from subtle to the subtlest or degenerate from crude to the crudest, according to their own propensity. Many "isms" are based on the *kámamaya kośa*. In one socio-economic theory, the economic factor is the only factor, but the *kámamaya* is only one *kośa*. Even trees also possess a *kámamaya kośa* and that is why they derive their vital energy from the earth, water and air. Where the *annamaya kośa* dominates, all the remaining *kośas* are dormant. The mind identifies itself with crude objects and therefore has no "I" feeling. For this reason, the *átman* is also devoid of perception. While the mind is sleeping in a dormant or latent state, it does not permit the *jíivátman*, which is but a reflection of *Paramátman*, to reveal itself.

Confinement to the *annamaya kośa* tends to crudify a person, since it does not allow for psychic elevation. There is some scope for discussion of philosophical controversies which have arisen with respect to the *mamomaya kośa*. On account of mental differences, different philosophical thoughts have sprung up, such as Buddhism, Jainism, Islam, Christianity,

and so on. Only in spirituality do we find discussions on subjects from the subtle to the subtlest, including the *átman*. The mind is the object of the *átman*. To attain the *átman*, blend the mind with its original subject. Unify the object with the subject. The relationship between them is the same as between you and your hand. There is only one way to self-realisation and that is to fuse the mind with the knower of the mind and eliminate the crude manifestation of the *átman*. How is this possible? It is only possible by the introversion of the tendencies, which can be achieved through knowledge and sadhana. It is not possible to be introverted until each and every *kośa* is realized. When the mind realizes that the physical body is the vehicle of the mind, then you will know that there is progress in sadhana. In other words, it is necessary to have a perfect conception of each *kośa* and for this it is necessary to know where one *kośa* ends and another begins. There are two minds – one immature and the other mature; one introverted, the other extroverted. Only the knowledge of these five *kośas* (*pañcakośas*) can be the perfect knowledge. Take a ripe mango, for example. Although the pulp and the seed of a ripe mango remain together they are in fact, separate. Ripeness means perfection.

This is the difference between dharma and sectism. Dharma makes each *kośa* perfect and enables a person to achieve perfection in sadhana. Only through the achievement of perfection are different portions differentiated from the original stuff. Sadhana is based on philosophy and supported by logic. In olden times people were under the impression that the world was comprised solely of matter and they never thought to go beyond the *kámamaya kośa*. Had they

contemplated a little deeper, they would have realized that they were totally mistaken. Similarly, many modern philosophies are solely materialistic. Their propounders did not fully apply their minds and hence they cannot be deemed to be perfect philosophies. Only those philosophies which carry us to the highest levels of the soul by observing every current of the mind are the real philosophies. The rest are only academical logics.

What is sectism, *mazhab* or religion? Some people encourage us to worship idols, others encourage us to have a dip in the Ganges. All these things are created within the mind and are destroyed there. Happiness and heaven, afflictions and hell – all are mental conceptions in the physical world. They are all destroyed in the *manomaya kośa*. The proponents' souls are confined to the *mánomaya kośa* and they are *Bhuktaye na tu muktaye*, “seekers of enjoyment and not the seekers of salvation”.

Some sects hold that happiness comes after death, but who will enjoy that happiness? The mind, of course. But where does the mind go after the destruction of its vehicle – the physical brain? Who will enjoy the pleasures? The *átman* pervades as an indivisible form, as an all-knowing entity. There is no *átman* in the grave, nor does the question of its waking up arise. In such sectism the *manomaya kośa* is called the “soul”, however if there is only the soul, then there would be no fear of pain or pleasure. ...

Ordinarily, sectism terminates in the *mánomaya kośa*. Idolatry can elevate a person up to the *átimānas kośa*, but no further. Many persons aspire to achieve happiness by devoting themselves to idolatry. They do not aspire to get

absorbed in *Paramátman* and remain close to Him. Buddhism rises above this, since it also provides for the annihilation of *samskára*. Annihilation of the "I" feeling is called "merging into the Supreme". Buddhism does not recognize the soul, but speaks of annihilation of the ego; but who will annihilate the ego? [According to this theory] It is the ego which will obliterate the "I" feeling, so egoism, it seems, must be considered as the subtlest expression of mind.

The subtlest expression of mind is in the *hirañmaya kośa*, which is the first expression of *Mahattattva*. Establishment in this *kośa* in a universal manner is *savikalpa samádhi*. When after emerging from the *samskaras*, the *hirañyamaya* merges in attributeless Brahma, then this is called *nirvikalpa samádhi*. Those who have attained the *kámamaya kośa* will say that it is not proper to steal since, if we steal, others may also steal from us. This is the trend of thought of the materialists. Their thinking is distorted with selfishness. Rather, one should not steal, [simply] for the sake of keeping the mind pure. This is the correct approach.

The Means of Purifying the Five Kośas

The *paiñcakośas* shall have to be perfected, but how is it possible? They can be consummated only through the practice of *yama* and *niyama*. The *annamaya kośa* is perfected through *asanas* (physical postures). *Yama* and *niyama* sadhana perfects the *kámamaya kośa*. The *manomaya kośa* is perfected through *pránáyama*. Through *pratyáhára* the *atimánasa kośa* is perfected. The *vijiñánmaya kośa* is perfected through *dhárañá*, and the *hirañmaya kośa* through *dhyána*. Only *dhyána samádhi* gives access to the soul.

Spiritual persons are those who are earnest in their efforts to perfect the *paiñcakośa*. Human existence consists of the five *kośas*, and spiritual practice is eightfold. This spiritual practice is dharma. That which does not provide for the explanation of the *paiñcakośa* is not dharma, but sectism. *Aśtāuṅga yoga* was introduced for this particular *kośa* sadhana.*

Aśtāuṅga Yoga is the Real Dharma Sādhanā

Why is *aśtāuṅga yoga* called “dharma”? The purpose of dharma is to attain perfect happiness, and perfect happiness is the attainment of the soul, there being only partial happiness in each *kośa*. So long as the soul is not attained, every *kośa* has to be perfected. Each *kośa* has to be taken care of. One *kośa* cannot be perfected to the exclusion of the rest. Where there is perfect happiness there is dharma; everything else yields only partial happiness and is therefore sectism. Sectism leads to *preya* (superficial and immediate gains) and only dharma leads to *shreya* (ultimate and real gains.) Everything else leads to crudeness. Dharma leads to the Supreme Consciousness, and only that which upholds and sustains the soul is dharma. The dharma of fire is to burn and the dharma of living beings is to attain happiness. Where there is the pursuit of *preya* there is *Avidyāmāya*. The happiness of heaven and the fear of hell are creations of the mind. Dharma has no fear since through dharma one attains the original state. Ananda Marga alone is dharma and all the rest are sectisms.

* In another of his works, the author has mentioned that the original propounder of *Aśtāuṅgika yoga* was Lord Śaḍashiva.—Editor.

All inspiration for a person practising dharma is derived from *Saguña* Brahma, through His grace. For this reason one must be indebted to *Saguña* Brahma. The person who does not practice sadhana is inferior to a tree, for a tree has no capacity for sadhana, whereas the person has. The wise avail themselves of this beneficence; those who do not are ignorant. You have been given divine grace and a human frame, so make use of this grace properly. Do not waste this golden opportunity.

You human beings are fortunate that you do not have to live as stones or trees. The entire universe has the grace of Brahma, but human beings enjoy greater grace. They are endowed with the privilege of practising sadhana. It is the special grace of Brahma to appear as *Sadguru* and teach spiritual practice to human beings. Is it not His special grace when Brahma attracts a person?

When one person attracts the *hirañmaya kośa* of another it is termed *brahmavidyá*. The one who attracts the *hirañmaya kośa* of a person is the Supreme Guru.

When the *hirañmaya kośa* of one person attracts the *vijñánamaya kośa* of another it is termed *daevii vidyá*. When the *vijñánamaya kośa* of one person influences the *atimánasa kośa* of another it is called *gandharva vidyá*. A person with this capacity is also called *madhyama guru*. Such a person awakens the sentiments of dharma in the mind of the disciple through sweet sounding *kiirtana*, and so on. If the *atimánasa kośa* of one person attracts the *manomaya kośa* of another it is called *rákásii* or *paeshácika* (demonic) *vidyá*. When the *manomaya kośa* of one person attracts the *kámamaya kośa* of another it is *bhúta vidyá* or hypnotism. If the

kāmamaya kośa of one person attracts the *annamaya kośa* of another, it is known as the force of physical attraction.

Saguña Brahma graces living beings with divine grace. You have been blessed. Use this properly and attain the state of *Nirguña* Brahma by annihilating the barrier between the subjective and objective angles of vision. The highest object, the supreme attainment, is to attain the *nirguña* state. The aspirant says:

Nivedayāmi cātmanam tvam̐ gati Parameshvara.

O human beings, you are fortunate. The clarion call of the Universal has reached you. Not only has the call come, but you are hearing it and it is vibrating in every cell of your body. Will you now lie in the corner of your house as an inert being and waste your time by clinging to old skeletons and bemoaning them? The Supreme Being is calling you in the roar of the ocean, in the thunder of the clouds, in the speed of lightning, in the meteor's flaming fires. Nothing good will come from idleness. Get up and awaken the clouded chivalry of your dormant youth. It may be that the path is not strewn with flowers and that an inferiority complex will attempt to hold fast your each advancing step, but even then you have to proceed onwards, tearing the shroud of darkness. You will tear the thick darkness of despair as you advance in the racing chariot radiant with the sun's brilliance, towards the attainment of the supreme state.*

* The foregoing twenty-two paragraphs are from "The Call of the Supreme" in *Subhāsita Saṁgraha Part 1*.—Editor.

Perfect Sadhana is the Sustained Effort to Completely Identify Every Kośa with the Inner Self

In this sadhana of stabilizing the *citta*, the meaning of progress is to gradually cleanse every *kośa* of its impurities. When the *kāmamaya kośa* is stabilized, the *citta* will follow the dictates of the *manomaya kośa* and will not be swayed by the lower propensities, by sensual proclivities. Then again, when the *manomaya kośa* becomes tranquil, the *citta* will be free from the influence of the *kāmamaya kośa*. It will then merge its own entity in the *atimánasa kośa* – the supramental mind. In other words, it will exhaust the remaining *saṁskáras*. It cannot perform any original action (*pratyayamúlaka*) without *citta-shuddhi*, (mental purification) because these non-original actions keep the lower *kośas* active. Thus one must continue with sadhana ceaselessly with a view to gradually establishing harmony and equilibrium in the *kośas* one after another. The moment the indistinct sensibility of the *hiránmaya kośa* (subtle causal mind) is free of the least vestige of impurity, the spiritual aspirant shines with the dazzling radiance of the *satyaloka*. That is an auspicious moment for a *sádhaka* or *sádhiká*, as it is the unification between *átman* and *Paramátman*.

Action is of two kinds – original and reactive (*pratyaya múlaka and saṁskára múlaka*). It is due to original actions that *saṁskáras* accumulate. *Saṁskáras* are exhausted through reactive actions. In the case of original actions the unit entity enjoys some freedom but not in reactive actions. Original actions, whether in the external world or in the world of thought, are performed in the wakeful state. In most cases

the thoughts in a dream are the tightly-woven expressions of the dreamer's *saṁskāras*. In the dream state the *kāmamaya kośa* and even the *manomaya kośa* have no direct authorship, so original action is not possible. The reason that this dream state is subtler than the wakeful state is that in the dream state, the lower *kośas* completely sublimate themselves to the higher *kośas*: it becomes impossible for them to indulge extroversively in original acts driven by the sensual propensities. The unconscious or causal mind, however, remains in its original stance even in the dream state. That is to say, in that state the normal characteristics of the *atimānasa kośa* [supramental mind], the *vijiñānamaya kośa* [subliminal mind] and *hirañmaya kośa* [subtle causal mind] are not impaired.

The dream world is directly concerned with the *atimānasa kośa*, and from this *atimānasa kośa* the *manomaya kośa* germinates. Because the *atimānasa kośa* is the creator of the *manomaya kośa* it is called the *pitrloka* (supramental sphere). Due to the incessant expression of *saṁskāras*, this *pitrloka* also does not remain in a state free of impurities, and for this reason the divine effulgence cannot be properly reflected in this *loka*. The *loka* just above it, the *vijiñānamaya kośa* or *janarloka*, being involved with the "I" – feeling (*asmitā*), also has impurities. Although it enjoys a very elevated position, it is still not free from the possibility of downfall. In this *loka* the mind does experience the semblance of bliss, but the unit may also degenerate into inertness, driven by the *saṁskāras* – although both these eventualities take place unknown to the unit itself. So one who has made even the least acquaintance with this *loka* – whether that person does good or evil acts – develops a rather self-forgetful nature.

This very *loka* is also called *gandharvaloka* in Sanskrit. The semblance of happiness that arises out of music or other fine arts, belongs to this *loka*. Let us call it in English the “subliminal sphere”. This *loka* lacks perfection due to the influence of *asmitá*. Although people may attain the semblance or suggestion of happiness by cultivating the fine arts alone, they cannot fully establish themselves in divine bliss; for this Brahma sadhana is indispensable.

The *loka* above this, where the *hirañmaya kośa* (subtle causal mind) is established, is what we call *devarloka*. When spiritual aspirants merge their petty “I” feeling from the realm of the *devarloka* (where this “I” feeling is not very much evident) – into the bearing of the Great, they establish themselves fully in *Saguña* Brahma [Qualified Consciousness – the collectivity of *Paramátman*, Macrocosm and microcosm]. In this *loka*, if the whole of the “I” – feeling (*asmita*) is shattered and merged in *Puruśa*, the unit attains total identification with *Nirguña* Brahma [Unqualified or Objectless Consciousness]. This *loka* is the *Satyaloka* – this indeed is the *Brahmaloka*. The one who is established in this *loka* is alone the *bráhmaña*.

Saguña or *nirguña* – whatever be the goal or aspirations of *sádhakas* on the path of sadhana, they must avoid the fragmentary pursuits of their organs. So, spiritual aspirants have to properly understand the intrinsic tendencies of their organs, or else it is impossible to bring them under control. *Sádhakas* and *sádhikás* must know how the organs and their tendencies have been evolved and why...

The human body is made of five fundamental factors, which are controlled by *prána* [vital energy]. *Prána* is

controlled by the mind. So, *prāna* and the mind are respectively the direct and the indirect controllers of those fundamental factors. The different seats of the mind for controlling the fundamental factors indirectly are called plexi (*cakras*). In these *cakras* the *prāna* is active. The nucleus that exists in the centre of these *cakras* bears the controllership of the mind.

The main controlling station of the *citta* and mind is located in the sixth plexus – the pituitary plexus (*ājñā cakra*). This plexus also indirectly controls the other fundamental factors. The right petal (the acoustic root of which is *ha*) controls the *aparāvṛtti* [propensity of extroversiality] of the human mind. In this it is assisted by the right subtle nerve current (the *piṅgalā*), which primarily controls the left portion of the body and secondarily the right portion.

The left petal of the pituitary plexus (whose acoustic root is *kṣa*) controls the force of spiritual inclination or *parāvṛtti*. With the help of the *idā*, the left subtle nerve, it primarily controls the activities of the right portion of the body, and secondarily, the activities of the left portion.

But whether the *Prāna* directly controls the *cakras*, there too the mind has to remain with it. A part of the mind remains intimately and pervasively associated with the *prāna* that controls the *mūlādhāra cakra*. Thus the five *kośas* or layers of the mind – *kāmamaya*, *manomaya*, *atimānasa*, *vijjñānamaya* and *hirāṇmaya* – chiefly control the five subtle energy centres or *cakras* – the *mūlādhāra*, *svādhiśthāna*, *maṇipura*, *anāhata* and *vishuddha cakra* respectively. The *ājñā cakra* does not directly control any fundamental factor, but by its

spiritual power it controls the psychic force. Those who are engaged in bringing this seat of knowledge under control are the true spiritual aspirants. For them alone the divine sphere remains open.

The perfect sadhana is the sustained effort to completely identify every *kośa* with the inner self, thus the more *sádhakas* and *sádhikás* progress on the path of sadhana, the more their *cakras* and propensities (*vr̥ttis*) are gradually controlled by the higher and higher *kośas*. But the *sádhakas* must not stop here. At the final stage of their sadhana, even the stance of the *ájñā cakra*, even their entire mind entity – has to be taken to a higher state of existence – the *Brahmaloka* – and merged in *Puruśa bháva* or Cognitive bearing. It is in the *sahasrára cakra* [pineal plexus] that *sádhakas* establish themselves in the true blissful state and transcend the bondages of pleasure and pain. That state is the ultimate state of attainment for microcosms, it is the original stance of Brahma. There exists neither you nor He, the two become One. It is by means of sadhana that this supreme rank is attainable. So you see, the destiny of human beings is in their own hands. You are certainly capable of controlling yourself. Here “yourself” means your propensities – the demons within you.

Bear in your mind that the controlling point of each *cakra* is located in the *ájñā cakra*, but it is with the help of the crude nerves that the *kośas* control the different *cakras* as well as the propensities belonging to them. Even without the nerve-fibres it is not impossible for the *kośas* to function; but in the absence of the nerve cells the unit-mind is unable to express its inner thoughts. Thus the mind of a dead person or disembodied soul, detached from its physical base, loses

its capacity of contemplation. It is impossible for a bodiless mind to entertain hopes or desires, or to become involved with any entity or any crude object, or to frighten or help anyone. Ghosts and spirits are the products of human beings' flighty imagination – the fantastic fancies of idle, timid minds. The greater the control you achieve over the *kośas* through your sadhana, the more your organs will become submissive to you. Just as people's internal thoughts and knowledge go on developing as they become established in their higher *kośas*, due to their control over the mind and the organs, similarly, when they are unaffected by external influences, all their vanity, inertness and superstitions rapidly disappear. The impact of external objects leads to psychic perversion, whereas the impact of subtle, internal ideas due to introspection manifests a synthetic mind in which intuition comes to the surface. In the final phase the *prajñā mānas* [intuitional mind], the abode of *saṃkalpa* and *vikalpa*, free from the psychic bearing, ultimately transforms itself into cognitive bearing (*prajñā*).*

* The foregoing twelve paragraphs are from "This world and the next" in *Subhāsita Saṃgraha Part 4*— Editor.

Food and Cells, Physical and Mental Development

The physical body of every human being is composed of countless cells. These cells are of two kinds: protozoic and metazoic. All parts of the human body are composed of these two types of cells. In another sense, the entire human structure can be regarded as one metazoic cell.

Each of these cells has its individual mind and soul, but the minds of the cells are different from the human mind. (And the minds of metazoic cells are more developed than those of protozoic cells.) The human mind is the unit microcosm plus the collection of the minds of the protozoic and metazoic cells; therefore the human mind is a collective mind. Just as the Macrocosmic Mind is inseparably associated with each and every entity of this universe through *ota yoga* and *prota yoga*, the unit mind is inseparably related to each of its composite entities [individually]; and in a collective way also, the minds of the cells have a certain relationship with the unit mind.

Generally a cell lives about twenty-one days and then dies, being replaced by new cells. When one rubs a certain part of the body, some seeming dirt comes off, even when the body remains covered, but this is not always dirt from the environment. In most cases, it is the accumulation of hundreds of dead cells.

Cells generally grow out of light, air, water and the food we eat. The nature of food and drink has its effect upon

the cells, and consequently also influences the human mind. Obviously each and every spiritual aspirant should be very cautious in selecting food. Suppose a person takes *támasika*, or static, food. The result will be that after a certain period, static cells will grow and exercise a static influence on the aspirant's mind. Human beings must select *sáttvika* (sentient), or *rájasika* (mutative) food according to time, place and person. This will lead to the birth of sentient cells, which in turn will produce a love for spiritual practice and help in attaining psychic equilibrium and equipoise, leading to immense spiritual elevation.

After about twenty-one days old cells are shed and new ones grow. But in old age, due to certain defects in the cells, the smoothness and the lustre of the face disappears, the skin becomes wrinkled, and the different parts of the body weaken. (In old persons, the old cells decay, new cells are produced in lesser numbers and some of the new cells do not get proper nourishment.)

In all cases where a patient has been ailing for a long time, experienced physicians advise complete rest for a minimum of twenty-one days to allow the growth of new, healthy cells so that the ailing person will regain physical and mental energy.

Cells are living beings, and as a result of transformation through lives together, they have found existence in the human body. Later, through gradual evolution, each cell mind will develop into a human mind.

The aura or effulgence radiating from the human body is the collective effulgence of all its composite cells. When in old age many cells in the body become weak, this results

in the diminution of the effulgence. Even the body of a young man who is suffering from a disease loses its lustre.

In the human face alone there are millions of cells. When a person gets angry a large amount of blood rushes into the face, causing it to become red and causing many cells to die. Violent or cruel people can easily be recognized by their faces.

As a result of eating sentient food and performing spiritual practices, the cells of the human body become sentient. Naturally, an effulgence emanates from these cells, creating an aura around the physical body of the spiritual aspirant. This is the reason why many pictures of *mahápuruṣas* [highly-evolved persons] show them with radiant auras.

If cells are affected by food and water, and if the nature of the cells affects the nature of the human mind, obviously human beings should eat the correct diet, because food and mind are closely related to each other. Any food item, whether good or bad, must not be taken indiscriminately because it may lead to mental degeneration. Sincere spiritual aspirants must follow the dictum: *Āhārashuddhao sattvashudhih* ["A sentient diet produces a sentient body"].

Only food which is helpful in keeping the body and mind sentient should be eaten.

Every object of the world is dominated by one of the three principles – sentient, mutative, and static. Food is no exception, and according to its intrinsic nature, is divided into the same three categories.

Sentient food: Food which produces sentient cells and is thus conducive to physical and mental well-being is sentient.

Examples of sentient food are rice, wheat, barley, [almost] all kinds of pulses; fruit, milk and milk products.

Mutative food: Food which is good for the body and may or may not be good for the mind, but is certainly not harmful for the mind, is mutative.

Static food: Food which is harmful for the mind and may or may not be good for the body is static. Onion, garlic, mushrooms, wine, stale and rotten food, the meat of large animals such as cows and buffaloes; fish, eggs, etc., are static.

Very often people eat food without knowing its intrinsic qualities. For example, the milk of a cow which has just given birth, white eggplant, *khesáarii* pulse [horse gram], red *puñi* [*Basella rubra* Linn.], and mustard leaves, all of which often grow out of rotten matter [and are therefore static].

In order to have a balanced mind and to progress spiritually, human beings will have to pay attention to the qualities of the food they eat. The idea that "I will just do my sadhana and eat any food, proper or improper" will not do.*

* The foregoing nineteen paragraphs are from *Ananda Marga Philosophy In A Nutshell Parts 1-4*.—Editor.

Ota Yoga, Prota Yoga and Hátha Yoga

You know, the Supreme noumenal entity maintains the closest relationship with all other apparent noumenal entities, the so-called noumenal entities, and those so-called noumenal entities maintain a link with each and every expression of this universe. This indirect link of the noumenal entity is called *prota yoga* in Sanskrit. That is, whatever you are doing is indirectly known to Him through your direct noumenal entity. And not only that, He keeps a direct relationship with you also. "Today we will decorate the hall in a very nice way, as is done in the case of DMC. And when Bábá will see those things, He will say, 'Let there be DMC.'" See, these things have a direct reflection, not on your apparent noumenal entity, but directly on the Supreme hub, directly on the Supreme noumenal entity. And He will say, "Let me satisfy those little boys and girls by declaring a subject of discourse."

The link, you see, is an indirect link with each and every entity, through so many noumenal entities, and also a direct link with each and every individual, from a mammoth to a blade of grass. So a mammoth cannot move without His grace, and a blade of grass also cannot move without His approval. And this shows that He maintains a link with each and every entity. Nobody is unimportant, nobody is insignificant. Each and every existence is valuable. And the life of an old widow of, say, a hundred years, is also not meaningless. Her existence also bears a certain significance. If an ordinary ant dies a premature death, the equilibrium of the entire universe will be lost. Nobody is unimportant,

so you must not develop the psychology of helplessness or hopelessness or defeatist complex or fear complex, because the Supreme Father, the Supreme noumenal entity is always with you. And that link with the individual is known as *ota yoga*. In the case of the collectivity it is *prota yoga*; in the case of the individual it is *ota yoga*. You are never alone. And your goal is that noumenal entity, that *Parama Puruṣa* and no number two or number three or number four gods or goddesses; only the singular entity, the God of all gods.*

Attainment of Paramá Puruṣa is Not the Aim of Haṭha Yoga

There are some other people who exhort others by saying, "Success in human life lies in God-realization, and you should do *asanas* and *práñáyáma* and other practices. When your mind and its psychic propensities will be completely suspended, you will realize *Parama Puruṣa*." This is called *haṭha yoga*. *Ha* is the acoustic root of "sun" or "fire", and *tha* is the acoustic root of "moon" or "calmness". Now when these two opposing flows, *ha* and *tha* – one the actional flow, and the other the cessation of the actional flow, the *idá* and the *piuṅgalá* – are forcibly made to become one, this is called *haṭha yoga*. Thus when something which was not expected is done suddenly or forcibly, we use the expression *haṭhat*.

Many people criticize this path of *haṭha yoga* because,

* The foregoing two páragraphs are from "The Noumenal Cause and the Personal God" in *Subhásita Samgraha Part 12*.— Editor.

they say, the practices of asanas, *pránáyáma*, and so on, are not very congenial for spiritual progress. In fact, the defects of this system are as follows; first, such *yogis* cannot render any useful service to the world, for they have to keep themselves engaged in these practices for twenty-four hours a day. Yet, human beings have to do so many things in life, not only the practices of *asanas*, *pránáyáma*, and so on. They must learn many things and teach many things to others. Instead of doing that, if some people spend a major portion of their days practising *pránáyáma*, how will they find time for setting an example for others?

Yes, *pránáyáma* has its necessity – a limited necessity; but any rigorous practice should be done for the welfare of others, otherwise what is the benefit of such practices with one's legs up and head down, sitting beside a fire pit? The practitioners subject themselves unnecessarily to physical torture. People understand the utility of austerity when they realize that the world of living beings was created by our Lord, and if we serve His world, how pleased He will be! If I undergo penance while rendering service to the society, there is no selfishness in this because the austerity is no longer a penance – it becomes a source of joy. Hence those who undergo penance for the sake of penance are greatly mistaken.

The same applies to yoga. If yoga is treated as a means of realizing *Parama Puruśa* and not as a type of *hathá yoga*, then this is the real yoga. Otherwise if one practices *pránáyáma* for a long portion of the day, then one's coming onto this earth becomes meaningless. Many people suspend their vital energy by means of *hathá yogika* practices. Others

wrongly think that since such people can suspend their life-force, they must be great personalities – *mahāpuruṣas*. Such a notion is wholly defective. Through regular practice, one's life-force can be suspended, but that does not prove one's greatness. One can survive for long without food; there are some specific techniques for that; but most people in the world do not know those methods. If those who know the methods are called *mahāpuruṣas*, this is not correct.

There is a particular system of yoga called *kāyakaḷpa* yoga in which the practitioner can suspend the activities of different parts of the body from within, and yet survive for five to ten years by drawing vital energy from the air. Of course, in that state one cannot do any physical work, because the motor organs of the body remain temporarily inactive – their activities remain suspended. Previously this system of *kāyakaḷpa* yoga was a recognized system of medical treatment within the scope of *hāṭha* yoga. Today, people have forgotten this system of treatment. If any teacher will train others in this method, then others can learn it.

But what is the benefit? If people through *kāyakaḷpa* yoga keep their limbs inactive for thirty long years out of their life span of eighty years, at the age of eighty when their limbs become active, their bodies will be like those of a fifty year old, for virtually they are fifty years old. But they spent thirty years in that state of suspension – so what is the benefit? Had they remained active for those thirty years, they could have done much work; but they spent those years in total inaction. This is completely meaningless. Theoretically

they are eighty years old, but practically they lived only for fifty years – the remaining thirty years they spent in a state of hibernation. What is the benefit of a life of hibernation like that of frogs and snakes which suspend all activities during winter? There is absolutely no benefit. Instead, that long period of time could be better spent in some useful service.*

The practice of yoga should be such that it will bring people in contact with the Lord. Yoga practitioners should practice those processes that lead to the different stages of yoga: *sálókya*, *sámiipya*, *sáyujya*, *sárśthi*, *kaevalya*, etc. That is good both for the society as well as for the individuals concerned. However, if one does not advance spiritually and yet one practises *práñáyáma* for hours together, it does good neither to the individual nor to the society. The goal of all spiritual endeavour is *Parama Puruśa*. So whatever we do, we must do it keeping *Parama Puruśa* fixed before our eyes – we must not do anything [while] forgetting Him.

There are many people who are fond of reading good books – voluminous books on philosophy and spirituality. Now if one's mind roams about in the filth of hell, what real purpose will be served by reading the scriptures? You have seen some white ants living in the pages of books of scriptures. They are always immersed in the scriptures, but

* Elsewhere, the author has explained regarding *haṭha yoga* and *haṭha práñáyáma*, that they are processes to control the *ha*, that is, the ethereal factor in the *vishuddha cakra* by *ṭha*, that is, mental force in the *ájina cakra*. There is no thought of spirituality here. So, when *práñáyáma* is practiced without *siddha íśtamantra* and Cosmic ideation, it is *haṭha práñáyáma*. It does not help the practitioner in spiritual elevation.—Editor.

do they attain liberation or salvation thereby? No, certainly not. Besides, the path of knowledge is more analytic than synthetic, and often in the minds of those who follow it there is a hidden desire that other people should accept them as great scholars. Now, if they cherish the internal desire that others should regard them as great scholars, their minds will become extroversial, so what is to be gained thereby? The desire for praise will go on increasing and in the process they will finally turn out to be inferior people. Any dishonest people, merely by praising them, can easily get them to perform even bad actions.

So those persons who do not possess genuine love for *Parama Puruṣa*, who are averse to spiritual practice, who only read books and scrounge for bits of intellectual information, who go to listen to the instructions of religious teachers, cannot do any really good work in the world. And worst of all, those people, by hankering after others' praise, become worse than ordinary people.*

* The foregoing twelve paragraphs are from the chapter "How An Ideal Person Should Live" in *Subhāsita Samgraha Part 12*.—Editor.

Yoga and Tantra

Today's subject of discourse is "Yoga and Tantra". Some people are curious to know what yoga is and what Tantra is; where they agree and where they differ. First let us discuss what yoga is.

The word *yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit root verb *yuiñj* plus the suffix *ghaiñ*; or alternatively, from the root verb *yuj* plus the suffix *ghaiñ*. If *yoga* is derived from *yuj* + *ghaiñ*, it means "addition", such as "two plus two equals four." But if *yoga* is derived from *yuiñj* + *ghaiñ*, it means "unification", such as the unification of sugar and water. When sugar and water are mixed, you will no longer find sugar separate from water. But in the case of "two plus two equals four," you will find the first "two" and the second "two" separately. Two mangoes plus two mangoes equals four mangoes: here you will still be able to see the four mangoes separately. So in the case of *yuj* + *ghaiñ*, *yoga* means "unity" or "addition", and in the alternative case it means "unification".

Besides the two derivations of *yoga*, there are also various definitions of *yoga*. Maharshi Patanjali defines *yoga* as *Yogashcittavrttinirodhah* – that is, "Yoga means 'the suspension of all psychic propensities'." In the human mind there are fifty main propensities. If by some special means the propensities are suspended, their expressions are stopped, and in that case the mind will cease to function. That state of psychic suspension is here termed *yoga*. However, above we have defined *yoga* to mean "unification", and we can see

that the suspension of propensities does not in any way mean that those propensities are being unified. The suspension of the propensities does not necessarily lead to the unification of the unit mind with the Cosmic Mind. This definition does not make clear with whom or what unification [occurs]. Hence this definition of *yoga* is not acceptable.

Now, the second definition is *Sarvacintáparityágo nishcinto yoga ucyate*. That is, "When the mind is free from any sort of thinking, the mind is completely free of thoughts, that state is called *yoga*." Yet, if the mind becomes free from thought, it does not lead to unification. When people are in a deep sleep, when they do not even dream, the mind becomes free from thought, and people become unconscious. In that state also the mind stops thinking. But is that *yoga*? No.

Now another definition, as given by Sadáshiva, is *Sanhyoga yoga ityukto jivátma Paramátmánoh*. That is, "The unification of the unit soul, the *jivátma*, with the Universal Soul, that is, *Paramátmá*, is *yoga*." This seems to be the best, most scientific, definition.

Now let us see what Tantra is. The Sanskrit root verb *tan* literally means "to expand". From the root verb *tan* comes the Sanskrit word *tanu*, which means "a body that is expanding". A child's body is called *tanu* in Sanskrit, because it grows and grows until thirty-nine years of age. The human body, up to thirty-nine years of age, can be called *tanu*, but thereafter it is called *shariira*. *Shariira* means "something which wears out, which becomes contracted". So a child's body is not *shariira*, and an old person's body should not be called *tanu*.

The word Tantra is derived as: *tan* + *trae* + *da*. *Tra* [*trae* + *da*] means "that which liberates." So Tantra means the science which shows the path for the emancipation of the human entity through psycho-spiritual expansion. In other words, the spirit of Tantra is to ever continue expanding.

Tantra has another meaning also. In the Indo-Aryan alphabet, there are fifty letters. *A* is the first letter, and *kśa* is the last letter. Now, the main human propensities are fifty in number, but within one propensity there are several sub-propensities; because the propensities have a certain faculty, and that is, that they can work in ten directions, and can also function both internally and externally. So ultimately we get the total number of propensities as fifty main *vrttis* times two (internal and external) times ten (working in ten directions), which equals one thousand. So although primarily there are fifty propensities, secondarily there are one thousand propensities. These one thousand propensities are controlled by the pineal gland in the brain.

Each of these propensities has its own vibration and its own colour as well. When someone grows angry, there is a certain vibration in their body, and in accordance with this vibration, the body trembles and simultaneously changes its colour. A fair-complexioned person becomes reddish and a dark-complexioned person becomes violet. So you see, each and every object in this universe has its own vibration, its own colour.

These vibrations, representing some action or some object, are called "acoustic expressions". A person, when angry, speaks in a certain way, but the same person in a normal state speaks in a different way. The voice of the angry

person has undergone a clear change from its normal state to an abnormal one. Likewise, each and every propensity has its own vibration, and each vibration has a certain colour and sound. The sounds of the fifty propensities constitute our language. These alphabet sounds – *a, á, ka, kha* [the first vowels and the first consonants or the Sanskrit alphabet] – are our acoustic expressions. Each sound has its own colour, and because of these fifty sounds and fifty colours, we call the alphabet *varṇamálá* in Sanskrit. *Varṇa*, or “letter” – there are *svavarṇa* [vowels] and *vyainjanvarṇa* [consonants] – literally means “colour”. There are primarily fifty sounds or colours, but secondarily one thousand sounds or colours. As I said, each and every propensity has a particular colour. The colour of the sentient principle is white, the mutative is yellow, and the static is black.

For example, *sha* is the sound for the mutative principle. Now these representative sounds are called *bijja* mantras in Sanskrit, and “acoustic roots” in English. *Sha* is the acoustic root of the mutative principle, *sa* is the acoustic root of the sentient principle, and *śa* is the acoustic root of the static principle. When someone walks or starts moving, it produces a sound, *khaṭ-khaṭ-khaṭ*; so the acoustic expression of movement is *khaṭ-khaṭ-khaṭ*. Behind every action or existence there lies a sound vibration. The particular sound vibration supporting a particular entity or action is known as its acoustic root.

In ancient times, some orthodox people avoided wearing leather shoes. They liked to wear wooden sandals. When people wearing wooden sandals would walk, they automatically produced sounds like *thak-thak-thak*. So the group of people who used to make a *thak-thak-thak* sound

during movement were called *Thakkara - Thakam-thakam karoti yah sah Thakkarah*. *Thakkara* evolved into *Thákur* [anglicized as "Tagore"].

So it is clear now that there is an acoustic root behind each and every action, behind each and every existence. As I said, *sha* is the acoustic root of the mutative principle. Similarly, *ra* is the acoustic root of energy (meaning all varieties of energy). *Sha + ra = shra*, meaning "where the mutative principle is backed by energy". Now *shra* plus the feminine suffix *ii* equals *shrii*. It means "where there is mutative force plus energy". So *shrii* ultimately means charm. In practical life, every human being longs for charm. This is the reason why since ancient times it has been the custom in India to prefix the word *Shrii* to a person's name.

So I hope you are now clear about what an acoustic root is. Similarly there is an acoustic root *ta*. *Ta* represents "dullness" or "lethargy". So, literally, Tantra [combining two derivations] means "a systematic and scientific process which brings about first expansion, and thereafter liberation from the bondages of dullness and lethargy". This liberation is called Tantra in Sanskrit. Tantra means "liberation from bondages".

You know that each and every living being wants liberation from bondages. Out of this inherent longing for freedom from bondages arises dharma. Dharma means "expansion". Suppose someone is tied with a rope. If the person's body expands or swells or becomes bigger and bigger in size, the rope will snap. So, Tantra is defined as the process of expansion and of emancipation from crudifying bondages.

So now *yoga* and *Tantra* have come close to each other in meaning. *Yoga* means the unification of *jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā*. And how can this unification take place? It is possible through gradual expansion, that is, by dint of the constant practice of Tantra. This practical cult or spiritual sadhana exists only in Tantra and nowhere else. *Prārthanārcanā mātraeva bhramamūlam*. That is, "Prayer and eulogy only mislead one." Only by dint of spiritual cult can one attain success. Thus sadhana is Tantra and Tantra is sadhana.*

Now how can one attain *siddhi* through the practice of *yoga*? The *jīvātmā* will take the ideation of *Paramātmā*, and then the former will become one with the latter. How is it possible for the microcosm to become Macrocosm? The Macrocosm, or *Parama Puruṣa*, has one unique characteristic, and that characteristic is, whoever ideates on Him becomes one with Him. The very nature of the mind is to become as it thinks. If it thinks of money, the mental stuff will one day, in a gradual process of crudification, be converted into money. After one's physical death, the mind will be converted into money, and may find shelter in the iron safe of a moneylender. Will that be desirable? No, certainly not!

Yādrshii bhāvanā yasya siddhir bhavati tādrshii – "As one thinks, so one becomes." There is a certain insect that eats cockroaches. When that insect appears before a cockroach,

* In his two-volume *Discourses on Tantra*, the author has described in depth the authentic Tantra sadhana. He explains that it is not simply the combination of the degenerated forms of *māraṇa*, *ucchāṭana* and *vashīkaraṇa*, and that this Tantra is the original sadhana. Readers will be benefitted if they read these books in order to know more about Tantra.—Editor.

the cockroach becomes mortally frightened. Due to the fright its nerve fibres cease to function, and when the fear becomes more intense, its nerve cells also cease to function. The severe fright creates a picture of that voracious insect in the cockroach's mind, and due to that persistent image a transformation of its nerve cells gradually sets in, which then extends to the nerve fibres, and at the end of this process the cockroach will appear to that insect to be a member of its own species. The insect actually thinks that the cockroach is a member of its own tribe, so how can it eat the cockroach? If human beings take the Cosmic ideation, they will also become one with the Cosmic Entity.

Now the question is, how can human beings take the ideation of *Parama Puruṣa*? *Jiṅániis* [scholars] will analyse, "*Parama Puruṣa* is like this or like that." *Karmiis* [those engaged in actions] will think that *Parama Puruṣa* is a master of action. (Now, what relation do *bhaktas* have to *jiṅána*? A devotee will think, "I may be a virtuous person, I may be poor, I may be learned or foolish, but, O Lord, I belong only to You.") And devotees think of the Lord just as people think of their nearest and dearest ones. They think, "*Parama Puruṣa* is mine;" and in this process of constant ideation, their minds gradually expand. From this sort of closeness, a person ultimately becomes one with *Paramátmá*. Such a person of devotion is called a *bhakta*.

Thus we see that *jiṅániis* are *Tantrics*, because by acquiring knowledge they expand their minds, and thus become one with the all-expansive Cosmic Mind. *Karmiis* are also *Tantrics*, for by dint of actions, they expand their minds and become one with *Parama Puruṣa*. *Bhaktas* [devotees] are also *Tantrics*, because they develop so much

love and devotion for *Parama Puruśa* that, in the process of constant ideation, they become one with *Parama Puruśa*. Thus there is hardly any difference between Tantra and yoga. [*Jiñána*, *karma*, and *bhakti* are the three main branches of yoga.]

But yes, there is one thing. Human life is very short. Those who want to cultivate knowledge may not get sufficient time. Even if they start cultivating knowledge at the age of five or six, the time will not be adequate. The scope of knowledge is infinite, whereas life is finite or short. If people divert their time and energy towards the attainment of objects other than *Parama Puruśa*, their time becomes less utilized and more misused.

*Mathivá caturo vedán sarvashástrán caeva hi;
Sárantu yogibhih piitam takram pivanti pañd'itáh.*

“After churning all four Vedas, and all the scriptures, the yogis assimilate the quintessence, and the non-essential parts are consumed by the so-called scholars.” The four Vedas and all the scriptures are as vast as the ocean. Just as by churning yogurt we separate the butter from the buttermilk, so by churning the ocean of scripture, the butter comes to the surface and the buttermilk remains at the bottom. Those who are real devotees eat up the butter, and the so-called intellectuals start quarrelling among themselves over the distribution of the buttermilk. And ultimately that also may spoil before they can drink it.

There is a story that once a man of knowledge and a man of devotion went together to a mango orchard. The man of knowledge started verifying whether the mangoes were *laungrá* or *himságara* or what varieties. Now there are over

1500 varieties of mango in the world. He began to ponder over which varieties of mango were available in that orchard; and in the process of this constant analysis the sun set and evening fell on the orchard. Then he started counting the numbers of the leaves, the branches, the twigs, etc. The night became darker. But what did the devotee do meanwhile? Straightaway he had climbed a tree and started eating the mangoes.

As a rule, devotees are more intelligent than *jiñániis*. They utilize their time properly, and you know that those who utilize their time properly are more intelligent than those who do not.

Now let us analyse how devotees conduct themselves. Devotees are confident from the very beginning that the Lord belongs to them, and to them alone. When something belongs to someone, there remains no obstacle or impediment between the person and the belonging. Suppose there is a son who says, "My father." That son may be a scholar or a big fool, he may be rich or poor, but after all, his father belongs to him, and he can easily come near his own father and serve him. At that time no father will ever say, "You are a fool, get out of here." He can never do such a thing.

There is a family relation between the father and the son [and daughter], and because of this family relation, the intimacy between the two will keep growing, and the internal thoughts will also remain very, very pure. This is why wise people say that the cult of devotion is the greatest. It is the best method to expand one's mind. And as the fundamental spirit of Tantra is to expand one's mind, snapping the

bondages, devotion is the best Tantra. That is why I repeat again and again that Tantra and yoga are not different from each other, rather they are almost the same thing.

Devotees will practise *asanas*, *pránáyáma*, *dháraná* and *dhyána*, and during this practice they will have one thought uppermost in their minds – that the Entity on whom they are ideating is their nearest relation, and no one is nearer to them than their Lord. Because of this, a devotee's mind will become highly expanded in a short period.

In the life of a person of action, *kiirtana* may or may not play a significant role, but in the life of a person of devotion, *kiirtana** is indispensable. To put it more explicitly, a devotee cannot live without *kiirtana*, just as you cannot remove a fish from water. If you remove a fish from water, it will die an instant death. Likewise, if a devotee is prevented from doing *kiirtana*, the person will die.

The secret of a devotee's heart is known to *Parama Puruśa*. In Jamalpur I told you that *Parama Puruśa* does not reside in *Vaekuñtha* [the mythological abode of Lord *Viśnú*], nor on a throne, nor in the heart of a yogi. He actually resides in the heart of a devotee. A devotee is always bound to think of *Parama Puruśa* at heart, because their mutual relation is one of love and devotion. That is why *Parama Puruśa* clearly proclaims, *Madbhaktáh yatra gáyanti tatra tiśthámi Nárada* – that is, "I reside, O *Nárada*, wherever my devotees are singing".

* The author has introduced different ways of doing *kiirtana* as an aid to sadhana. These are – *akhañda kiirtana* with special *mudrá* and dance-postures, general *kiirtana* as a part of different spiritual programmes, and *kiirtana* with *tándava* and *kaoshikii* dances.–Editor.

So, *Parama Puruśa* says to Nárada that He does not reside anywhere except where His ardent devotees are singing *kiirtana*. Philosophically, *Parama Puruśa* is omnipresent, but His nucleus remains at a particular place. That particular place, where the nucleus resides, is not *Vaekuńtha*. That particular place is where His ardent devotees are singing His glories in *kiirtana*.

So you will notice that when people do *kiirtana* out of deep love, a highly powerful spiritual vibration is created. Those who do *kiirtana* feel that vibration in their minds, hearts, and everywhere. They become virtually intoxicated with unbounded bliss. That sort of bliss is not attainable by people of knowledge. It may be that those person of knowledge will one day become one with *Parama Puruśa*, but they will not be able to attain that bliss; nor is that bliss attainable by a person of action. That bliss is attainable only by a person of devotion. The “wholesale right” to that boundless bliss lies with the devotee only.*

26 October 1979, Gaddopur, Bihar

* The foregoing twenty-two paragraphs are from *Subhásita Samgraha Part 13*.— Editor.

Bio-Psychology, Yoga Psychology and Yoga Sádhaná

Mind is a state in the process of *Brahma Cakra*. Being the result of changing positions, it is essentially a stage in the process of motion, and implies a momentum which it has to express. To find expression the mind adopts certain inter- and intra-ectoplasmic occupations. These occupations, such as love, hatred, fear, and so on, are known as *vrttis*. In other words, a *vrtti* may be defined as "the way of expression of mind". On the psychic level this occupation is called "expressed sentiment".

Sentiments affecting the subsidiary glands are known as "instincts". Here the term "subsidiary gland" has been used for any gland other than the pineal and the pituitary. Some psychologists define "instinct" as "accumulated sentiment". By this they imply that instincts are later stages of sentiments, that is, that instincts are created when sentiments become ingrained habits. This is a theoretical definition, however. A spiritual aspirant, who is a practical psychologist, realizes that an instinct is a sentiment affecting the subsidiary glands.

These subsidiary glands are the sub-stations of organs whose main controlling station, as already discussed, is located in the brain. For the evolution of the *sañkalpátmaka* and *vikalpátmaka* aspects of the mind (the mind is said to be *sañkalpátmaka* when its internal occupations lead towards the Great, and *vikalpátmaka* when they lead towards the mundane or crude) and for the creation of external waves, the help of the organs has to be taken. This

help is also essential for crude manifestation in the physical stratum and other multifarious activities. The subtle brain does not work directly; it requires the cruder sub-stations under its control.

Waves have to be developed for other manifestations of the internal *saṁskāras*, and these waves have to be created in the nerves and the blood. According to the sanguinary flow and strength of the nerves, the sub-stations of the mind go on transmitting these waves.

The seed of every *vṛtti* is in the brain, but the first expression occurs in a sub-station. Waves, after being created by the glands or sub-stations of the mind, are expressed outside through the efferent nerves. The motor organs work with the help of the efferent nerves, but the secret of their functioning lies with these mental sub-stations or glands.

The number of *vṛttis* varies according to the complexity of the physical structure. The more complex the structure, the greater the number of *vṛttis*. More-developed animals, therefore, possess more *vṛttis* than less-developed ones. Generally there are one thousand *vṛttis* in the human structure. In their development and expression on the ordinary crude level they are fifty in number. The collective number being one thousand, the seeds of all those thousand *vṛttis* are present in the brain. Because of the existence of these seeds of one thousand *vṛttis* in the pineal gland, yogis named it the *sahasrāra cakra* [*sahasra* means "thousand"]. The subsidiary glands control forty-eight *vṛttis* and the pituitary controls two – *saṁkalpātmaka*, that leading to *parávidyá* [knowledge of the Great] and *vikalpātmaka*, relating to *aparávidyá* [knowledge of the mundane]. The pineal, as a

structure, controls all these fifty *vrttis* taken internally and externally by all ten indriyas. $50 \times 2 \times 10 = 1000$. Yogis having control over the *sahasrára cakra* attain *nirvikalpa samádhi*, a state where they are beyond the approach of all the *vrttis*. Within the scope of these *vrttis* lies the seed of *saṁskára* – good or bad. Thus, the attainment of such a state means the end of all *saṁskára*, the exhaustion of all the previous momentum accumulated by the mind due to its previous journeys in Brahma *cakra*. This is what is called *mokṣa* – union with the Transcendentality.*

Glands and Sub-Glands

There are many underdeveloped creatures which have no nerve cells or nerve fibres and behave according to their instincts only. Human beings possess nerve cells and nerve fibres, but they also behave according to their instincts. For example, very young children smile and keep their hands closed because of their instincts. They are not goaded by intellect or by any intellectual inclination in this respect.

The innumerable nerve cells and nerve fibres in the human body can be divided into two types: one connecting the brain to the spinal cord [the central nervous system], and the other from the spinal cord to the skin and going within the body [the peripheral nervous system]. There is also a collection of nerve cells in the cranium that is made up of fat [that is, the hypothalamus], which has a special power, an inborn power or a vibrational speciality, which is sometimes synthetic [sympathetic] and sometimes apathetic [parasympathetic].

* The foregoing six paragraphs are from the chapter "Mind, Prāṇendriya and Vṛtti" in *Idea and Ideology*.—Editor.

In Sanskrit the region across the top of the head above the ears is called *snáyupetaka*, which means "a basket of nerves". A vibration from any part of the body takes a two-hundredths of a second to reach the cranium. Suppose an insect bites your hand. The sensation will travel through your afferent nerves to the brain. Immediately an order, which will travel through the efferent nerves, will be given to remove the insect. The terms "afferent nerves" and "efferent nerves" are derived from Latin words and mean "sensory nerves" and "motor nerves" respectively. The corresponding Sanskrit terms are *sañjñá nádíi* and *áñjñá nádíi*.

The nerve cells are active and work directly in the conscious (*jágrata*), subconscious (*svapna*) and unconscious (*súsupta*) states of mind, although the Sanskrit and English terms for these three states are not exactly synonymous. When the nerves do not work properly, sometimes people experience a condition which may be described as feeling unnerved. For example, if a person is hit on the head and the balance between their afferent and efferent nerves is lost, the person may forget everything, lose their discrimination and be unable to decide what to do. The same condition may occur after a nightmare. If a man dreams that he is being chased by a ghost and falls down and knocks his head, he may suddenly wake up covered in perspiration, suffering from the same symptoms as if he had actually been hit on the head while awake. In such a condition we say he is feeling unnerved.

The mid-point of the last vertebra of the spinal column is a nerve centre. This is the central point of the *múládhára*

cakra. The whole body is balanced on this *cakra* [plexus]. It has four *vrttis* [propensities]: *dharma* [psycho-spiritual longing], *artha* [psychic longing], *káma* [physical longing], *mokśa* [spiritual longing].

The *svádhiśthána cakra* is situated on the spinal cord directly behind the root of the genital organ. It has six propensities:

<i>avajiná</i>	[belittlement of others]
<i>múrcchá</i>	[psychic stupor, lack of common sense]
<i>prashraya</i>	[indulgence]
<i>avishvása</i>	[lack of confidence]
<i>sarvanásha</i>	[thought of sure annihilation]
<i>krurató</i>	[cruelty].

Next comes the *mañipura cakra*. This *cakra* is located at the navel. It controls ten propensities:

<i>lajjá</i>	[shyness, shame]
<i>pishunató</i>	[sadistic tendency]
<i>iirśá</i>	[envy]
<i>susúpti</i>	[staticity, sleepiness]
<i>viśáda</i>	[melancholia]
<i>kaśáya</i>	[peevishness]
<i>trśná</i>	[yearning for acquisition]
<i>moha</i>	[infatuation]
<i>ghrńá</i>	[hatred, revulsion]
<i>bhaya</i>	[fear]

Then the *anáhata cakra*, situated in the centre of the chest, which controls twelve propensities:

<i>áshá</i>	[hope]
<i>cintá</i>	[worry]
<i>ceśtá</i>	[effort]
<i>mamatá</i>	[attachment]
<i>dambha</i>	[vanity]
<i>viveka</i>	[conscience]
<i>vikalata</i>	[mental numbness due to fear]
<i>ahamíkára</i>	[ego]
<i>lolatá</i>	[avarice]
<i>kapaśatá</i>	[hypocrisy]
<i>vitarka</i>	[argumentativeness to the point of wild exaggeration]
<i>anutápa</i>	[repentance]

Next is the *vishuddha cakra*, located in the region of the throat, which controls sixteen propensities:

<i>śadája</i>	[sound of a peacock]
<i>rśabha</i>	[sound of a bull or ox]
<i>gándhára</i>	[sound of a goat]
<i>madhyama</i>	[sound of a deer]
<i>paiñcamá</i>	[sound of a cuckoo]
<i>dhaevata</i>	[sound of a donkey]
<i>niśáda</i>	[sound of an elephant]

<i>oṃ</i>	[acoustic root of creation, preservation, dissolution]
<i>hummm</i>	[sound of arousing <i>kulakuṇḍ'alinii</i>]
<i>phať</i>	[practication, i.e., putting a theory into practice]
<i>vaośať</i>	[expression of mundane knowledge]
<i>vaśať</i>	[welfare in the subtler sphere]
<i>sváhá</i>	[performing noble actions]
<i>namah</i>	[surrender to the Supreme]
<i>viśa</i>	[repulsive expression]
<i>amrta</i>	[sweet expression]

When any theory is put into effect the process of practication is made effective by chanting the sounds *hummm*, *phať*, *vaośať*, *vaśať*, *sváhá* and *namah*.

Finally, there is the *ájiṇá cakra*, located between the eyebrows*, which controls two propensities:

<i>apará</i>	[mundane knowledge]
<i>pará</i>	[spiritual knowledge].

* From the point of view of complete *yoga sádhaná*, three more *cakras* are used in higher yogic practices, apart from the generally known six *cakras* up to *ájiṇá cakra*. These are – *lalaná cakra*, *guru cakra* and *sahasrára cakra*. Therefore, in all, *cakras* are nine in number (*navacakra*). The location of *lalaná cakra* is between *vishuddha* and *ájiṇá cakra*. *Guru cakra* is just the inner portion of *sahasrára cakra*; *sahasrára* is above it, which has no corporeal existence. *Guru cakra* has, of course, corporeal existence. In the *Sahaja yoga sádhaná* of Ananda Marga there are uses of the *lalaná* and *guru cakras*. In *Viśeśa yoga sádhaná* there are uses of *sahasrára* and even higher stages beyond that.—Editor.

Cakra is a Sanskrit term while “plexus” is the Latin term. Besides the main nerve centres at the point of each *cakra*, there are also sub-centres where sub-glands are located** . These sub-glands influence [and control] the propensities attached to each *cakra*. This science is largely unknown today.

By performing asanas [postures for physico-psychic well-being] regularly, human beings can control the propensities attached to each *cakra*, and hence the thoughts which arise in their minds and their behaviour. This is because asanas have a profound effect on the glands and sub-glands. How? All *ásanas* have either a pressurizing or depressurizing effect on the glands and sub-glands. For example, *mayúrášana* [peacock posture] has a pressurizing effect on the *mañipura cakra*. The secretions of the glands and sub-glands of the *mañipura cakra* and the propensities associated with them will become more balanced if this asana is practised regularly. If someone has a great fear of public speaking, it means their *mañipura cakra* is weak. Through the regular practice of *mayúrášana*, this propensity will be controlled and fear will be eliminated. Other asanas may have a depressurizing effect on the *mañipura cakra*, and if these *asanas* are performed regularly the glands and sub-glands associated with the *cakra* will become less active. Increased glandular secretions generally make the propensities more active and vice versa. By practising *asanas* regularly, one can control the propensities and either increase or decrease their activity. So, spiritual aspirants should select the *asanas*

** The sub-centres of sub-glands are the real controlling points of all *virttis*.—Editor.

they perform very carefully. This effect of *asanas* on glands and sub-glands has never been revealed before.

Extreme fear causes excessive tension and pressure on the *mañipura cakra*. Normally when people experience fear, the afferent and efferent nerves are able to work properly. The tension in the nerves caused by the fear travels through the nervous system and reaches the brain, so excessive pressure does not occur. However, when a person becomes extremely afraid the balance between the afferent and efferent nerves is lost, and there is a build-up of tension and pressure around the *mañipura cakra*. If the information carried by the efferent nerves from the brain to the *mañipura cakra* is prevented from reaching its destination, the imbalance can cause a blockage in the region of the *anáhata cakra* which is a very complicated and sensitive part of the human body. A disturbance in this region can cause palpitations, excessive pressure on the heart, the inability to act decisively, and even a heart attack.

In human beings the thyroid and parathyroid glands are more developed than the lymphatic glands. Previously the lymphatic glands were more developed than they are today, but as human beings evolved, the thyroid and parathyroid glands became more active and the role of the lymphatic glands diminished. In monkeys, the opposite is the case: the lymphatic glands are more developed than the thyroid and parathyroid glands. The thyroid and parathyroid glands are concerned with psychic development and intellectual elevation, while the lymphatic glands are more concerned with physical activity, hence monkeys can jump higher and swing further than human beings. One of the reasons why human beings

are more evolved than monkeys is that their thyroid and parathyroid glands are more active.

Semen and lymph are not the same thing. When males are sexually aroused, the nerves in the testes get stimulated and lymph is converted into semen.

Joint hair grows near the lymphatic glands in the armpits and genital area. If this hair is removed, then the lymphatic glands tend to overheat, causing over-secretion, and this in turn decreases the function of the thyroid and parathyroid glands. There is an inverse relation between the lymphatic glands and the thyroid and parathyroid glands: if one is more active then the other is less developed and it becomes weak. For this reason, the joint hair should not be removed.

The process of controlling all the *cakras* and propensities was invented by Astavakra over two thousand years ago. He wrote the book *Aśtāvakra Saṁhitā*. He was a great saint and called this process *Rājadhīrāja* Yoga. He first taught this system of yoga to Alarka at Vakreswar in Bengal.

The human body is a biological machine. No body deviates from this rule – all physical bodies are biological machines. The different types of lessons in Ananda Marga sadhana [spiritual practices] are designed to strengthen the different *cakras* and control the propensities. *Guru dhyāna* [meditation on the guru] strengthens the *sahasrāra cakra*. If there is control over the *sahasrāra cakra*, then the body and mind can be controlled completely.

When a great person gives you a blessing, they generally do it by placing their hand on the *sahasrāra cakra*, which has a positive effect on all the other *cakras*. The higher propensities will be increased and the lower propensities will

be decreased. This kind of effect is not only produced by touch; it can also be caused by sound. When you do *sáshtaunga prañáma* [prostration] to a great personality and are verbally blessed as well, the sound of the blessing will have a positive effect on your whole being. Both the touch of the hand on the *sahasrára cakra* and the verbal blessing will increase your spiritual elevation.

You can only bless those you like. If you accept salutations from those you dislike, negative sentiments may arise in your mind, increasing the lower propensities and decreasing the higher propensities in those seeking your blessing. So you do not have the right to accept salutations from all people, and you should not automatically bless everyone.

The cranium of females is usually slightly smaller than that of males, consequently women have less nerve cells in the brain than men. But the fact is that men use a very small number of the nerve cells in their brains, and the same applies to women. Spiritual practices and higher pursuits utilize more and more nerve cells. Suppose a man and a woman learn sadhana at the same time, practise with the same sincerity and progress with the same speed – they will both achieve spiritual elevation. Now, suppose they both enjoy divine bliss after performing sadhana for the same number of years. If all or say ninety-nine per cent of the nerve cells in the brain of the woman are utilized, a lower percentage will be utilized by the man because he has more nerve cells in his brain.

Women have some propensities which are very strongly developed. In particular, women normally have great love and affection for their children. This is natural. But if the

expression of a particular propensity is excessive, it may have adverse consequences. For instance, most stepmothers love their own children more strongly than their stepchildren, and if the intensity of this affection is not controlled, it may create tensions and divisions in the family. Also, because of the affection women have for their children, they may not like to go outside the home, and if this is taken to extremes, it may lead to harmful isolation. Similarly, if a large number of people living in a particular region only stay in their own region out of blind love for their locality, it will be detrimental to the progress of society as a whole. Good relations with other regions will not be encouraged, and the trade and economic development of their region may be adversely affected.

Love and affection are very good attributes, but to protect oneself and society from their possible extreme expressions, the best path to follow is to channelize all one's love and affection towards *Parama Puruśa* [Supreme Consciousness]. This will expand the arena of one's love and accelerate one's march towards the Great. A person who has developed universal love will be able to do very great work in a very short time.*

Apexed Psychology

When the movement of the human mind is not in many lateral directions – north, south, east and west – but towards the Supreme Entity, then the mind becomes apexed, pinnacled. This pointed mind either merges in the Macrocosm, or gives up its individual existence in the Supreme Cognitive Faculty.

* The foregoing twenty-three paragraphs are from *Yoga Psychology*.—Editor.

In the time of Shiva yogis and bio-psychologists preferred cold climates. In those days they did all kinds of parapsychological research. Even now yogis run to the Himalayas for this purpose. Ananda Marga sadhana is a bio-psychological practice.

If, in a particular life, one performs sadhana but does not attain salvation, one will have to come back again. Under such circumstances one may or may not remember one's past life – it depends on the pituitary gland. Then, in the latter part of one's present life, say at the age of forty or later, if one's mind reaches the pineal gland, one will attain salvation.

Preferably, one should start bio-psycho-spiritual practice as early as possible after the age of five.* If that is not possible, one should definitely start sadhana by the age of thirteen, or after the sex glands develop and the sense of responsibility and dutifulness arises in the mind.

The pituitary plexus is very important in spiritual progress, especially the left side [from the viewpoint of the *sádhaka*]. If the left side of this plexus is developed and the right side

* "When children are five years old and attain some awareness, the parents, brothers, sisters or any guardian may initiate them in *Nāma Mantra* [the preliminary process of meditation]. They should be taught to sit in *padmāsana* [lotus posture], but instead of interlocking the fingers, they may rest one palm upon the other; and keep the spine erect. They will then be instructed to feel or imagine that everything around them, and whatever they visualize, is Brahma.

After this, at the age of twelve, the child should take initiation from an *ácārya/ā* in *Sádhāraṇa Yoga*, and at sixteen or afterwards, they should take initiation in *Sahaja Yoga* from the *ácārya/ā*. If considered essential, asanas may be taught before the age of sixteen." (*Ananda Marga Caryācarya Part 1*)

is not, after death one is reborn with a human body and continues practising sadhana. When a spiritual aspirant strikes the pineal gland, salvation is achieved. If both sides of the pituitary plexus are fully developed, one becomes self-knowing, if not all-knowing. (In Latin "all-knowing" is "omniscient", and in Sanskrit it is *trikáladarshii-sarvajña*.)*

In the case of Shiva, the pituitary gland is called Shiva's third eye, but it is actually His omniscience, through which He sees the three ages – past, present and future.

If one is unable to attain salvation in a particular life, one gets a human body in the next life and is guided by parapsychology. In the next life one remembers, up to the age of thirteen or fourteen, everything concerned with the past life, but as soon as the testes glands [or ovaries] start to function, one generally forgets the past. This is because as soon as the sex glands start functioning, one develops a special attraction for this earth. If one does not forget the past, one dies, usually at the age of thirteen, fourteen or fifteen, because one will not be able to adjust the past life with the present life. If one forgets the past, one will not die. Those who have attained salvation may or may not remember their past lives according to their own sweet will. This comes within the scope of parapsychology.**

* In Ananda Marga sadhana, apart from the lower *cakras*, the yoga practices related to apexed psychology are mostly concerned with the higher *cakras*, that is, from *ájñá* to *sahasrára*, including *guru cakra*. In fact, in order to get the highest fulfilment from this, the *sádhaka* is to reach different higher and higher strata of *Sahasrára*. In the higher sadhana of Ananda Marga all these processes are included.—Editor.

** The foregoing seven paragraphs are from *Yoga psychology*.— Editor.

Thoroughly Practical Aśtāuᅅga Yoga Sādhaná

Aśtāuᅅga Yoga Sādhaná in Ananda Marga

In the practical field the utility of things is determined by the mind. The feasibility of the codes of procedure and conduct is also determined by the mind. "To live in peace with food to eat and clothes to wear" is also done for the satisfaction of mind. And above all, no matter what "logy" or "ism" is propounded, the supporting doctrine – the "supportology", must depend on imaginativeness (mental sanction). Every mental or spiritual disease is not *máyáváda* or illusionism. Even by keeping contact between the earthly world and the human mind, spiritual philosophy can be established. Ananda Marga is a philosophy of this type.

Some of those who are comparatively imaginative regard the *kámamaya kośa* or the crude mind as the *rúh* or "soul"; and some identify the astral minds like the *atimánasa*, *vijiñánamaya* and *hirañyamaya kośas* with it. However, the real preceptor, possessed of knowledge of the divine truth, from whom you will learn the Brahmic or intuitional knowledge, will make you understand that the soul is a lot subtler than these *kośas* or shells of the mind, each of which is mutable, and so evanescent or transitory - the soul alone is eternal. So the happiness that you will get in the worship of spiritual knowledge will be permanent happiness, and that is why it is called *ánanda* or divine bliss. *Ánanda* is not

to be had from transitory objects. Transitory or temporal objects will come and go; sometimes they will make you laugh and sometimes they will make you cry. No matter how endearing temporal things may be, one day they will surely and undoubtedly leave you in the lurch, abjectly beggarly. But He will not make you wail; He is an eternal, non-evolutive, immutable Entity.

Yama said, "O Naciketá, the broad gateway to the realm of God lies open before you. One who has acquired a thorough knowledge of mortal objects has verily acquired the knowledge of both the perishable and the imperishable ones." With the development of mental faculties as one proceeds from transient happiness to permanent happiness or *ánanda*, one gets more and more inclined towards one's mental happiness in preference to physical joy. For the love of country or many such subtle happinesses, people make no bones about laying down their life. These are actually signs of the preponderance of the human mind. The happiness of cats and dogs is purely physical. In such receptacles, their mental happiness cannot have the priority. Beat them and then call them to eat some delectable food, and they will come running after it. Yet human beings are reluctant to stand the least dishonour or any little blow to their mind. A person who serves you under circumstantial pressure and keeps your mind constantly humoured by his sycophancy, is actually at heart not very pleased with you. They constantly try to escape the bondage of slavery. You cannot conquer the human mind through circumstantial pressure.

Through *astáun̄ga yoga*, as laid down in Ananda Marga, *sádhakas*, conscious of their body and self, can gradually

awaken their dormant mental power,* and with the help of their developed minds they can eventually establish themselves in the spiritual self. In this society – in this characteristic self they attain real *ānanda*. So, I say, learn intuitional knowledge from a proper preceptor. You cannot learn this through empirical knowledge. Intuitional knowledge cannot be gained from books. For this one has to go, with devotion and reverence, to a preceptor. Try to awaken your latent devotional sentiment. It will come to you, if you so wish. Once devotion is awakened, you shall get divine mercy without a doubt.

Mahad kṛpayaeva bhagavad kṛpāleshādvā.

–*Nārada Bhaktisūtra*

With the attainment of only a wee bit of divine grace the ego starts disappearing from the crude human body, *nityānitya viveka* gets awakened, and this discriminating judgment establishes the *sādhaka* in Brahmic consciousness. Remember, on the path of meditation, devotion is the paramount factor. Wherever there is devotion God's mercy is there – it has got to be.

Physical attachments are very difficult to give up – they die hard. Preservation of the crude body and attachment to the body are not one and the same thing. Yet where the preservation of the body is not jeopardized, or does not stand in danger, even then people are surprisingly attached to their physical body. At the time of an earthquake a mother runs

* The eight limbs of *aśtāuṅga yoga* are – *yama, niyama, asanas* (with *mudrās, bandhas* and *bedhas*), *prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna* and *samādhi*.—Editor.

out of the house, leaving her sleeping child in bed ; and then half way, when the thought of her child arises in her mind, she runs back again to save her child. The quicker the mother's remembrance of her child, the less her attraction for her own body. A mother who is above such attraction will think of her child first and take it away along with her. Through proper sadhana alone one is able to conquer such bodily [attachments] and all sorts of [other] attachments. All bondages of sensuous attractions of those who have been able to awaken their subtle selves through Ananda Marga *ástáungika* sadhana, are bound to be resolved.*

The Importance of Moral Discipline and Yama-Niyama Sadhana

Morality is the foundation of sadhana (spiritual practice). It must, however, be remembered that morality or good conduct is not the culminating point of the spiritual march. As a moralist one may set an ideal for other moralists, but to do this is not something worth mentioning for a sádha (spiritual aspirant). Sadhana in its very start, requires mental equilibrium. This sort of mental harmony may also be termed as morality....

Moral ideals must be able to furnish human beings with the ability as well as the inspiration to proceed on the path of sadhana. Morality depends on one's efforts to maintain a balance regarding time, place and person, and therefore there may be differences in the moral code. However, the ultimate end of moralism is the attainment of Supreme bliss

* The foregoing six paragraphs are from "Pravrtti and Nivrtti" in *Subhásita Samgraha Part 3.*—Editor.

and therefore there should not be any possibility of any imperfections of relativity. It cannot be said that the ultimate aim of human life is not to commit theft; what is desirable is that the tendency to commit theft should be eliminated. Not to indulge in falsehood is not the aim of life; what is important is that the tendency of telling lies should be dispelled from one's mind. The *sādhaka* starts spiritual practices with the principles of morality, of not indulging in theft or falsehood. The aim of such morality is attainment of such a state of oneness with Brahma that no desire is left for theft; and all tendencies of falsehood disappear.

In the *sadhana* of Ananda Marga, moral education is imparted with this ideal of oneness with Brahma, because *sadhana* is not possible without such a moral ideation. *Sadhana* devoid of morality will divert people again towards material enjoyments and at any moment they may use their mental power, acquired with much hardship, to quench their thirst for meagre physical objects. There are many who have fallen from the path of yoga or Tantra *sadhana* and are spending their days in disrepute and infamy. Whatever little progress they achieved through forcible control of their instincts, was lost in a moment's error in pursuit of mundane pleasures.

It must, therefore, be emphasized that even before beginning *sadhana*, one must follow moral principles strictly. Those who do not follow these principles should not follow the path of *sadhana*; otherwise they will bring about their own harm and that of others...

The first lesson of human conduct is *yama* *sadhana*. We shall discuss all the aspects of *yama* *sadhana*. You know that

yama consists of five principles – *ahimsá*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmacarya* and *aparigraha*...

The practice of these five principles achieves control by different processes. The word *saṁyama* in Sanskrit means “regulated conduct”. It should be clearly understood that *saṁyama* does not imply destroying something or somebody... The correct meaning of *brahmacarya* is “to remain attached to Brahma”. *Brahmaṇi vicaraṇam iti brahmacaryam*... The meaning of practising *brahmacarya* sadhana is to treat the objects with which one comes in contact as different expressions of Brahma and not as crude forms. By means of such an ideation, even though the mind wanders from one object to another, it does not get detached from Brahma because of the Cosmic feeling taken for each and every object. As a result of this *preya* sadhana [extroversial approach] is converted into *shreya* sadhana [introversial approach] and *kāma* into *prema*. [*Preya* means “attraction towards crude material objects”, while] *shreya* means “attraction towards the ultimate reality”; *kāma* means “desire for finite objects” and *prema* means “desire for the Infinite”.

Many misinterpret *brahmacarya* to mean “preservation of semen”. It should be remembered that neither the word “Brahma” nor the word *carya* has any relevance to the word “semen”. Moreover, even physiologically such a preservation of semen is a bluff... It is certainly true that if the correct meaning of the word *brahmacarya* is accepted (that is, to feel the Cosmic Entity in every material object), control in life becomes essential, but such control does not imply disobeying the laws of nature. Control means to abide by nature’s laws... The prevention of the discharge of semen

by some special measures or prevention of its surplus formation by fasting is ordinarily termed as so-called *brahmacarya* (*laokika brahmacarya*). For those who are not married, this so-called *brahmacarya* (which is really not *brahmacarya*) has some meaning, because it reduces the possibility of sexual excitement and thus prevents a discharge which may occur due to excitement while awake, asleep or dreaming...

The practice of *brahmacarya* is held in higher esteem than the other four items of *yama*. Similarly, in *niyama*, the most important item is *iishvara prañidhāna*. To be more clear and concrete we may say that out of the ten principles of *yama* and *niyama* the remaining eight are subordinated parts of the two items, *brahmacarya* and *and iishvara prañidhāna*. While dealing with their specialties, we may say that *yama* sadhana is the practice of the physical and psychic strata while *niyama* sadhana carries equal weight in the mundane, supramundane and spiritual strata [The five items of *niyamā* sadhana are: *shaoca*, *santośa*, *tapah*, *svādhyāya* and *iishvara prañidhāna*]...*

Vashiikāra-siddhi is only possible for those spiritual aspirants who follow the principles of *yama* and *niyama* and perform Brahma sadhana. Those who do not, do immeasurable harm to themselves and the entire world by the strength of their *kśipta*, *mudhā* and *vikśipta samādhis*, having attained some degree of control over their organs through the process of yoga sadhana. In the absence of the sadhana of self-control they use their mental power for petty selfish ends. After

* The foregoing eight paragraphs are from *A Guide to Human Conduct*. In order to know more details about *Yama-Niyama*, readers are advised to read this particular book.—Editor.

practising yoga or Tantra sadhana for a while, these immoral individuals begin to harm others for the sake of their own petty egoistic aggrandizement, and eventually end up in the blind alley of inertness, so, I entreat you to follow the right path. The same yoga of self-control which is so beneficial for both individuals and the collectivity, is so dangerous when it is devoid of morality. Hence, everyone must be strict in following the principles of *yama* and *niyama*.

*Naeva vácá na manasá práputumí shakyo na cakśúśa
Astiiti vruvato'nyatra katham tadupalabhyate.*

Those who are not established in self-control cannot attain Brahma – their Brahma remains confined to books and tall talks. They can never expand their minds to absorb spiritual knowledge.*

* The foregoing two paragraphs are from "This World and the Next" in *Subhásita Samgrha Part 4*.—Editor.

Psycho-Spiritual Practices of Ishvara Prañidhāna

Ishvara prañidhāna means “to move with accelerated speed towards that Supreme Shelter, God”. Therefore, *Ishvara prañidhāna* is absolutely based on *bhāva*, or ideation – it is a mental effort in its entirety. Shouting at the top of one’s voice for a big crowd to assemble, showing devotion by beating drums, and so on, have no place in it. Your *Ishvara* is not deaf. Don’t shout to convey your mental feelings to Him....

One will have to detach the mind from worldly propensities while meditating upon *Ishvara* (God). First the mind will have to be withdrawn from the limited “I” feeling, and focused at a point. Then one will take the thought of the Macrocosm around that point, with the help of the ideation of the *mantra* prescribed according to one’s own *saṁskāra* (mental potentiality). He is the subtlest Entity; therefore He can be realized only through feeling and by no other means....

Mental *japa* is the best process of *Ishvara prañidhāna*. One’s ideation should be expressed mentally and the mind should be its witnessing entity. If this mental *japa* is practised regularly and properly after learning the same from a competent teacher, the mind will progress in a particular flow, a forward movement on the path of *pratisaiṅcara* of Brahma....

It is desirable to practise various lessons of *sadhana* alone, in a lonely place, but *Ishvara prañidhāna* can be practised both individually as well as collectively. In collective

Ishvara prañidhāna the combined mental efforts work together, and so give rise to the expression of the higher signs in a very short time. Therefore, like all other aspects of sadhana, *Ishvara prañidhāna* should positively be practised alone, in a lonely place; but in addition, do not miss the opportunity of collective *Ishvara prañidhāna* whenever some of you conveniently meet together. The indomitable mental force aroused as a result of collective *Ishvara prañidhāna* will help you solve any problem, great or small, on this earth. It is for this reason that you should always be zealous to attend weekly *dharmacakra* regularly.*

The Fundamental Principle of Ishvara Prañidhāna – Oneness in Objectivity Results in Oneness in Subjectivity

...The human being, *mānuśa*, the possessor of ego, has accumulated in his or her self the experiences undergone during that person's past living stages. That person's living momentum knows nothing about the phases ahead. The momentum of previous lives naturally creates a longing for material happiness, or love for *jada*, and people remain unaware of the love of Consciousness, as this stage or path is untrodden by them. Who likes to take the unknown risk of an untrodden path? One who has a longing for *jada* lacks the courage to experiment with spiritual truth and to follow the path shown by the *rśis*.

Ordinarily, people do not follow this path of courage. They think of the need of some superhuman help for their

* The foregoing four paragraphs are from *Ananda Marga Caryācārya Part 1*.—Editor.

carnal pleasures. They feel satisfied by creating imaginary gods or are misled into worshipping the mental creations of others. These are all worships of *jadatá*, or the crude.

According to its fundamental properties, mind-stuff takes the form of the object it entertains. Because of the constant superimposition of physical entities and mundane waves on the psychic body, the mental waves, for the sake of an adjustment, take the length of the material waves, representing a cruder psychic projection. Such a crude mind, for the sake of psycho-physical parallelism, chooses a physical structure cruder than its previous objective. This process of retracing the movement is the path of negative or counter-*pratisaiñcara*.

In this negative *pratisaiñcara*, the unit mind can take a backward jump, that is, according to the change in mental wavelength, the physical structure may take the form of a tree, an underdeveloped metazoan or even a protozoan, or even that of an inanimate object such as stone, gold, or silver. The mental structure of the money-minded capitalist may convert itself into a paper note of that person's choice.

Even after this retracing of the destined path, the ever-merciful Macrocosm helps the ego-lost mind, and under the forces of external pressure and internal clash, the path of evolution, that is, movement towards *pratisaiñcara*, recommences. The unit mind regains its lost status. It may, however, take millions of years to recover its lost status.

It is not that a human has the chance of negative *pratisaiñcara* only, due to his or her evolved ego; this ego renders positive help in the movement towards *Puruṣottama*. In the animate phase, the imagination of many works in harmony with the Supreme One. So if the unit mind at that

stage of evolution directs its potentialities towards longing for the Great, the unit mind can accelerate its progress (that is, movement towards Puruśottama), and its progress can be many times speedier than it was in the stages where the citta, being in the crudest form, had not developed self-will but had to move according to the desire of the Macrocosm. In this march towards the supramundane, the unit mind gradually feels a closer touch of Puruśottama, and as the proximity of the two increases, the psychic gap between the reflected consciousness and the reflecting plate goes on diminishing and finally these two merge together. This supreme union of Puruśottama and the unit mind is known as *yoga: Saṁyogo yogo ityukto jīvātmā Paramātmanoh.*

According to the urge of *pratisaiṅcara* the unit mind goes on dilating because of the ever-increasing reflected density of the Macrocosmic Nucleus. Here, the microcosm acts as a mirror and the reflected consciousness is just like the reflection of the rays of the sun, in that, while being reflected, He also associates Himself with the plate. The association inculcates the sameness of the quality and so the associative reflection of the Nucleus – Puruśottama – will develop in the unit mind the broadness of His Cosmic Self and the final culmination of the march of this unitary self, or microcosm. The sameness of the unit and the Cosmic Mind is established, and the finality in association will result in the merger of the microcosm into Macrocosm. This is what is known as *mukti.*

Thus, if the finite subjectivity (unit mind) dwells on the infinite One as its objectivity, it results in the gradual expansion of its self and this enlarged mind finally merges with Puruśottama. Hence, such a stage is nothing but mental

liberation. Here, one of our psycho-philosophic theories is apt: "Oneness in objectivity results in oneness in subjectivity." So, when the objectivity of the microcosm gets converted into the objectivity of the Macrocosm, the *jīvātman* – the subjective counterpart of the microcosm – is transformed into the subjective counterpart of the Macrocosm, that is, *Puruṣottama*.

The fundamental principle of our *Iishvara Prañidhāna* is based on this psycho-spiritual theory.

28 May 1959

The Resultant of *Iishvara Prañidhāna* is Savikalpa Samādhi

Prañidhāna is devotion attained through *japakriyā* or repetition of one's *Iśta mantra*. Thus *iishvara prañidhāna* is the incantation of the name of the Supreme Being, with cosmic ideation. *Iishvara prañidhāna* does not mean to escape from the world, nor to avoid one's responsibilities like a coward. On the contrary, *iishvara prañidhāna* is a dynamic spiritual practice performed with the courage of a lion. The more one masters the technique, the more the mental wave becomes straightened, and the easier it becomes. Through *iishvara prañidhāna* one can reach the state of *asamprajñāta samādhi*, yet for this attainment *dhyāna* is actually more effective.

Iishvara prañidhāna is a more effective practice for the attainment of *savikalpa samādhi*, because during *iishvara prañidhāna* the mind is temporarily concentrated in the state of *ekagrabhūmi* (the fourth stage of mental development – the state of one-pointedness of mind). Whatever little amount

of "I" feeling still persists can be finally discarded through the practice of *dhyána*. *Asamprajñáta samádhi* is attained following the complete elimination of the "I" feeling.

To ideate on *Nirguña* Brahma [Non-attributional Brahma] is impossible. Unit beings can only ideate on *Saguña* Brahma (the *Puruśa* liberated from bondage) and *Táraka Brahma* (the tangential point between *Saguña* and *Nirguña*). Ideation can only occur when both the subject and object continue to exist. Ideation for one who has remained free from *klesha* [afflictions], *karma* [actions], *vipáka* [requital of *saṁskáras*] and *áshaya* [bundle of unserved *saṁskáras*] since eternity is meaningless. Microcosms undergo unserved afflictions due to their original actions. Afflictions cause the requital of accumulated *saṁskáras* and that leads to the formation of a bundle of unserved *saṁskáras*.

The one who meditates on that Entity who has no mind or feelings, will never be showered with grace. How can the ever-free *Nirguña Puruśa* shower his grace on human beings? Only *Saguña* Brahma and *Táraka Brahma* can shower grace. Those unit beings who have liberated themselves from bondage will remain liberated. They become one with *Saguña* Brahma and are thus called great personalities or *Mahápuruśa*. Only they have the right to shower grace upon microcosms.

Infused with divine grace, microcosms make rapid progress along the path of *iishvara prañidhána*. They attain Supreme bliss by surrendering their individualities to the Supreme Entity. In so doing they liberate themselves permanently from the bondages of *Prakṛti*. This sadhana of salvation which ultimately results in *samádhi* is not a mental distortion. The mental state it creates can neither be called positive nor

negative. The practice of sadhana for the attainment of *samádhi* is the way to progress along the path of spiritual vigour. There is no room for escapism on this spiritual march.*

Auto-Suggestion and Outer-Suggestion in the Japakriyá of Iishvara-Prañidhána

Human existence is trifarious. Human beings have a spiritual body, a psychic body and a quinquemental body – this physical structure – hands, legs, ears, nose, and so on. When the flow is towards the Supreme Desideratum, there must be an adjustment amongst these three flows of human spirit, human mind, and human entity. There must be a parallelism between the spiritual flow and the psychic one, and there must be parallelism between the psychic wave and the entitative wave.

For progress in entitative flow, one is to lead a pure life, a moralistic life, a life based on moral principles. Do not do anything bad. What is “bad”? “Bad” is that which depraves human existence. Follow a strict code of morality. Live a pure life, a neat and clean life. Be strict in the Sixteen Points. What will happen? Your entitative flow will get purified and will be in parallelism with your psychic wave.

For maintaining parallelism between your psychic waves and spiritual waves, what are you to do? You are to follow the auto-suggestion and outer-suggestion of incantation*. What is “outer-suggestion”? If you are in the company of good people - that company – their discourses and talks will

* The foregoing thirteen paragraphs are from “Pratisaincara and Manah in *Idea and Ideology*, and from “Psychic Assimilation in Psycho-spiritual Practice” in *Subhásita Samgraha Part 8.*—Editor.

influence your mind, and your mind will be purified. The curvature will be less and the flow will be straightened. This is outer-suggestion through incantations. Now, what is auto-suggestion through incantation? It is doing meditation and *japa* (*mantra* repetition) as per the instruction of the *ácárya*. This is auto-suggestion. These incantative auto-suggestions and outer-suggestions will purify your mind, and the mind will be in the position to maintain proper parallelism with your spiritual flow.

What is spiritual flow? For spiritual flow, you need not go through so many books and so many scriptures. You need not do anything else; only all your propensities should be suspended and brought to a particular point, a particular gland and goaded unto the *Parama Puruśa*. When you love *Parama Puruśa* with all your propensities, good and bad, then that collective flow of your mind is "devotion". By dint of one's devotion, one can attain the Supreme Stance. One gets *Parama Puruśa*.

So, devotion is the only secret in spiritual movement, and the incantative outer-suggestion and auto-suggestion can help you in psychic movement...*

Regarding psychic waves and parallelism, I said that there are two things regarding auto-suggestion and outer-suggestion.

Auto-suggestion is done through – what? Your own incantation. The incantation – what is it? Is it an internal or external acoustic expression?

When you say something, [suppose] you are saying,

* The foregoing five paragraphs are from "Microcosm and Its Object of Ideation" in *Subhāsita Saṁgraha Part 12*.— Editor.

“Rama” - it is a vocal expression, an external expression. So, while using your incantation, what do you do? Just the internal vocal expression. When you think, what do you do? You say something internally.

What is “thinking”? “To say something internally”. To “think” means “to speak within”. Just try to think something, to speak within your mind. In that case, no one else will hear. And when you speak externally, use the vocal cord externally, then others may hear. And there is a third style of expression. There is external expression but only you can hear. It is called what? What is its name in Sanskrit? *Upámshu*. (speaks loudly). *Ráma*, *Ráma*, *Ráma*. External vocal expression. [Baba closes his eyes and pauses] Internal. [Baba mouths the words “Rama”] You can hear, others can not. *Upámshu*.

I told you in Tainan that actual progress is on the spiritual level, not on the physical or psychic level. Your progress is auto-suggestion or outer suggestion, when you say something like... “Sudarshan, be an ideal man. Sudarshan be an ideal man,” When you say internally, what is it? It is auto-suggestion. Sudarshan is giving a suggestion to Sudarshan. The conscience goads Sudarshan’s mind towards the idealistic stance of Sudarshan. “Be an ideal man.” - the mental picture is in the mind of Sudarshan, and the conscience of Sudarshan says, “Sudarshan, be an ideal man.” The conscience of Sudarshan goads [him] towards that ideal figure. Do you follow the psychology? What is it? It is auto-suggestion. “I must be a good person. I must be good. I must do something concrete for the world. I won’t be afraid of anybody in this world. I must be good. I must do something concrete for the world. No power in heaven or

earth can check me.” What are these things? Auto-suggestion. I think now the term “auto-suggestion” is clear to you. I used the word in DMC.

When someone else is saying, “Sudarshan, be a good boy. Sudarshan, be an ideal man. Sudarshan, start your life afresh, forgetting all your past mistakes and misdeeds.” what are these things? Outer suggestion. Suggestions coming from the outside.

What is the best auto-suggestion, on what you are to do? You are to use your incantation, always use your *Iśta mantra*. That is the best auto-suggestion. “Auto” means – what? “Auto” means “self”. “Autonomy” means “self-government”. “Automatic” – “done by self”.

Then what is the best outer suggestion? When you are in good company, from that good company there comes outer suggestion. Here you are getting outer suggestion. This outer suggestion strengthens the vitality of auto-suggestion. So, outer suggestion is a necessity, it is indispensable for a human’s spiritual progress. This outer suggestion is called *satsaṅga* in Sanskrit.*

What is *satsaṅga*? Have you understood what is “outer suggestion”? So many good discussions are there. These

* One of the chief characteristics of a *siddha iśta mantra* is this, that it must be of two types – some are related to auto-suggestion, whereas some to outer-suggestion. At the time of *sabiija dīkśā*, the *ácārya* or *ácāryā* imparts the relevant *iśta mantra*, explaining its meaning, to the *sádhaka* or *sádhikā*, applicable according to the specific *saṁskáras* of the initiate. That is, this must be related to either auto-suggestion or outer-suggestion. The other meaning of outer-suggestion is “good company” (*satsaṅga*), as explained by the author.—Editor.

discussions will have an effect on your mind – the effect of outer suggestion. Now, all company or all associations cannot give you outer-suggestion. If you are in the company of thieves, they can say, “Steal, steal, go on stealing.” This is also a sort of outer suggestion. In the case of auto-suggestion, you are sure that there will be cent per cent success because of that *mantra*, that incantation. In the case of outer-suggestion, there will be good company and bad company, and the outer suggestion coming from bad company may be detrimental to your progress; and not only your progress, but the progress of the entire humanity. If you become a giant, then so many people will be destroyed by you, so there must be a careful selection of company. That is what in Sanskrit is called *satsaṅga*: *sat* means “good”, and *saṅga* means “association” = *satsaṅga*. *Sadvipra*, “one who is a good intellectual”.

What is good and what is bad? A constant fight is going on between good and bad. In your mind, in our society, in the country, in the entire human society is a never-ending fight between good and bad. When good is established over bad, when the result goes in favour of good, that result is known as “conscience”, the authentic and established power of discrimination. It is called “conscience” in Latin. As a result of the fight between good and bad, when the resultant goes in favour of good, that resultant is called the “power of discrimination” or “conscience”. The English meaning of “conscience” is “power of discrimination”. For “conscience”, the Sanskrit term is *viveka*.

Now, what is “good” and “bad”? What is *sat* and what is *asat*? The physical, mental, or spiritual action that helps you; or your association in developing your spiritual life that

lessens the distance between you and your Lord, is “good”. And your physical, psychic, or spiritual actions that increase the distance between you and your Lord is “bad”. That which encourages the proximity between you and your Lord, your goal, your idealistic goal; when the distance is decreased or lessened, it is “good”. And when it is increased, it is “bad”.

So, while selecting company, you should be careful whether its discourses, its activities, its plans or programmes are to decrease the distance between you and your Lord. This is *satsaṅga*, good company. Otherwise it is *asatsaṅga*. Even intellectual discussions of a high order may not be *satsaṅga* if they have nothing to do with lessening the distance between you and your Lord, you and your Goal. That type of intellectual discourse, in my language, is called “intellectual extravaganza”. *Baoddhika amitavyayitá*. *Satsaṅga* and *asatsaṅga*. When it goads you on the path of the Lord, it is *satsaṅga*. From this moment, you should always try to have *satsaṅga*. That *satsaṅga* will give you outer-suggestion.

Those who are engaged in *satsaṅga* and lessening the distance between the Lord and the aspirant, their actions are called *puṇya*. And those who try to increase the gap, their actions are known as *pátaka*. *Puṇya* and *pátaka* – virtue and vice.

In the scriptures, it is said, *Kuru puṇyam ahorátram*

“You should always be engaged in doing *puṇya*.” *Ahorátram* – “day and night”. *Ahoh* means “sunrise to sunset”, not to zero hours in the night; sunrise to sunset. And *rátri* means “sunset to sunrise”. *Ahoratri* means “twenty-four hours”.

Kuru puñyam ahoratram

You should be engaged in *puñyam* – virtuous work – for all twenty-four hours.

You may ask, “How can I do *puñyam* while sleeping? In the wakeful state, I may do *puñyam*, but while sleeping, how can I do *puñyam*? Can you? Yes, you can. What’s the difference between habit and nature? When habit becomes one with your existence, it is called “nature”.

Suppose you are a teetotaler. What is the meaning of “teetotaler”? Now, a friend offered you some alcohol, then after three days, the friend offered you another glass of alcohol and you accepted it. After that it is your habit that you won’t be able to be without alcohol. Then it is a habit. Finally, alcohol will be drinking you, you won’t be drinking it. That is why the doctor will tell you to stop it. Everyone will tell you to stop because you have become helpless. It has become your nature. By constant practice or under pressure of circumstances, one becomes habituated, and by encouraging this habituation, it finally becomes [one’s] nature.

This is auto-suggestion. “Now it is time for my meditation”, what is it? You are trying to habituate yourself. But when you cannot live without *pújā*, then it has become your nature. Try to make it what – habit or nature? Nature. I never take a drop of water without doing *pújā*. Why? It has become my nature. And I want that all of you should make it your nature also.

When auto-suggestion will become your nature, what will happen? While sleeping you will be repeating that *japa* (repetition of *mantra*) in your unconscious mind. You are

sleeping, so your conscious mind is not active. You are not having any dreams, so your sub-conscious mind is not active either. But the unconscious mind is there. Automatically there will be *japa*. Twenty-four hours you are doing *puñya*. While you are sleeping, you will be engaged in doing *japa* and using your incantation. *Kuru puñyam ahorátram*. Be engaged in doing *puñya* all twenty-four hours.

You should always encourage the company of *satsaunga* – those who are engaged in *puñya*, and always avoid the *saunga* of *pátakiis*-[those who are engaged in *pátaka*]. That company will deprave people, degenerate people. Among *pátaka*, there are two classes, two branches. One is *pápa*, the other is *pratyaváya*. *Pápa* means to do the “don’ts” of life. Don’t steal. If you steal, it will be *pápa* because you are doing the “don’ts” of life. *Pratyaváya* means not to do the “dos” of life. You should help a person in distress. You should help the suffering humanity. These are the “dos” of life. If you do not do them, you are doing *pratyaváya*. *Pápa* plus *pratyaváya* is *pátaka*. There are two kinds of *pátaka*.

Always be engaged in *puñya* and always avoid *pátaka*. Always try to be with those people who are engaged in *puñya*. Never be with those people who are engaged in *pátaka*. This is because these *puñyavána* people who are engaged in *puñya* will give you outer-suggestion, good outer-suggestion, positive outer-suggestion. *Pátakiis* will give you negative outer-suggestion, and their suggestions are detrimental to the progress of human society.*

* The foregoing twenty-two paragraphs are from “Auto Suggestion and Outer suggestion” in *Ánanda Vacanámrtam Part 14*.—Editor.

Iishvara-Prañidhāna – an Effective Practice of Controlling One's Mind

The process of concentration is, in the first phase, physico-psychic; and in the second phase, psycho-spiritual. A person has a physical body, a mind, and a spirit; so in the first phase the intuitional practice should be physico-psychic, starting from the arena of physicality and culminating in the common point of physicality and mentality. That is, the approach is physico-psychic, and in the next phase the approach will be psycho-spiritual, starting from the psychic realm and ending in the realm of spirituality.

The human mind is moving towards so many propensities; there are so many propensities in the human mind; and according to the complexity of the mind, the physical body also becomes more and more complex. The physical structure of an animal is less complex than that of a human being, because the human mind is also more complex than that of an animal. The number of glands in a human body is more than that in an animal structure, in an animal body. Now, the first phase of the process is physico-psychic – that is, withdrawing the mind from different physical objects and bringing it to a particular point, and directing that point towards the realm of the mind. And next is a phase of withdrawing the mind from different mental objects, from different mental pabula, and directing it towards the Supreme Subjectivity. Now, this process of movement is the process of concentration [*Iishvara Prañidhāna*].*

* Ananda Marga sadhana begins with the practice of concentration or *Iishvara Prañidhāna*.—Editor.

Concentration is a major sadhana, a major intuitional sadhana, but there are certain helping sadhanas. Asanas and *prāṇāyāma*, for example, are helping items. They are not sadhana, they are called *sadhanauṅga*. Now if, during this process of movement, this phase of movement, the mind becomes heavy, it will not be able to move forward. Suppose you are crossing a river. If the boat becomes heavy due to water percolation, what will happen? You will not be able to cross the river. You will have to arrange to pump the water out.

So, what is this process of pumping out the water in the case of the human mind? It means freeing the mind from mundane impurities. And how to free the mind from mundane impurities? By rendering selfless service to society without any restriction of caste, creed, nationality, or sex. ...*

* The foregoing four paragraphs are from "How to Concentrate" in *Ānanda Vacanāmṛtam Part 23*.—Editor.

Asanas, Mudrás and Bandhas

The relation between the physical body and the mind is very close. Mental expression is brought about through the *vrttis*, and the predominance of the *vrttis* depends on different glands of the body. There are many glands in the body and from each there is a secretion of a particular hormone. If there is any defect in the secretion of hormones or any defect in a gland, certain *vrttis* become excited. For this reason, we find that in spite of having a sincere desire to follow the moral code, many persons cannot do so; they understand that they should do meditation, but they cannot concentrate their minds because their minds become extroverted due to the external excitement of this or that propensity. If people want to control the excitement of these propensities, they must rectify the defects of their glands. Asanas help the spiritual aspirant to a large extent in this task, so they are an important part of *sadhana*.

... No one should risk harm by practising asanas and *mudrás* without the permission of an *ácarya*... *Mudrás* are almost the same thing as asanas but incorporate more ideation.

Examples of Some Asanas and How to Perform them

Utkatā kúrmakāsana [difficult tortoise posture]:
Bring the right leg over the right shoulder. Then bring the left leg over the left shoulder and place it on the right

ankle. Interlock the fingers firmly and hold them forward in the namaskára position. Duration – half a minute. Practise four times.

***Jañila utkañásana* [difficult chair posture]:** Squat down, supporting the entire weight of the body on the big toes. Grasp the waist on each side with the hands, the buttocks resting on the heels. Duration – half a minute. Practise four times.

***Utkañá pashcimottañásana* [difficult back-upwards posture]:** Lie in a supine position and extend the arms backwards, keeping them close to the ears. Rise while exhaling and insert the face between the knees. Make sure that the legs remain straight. Grasp both the big toes with the hands. Remain in this state for eight seconds. Now resume the original posture while inhaling. Practise eight times in this way.

***Kukkuñásana* [cock posture]:** Assume the position of *padmāsana* and insert the hands and forearms in between the respective lower legs and thighs. Then raise the whole body, supporting the weight on the hands. Look forward. Duration – half a minute. Practise four times.

***Tuládaññásana* [balance posture]:**

(i) Standing on the left foot, direct the other foot backward and raise it. Grasp the waist on either side with the respective hand, and then bend the trunk and the head forward such that the head, the trunk and the leg (extended backward) are parallel to the floor.

(ii) Standing on the right foot, repeat the process. Duration – half a minute. Practise four times.*

Examples of Some Mudrás and How to Perform Them

Mudrás are almost the same thing as asanas but incorporate more ideation. The rules for *mudrás* are similar to those for asanas, but there is no restriction regarding the nostrils. The number of *mudrás* is also large. A list of a few necessary *mudrás* is given here.

* The foregoing eight paragraphs are from *Ananda Marga Caryácarya Part 3*. Elsewhere, the author has mentioned the benefits of these asanas. Some of these are:

Utkáá kúrmakásana – beneficial for diseases of the joints, and also for weight-lifters or those who habitually carry heavy loads.

Jaáíla utkáásana – for those suffering from diseases such as beriberi, elephantiasis, and also for those undergoing strenuous training or serving in the military, paramilitary or policeforce.

Utkáá pashcimottánásana – beneficial for syphilis, duodenal ulcers, diabetes, gout, tuberculosis, asthma, leucoderma, nocturnal emission, obesity and displaced uterus. There are certain restrictions for this asana and, as with all asanas, it should not be practiced without the guidance of an *Ácáryá*.

Kukkuúásana – beneficial for those suffering from tuberculosis, and weakness of the hands and legs.

Tuládaándásana – Beneficial for weakness of the legs, for those who practice sports, and adolescents.

Asanas must not be practiced without the instructions of an *ácárya* or *ácáryá*. Apart from these five asanas, the rules for performing asanas, descriptions of thirty-seven more asanas, dos and don'ts, rules for massaging, *shavásana* etc., are included in the above-mentioned book. Moreover, it is most beneficial to read the author's *Yogic Treatments and Natural Remedies*, in order to know the benefits of different asanas, their application in specific diseases, and various natural and herbal remedies.—Editor.

1) *Utkṣēpa Mudrá* : This *mudrá* should be practised in bed immediately upon waking. While lying on the back, one should flex both the arms and legs, bringing them over the chest, and then immediately return them vigorously to the extended position. After doing this three or four times, sit up in bed and drink a glass of cold water without allowing the water to touch your teeth. After this you should expose the navel area to the air, and walk up and down in this way for some time in the open air.

2) *Uddāyana mudrá*: Standing, place the hands above the knees and bend forward a little. Gradually breathe out, to a state of complete exhalation. Keeping the breath out, draw the abdomen and lower abdomen inward as hard as possible, to touch the spine. Maintain this position for eight seconds. Then gradually inhale fully. Practise eight times.

3) *Vāyavii mudrá*: Standing erect, press the nipples with the third joints of the middle fingers of both hands. The remaining fingers will stay in their natural positions on either side of the middle fingers. Now bring both the elbows backward while inhaling. After complete inhalation, exhale. The elbows should be relaxed a little when exhaling. Practise this *mudrá* with the eyes closed, concentrating the mind on the *anáhata cakra*. Practise seven times.*

* The foregoing four paragraphs are from *Ananda Marga Caryácarya Part 3*. Elsewhere, the author has mentioned about the benefits of these *mudrás*:

Vāyavii mudrá or *Vāyavii práñáyama* – beneficial in the treatment of tuberculosis, asthma, blood pressure and related problems.

Examples of Bandhas and How to Perform Them

...First the mind has to be fixed on the *kírma nádíi* [energy channels related to the vocal cord] located in the throat region (*kańtha*), then the *vayus* [ten vital airs in the human body] have to be suspended. The the gates of the *indriyas* [ten motor and sensory organs] will have to be closed, and finally, the network of nerves in the neck and the throat will have to be inflated and kept in the same condition for some time. The whole process is known as *jálandhara bandha* (*jálam + dhr + ac = jálandhara*). The practice of *jálandhara bandha* brings the network of nerve fibres in the throat region under control. As a result, human beings can create sounds of different intensities and frequencies with the help of the strength of their vocal chords. According to Tantra, the power [*shakti* in Sanskrit] that operates in the practice of this *jálandhara bandha* is called *jálandharii shakti*. In the past, this *jálandhara bandha* or *jálandhara mudrá* used to be practised widely in western part of India. The place which was familiar as its common *piitha* or centre is still known as Jálandhar. Perhaps some of you still call the place Jallundhar [without *á*] by mistake. No, it is not

Ud'd'ayana mudrá – beneficial for diseases related to the pancreas, kidneys, lower belly and hydrocele.

Uk'sépa Mudrá – this helps very much in regularly keeping the bowels –clear, and also keeps the body and mind fresh and ready for work throughout the day.

In the same book, the author has mentioned the guidelines for other *mudrás*. These are – *párthivii mudrá*, *ámhasii mudrá*, *ágneyii mudrá*, *ákáshii mudrá*, *mánasii mudrá*, *agnisára mudrá*, *kákacaiñcu mudrá*, *trimuńda mudrá*, *ashvinii mudrá* and *vajrolii mudrá*.—Editor.

Jallundhar – it is Jálándhara. The meaning of the word ‘Jallundhar’ is “water- reservoir” or “dam”; It can also be used to mean *jalabandha* or *kabandh* or “barrage”. The city Jallundhar of the Punjab does not mean this. It was a centre of the practice of Tantra and yoga.

In Yoga and Tantra special kinds of exercises of a bunch of arteries in some parts of the human body are performed with the help of *siitkárii mudrá* [or *siitkárii kumbhaka*]. To facilitate the easy flow of bloodstream, the practitioners of yoga and Tantra in ancient times, used to perform this *siitkárii mudrá*. They would do it standing or sitting by the side of a large body of water...*

Bandhatraya Yoga –

1) **Mahámudrá:** Sitting down, press the *múládhára cakra* with the left heel and extend the right leg forward. Breathe in deeply, and at the same time contract the urinary sphincter muscles. Grasp the sole of the extended foot firmly with both hands, and maintaining *jálándhara Bandha* (clamping the chin against the chest), hold the breath. Retain this position for half a minute. Then relax the hands and also *jálándhara bandha*, and, sitting erect, breathe out.

2) **Mahábandha:** Press the *múládhára cakra* with the left heel and press the *svádhiśhána* with the right. Breathe in and simultaneously imagine that the urinary sphincter muscles are being raised. Apply *jálándhara bandha*, and after placing the thumbs over the waist, press the sides of the genitary organ with the eight remaining fingers. Maintain this position

* The foregoing two paragraphs are from *Shabda Cayaniká*.– Editor.

for half a minute, and then, releasing the hands and relaxing *jálandhara bandha*, breathe out.

3) **Mahávedha**: Press the *múládhára* with the left heel and the *svádhisthána* with the right. Contract both the anal and the urinary sphincter muscles hard while breathing out. Both the thumbs will rest over the waist. With the remaining eight fingers, try to raise the anal and the urinary sphincters. *Jálandhara bandha* should be held in the meantime. Retain this posture for half a minute. Release the hands and *jálandhara bandha*, breathe in, and at the same time relax the anal and urinary sphincters. Pressing the right heel to the *múládhára* in a like manner, practise *mahámudrá*, *mahábandha* and *mahávedha*.inn*

* The foregoing three paragraphs are from *Ananda Marga Caryácarya Part 3*. Elsewhere, the author has mentioned that *bandhatraya yoga* benefits the sufferers of dysentery, diarrhoea, dyspepsia, seminal weakness and displaced uterus.—Editor.

Práñáyáma Sadhana

Práñáyáma – A Practice to Increase the Power of Concentration and Ideation

The greater the control a person has over the *práñah*, the stronger and more expanded will be the *citta's sthirabhúmi* [state of stability of mind], and the greater its power of reaction. *Citta*, the object of the *práñah*, is static in principle (*tamoguñátmaka*), due to its passivity. Accordingly, the mutative principle is predominant in the motor organs, and the sentient principle in the sensory organs. The object with which the unit entity is concerned through the sensory organs is what we call "the knowable" (*jineya*). Whatever makes the unit entity attain contact with the objects through the motor organs is called *kárya* (action); and the object of *práñah* is called *dhárya* or "the sustainer, that which sustains". As these *dháryas* are contacted by the *práñah* [the collection of ten vital airs], it is impossible for the *práñah* to simultaneously hold or reflect on the *citta* all the objects which are collectively apprehended by more than one sense or motor organ.

When people read anything aloud, both their organs, the eyes and the tongue, are working simultaneously. The sound waves reach the *citta* through the medium of the acoustic nerves (afferent nerves) with the help of their vital force. At the same time, the sense of sight or form *tanmátras* of the letters of the alphabet are reflected on their retinas and are also reaching their *cittabhúmi* or ectoplasm via their optical nerves with the help of that same vital force. It is not possible for one singular vital force to be present at two

places at the same time and perform two different functions; so it has to both receive the sound waves as well as visualize the letters of the alphabet separately. If the vital force or energy remains engaged only in visualizing the alphabet, then the sound waves will not properly reach the ears. In such a case, if the readers are students, their sense perception will not be as good as their knowledge of language or spelling. Similarly if attention is paid more to only hearing, then the knowledge of language and spelling will suffer. You have certainly encountered many accredited scholars whose every line of script contains countless spelling mistakes. If you investigate the cause, you will discover that these people had and still have the habit of reading books aloud, softly uttering.

Similarly, those who give more importance to their motor organs cannot utilize their sensory organs well. Generally, those children who are very fond of games are less attentive to their studies. Their vital force being engaged with the practical application of ideas through the medium of the motor organs, it cannot properly apprehend ideas through the sensory organs. However, to attain success in action, the coordination of more than one sensory and motor organ in the same action is most desirable. Similarly, success in the field of knowledge is also accelerated as a result of the coordination and cooperation between several motor and sensory organs. So, it is preferable for a student to read books aloud instead of silently, because then two organs become involved with one object and so there is less chance for the mind to become distracted.

According to the predominance of subtle or crude forces, we may divide the motor and sensory organs into three

groups. The subtle *sattvaguṇa* [entient quality] is predominant in the vocal organ, and *tamoguṇa* [static quality] in the region of the genitals. The vocal organ and hands are *sattvaguṇii* because speech expresses internal ideas externally, and the hands give form to subtle inner feeling, or create arts and crafts. The feet are *rajoguṇii* [mutative] due to their kinetic or locomotive characteristics, and the anus and the genitals are *tamoguṇii* [static]. According to the five functional distinctions of speech, action, movement, excretion and procreation, we determine the individual characteristic of the motor organs. There are functional distinctions among the sensory organs also: the ear receives sounds, the subtlest of the *tanmātras*, and so it imbibes the greatest amount of *sattvaguṇa*. The nose is *tamoguṇii* in the highest degree. The ears and the skin are *sattvaguṇii* and the tongue and nose *tamoguṇii*.

Biologically also we find that the more unevolved a unit entity is the stronger are its *tamoguṇii* organs. In extremely undeveloped or unicellular organisms we find no sexual distinction; due to their extraordinary sexual power they disintegrate their bodies into parts [schizogenesis or "reproduction by fission"] according to necessity, for the maximum propagation of their species. But as the unit entities advance on the path of progress and higher mental development, the power of their organs wanes; and as a result higher organisms cannot bring forth their progeny singly due to their low sexual potentiality. So in them the distinction of male and female become a necessity.

I have already said that *prāṇāh*, the vital principle, is *tamoguṇātma*, for in its object, the *dhārya*, steadiness alone is the predominant factor. For lack of more than one organ

under it, the *prāña* is collectively static. The greater the control one has over this vital principle of *prāña*, the stronger is one's power to accept or reject *saṁskāras*. These accepted or rejected *saṁskāras* are perceived in the mind during the still condition of the *prāña*, wherein it (*prāña*) finds its fulfillment. You are taking *prāña's* help every moment of your daily life. Just as you feel the heat or coldness of things through tactual inference or *sparsha-tanmātra*, similarly you know their hardness and softness through *prāña*. Suppose there is cotton and gold of equal temperature. The eye sensory organ will see them, the skin sensory organ will feel their hotness or coldness and the *prāña* will feel the hardness of the gold and the softness of the cotton. The ear sensory organ will hear a song and the *prāña* will appreciate its melody. The ears will hear a scandal and the *prāña* will receive its harshness and severity; and thus hearing it, will become hurt and feel pain – it will hold anguish (*dhārya*) in the mind. We call this capacity of the *prāña* to hold feelings, the “vital core” or *marma*. The terms “hard” or “soft” that you apply to a person on the basis of your knowledge of the hardness of iron or the fluidity of water are also derived from your *prāña-bodha* or vital sense. A “hard” man does not mean that the man is hard to the touch. A “hard” thought-wave is received by the *prāña* when the skin-organ touches something hard. You call a man “hard” only when his speech or behaviour creates a similarly hard thought-wave in your *prāña* through the medium of any other organ. In the same manner you also call many people “soft”, don't you?

What is this *prāña-bodha*? I have already said that when the nerve or force of acceptance or rejection of inferences (*tanmātras*) establishes contact between its object and the

sthirabhúmi or apperceptive plate of the *citta*, then alone does "sense" come into being. All the forces of the world prove their existence in this dynamic *sthirabhúmi*. The wave by which your acceptance or rejection of the *tanmátras* takes place cannot be a perennial one, because its permanence precludes the possibility of sensing. If the eyes could apprehend form-waves uniformly and continuously, or the form-waves were themselves continuous and uninterrupted, then due to their lack of division, the object to be "held" by the *prána* could not have a place in the *sthirabhúmi* of the *citta*. In order to effect breaks in the waves they have to be pulsative and the stream of waves also has to be interrupted by pauses. Energy in motion is not continuous but flows in definite little jumps; thus the stream of energy has been called systaltic or pulsatory in the scriptures. This applies equally to all inferential (*tánmátric*) flows, and these currents are received during their phase of contraction in *sthiurabhúmi* of the *citta*, with the help of the *prána*. So the more steadiness one can create in the *prána*, the firmer and stronger shall be one's power of receptivity.

The receptive power of *prána* finds great scope for expression in a calm mind, with a calm body and calm organs; and its retentive power wanes tremendously during physical or mental restlessness. That is why a restless-minded boy cannot memorize his lessons – he cannot retain them in his *prána*. A fickle-minded young man can earn his bread by hard labour, but he cannot take any serious responsibility.

*Nityadá hyauṅgabhútáni bhavanti na bhavantica,
Kálenálakśyavegena súkśmatvátanna drshyate.*

It is only due to the interim motionlessness in the course of movement that a unit entity can comprehend anything.

If one becomes restless, one cannot feel an object in the proper perspective. But there may be at least indistinct knowledge of the object due to a relatively slight calmness that still remains in the restlessness. A person in this state is generally called “bewildered”, in a state of doubtful comprehension. The shorter the period of this interim motionlessness, the greater the speed of motivity and thus also the degree of bewilderment. So you see, all forces, whether receptive or rejective, must be pulsative. When they are not pulsative, then their entities are outside the range of comprehension, and are therefore sensorily untenable and intellectually either untenable or quiescent.

The pause period of the systaltic movement is the opportune moment for the acceptance of any sensation or idea. Similarly, the greater the composure of the *prāña*, the stronger and keener is the power of receptivity. That is why spiritual aspirants take pains to keep their *prāña* under restraint and control. In the path of sadhana (intuitional practice) there are two ways to control the *prāña*: *prāñāyāma* [breath-control] and *dhāraṇā* [concentration].

Prāñān yamayatyēśah prāñāyāmah

Tasmin sati shvāsaprashvāsayorgativicchedah prāñāyāmah.

I have already said that the movement of every mundane force, whether active or reactive, must be pulsative. The period of contraction or cessation is the concluding state of the vital function. When this state of cessation is established permanently in the unit body, the vital functions totally cease. This is the state of death. In such a condition the mind and the other organs are inactive, and so in this long-lasting cessation nothing can be accepted or retained. The practice of *prāñāyāma* is the practice of control of the *prāña* – of

the expansion of the period of pause for the maximisation of the power of concentration and receptivity. The vital expansion of one who practices *pránáyāma* is also pulsative, the only difference being that the pause is comparatively long. Even in the sadhana of introspective concentration (*dhāraṇā*), when the *sthirabhūmi* of the *citta* is fixed on the object, the vital function is also obliged to gradually prolong the duration of the pause. In that condition the manifestive waves also diminish. Thus whenever people ponder something with rapt attention, the movement of their vital functions gradually becomes more and more tranquil due to the prolongation of the duration of the form waves of their object of imagination.

There are abuses of *pránáyāma* also. If spiritual aspirants, during the period of *pránáyāma*-induced contraction, indulge themselves merely in the parading of their own petty vanity instead of using that force of contraction for the inculcation of *Brahmabhāva* [Cosmic ideation]; that is, if they devote themselves to the expression of their own little egos, they will gradually tend towards crudeness. Even without practising *pránáyāma*, if people zealously propel their little egos towards worldly enjoyments, they will also meet the same fate. *Pránáyāma* is exceedingly harmful – devastatingly disastrous – for those without cosmic ideation or *Brahmabhāva**. In common experience we find that whenever people absorb themselves in some work, their power of contraction increases, and the movement of their *prāṇa* becomes steady and regulated; but whenever they indulge

* In Ananda Marga sadhana, taking Cosmic ideation in *Pránáyāma* is a must. *Pránáyāma* is one of the higher lessons of Ananda Marga sadhana.—Editor.

in any sensuous or crude act, the movement of their *práña* becomes remarkably unsteady and agitated. In such a condition their minds are not amenable to comprehension, thought or judgement.

The agitation of the body causes the agitation of the *práña*. That is why all concentrative practices should be performed in a quiet posture (*sthirásana*), so that the practices of *práñáyáma* and *dhyána* (contemplation) may progress cohesively. At the time of meditation, repeated movements of the body – now lying, now sitting, now standing – are extremely detrimental to mental concentration. Such a practice defeats the very purpose of spiritual meditation...*

The Paramount Importance of Práñáyáma

...[Now], so long as the heart functions, all the afferent and efferent nerve fibres pulsate with the same rhythm. The pulsation of all the *nádiis* also vibrates according to the same system. When one becomes engrossed in deep thought or *dhyána*, the nerve cells remain absorbed in this; their connection with the nerve fibres becomes weak. As a result, there is less pressure on the heart, as the pulse rate is reduced to some extent. As there is lesser need, the rate of breathing also become slower. Sometimes the pulse rate becomes so slow that it appears as if one is almost going to die. In the more elevated state, due to prolonged *dhyána*, it so happens

* The foregoing thirteen paragraphs are from "The Chariot and the Charioteer" in *Subhásita Samgraha Part 4*. In Ananda Marga sadhana, as introduced by the author, *práñáyáma* is performed sitting in *siddhásana* or *padmāsana*. The three *shuddhis* must be performed before *práñáyáma*, as these are conducive to keeping the mind in a balanced state.—Editor.

that the pulse rate is completely suspended. The same thing happens in the case of *nirvikalpa samádhi* [the non-attributational stance]. In the deeper state of *savikalpa samádhi* [determinate trance] the pulse rate becomes feeble. In the state of absolute bliss the pulse rate becomes completely suspended, but it is not indicative of any physical abnormality or disease. It is a specific state of the psycho-physical entity being separated from gross materiality for the time being. When one takes to deep thinking, the pulse rate of the body also slows down.

Too much physical labour, running, too much running after material needs, too much crude thinking, obsession with materiality and persistent desire to do harm to others, increases the pulse rate. In most of these cases, the breathing rate becomes faster and the capacity of thinking is reduced. If one is going to do something without the support of conscience, then the thinking ability is impaired. When a person who is very materialistic is going to do an utterly unconscientious thing, it is found that their thinking ability is greatly impaired. They do not want to pay heed to good words, and do not want to understand, even if they hear good things, nor can they understand. When a person is used as an instrument to do something heinous or ignoble, they often take food and drink that are stimulating or intoxicating. Through this, the blood circulation and respiration become faster. Their judgement is also lessened. At that moment, they commit an extremely sinful act. When they come back to a normal state, their pulse rate becomes normal, the crest and trough also become normal, and the person regains the capacity of thinking properly. Then they start suffering from extreme penitence. They tell themselves time and again, "Why did I do this? Why did I ever take to such a way?"

In Yoga practice, one gains control over the rate of breathing through *práñáyama*. *Práñáyama* means “control over the vital power or life force”. That is the reason why the practitioners of *práñáyama* can do meditation for a relatively longer time. The practice of *práñáyama* is necessary for one who seeks to concentrate the mind in meditation (*dhyána*). It is still better if one can do *sakumbhaka práñáyama*. Otherwise, it is necessary for one to do *akumbhaka práñáyama*. By this one establishes control over the flow of the [ten] vital airs in their crests and troughs.

Types of Práñáyama

The process by which the *práñás* in the body are controlled is called *práñáyama*. *Práña*, *apána*, *samána*, *udána*, *vyána*, *nága*, *kúrma*, *krkara*, *devadatta*, and *dhanainjaya* – the collective name of these ten vital forces is *práñáh*. If you wish to increase your apperceptive power you must control the *práñáh*. Through regular practice, the mind will become concentrated. *Práñáyama* is meant for spiritual aspirants – it is better for those who are not spiritual practitioners not to take the risk of injuring themselves by doing *práñáyama*.

Práñáyama is also very beneficial for the physical body. Special *práñáyama* practices are prescribed for specific diseases.

No one should practise *práñáyama* without the permission of an *ácarya*.

- 1) *Sádháraña Práñáyama* – an *ácarya* will teach it
- 2) *Sahaja Práñáyama* – a *purodhá* will teach it
- 3) *Vishesa Práñáyama* – a *purodhá* will teach it
- 4) *Ántarpráñáyama* – a *purodhá* will teach it

How to Practice Pránáyáma

Closing the eyes, sit in either *siddhásana*, *padmásana* or *bhojanásana*. Do *bhútashuddhi*. After doing *ásana shuddhi*, concentrate your mind on the point that the *ácárya* will fix. Then, after doing *cittashuddhi*, ideate on the first syllable of your *Iśta mantra*, press and close the right nostril with the thumb of the right hand, and draw in a deep breath through the left nostril. During inhalation, ideate that infinite vital energy is entering the point from the infinite Brahma who is existing all around. After taking a full breath close the left nostril with the middle, ring and little fingers, and, taking the thumb away from the right nostril, slowly let out the air (Ideate that the infinite vital energy is returning from the point to that Infinite Brahma). During exhalation ideate on the remaining syllable of your *Iśta mantra*. When the breath has been fully expelled from the right nostril, inhale as fully as possible again through the right nostril. Afterwards, closing the right nostril with the thumb and removing the fingers, exhale the air through the left nostril. This completes one round.

For the first week, complete three rounds each time. The number is increased by one round every week until seven rounds is reached.

Pránáyáma can be practised up to four times in a day. If a person practising *pránáyáma* twice daily wishes to practise three times on any particular day, they may do so, but the person who practises twice daily must not suddenly increase to four times, because that will result in the body falling sick. Therefore it is advisable at first to do the practise twice daily, increasing it by one round per week. If, however, on any day *pránáyáma* is not completed twice, then at the

end of the week, the number of times missed must be practised in compensation, before increasing the number of rounds.

Practitioners of *prāñāyāma* should try to keep themselves away from dust, smoke, bad-smelling environments and excessive labour. It is very helpful to take a sufficient amount of milk products for the first two months following commencement of the practice.

Health-Related Prāñāyāma

Shiitalii kumbhaka: Sit in *padmāsana*. After closing both the nostrils and sticking out the tongue, inhale as deeply as possible the cool air of the morning, evening or midnight hours. Keeping the nostrils and mouth closed, hold the breath for eight seconds, then exhale gradually through the nose. Do this eight times continuously. After completion, massage the diseased portion of the body.*

* The foregoing twenty-four paragraphs are from *Shabda Cayanika Part 22 and Ananda Marga Caryācarya Part 3*. Here, as an example, the rules for just one health-related *prāñāyāma* have been given. The author has described several other such *prāñāyāmas*, such as *siitkārīi kumbhaka*, *karkaṭa prāñāyāma* etc., which are included in the afore mentioned book. Some of the benefits of *shiitalii kumbhaka* are for diseases of the genital region, eczema, leprosy, etc. *Viśheṣa prāñāyāma* and *Antarprāñāyāma* are parts of *Viśheṣa Yoga Sādhana*, in *Ananda Marga into Sadhana*. —Editor.

Pratyáhára Sádhaná

The Application of Madhuvidyá Is the Best Means of Pratyáhára Yoga

The object of the ordinary mind, be it external or internal, is the outcome of the five fundamental factors. In order to maintain its separate existence the mind has to be attached to some object. Here, an object means “a place”. Just as a living being has to inhabit some physical space in order to maintain its physical existence, similarly the mind has to attach itself to some object of requisite subtlety, to maintain its subtle existence.

From this we arrive at the conclusion that the mind never enjoys the original object; it enjoys only the reflected shadows of the original object. Catching the shadows of the physical world, people mistakenly believe that they have realized their goal. If the mind really desires to enjoy something, it should adopt the opposite course. The mind will have to be extricated from the quinquemental world which has been created as the crudest manifestation of cosmic mind-stuff, and adopt the universal *Puruśa* – the original constituent of cosmic mind-stuff. The object of *Puruśa* is the mind, and if *Puruśa* becomes the subject of the mind, then, as a result of their proximity developing into union, the subjective feeling of each will disappear. This union is called *yoga*. In other words, it is the union of the unit “I”, centered in the mind, with the universal *Puruśa*.

Samyogo yoga ityukto jivátma – Paramátmanoh.

If a person desires to merge in *Puruśa*, while retaining their “I” feeling, then that person will not be completely free

from objects. In that state, the universal mind of the universal *Puruśa* becomes their object. We call this state, *savikalpa samádhi*. Where there is no anxiety about the "I" and no desire to preserve the separate identity of the "I", then a state of complete freedom from objects or thoughts is achieved. This state is called "salvation" or *nirvikalpa samádhi*...

One has to advance by making the maximum effort to keep the mind scrupulously away from vices. Never let your mind's purity be polluted in any way. After practising this for some time, you will observe that the same mind that sustained your vile tendencies has become your greatest friend. Your mind will serve all your purposes, so you should let it have constant inspiration from your soul. Enlighten your mind with the effulgence of the soul. The absolute truth in you will automatically reveal itself.

Rtambhará tatra prajñá

— Patanjali

Those who adopt the reverse course are truly ignorant, in that as they dedicate themselves to crude objects, they gradually transform their minds into crudeness. By gradual transformation their mind-stuff reaches a stage where they cannot be called human beings. Who can say that the fire-burnt cane has been transformed into a plantain tree, that the decomposed beef has been transformed into an onion through natural changes, and that the rice-water has produced *tañd'uleraka* leaves? Likewise, no one will be able to recognize you as a human being in your degenerated condition.

Therefore, do not absorb yourself in crude thoughts or allow yourself to be carried away by impulses and tendencies. The extroverted tendency and the dedication to these crude objects are sure impediments to the realization of the self.

In mundane life, finite objects are indispensable. The preservation of existence is not possible by pursuing the path of *shreya* or ultimate gain all the time. Nevertheless, *shreya* alone is necessary for one's supreme spiritual progress and only *shreya* and not *preya*, or the immediate and superficial gain, should be pursued. It is said in the Vedas:

*Anyacchreyo 'nyadutaeva preyaste ubhe nánárthe puruṣam̐ siniitah
Tayoh shreya ádadaenasya sádhu bhavatihiiyate arthád ya u preyo vrñiite,
Shreyasca preyasca manuśyametaṣtao sampariitya vibinakti dñiirah
Shreyo hi dñiiro 'bhipreyaso vrñiite preyo mando yogakṣemád vrñiite.*

—*Kathopaniśad*

If spiritual aspirants are advised to follow only *shreya*, then how will they maintain their existence during the period of spiritual practice? They will have to deal with *preya* in such a manner that it does not become a cause of bondage or extroversion of tendencies, but will instead lead to the introversion of tendencies and thereby to *mukti* or liberation. This technique is known as *madhuvidyá*.

Madhuvidyá teaches you that you can endeavour to attain liberation even while leading a worldly life, provided of course, that before dealing with any object of gratification, you take it with cosmic feeling. While feeding your child you ought to contemplate that you are not feeding your child but giving proper care to the manifestation of Brahma in the

shape of a child. When you plough your land, you ought to contemplate that you are giving proper care to the manifestation of Brahma in the shape of land. If you properly follow *madhuvidyá* you can keep yourself aloof from the shackles of actions even though you perform actions. This *madhuvidyá* will pervade your exterior and interior with the ecstasy of *Brahmánanda* and will permanently alleviate all your afflictions. Then the ferocious jaws of *avidyá* cannot come and devour you. The glory of one and only one benign Entity will shine forth to you from one and all objects.*

*Idam mánuṣam sarveśám bhútánám madhvasya mánuśasya sarváni bhútáni madhuh Ayamátmá sarveśám bhútánám madhvasya átmanah sarváni bhútáni madhuh.***

Varńárghya Dána – The Second Process of Pratyáhára Yoga

People may ask, “We are ordinary people. If we always keep ourselves absorbed in the thought of Brahma, can we properly attend to our worldly duties?” To this my reply is,

* In Ananda Marga sadhana, the practical application of *madhuvidyá* is the use of *siddha guru mantra* which is a *daily practice* in Ananda Marga meditation. The *ácarya* or *ácaryá* will impart the appropriate *guru mantra*, in accordance with the initiate’s *sańskáras*. The use of *guru mantra* during the day, before every action, whether big or small, will increase, *guru bhakti* (the feeling that “my Guru is always with me”) and his power of remembrance will also increase tremendously. Those of an advanced age and those who suffer from problems like extreme forgetfulness, will get benefit from the maximum uses of *guru mantra*.—Editor.

** The foregoing ten paragraphs are from the chapter “Sadhana and Madhuvidyá” in *Subhásita Sańgraha Part 1*.—Editor

of course you can, and you will do them still more beautifully. In the worship of Brahma there is a method by which every worldly duty can be performed easily and perfectly. For ideation on Brahma a person does not have to become a hermit in the forest. Only go on behaving rightly and properly with every manifestation of Brahma in this universe – remove or rectify the mental disease of criminals and reform their characters, cure the sick of their sickness, and arrange for their medicines and their diet. Just remember only this: that you have to behave properly and reasonably with every entity of this world. Pay special attention to the word “properly”. By “proper behaviour”, I mean that in which there is neither anger nor jealousy, neither attraction nor aversion...

The attraction between one object and another is always chromatic, pertaining to *rāga* or colour. The word *rāga* is derived from the root *rañj* which means “dyeing”. *Anurāga* means “to dye one’s mind with the colour of that Infinite Entity”. Nothing will result from dyeing one’s clothes with saffron colour only for show. Dye yourself within. People of some particular religious creeds think that dyeing their clothes or bodies with a particular colour is a part of spiritual sadhana. But remember that is all useless unless you are dyed within as well. Can a person become a *śhúdra* only by wearing a dark dress, or a *vipra* by donning white garments? Mahatma Kabir used to say –

Mana ná ráuṅgaile ráuṅgaile yogii kápaṛá.

[Saffron and red do not a *yogii* make.
With mind undyed he remains a fake.]

Dye your mind with His colour. Those who have not done so cannot attain Him, for this very coloration is *prema* or divine love. The differences in colour are signs of distinction; without these differences there is identity. No external sign of *sádhutá* or virtue is necessary. Become a *sádhu* within. Behind the external show of virtuousness of many so-called *sádhus* exists a pharisaic state of mind. Preserve the true dignity of the word *sádhu*.

*Múrh múrháye jatá várháye masta phire jaesá bhaesá
Khalrii upar khák lágáye
Mana jaesá to taesá.*

[With shaven head or matted locks
And ashen body a *sádhu* walks
With the swaggering gait of a well-fed buffalo.
And crude mind filled with thoughts mean and low.]

This is why I say that you must bring about a revolutionary change in the flow of your judgment and thought, and see how, after overcoming your fascination with external colour, your mind becomes tinged with the His glorious colour. In Ananda Marga sadhana, the method of withdrawing the mind from degrading tendencies and absorbing oneself in the colour of the Great, is called *pratyáhára yoga* [the *yoga* of withdrawal] or *varnárghyadána* [the offering of colours]. All people have a particular attraction for one or another object or activity, and as soon as they become attracted to an object, then their minds become coloured with the colour of that object. You can withdraw your mind from the colour of that object and dye yourself in His colour by offering Him the captivating colour of the object that has attracted you: this is the real *pratyáhára yoga*. The word

pratyáhára means “to withdraw” – to withdraw the mind from its object.*

The main object of the Spring Colour Festival (*Vasantotsava*) is not playing with external colours; it is meant to offer Him the colours of different objects which have dyed the mind. When this practice of offering your own colours – your own attachments, becomes natural and easy, you will then merge in Him. Then you will have no need for any colour, for you will become colourless – you will go beyond the reach of any colour. Your unit-ego will become one with the Cosmic Ego. Whichever way you look you will see only Him in His ever-surg-ing glory. There is no “I” nor “you”. By an everlasting, mutual pact the final curtain will have fallen on all clashes of “I” and “you”. At that stage, if you call *Parama* Brahma “I”, you are right in calling Him so; if you call Him “He”, you are equally right; and if you call Him “You”, again you are correct. The extent of your attainment of Him will be proportionate to your self-surrender.

Remember, you have to offer your own identity – not money, rice, plantains or other crude objects.** The give-and-

* *Varnárghyadána* is performed at the end of each sadhana, along with *gurupujá*. It is purely a psycho-spiritual process. As a result of this, the seeds of reflections of crude objects still remaining in the mind after the application of *guru mantra* will be obliterated and offered at the feet of the Sadguru. In this way, *sádhakas* will not incur new *saṁskáras* of *pratyamúlaka karma*. The *ácárya* or *ácáryá* will give proper instructions regarding it. *Varnárghyadána* is a must after daily sadhana and also after collective meditation, as instructed by the author.—Editor.

** This is the reason that, in Ananda Marga sadhana, the significance of *gurudakṣiṇá* is not to offer anything crude to Guru but to offer one's entire self to His lotus feet.—Editor.

take of crude things is a business transaction. If you want to attain the bliss of Brahma, you must offer your own self. If you want to have the Great "I", you must give away your own little "I". You have to give the full sixteen *annas*, (the full rupee). Giving fifteen *annas* and holding back one *anna* will not do. You must completely surrender. To attain that Infinite One with the help of your mental concentration and strength, you have to surrender yourselves. But remember, self-surrender does not mean suicide. On the contrary, your soul will have its full expression. Your existence will not become contracted, for contraction is inert in principle...

The existence of microcosms is bound up in action. Microcosms will have to act and to move; life is a dynamic process from beginning to end. No one has come to this world to remain static; staticity is contrary to living existence. Even the physical body changes in every moment, even the body maintains dynamic movement.

Human beings perform two types of action: *pratyayamúlaka* [original actions] and *saṁskáramúlaka* [reactive actions – actions prompted or goaded by *saṁskáras*]. Original actions are performed under one's own initiative, and thus one is fully responsible for them. Every original action is a new action. It may represent an extension of the experience of the past, but it is not a reaction. And the actions which human beings are compelled to perform as reactions to their previous actions are called reactive actions. In other words, original actions constitute efforts, and reactive actions constitute the resultants [of the original actions]...

When people rob others, or indulge in hypocrisy, or cheat people, or indulge in tall talk day after day, they are committing original actions. When a dishonest government

employee accepts a bribe it is an original action, and when his son gets sick and has to be rushed to the doctor it is the reactive action (the reaction to the original action). When his son dies he laments, "I haven't knowingly done anything wrong. Oh, Lord, why have you given me such severe punishment." But God did not give him any punishment – the deep sorrow he felt at the death of his child was the result of his past original actions.

The moment spiritual aspirants start spiritual practice they must surrender all their original actions to Brahma so that they do not have to endure the reactions. This surrender is the most important aspect of spiritual practice.

*Brahmárpaṇiāṁ Brahmahavirbrahmáṅnao Brahmañáhutam;
Brahmaeva tena gantavyāṁ Brahmakarmasamádhinā.*

[The action of offering is Brahma, the ghee offered into the sacrificial fire is Brahma, the fire is Brahma, and the person who offers is Brahma. Those who will maintain this spirit in every action will finally merge in Brahma.]

Reactions in requital to past actions normally occur more in a spiritual aspirant's life than in an ordinary person's life. The reason is that when all original actions are surrendered to Brahma, there remain only the reactive actions. The reactions may be good or bad [according to whether they are resultants of good or bad original actions]. But think about how many of the deeds you performed before coming to the path of sadhana were good and how many were bad. To tell the unpleasant truth, ninety-nine percent of your deeds were bad. Hence, it is often the case that *sádhakas* have to suffer much more from bad reactive momenta than they get to enjoy good ones. It can even be said that the more one

suffers from reactions (*karmaphala*), the more one is progressing along the path of sadhana.

Of course, the requital of the reactive momenta may possibly be pleasurable instead of painful; it all depends upon the nature of one's actions. In either case, the more one surrenders one's actions to Brahma, the shorter will be the period of requital caused by the reactions. In this case the intensity of the requital will be greater than normal; but this is a good sign, because intense requital means the exhaustion of the requital within a short period.

Suppose you have incurred a loan of a thousand rupees. If you repay the loan in monthly instalments of one rupee it will take you a thousand months to clear the loan. One rupee being such a small amount, this will hardly cause any suffering at all. But if you want to free yourself from the debt quickly, you will have to pay a larger amount every month, which will obviously cause more suffering. Likewise, if one does not feel the need to be freed of one's reactive momenta quickly, one can undergo less affliction, but then one may have to wait ten or twenty lives to exhaust all the reactive momenta. Moreover, within those ten or twenty lives one will probably undergo psychic degeneration, and due to one's mean actions imbibe new reactive momenta.

Hence genuine *sádhakas* always strive to be relieved of their acquired *saṁskáras* as early as possible; therefore they surrender completely to Brahma. The consummation of self-surrender precipitates the requital of *saṁskáras*, and this requital may take place in the Shákta, Vaeśṇava or Shaeva stages, but in the Shaeva stage the requitals are not felt so keenly, and therefore may be considered not to be requitals in the true sense of the term. The requital of reactive

momenta is felt most acutely in the Shákta stage, because this stage involves a tremendous fight against Prakṛti...

Ananda Marga has harmoniously blended the Shákta, Vaeśnáva and Shaeva *sáadhanás*. Of the three, the Shákta *sáadhaná* is the most important, because it is the initial stage of the microcosm's journey towards the Macrocosm. Progress on this journey is made through *pratyáhára yoga*. As all spiritual aspirants are aware, the goal of *pratyáhára*, *dháraná*, and *dhyána* is the attainment of *samádhi*. *Pratyáhára* is the conscious endeavour to withdraw the mind from mundane qualities and attractions – easier said than done! The process of *varnárghyádán* is in most cases very difficult to perform properly.

The importance of *pratyáhára sáadhaná* is immense, because it involves a harmonious blending of knowledge, devotion and action. In this sadhana, the Shákta *bháva* finds its consummation, and the latent devotion starts sprouting. This sprout ultimately develops into the highest Vaeśnáva *bháva*. Shaeva *bháva* is the path of knowledge. So, in social life there is a great need for Sháktas and Vaeśnávas. The *pratyáhára yoga* with which a Shákta starts rendering service to the world reaches its consummation in the perfect and total service of the Vaeśnáva. *Pratyáhára* begins with vigorous action and culminates in selfless devotion.

Vaśhikára siddhi is only attained by devotees. Even Shankaracharya [the great protagonist of *jiñána*] admitted, *Mokśakáraña samagryám bhaktireva gariyasii* – “Of all the ways to attain salvation, the way of bhakti or devotion is the greatest.”

If knowledge is likened to the elder brother of a family, devotion is his younger sister, happily holding her brother's

hand as she walks beside him. The little sister cannot walk alone, nor would it be safe for her to do so, but when she walks merrily along with her brother, people look lovingly at her and speak sweet words to her. They will probably ask that elder brother, "Is she your little sister?"*

Pratyáhára Yoga and Supreme Attainment

Just like *práñáyáma*, *pratyáhára yoga* is not complete in itself. *Práñáyáma*, you know, is a practice to control the movement of the vital energy of a particular body:

Práñán yamayatyeshah práñáyámah

["The process of controlling the *váyus*, or energy flows in the body, is known as *práñáyáma*"].

This is the process by which the movement of vital energy is controlled by a spiritual aspirant. But *práñáyáma* should always be associated with *bindu dhyána*, that is, meditation on a particular point. If *práñáyáma* is not associated with *bindu dhyána*, it will affect self-restraint, it will make the mind restless. Similarly, *pratyáhára yoga* – here the actual English term is "withdrawal" – should always be associated with *dhárañá*.

The difference between *dhyána* [meditation] and *dhárañá* [concentration] is that *dhyána* is something stationary; that is, the object is a stationary one in the case of *dhyána*. In the case of *dhárañá*, the mind moves along with the object; that is, there is a dynamic force behind *dhárañá*. And *dhyána*,

* The foregoing twenty two paragraphs are from "Vibration, Form and Colour" and "Sadhana", in *Subhásita Saṅgraha Parts 3 and 7*, respectively.—Editor.

although sentient, has no movement in it. In the sphere of – rather, in the arena of – spiritual practice, *pratyáhára* has very much importance, because in the primordial phase of sadhana, one will have to withdraw one's mind from the physicalities of the universe.

Now in *pratyáhára yoga*, what are you to do after withdrawing all your propensities from the objective world, from the physicalities of the world? To where are these mental propensities to be directed? If the mental propensities are withdrawn but are not guided to some other point, what will happen? Those withdrawn mental propensities will create an internal disturbance in your mind, will create a disturbance in your subconscious and unconscious strata. This is dangerous. Sometimes, it so happened in the past, and may happen in the future, that if a spiritual aspirant, without the guidance of a strong guru, tried or tries to practise *pratyáhára* only from reading books, there would be some danger. So, whenever you are withdrawing your mental propensities from different objects, you are to guide those collected propensities into some moving object, moving within the realm of your mind.

And what is that moving object? That moving object is your *citta* – your objectivated “I” – feeling. The *citta* is moving. The *citta* is something moving. So these withdrawn propensities are to move towards the *citta* and not towards external objects. They stop moving towards external objects, but they start moving towards the internal *citta*, that is the thing.

If the propensities are withdrawn but not goaded towards the *citta*, then there will be a dangerous reaction. I think you have understood. That is why it has been said,

Yacched váuṇ manasi prájñah

“What are intelligent spiritual aspirants to do? They are to goad their mental propensities to the *citta*.”

Here the word *váun* represents the external movement of the propensities. Then, *manasi + prájñah* – that is, “those withdrawn propensities are to move towards the *citta*.” *Prájñah váun manasi yacchet*.

Tad yacched jñána átmani. The *citta*, after consuming those withdrawn propensities, also moves. It moves within the mind, not toward any external object – not toward an external elephant, but toward the elephant created within your mind.

Tad yacched jñána átmani.

“And the *citta*, along with the withdrawn propensities, is to be guided towards the *ahamátattva*, the doer “I”, the owner “I” – the “I do” feeling that is subject to the “I” having a direct objectivity.”*

Here this doer “I”, although not in movement, still has the full potentiality of movement. It can move, it may move, it can partly transform itself into the done “I”, so it has the potentiality. So, the *citta*, that is, the done “I”, is to be directed towards the doer “I”, the *ahamátattva*. Not the feeling “I exist,” but the feeling that the “I” that exists is now able to do something. This is the *ahamátattva*.

Jñánamátmani mahati niyacchet. Now this *jñána átmá*, or *aham*, has also potentiality, so the mutative principle is very prominent in it. That doer or mutative principle is also

* The “I” having a direct objectivity (also known as the “done ‘I’”) is the *citta*.—Editor.

a binding fetter, a tethering agency. So, “one will have to withdraw this *jiṅána átmá*, this *ahamátattva*, into the *mahattattva*” – *jiṅánamátmani mahati niyacchet*. *Mahati* means “within the *mahattattva*”. And what is the *mahattattva*? The *mahattattva* is the feeling “I exist”.

Now in this pure “I” feeling there is hardly any movement, because it is a creation of the sentient principle. But you know, although the sentient principle cannot give any specific figure, any boundary line, still it is a sort of bondage, and because there is bondage there is a fight within and without. You are doing something. Is there no fight, is there no movement? Although there is no figure, there is a fight, there is movement.

So, *jiṅánamátmani mahati*. [The *mahattattva*] is almost free from bondage, but there is still bondage. Suppose a very good man is harshly rebuking an immoral person for having insulted him. Is that unfair? No, no, it is not unfair. It is called “sentient anger”. Anger is static; but sometimes it may be *sáttvika*, it may be sentient. And that type of anger is sentient anger – *sáttvika krodha* in Sanskrit.

Tad yacchecchánta átmani. “Now this pure ‘I’ feeling, ‘I exist’” – where all your propensities, along with the *citta*, and the *citta* along with the *ahamátattva*, and the *ahamátattva* along with the *mahattattva*, form one strong unit of movement – “is also to be withdrawn and merged into that Cognitive Principle.” And that Cognitive Principle is free from all bondages. And that is the *Paramágati*, that is the supreme goal of human existence.*

24 September 1978, Patna

* The foregoing fourteen paragraphs are from *Ánanda Vacanámrtam Part 2*.—Editor.

Dhāraṇā

Dhāraṇā literally means “locating the mind firmly in an area or region of the body”. The *citta* has the characteristic of becoming like its object. For example, when the *citta* is in contact with a tree, it becomes like the tree. To do this the *citta* has to depend on external sensations which convey that shape to the *citta* with the help of the *indriyas* or organs. The *citta* performs two types of functions: *grāhaka* and *vikṣepaka*. The *grāhaka* function is performed with the help of the five *jñānendriyas* or sense organs with their afferent nerves, which carry the sensations of external objects to the *citta*; then the *citta* takes the form of the sensations carried by the nerves. The second function of *vikṣepaka* is performed with the help of the five *karmendriyas* or motor organs and their efferent nerves, which transform sensations into physical action.

Thus the *citta* takes the form of the image or sensation which is carried to it with the help of the sensory nerves. The property of the *citta* to become like its object is called *dhāraṇā* which means “to hold”: the *citta* holds an image and becomes like that. The image is carried to the *citta* from external sensations, and since these sensations are not continuous, the image which is formed on the *citta* is also not continuous. There is always a gap between two successive images, but due to the rapid succession of the images, the gap is not perceived. It is just like the images on a cinema screen, which appear to be continuous and constant; but when the film is examined it is seen that the images on the screen are formed from a succession of many different pictures. In *dhāraṇā*, the *citta* becomes like that with which it comes

in contact in the external world through sensations. Since the sensations of the external object are not continuous, the image in the *citta* is not continuous, either. Thus *dhāraṇā* is not dynamic, for the individual images which are formed on the *citta* are all static and will not remain unless immediately followed by another image.

Dhyāna is also a state of *citta* like *dhāraṇā*, but since *dhyāna* can never be of any external object, the *citta* does not have to depend on external sensations. The object in *dhyāna* is always internal and so *citta* can take its form without the help of any external sensations. When there is no necessity of external sensations, there is no gap between one sensation and another; and the form which the *citta* adopts in *dhyāna* is continuous. *Dhyāna* is thus not static but a continuous process; and this continuity cannot be broken because the *citta* exists in the same state and takes the same form throughout the period of *dhyāna*. Since the form is the same throughout, no gaps exist as in *dhāraṇā*, and there is no succession of individual static images either. *Dhyāna* is compared to the continuity of a stream of oil which flows without any apparent movement. *Taela dhāra vat ekatānatā*: "Meditation or *dhyāna* is a constant remembrance, flowing like an unbroken stream of oil from one vessel to another."

The result of action in *dhyāna* is inaction. The process of *dhyāna* is so continuous that all capacity of action is exhausted in maintaining this continuity, and the resultant therefore is inaction. When there is a cessation of action, the mind ceases to exist, and that is called *samādhi*. *Samādhi* is also called *karma samādhi* – the actionless state when all *karma* ceases (*karmanāsha*).

There is another action – the attractive power of *Parama Puruśa*. This attractive power which originates from *Parama Puruśa* will always remain; but as the object of the attraction is the mind, when the mind itself does not exist, this attractive power will also not exist. *Dhyána*, therefore, results in the complete loss of action.

Dhárañá and *dhyána* are therefore quite different from each other, although both take place in the *citta*. *Dhárañá* is the process of the *citta* taking the shape of external objects [through a specific psycho-spiritual process]*, while *dhyána* concerns internal objects only. *Dhárañá* is static, while *dhyána* is full of dynamic form. *Dhárañá* is non-continuous and momentary, while *dhyána* is continuous. *Dhárañá* may result in action, but *dhyána* results only in the cessation of actions. *Dhárañá* is purely a creation of the *citta* and is *tamoguñi* or static, whereas *dhyána* is full of dynamism and is *rajoguni* or mutative by nature. The resultant cessation of action in *dhyána* shows that its final goal is *sattvaguñi samádhi* through the principle of *sattvaguña*.**

* Elsewhere, the author has described the benefits of *dhárañá*, which are explained by the *ácárya* or *ácáryá* at the time of imparting this lesson. *Dhárañá* is one of the higher lessons of Ananda Marga sadhana. One of the most important benefits of *dhárañá* is that control over the *vrttis* and the mind develops through this process. As a result, this helps immensely in *dhyána* sadhana when it comes to be practised. *Dhárañá* and *cakra shodhana* are not the same. *Cakra shodhana* is a higher lesson than *dhárañá* in the Ananda Marga system of sadhana.—Editor.

** The foregoing six paragraphs are from *Ananda Marga Philosophy in A Nutshell Parts 4-8*.—Editor.

Dhyána Sádhaná

What is *dhyána*? “To suspend all the *vrttis* and then to direct them towards the Supreme One” is *dhyána*. There are two definitions:

Yogashcittavrttirnirodhah.

[“Yoga is the suspension of all psychic propensities” – Patanjali]

and *Sarvacintáparityágo nischinto Yoga ucyate*

[“Yoga is the attainment of a composed mind unperturbed by thought” – Tantra].

The mind should be suspended. But where should the suspended mind go? Suppose we build a dam at the mouth of a river. If there is not a small outlet for the water, the dam will burst under the force of the current, which could be catastrophic. Similarly, if the mental flow is checked, it is also dangerous. The mind must be directed along a particular path, it must have some kind of mobility.

Dhyána means “to direct the mind towards the Supreme One”. Remembering *Parama Puruśa* is *dhyána*. In this thought process there is a sense of mobility. The absence of mobility leads to crudeness and ultimate destruction. Those of you who are students of psychology will understand this subject better.*

* The foregoing four paragraphs are from the chapter “Sadhana, Abhidhyána and Kirtana” in *Subhásita Samígraha Part 8* and from *Ananda Vacanámrtam Part 8*.—Editor.

Anudhyána – the Real Dhyána

Many days ago, when I was giving a class to the senior *ácáryas*, I clearly explained the difference between *dhyána* and *dharaña*. There is movement and dynamic force in *dharaña* [of course, according to the author, in real spiritual practice, *dharaña* is more static, whereas *dhyána* is more dynamic]. Now I shall explain in short the difference between *prárthaná*, *archaná*, *abhidhyána*, *sadhana* and *árádhaná*. The practitioners of spirituality should know all these.

Given the relationship between the individual and *Parama Puruśa* one has, of course, to address Him properly. The way of addressing Him is by the *ístamantra*. The *ístamantra* should be in clear, simple and easy language because one has to address Him with that. Let us suppose, that Mr. Krushnapada Banerjee is your uncle. You should not address him as “Krushnapada Banerjee”. You should address him as “uncle”. All have the bond of an intimate relationship with *Parama Puruśa*. He is certainly your own, but there has to be a term or note of address, which is rightly the *ístamantra*. One has, of course, to always remember that “His two eyes are watching me”. To do this, using the *ístamantra* will not help you so much. What are those words we generally use, then? *Ore Bábáre!* [O! Lord, save me!] That is the *gurumantra*. “O Lord, [Your] two eyes are watching me and will not spare me!” That is the *gurumantra*.

Now, the fact is that you are in this material world. You have various needs, both physical and mental. Your existence is in this world. You have come to this world because *Parama Puruśa* desired so, otherwise you would not have come. Hence it is His duty to make necessary arrangements for

fulfilling your physical and psychic needs or any other needs you might have. So, is there any necessity of desiring anything from Him on your part? Since he is doing everything possible to meet your needs, then where is the necessity of desiring anything at all? There are two distinct consequences in desiring [something] from Him. First, you are wasting your precious time. Of course, your time is valuable. What you do when you ask for something from Him? In desiring so you are frittering away your valuable time which you could have utilized in useful pursuits. Secondly, in a roundabout way you are trying to make Him understand that, “You (*Parama Puruśa*) should have done this for me but you are not doing it. That is why I have to solicit this. That is why I have to request like this.” This means you are reminding Him of His “omission”. I do not support the practice of *prárthaná* [prayer]. About prayer I have said in *Ánanda Sútram*, that *Prárthaná archaná mátraeiva bhramanúlam*. [Prayer and ritualistic worship become a source of confusion.] When does a person pray? When one’s thinking goes wrong, when one commits a gross mistake. Hence, praying to *Parama Puruśa* is wrong in the beginning, middle and end.

Sádhaná is derived from the word *sádh*. In Sanskrit it means that “you have a goal and you are trying to reach the goal”. In Sanskrit the goal is termed as *sádhya*. Sadhana is the effort to reach the goal. You are in Kolkata and you will have to go to Burdwan. In this case Burdwan is the *sádhya*. The effort you make to go by train, bus or on foot is *sadhana*. *Parama Puruśa* is the goal of the individual (*jīva*), so He is the *sádhya* of the *jīva*. The effort to attain Him is *sadhana*. Suppose, a singer reaches a particular level

in the [art] of singing, for which they are doing regular practice (*reváj*), because of which their hands and vocal chords are toned up. This is *sadhana*. That is why I say that the effort to reach any goal (*sadhya*) is called *sadhana*. What is spiritual practice ? The effort to reach *Parama Puruśa*, who is the *sadhya*, is called *sadhana*. So, every one in all circumstances has to do *sadhana*...

Parama Puruśa is my goal. I try to reach *Parama Puruśa*, that is, I do *sadhana*. You know that *Parama Puruśa*'s other name is *Liilámaya* [the Sportive One]. You will find *Parama Puruśa* if you love Him heartily, but He plays a game with you. If He does not play with you, you will not get *ánanda* [bliss]. A person must run here and there after Him, and think, "What is going on, what is going on?" This is suspense. And in this suspense is the sweetness.(1)

In Ranchi I told [you] about *dhyána* and *dhárańá*. *Parama Puruśa* is your goal. You are going to *Parama Puruśa*. If *Parama Puruśa* is caught easily in your heart, then that is the will of *Parama Puruśa*. If *Parama Puruśa* runs away from you, then what should you do? If you think, "*Parama Puruśa* does not want me," and you go back, then you are defeated by *Parama Puruśa*. But if *Parama Puruśa* runs away and you chase Him, if you say, "I won't let Him go, I will not desist till I catch hold of Him," this is *abhidhyána* [with *anudhyána*].*

You must do *abhidhyána*: "Even if *Parama Puruśa* says that I am a sinner or a confirmed scoundrel, I will not leave Him. Whatever I may be, a sinner, a fool, a scoundrel, I

* In the *dhyána* *sadhana* of Ananda Marga, *anudhyána* is used, which gives the *sádhaká* immense bliss.—Editor.

will chase him. I will run and run after Him. After all, how much can He run? I will surely catch Him." This is *abhidhyána*.

Gurudhyána on Gurucakra – The Real Fullfilment of Dhyána Sádhaná and its Final Attainment is Salvation

To make the mind pinnacled, one should do *dhyána* of the *Guru* in the *guru cakra*. The *guru cakra* is slightly below the pineal gland, although the *sahasrára cakra* and the *guru cakra* are virtually the same. So, the mind is to be concentrated on the *guru cakra*, and all the potentialities of the unconscious mind are also to be concentrated here. The moment one achieves full concentration, one becomes omniscient. Why do spiritual aspirants concentrate on the *guru cakra* and not on the pineal gland for *dhyána*? Because the *guru cakra** is the internal side of the *sahasrára cakra*.

A spiritual aspirant should not do spiritual practices to become omniscient. Rather, a spiritual aspirant is to perform spiritual practices to satisfy *Parama Puruśa* in the form of *Parama Guru*. That is why it has been rightly said: *Guru krpáhi kevalam* ["The grace of the *Guru* is everything"].

There is no difference between the pineal and pituitary glands of males and females, but there may be differences

* In his *Shabda Cayaniká* series, the author has used the word *sarvarasásvádana* for *guru dhyána* on *gurucakra*. This means "to assimilate totally the entire inferences being emanated from the *Guru* with deep devotion and an acute intensity of love for Him". This really increases the depth and bliss of *dhyána*, and it also enables the *sádhaka* to be merged, to be one in Him in the final stage of *dhyána sadhana*.—Editor.

in the other glands. This is why those who say that women are not entitled to spiritual salvation are wrong. Men and women are equally entitled to spiritual salvation.

... By the will of *Parama Puruśa*, the intuitional mind (*parjiñámánasa*), originally engaged in witnessship, gradually evolves out of His Cosmic Body, towards crudity. In this state, first come the looser bondages of *sattvaguña*, then come the stronger bondages of *rajaguña*, and lastly the crudest bondages of *tamaguña*. They come in stages, not suddenly or at the same time. In a special state of this process of evolution, a living unit body with a static physical structure, mutative force and sentient attraction (*sañlepa*) goes ahead and attains higher lifeforms and more developed minds.

Having moved further ahead, attaining the most elevated state, the unit, with the help of its developed mind associated with the body, gains control over its instincts and propensities, except the self-active nerve fibers and *náđiis* [energy channels].

The being in whom the psychic entity is preponderant and the mind controls and administers the entire nerve cells and nerve fibers except those self-active nerve fibers and *náđiis*, is called *mánuśa* or *manuśya* or "intellectual human" *Man + uñ = manu + añ = mánava*. Now, where the enlightened intellect (*prajiñádhii*) is sovereign, where the material factors are completely subjugated by it, such an enlightened being is called "a human of intuitional being" The nerve cells of such human beings find the rare opportunity of becoming enriched by intuitional practices (*sadhana*). Such an opportunity is not available to other animals, or at least, it is rare for them.

Such an elevated human mind, by virtue of its strong ectoplasmic forces, secures control over the higher nerve cells, provided it has the support and association of the grace of the Guru. Everything originates from the same cosmic factor and from His intuitional mind. That is why the inspiration and impetus to move ahead come from Him only. That is the reason why, even if one may be a great philosopher or scholar, however strong one's grasp over the faculty of action and knowledge may be, nothing happens without the grace of *Parama Puruṣa*. *Nānyah pantháh vidyate ayanáy*. [We have no other way or means] In fact, there is no course available for a human being except His causeless grace. There is grace at the beginning, in the middle and at the end. All these three types of *kṛpá* constitute the grace of the Guru (*gurukṛpá*).

The most elevated point in the human body is the *guru cakra*. The divine power [occult power of the guru] functions in the body through this *guru cakra*. That is why the practice of doing *práñáma* [showing reverence] to the Guru is a full prostration exactly like a straight line, so that the *guru cakra* lies in the direction of the very object of obeisance. Such a posture is termed *sáṣṭaṅga práñáma*, because obeisance is done by means of the eight vital limbs of the body. This is also called *dañḍavat práñáma* because in this [posture], the body remains [straight] like a stick.

In the ancient Aryan and Dravidian societies, a time-honoured practice was to pay respect to highly revered entities and to seek their blessings in such a manner that their words of blessings and the touch of their hands dispensing blessings helped one reach the proximity of *guru cakra*. As there is the practice of touching the feet of the

revered one by one's own hands, there is also the practice of blessing someone by placing one's hand on their head. To bless is "to speak within" – *kalyāṇam bhúyát* – "Let good come to you", that is to say, "Your soul should move upwards, let your material being attain supreme contentment". That is why, when performing a handshake, one tilts a little forward. This amounts to *namah mudrá*, no doubt, but this is not doing *práñama*, nor is it a potent way to receive blessings. Of course, the practice of *namaskára* is good. While doing this one says mentally, 'Let good prevail upon you, I wish your well-being from the depths of my heart'. That is why, while doing *namaskára* one has first to touch the midpoint of one's two eyebrows (*trikúṭi*) with one's hands, while intending good to the other; then one has to touch one's *anáhata cakra*, pouring out one's heartfelt love to the other. By doing this, one gets the best wishes of others, but it is not the way to receive a blessing.

When *Parama Puruśa* blesses someone, He does not do it with the expectation of getting *namaskára* or *sáśtaṅga práñama*; it is His causeless grace. He is not accountable for the grace He bestows on anyone. That is why the individual, without asking for anything, may only say, 'Let Your wish be fulfilled'.

Of course, *Parama Puruśa* is responsible for the awakening of the individual [the individual's *kúlakuṇḍalinii* at the time of *dikśá*] which, in the language of the scriptures, is termed as *abhiśeka* or "auspicious beginning". In Tantra, the secret instructions for merging psychic wealth into spiritual wealth are called *sámrájya abhiśeka*. And the secret practical directions for merging one's spiritual wealth with the Supreme Entity, which are not expressed verbally but fulfilled through

action, are called *mahá sámrájya abhiśeka*. (*Abhi - ciṅc + ghaiṅ = abhiśeka*. According to the *Gaodīya* system, when the dental *s* follows *abhi*, it becomes a glottal *ś*. This is an alternative means in Sanskrit grammar.) *Parama Puruśa* guides the *jīva* on the path of righteousness through *gurutattva*.

Sadāśhiva was the first Guru who came to this planet. He was the living embodiment of divine power and intuition. When the divine principle of Brahmahood or Iishvarahood (*Brahma tattva* or *Iishvartattva*) gets expressed in the form of the Guru, such an advent is called *Tāraka Brahma*. The stance of Brahma which liberates the *jīva* from all kinds of bondages is termed *tāraka (traī + thak)*. *Tāraka Brahma* is that point of mercifulness (*karuṇāmay vindu*) of the Supreme Entity, who can move with ease both in the realm of materiality and consciousness. *Tāraka Brahma* is the one who constantly delivers the message of consciousness (*cetanā*), without ignoring the material world. It is said in *Ānanda Sūtram* that “the Guru is none other than Brahma” (*Brahmaeiva gururekah nāparah*). The human society of this planet received the first expression of *Tāraka Brahma* in the form of Sadāśhiva.*

* The foregoing fourteen paragraphs are from *Ānanda Vacanāmrtam Part 31, The Awakening of Women*, and from “Guhyguru” in *Shabda Cayanikā Part 26*.—Editor.

Savikalpa Samádhi, Nirvikalpa Samádhi and the Supreme Attainment of Salvation

Diipanii and *mantra caetanya* are not necessary in the process of *dhyána*, but they are necessary in *japakriyá* [auto-or outer-suggestion through the repetition of a *mantra*]. Those who are unsuccessful in *japakriyá* find it very difficult to master the practice of *dhyána*. In the process of *dhyána*, *mantra*, *diipanii*, and *mantra caetanya* – all three – are associated with the *dhyeya Puruśa* [*Puruśa* as the object of ideation]. So, from a subtle perspective, *japa* is a composite of a number of processes, but *dhyána kriyá* “Internally persuing this object of meditation in *dhyána*” is complete in itself, and this is the reason that beginners find it difficult to become established in *dhyána*. For those who can establish themselves in *dhyána*, however, *samádhi* is a certainty. Only after one is established in *dhyána* can one attain *nirvikalpa samádhi*. If one is established in *samádhi*, liberation or salvation will come as a matter of course.

Tantra, being a practical process, does not recognize any external practices or showy displays, and in particular does not recognize idol worship as the best process of *sadhana*.*

* The foregoing two paragraphs are from “Tantra and Sadhana” in *Subhásita Samgraha Part 8*.—Editor.

The Result of Long and Meticulous Sadhana is Establishment in Samádhi

Mental functions are *sañkalpa* [action in seed form] oriented and *vikalpa* [actional expression] oriented. The sense organs (*indriyas*) are activated by the *sañkalpátmaka* portion of the mind, and then actions are performed in the practical world. If someone considers that as actions are performed by the *sañkalpátmaka* portion of mind, they are true, and that as actions are not performed by the *vikalpátmaka* or negative portion of mind, they are untrue, such a statement of theirs is not philosophically justifiable. How far does this sort of positive or negative mental movement of mind influence the life of a spiritual aspirant? How far is it related to *samádhi*? If spiritual aspirants actively render social service and accept it as the supreme goal of life, will they become established in *samádhi*?

In fact, *samádhi* is neither a positive nor a negative state of mind. *Samádhi* is a state of equilibrium. When the surface of water remains smooth and unruffled by the wind, we may call it a "state of equilibrium". If the outer, turbulent surface of water is *sañkalpátmaka* or the positive aspect of mind, then the currents below the surface should be called the negative aspect. When a state of equilibrium is attained, the upper surface and the lower currents of the mind attain parallelism. In the course of their agitated movement, the *sañkalpátmaka* and *vikalpátmaka* portions of the mind meet at certain common points. Thus in every thought wave, in every entity, at all times, and in all countries, there is some kind of temporary equilibrium.

While one is engaged in extroversial actions (*pravrttimúlaka karma*) it appears that both *nivrtti* [introversial

actions] and a state of equilibrium are possible to attain. However, to a person who is engaged in *nivr̥ttimúlaka karma*, both *prav̥rtti* and a state of equilibrium seem to be impossible to attain. Generally, people accept those objects or actions as natural with which they easily adjust themselves, and those objects or actions as unnatural with which they are unfamiliar. Aquatic creatures think that the only place to live is in water and cannot comprehend how any living object could live on land. Conversely, those creatures who live on land think that land is the only natural habitat. They gasp for breath after remaining only a little while in water. This is nature's arrangement – no question of free choice arises here.

People who try to bring their minds to a state of equilibrium, find that a tranquil mental flow is something quite natural. For them *prav̥rtti* and *nivr̥tti*, that is, extroversial and introversial states of mind, are something unnatural. The paths of *prav̥rtti* and *nivr̥tti* depend upon mundane propensities; neither of them leads to psychic balance, thus neither can ensure absolute bliss.

For success in the extroversial (*prav̥rtti*) sphere of life one must develop an attachment to an external object or extroversial idea, and then make efforts to attain it, For success in the introversial sphere (*nivr̥tti*) one must develop *dveṣa* or the feeling of repulsion for an external object or extroversial idea, and then make the requisite effort to succeed in that endeavour. The greater one's attachment for an object, the greater the possibility of attaining success in the pursuit of *prav̥rtti*. But if there is only attraction for an object, with no endeavour made to attain it, one cannot be successful. If someone wants to become rich, but does not try to acquire wealth, they will never become rich. Similarly, the greater one's psychic repulsion for an object, the more

easily one will be able to withdraw from that object, but if one does not try to increase one's repulsion one will not be successful in *nivr̥tti* sadhana. Those who are the advocates of the *nivr̥tti* cult strive to convince people that wealth, opulence, and near and dear relations create snares of bondages and are thus impediments to spiritual progress. Yet their exhortations do not end here - they incite people to abandon their homes and embrace the life of renunciation. In other words, they advise people to practise the cult of repulsion.

A spiritual aspirant who wants to attain *samádhi* needs to develop *vaerágya* [the spirit of renunciation] and *abhyása* [continued practice]. Remember, *samádhi* is neither *pavr̥tti m̥laka* nor *nivr̥tti m̥laka*. *Vaerágya* is the "absence of attachment", not repulsion. In order to deal with objects properly one should never become subservient to them, but should ascribe Brahmahood to them by cultivating the repeated practice of cosmic ideation or Brahma *bhāvana*.

What is *abhyása*? *Tatra sthitaṃ yatno'bhyaśah. Abhyása* is the creation of a particular continuous psychic vibration. It is the most essential factor in the spiritual sphere. The continuous endeavour to maintain the state of equilibrium of the *citta* leads to the attainment of *samádhi*. When one is attracted by an object one runs after it, and when one feels repulsion for an object, one runs away from it. A person who is fond of wine often thinks of it, whereas a person who detests wine prevents their mind from thinking about it. Unless attraction and repulsion are both transcended, the mind can never attain a state of equilibrium or *samádhi*. Mental equilibrium only becomes possible when one makes a constant endeavour to attain psychic balance.

Samádhi becomes a natural phenomenon as a result of continuous spiritual practice [*dhyána* sadhana and other lessons]. Procrastination is something undesirable on the spiritual path. If ever spiritual practice is discontinued, endless desirable and undesirable waves of thoughts occupy the mind. Spiritual practice should be continued uninterruptedly and with proper sincerity and veneration, otherwise *samádhi* will forever remain a theoretical subject of philosophy, never entering the periphery of practical realization. One must not adopt the psychology, "I'm practising spirituality because my *ácárya* [spiritual teacher] told me to." Rather one should think, "I want to attain spiritual realization. My *ácárya* is merely guiding me along the path." Only when one takes full responsibility for one's own spiritual life can one attain the peak of spiritual progress and become fully established on the solid ground of spirituality.

When one accepts something as absolute after due logical deliberation, one develops *shraddhá* [veneration] in the mind. One who has no respect for the goal can never attain success. *Shrat satyam tasmin dhiiyate iti shraddhá*. "*Shraddhá* is the pursuit of Supreme Truth." The expansion of the *citta* is also called *shraddhá*. One should have immense respect for that object which causes the *citta* to expand. *Samádhi* is the state of maximum expansion of the *citta*, and thus *shraddhá* is the first stage in the attainment of *samádhi*. *Pravríti* and *nivríti* are both psychic tendencies. The more one practises either of these, the more one's mind becomes adjusted with them. *Samádhi* is beyond the scope of *pravríti* and *nivríti*. Even *shraddhá* is not necessary in the pursuit of *pravríti* and *nivríti*, but it is indispensable for attaining *samádhi*. Sometimes an undesirable thought blocks the smooth unidirectional flow of the mind along the spiritual path. When

this occurs, *viirya* or spiritual vigour, a special type of psychic power, is required to dispel the negative thought. Spiritual vigour arises as a result of *shraddhá*.

Anubhútaviśayásampramośah smritih. “The re-creation of an object already perceived is termed *smriti* [memory].” Memory is strengthened by spiritual vigour. When one successfully eliminates all impediments to spiritual progress by developing spiritual vigour born out of *shraddhá* and moves towards the spiritual goal without interruption it is called *dhruvásmrti* or “fixed memory”. The waves of extroversial propensities create obstacles in the way of *dhruvásmrti* and the waves of introversial propensities keep the mind oblivious of everything. But when *dhruvásmrti* is perfect, that is, when one’s only object of ideation is the Supreme Entity, and none other, one attains *samádhi*. At this stage the mind becomes fully identified with its goal. In subtle analysis this is also a type of a positive stage of mind.

The mind takes the form of the physical object or psychic idea it encounters. This assuming of a form in the mind is called “psychic pabulum” or *ábhoga*. Unless the mind is liberated from its pabulum, permanent peace is not possible. How can one attain liberation from one’s pabulum? Liberation cannot be attained through repulsion. Repulsion towards an object is a negative tendency – this too is a kind of pabulum. Although the mind detaches itself from its object, it is nevertheless attached to the nonexistent form of that object. When the mind withdraws from its object, the *citta* becomes suspended in unmanifested *Prakrti* due to the attainment of *vashiikára siddhi*. This is not a supreme attainment. This state of *samádhi* is neither static *samádhi* nor *nirviija* [seedless] *samádhi*, nor *samprajñáta samádhi*. Within the *citta* there

remains the possibility of future rebirth, even after a million years, and thus the attainment of permanent *samádhi* (*kaevalya samádhi*) is not possible. The *samádhi* attained in this state can be called *nirbija prakrtiliina samádhi*. Unless this *nirvija samádhi* is permanent we may at best call it *asamprajñata* or *nirvikalpa samádhi* [in theory only], and not salvation of a permanent nature.

In the states of *prakrtiliina* and *videhaliina* (two of the seven *devayonis*) the *samskáras* lie latent in seed form, waiting for a congenial environment to acquire a proper physical base. *Videha* means "bodiless state", *liina* means "merged" or "dissolved". *Videhaliina* are caused by one's *bhavapratyaya* (bundle of *samskáras*). The *bhavapratyaya* contains the reactive momenta which cause one's rebirth. The states of *prakrtiliina* and *videhaliina* are *nirvija* and not *asampraliniata* because although the seeds of the reactive momenta are burnt, one does not attain full omniscience.

A spiritual aspirant attains the state of *videhaliina* as a result of *shunya dhyána* or ideation on nothingness. Through such ideation a spiritual aspirant develops a psychic pabulum of nothingness. Yet even in this state there remains the possibility of rebirth. Those who embrace nothingness as their absolute goal develop a void in their *citta* in the absence of the Cognitive Faculty. As a result they are unable to establish themselves in the Supreme Cognitive Stance and attain salvation. The spiritual cult which encourages this practice is certainly defective.

Both the *prakrtiliina* and *videhaliina* states are established in negation, thus there is certainly a possibility of rebirth. The true path of spiritual aspirants is not the path of *bhavapratyaya*, but the path of *upáyapratyaya* [path of

positive ideation and exhaustion of *saṁskáras*]. *Sádhakas* and *sádhikás* will have to devise methods to establish themselves in *samádhi* beyond the periphery of the mind. They should neither become attached to nor detached from the objects created by *Prakṛti*, for this is not the path of enjoyment or sacrifice, but the path of psychic equilibrium. *Prakṛti* is not the entity to be worshipped or denied; the goal is *Parama Puruśa*. He is the only object of ideation and adoration. By ideating on Him one's whole being gradually becomes identified with the Cognitive Faculty. Hence one should worship *Puruśa*, not *Prakṛti*.

The perpetual state of *nirbija samádhi* acquired in the sadhana of *Puruśa* is called *mokśa* or "salvation". *Samprajñáta samádhi*, in which only the "I" feeling persists is experienced when the *citta* is in a state of total concentration.

One who has attained this *samádhi* gradually acquires the state of omniscience. After the *citta* attains *samádhi* due to its unwavering ideation on one particular pabulum, it can easily attain *samádhi* [by ideating] on other pabula too. Once the mind gains control over one object it can simultaneously gain control over other objects as well.

What is "omniscience"? Knowledge regarding the past, present and future is called "omniscience". The seed of omniscience lies in every human being, but the degree of its expression varies from person to person. In some the seed is ripe, in others it is unripe. *Samprajñáta samádhi* causes the seed to ripen. In permanent *savikalpa*, the seed assumes vast proportions. In that state one's object no longer remains within the limited periphery of the unit mind, but becomes as vast as the Macrocosm. One's potentiality becomes immeasurable. By virtue of sadhana the ungerminated seed

ripens and assumes unlimited proportions. Thus elevated spiritual aspirants do not need to acquire knowledge from external sources. The bliss of knowledge spontaneously manifests itself in them due to Macrocosmic grace.

Tatra nirátishayam sarvajñátva bijjam.

“The seed of omniscience is manifested in them.”

This expansion of the *citta* is only possible in *savikalpa samádhi*. A restless *citta* can never attain *samprajñáta samádhi*. *Jada samádhi* [*samádhi* on crude material objects] should never be called *samprajñáta samádhi*. What is *jaśa samádhi*? *Jada samádhi* occurs when the mind becomes so infatuated with a crude material object of ideation, be it money, opulence, landed property, and so on, that it takes the form of that object, to the exclusion of all other objects of the world.

The goal of *samprajñáta samádhi* may be positive or negative, crude or subtle psychic pabulum. The goal of *asamprajñáta samádhi*, like *prakṛtiliina*, *nirbiiija*, or *videhaliina*, etc., is neither *nirbiiija asamprajñáta* (without seed), nor *sabiiija asamprajñáta* (with seed), but is an intermediary stage.

Samprajñáta samádhi has four stages. The first stage is called *savitarka*. One attains this *samádhi* when the mind is concentrated on worldly objects, such as one's children, relations or wealth. In fact, *savitarka samádhi* is synonymous with *jada samádhi*. Negative *savitarka samádhi* occurs when one keeps one's mind aloof from [has an aversion to?] the thought of family or material wealth. The desire or nondesire for crude pabulum amounts to the same thing as far as the *citta* is concerned.

The second stage is called *savicára samádhi*. This *samádhi* occurs not when the *citta* is engaged in crude psychic pabulum, but when it becomes fully concentrated in the mad pursuit of more subtle pabula such as name and fame, etc. If the *citta* wants to free itself from these things, one attains negative *savicára samádhi*.*

The third stage is called *sánanda samádhi*. In this *samádhi* the *citta* only has one psychic pabulum – the feeling of bliss. This *samádhi* also has a negative counterpart which occurs when the only psychic pabulum is “I am not enjoying bliss.”

The fourth stage of *samprajñata samádhi* is called *sásmita samádhi*. In this *samádhi* the unit cognitive faculty has only one object – the I- feeling or *asmitá*. When this I- feeling disappears, leaving a subtler, singular flow of consciousness, it is called *asamprajñata samádhi*. In *asamprajñata samádhi* there remains only the Cognitive Faculty (*Puruśa*). When all other objects or factors disappear and only the Cognitive Faculty exists, it is called *puruśakhyáti***

Ásárhii Púrñimá 1959 DMC, Hazipur, Bihar

* The author also mentioned other types of *samádhi*. While staying in Ranchi in the sixties, he imparted the realization of different *samádhis* to various *sádhakas*, even demonstrating and explaining them to the assembled spiritual aspirants. Some of these types of *samádhi* were *Bháva samádhi* (not Abstract *samádhi*), *Rágánugá* and *Rágátmiká samádhi*, *Tanmátrádhigata* and *Tanmátrátiita Anandayoga samádhi*, *Kauṣṅkálmálinii samádhi*, *Tanmátríc samádhi*, etc. Of course, according to the author, the best *samádhi* is *Nirvikalpa samádhi* which is only possible to be attained through *guru dhyána*.—Editor

** The foregoing twenty-five paragraphs are from the chapter “Psychic Assimilation in Psycho-Spiritual Practice” in *Subhásita Samígraha Part 8*.—Editor.

Complete Abhedajñána is the Real Samádhi

Now the question is, how can people acquire non-discriminatory knowledge? The answer is: through the practice of *iishvara prañidhana* and *abhidhyána*. There are several interpretations of the word “*iishvara*”. According to some, “*Iishate yah sah Iishvarah*”. That is, “the one who controls everything is *Iishvara*”. According to Maharsi Patanjali, “*Klesha karma vipákáshayaeraparámsth Purúsa visheśa Iishvarah*”. That is, the entity which is not assailed by *klesha* [afflictions], *karma* [reactions], *vipáka* [serving of reactions], and *áshaya* [the bundle of unserved reactions] is called *Iishvara*. Whatever these definitions of *iishvara* may be, here, by *Iishvara*, we mean the Supreme Controller of the universe, the Supreme Object of ideation for all living beings. Hence *iishvara prañidhána* means to let one’s entire psychic energy flow towards *Iishvara* as the object of Supreme ideation. And *dhyána* means *anudhyána*. When spiritual aspirants feel that the object of meditation – which is their life and soul – is trying to escape, they immediately run after Him and try to catch Him. This is called *anudhyána*.

Prañidhána and *anudhyána* together are called *abhidhyána*.

*Tasyábhidhyánád yojanát tattvabhávád bhúyashcánte
Vishvamáyámivittih*

Through *abhidhyána* the unit mind remains continuously absorbed in the ideation of the Supreme Entity and finally merges in Him. In this way it consequently overcomes the influence of *Vishvamáyá*, the creator of numerous

differentiations. At this point spiritual aspirants finally attain non-discriminatory knowledge. To attain this stage, worldly knowledge, social position, and skin colour are of no importance whatsoever. Even the different systems of worship, sacrifice, incantation, and ostentatious devotion are insignificant. In psycho-spiritual practice the mind plays a vital role – external rituals have no place. Just because a person takes a holy dip in the Ganges and then puts on a sacred garment does not necessarily mean that they have attained that non-discriminatory knowledge. The water may cleanse the body, it is true, but how can it purify the mind and the soul? Fishes have a holy dip in the Ganges every day. Does that help them to attain non-discriminatory knowledge? Hence, the external observances, the ostentatious display of holy beads and coloured foreheads are not the means to attain divine knowledge.

Although all the great personalities are equally venerable, yet different individuals have love for different personalities. The great devotee Hanuman was well aware of the fact that Náráyaṇa, the husband of Lakṣmi, and Rámachandra, the husband of Siita, were the same entity. Even then he was more attracted towards Rámachandra because, as he said,

*Shriinátthe Jánakiinátthe cábhedo Paramátmani;
Tathápi mama sarvasvah Rámah kamalalocanah.*

“I know Náráyaṇa and Rámachandra are basically one, yet to me the lotus-eyed Rámachandra is dearer.”

The state of non-discriminatory knowledge is called *samprajñáta samádhi*.

The Differences between Sampraijñáta, Asampraijñáta, Savikalpa and Nirvikalpa Samádhi

First let us analyse the difference between *sampraijñáta* and *savikalpa samádhi*.* *Sampraijñátá* is derived from *sampra - jñá + kta*. The derivate meaning of the word is "proper and excellent knowledge.", and *savikalpa* is derived from *sa + vi - kalp + al*. During the state of *savikalpa samádhi* the spiritual aspirant has a feeling that there is a second entity [oneself] besides *Paramátma*. Hence this *samádhi* is called *savikalpa samádhi*.

The human mind performs primarily two kinds of actions - *samkalpátmaka* and *vikalpátmaka*. When one decides to do something it is called the *samkalpátmaka* state of mind, and when the *samkalpa* or resolution is materialized in the practical field, it is called *vikalpátmaka* action. During the state of *sampraijñáta samádhi*, the unit *citta* is converted into the Cognitive Faculty, and thus the *vikalpátmaka* action of mind is suspended, although the *samkalpátmaka* state of mind is still quite active. Yet, during the state of *savikalpa samádhi*, the *samkalpátmaka* state of mind remains only nominally active, and during the state of *nirvikalpa samádhi* both the *samkalpátmaka* and *vikalpátmaka* states of the mind are completely suspended. In that state of complete cessation of the mind, the spiritual aspirant's mind cannot function in any way, neither in the individual sphere nor collective

* Regarding *samádhi*, *sampraijñáta* and *asampraijñáta* are terms used by Maharshi Patanjali, whereas terms like *savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa* are used by the author. The author has explained later on that there is a gulf of difference between the two.—Editor.

sphere; and as one loses psychic vitality, the nerve cells, nerve fibres and sensory organs also stop functioning.

(On 14th May, 1970, at Ranchi *jagrti*, a certain *sádhaka* experienced this type of *nirvikalpa samádhi* in the presence of about twenty-five other *sádhakas*. That concerning *sádhaka* first sat in *siddhásana* with the spinal chord erect, and then began to practice *dhyána* on all the *cakras* – *múládharma*, *svádhiśthána*, *mañipura*, *anáhata* and *vishuddha*. During that period he had a unique experience. He felt within that his dear object of meditation was dancing with two skulls. Thereafter, he raised his mind to *ájiña cakra* and began to practice *dhyána* in the prescribed *dhyána mudra*. Next, when he concentrated his mind on *lalaná cakra*, the function of the ten sense organs of his body was suspended. The *sádhaka* lost his mind in the Cosmic Mind and became one with the Cosmic Mind. He looked peaceful and serene.)

It was noted in the aforesaid instance that the *sádhaká's* *indriyas* and unit mind totally lost their power of functioning. And in the total absence of the mind-entity the unit mind can have no notion of duality. *Tasya sthitih amánasikeśu*. This is why this *samádhi* is called *nirvikalpa samádhi*. *Átmani mahadaham cittánám prañáshe nirgunásthitih nirvikalpa samádhi vá (Ánanda Sútram)*.

The moment some spiritual aspirants' minds reach the pituitary gland, they stop functioning. The minds of other aspirants cross all the *cakras*, rising in gradual ascendancy from the lowest *cakra*, and ultimately reach the *sahasrára cakra*. This is the highest state of realization in the spiritual sphere. When the unit mind goes beyond the jurisdiction of the *indriyas*, and the seeds of reactive momenta have been completely destroyed, it becomes altogether non-existent. In

that state of complete cessation of mind the *jiiva* gets completely merged in Shiva. The mind, after reaching the *sahasrāra* [pineal plexus] does not return, and due to the obliteration of spatial differences, the spiritual aspirant dies a physical death.

Pāshabaddho bhavejjiivo pāshmukto bhavecchivo.

However, the minds of those whose *saṁskāras* are not yet completely burnt up, descend again after remaining in a trance for a certain period. Some spiritual aspirants' minds stop functioning after reaching the stage of *kalā*. Under natural circumstances they remain without any external body-consciousness for about five or six hours.

Experiences of the Post-Samādhi State

After the *samādhi* or trance [of a spiritual aspirant] is broken, two completely different pictures of the different worlds present themselves. In their inner life, they experience an unbroken flow of bliss – an endless ocean of bliss, with external tranquillity and indescribable sweetness. On the other hand, the outer world appears to be dry, desolate and unsubstantial. In their inner life, they feel the most intimate contact and sweetest touch of the loving Father, but in the outer world, they feel detached from the original abode – the abode of eternal bliss. So this world of inferences appears to be dry and dreary. The *sādhaka* feels difficulty in adjusting with the external world. The pangs of separation from the Lord affects their mind. As a result, sometimes they may burst into laughter, and sometimes break into sobs. To normal people their behaviour appears to be abnormal, but actually it reflects a very high stage of spiritual attainment. Soon afterwards, they attain the non-attributional stance – the

highest state of spiritual attainment. Attaining this highest stage by the Macrocosmic Grace, the *sádhaka* becomes established in the original stance of the Supreme Entity – Parama Brahma...

[In this connection, it is said in *Ānanda Sútram*]

Abhāvottaránandapratyayálabhaniirvrttih tasya pramáñam.

[The lingering bliss which follows this state of vacuity is the proof of that state, the means of firm belief in that state.]

Purport: In the state of wakefulness, all three stages of the mind, namely, conscious, subconscious and unconscious, remain active, but the subtler condition is inconspicuous due to the activeness of the cruder condition. While dreaming, the crude or conscious mind remains dormant and the subconscious and the unconscious minds remain active. During sleep, only the unconscious mind remains active. The opinion that the state of sleep is the state of the sense of vacuity is unacceptable to a subtle philosophical judgement, because at that time the work of both the conscious and the subconscious minds is done by the unconscious mind. The real state of vacuity is actually the state of utter destruction of the mind, and so even *savikalpa samádhi* is not a state of vacuity. Only the state of *nirvikalpa* is the state of vacuity. In this state of absolute vacuity, the spiritual waves of exhilaration that fill the unit entity still continue to flow and trail on for some time even after that state of vacuity, that is, after the mind returns due to unserved *sañskáras* [the consequential reactive momenta of one's past deeds]. These trailing waves of exhilaration and joyous exuberance keep

reminding the “mindful” *sádhaka* [intuitional practitioner] that their state beyond the mind had been one of absolute bliss.*

Stages of Samádhi

Anindyánanda Rasa Samádhi

To control the various propensities of human mind there are various glands and sub-glands which form certain nerve centers inside the spinal column. They are called “plexii” in Tantra. Each and every plexus regulates a certain number of propensities. The hormones secreted from these particular glands influence the concerning sub-glands, the other lower glands, and the *vrttis* controlled by their respective glands.

The food and drink we take every day is converted into *rasa* [fluid], *rakta*, flesh, fat, bone marrow and lymph etc. Ultimately, the lymph is converted into hormones of various types. The special hormone secreted from the spiritual aspirant’s pineal gland flows into the pituitary plexus. At that time if one’s mind remains engaged in pure spiritual thoughts that hormone flows from the pineal gland down the left side to the pituitary gland, and then to other plexii, glands and sub-glands, nerve fibres, nerve cells, veins and arteries, etc. This excessive flow of pineal hormone revitalises all the lower plexii. On the other hand, if one’s mind remain preoccupied with crude thoughts then the pineal hormone

* The foregoing twelve paragraphs are from the chapter “Abhedajīāna and Nirvikalpa Samádhi” in *Ananda Marga Philosophy in A Nutshell Part 5* and *Ananda Sūtram*.—Editor.

gets burnt up at the pituitary plexus. The lower plexii and glands, due to the lack of supply of pineal secretion, do not enjoy any spiritual bliss. But when the pineal hormone flows through the pituitary plexus to the lowest plexii, the undeveloped plexii of the body become healthier and revitalized. As a rule the upper chakras control the lower ones. So the *svadhiśthána chakra* controls the *múládhára chakra*, the *mañipura chakra* controls the *svadhiśthána* and *múládhára chakras*, the *anáhata* controls the *mañipura*, *svadhiśthána* and *muládhára chakras*, and the *ájiñá* controls all the lower *cakras*.

At the time of pineal secretion if a *sádhaka* goes into *samádhi* – they visualise or experience a kind of divine aura around the *anáhata chakra*. The *sádhaka* realizes that they are experiencing a divine dip in the holy aura, and feels indescribable bliss in the heart. In that exalted state of realization every object of this universe seems to be extremely sweet, and one derives immense bliss which no worldly object could ever provide. The sun's rays, the moonbeams, the land, the water, in fact everything appears to be emanating continuous stream of blissful nectar.

Idamánusamśarveśám bhútánám

Madhvasyá mánúsasya sarváni bhútáni madhuh,

Ayamátmá sarveśám bhútánám madhvasya átmanah

Sarvani bhútáni madhuh.

Even a sworn enemy appears to be very sweet at that time. Everything is sweet. In *Vaesnava* philosophy this stage of *samádhi* is called *madhura bháva*. In Tantra it is called *anindyánanda rasa samádhi*.

Characteristics of Anindyananda Rasa Samádhi

The different plexii of the body get revitalized due to abundant hormone secretion and become more active than before. The *sádhaka* enjoys immense bliss. Due to excessive feelings of joy the nerve cells and the nerve fibres become ineffective. A very sweet relation of love between the devotee and *Parama Puruśa* is established. Throughout the blissful experience a sweet taste is felt. This state is one of the thirty-two prominent states of bliss experienced by highly developed *sádhakas*. The special characteristics of this *samádhi* is that it cannot be attained by one's own personal efforts, but only through the grace of the Guru.

Of course, to attain supreme spiritual salvation it is not necessary for a *sádhaka* to experience any *samádhi* at all. For example, a passengers travelling on a Kolkata-bound train may or will not be able to see the sights of Jamalpur or Bhagalpur towns if the doors and window-shutters are closed. Although the passengers are unaware of the towns they are passing through, they still reach their destinations. In the spiritual world also, the *sádhaka*, while ideating on the Supreme will certainly pass through the different stages of realization without necessarily being aware of it. When the all-merciful Táraka Brahma physically comes to Earth in the form of a Sadguru He helps the deserving *sádhakas* to attain this type of *samádhi*. Even when He is physically absent in this world He helps deserving persons to attain this *samádhi* through other *gurus*...*

30 April 1969, Ranchi Jágtri

* The foregoing six paragraphs are from *Ananda Marga Philosophy in a Nutshell Part 4*.—Editor.

When spiritual aspirants, by dint of their sadhana, intuitional practice, exalt their *kulakuṅḍalīnī*, and when the *kulakuṅḍalīnī* crosses the *svādhiṣṭhāna cakra*, the next higher *cakra*, their feeling, their expression, their status, is known as *sálokya*. ...

Then when this coiled serpentine, the sleeping divinity, crosses the *maṅḍipura cakra*, just near the hub, the controlling point, of the pancreas, another sort of pleasure can be enjoyed, and that pleasure is called *sámiipyā samádhi*. *Sámiipyā* is a Sanskrit word. It means “proximity”. That is, spiritual aspirants feel their proximity to the Supreme Father. ...

Then when that sleeping divinity, that *kulakuṅḍalīnī*, crosses the *anáhata cakra*, this plexus, this “solar plexus” (in Latin), the spiritual aspirant’s feelings are known as *sáyujya*. *Sáyujya* means “in close contact”. In Sanskrit *sáyujya* means “close contact, just side by side, just touching”. ...

Then, when by dint of your sadhana, the divinity — the sleeping divinity — the *kulakuṅḍalīnī*, crosses this point [the throat], one will experience another sort of sadhana, a subtler sadhana, subtler *samádhi*. And that one is called *sárúpya*. In *sárúpya* the feeling is “I am one with Him.” “I am one with Him” – not close contact, but oneness. “I am one with the Supreme Progenitor, I am one with the Supreme Cognition.” This is *sárúpya*.

Then by still more sadhana, when the sleeping divinity crosses this point [between the eyebrows], the controlling point of the pituitary gland, the *ájñā cakra*, the spiritual aspirant’s feelings, or experiences – another sort of sadhana,

still more high – are known as *sársthī* in Sanskrit. At that point, the feeling is that “I am He”; that is, “I” and “He”, these two entities, have become one. “I am;” but “He” and “I” have coincided. ...

And the last stage is when that *kulakuṇḍalinī* comes here [crown of the head]. I said that in the unit structure, *Shambhūliuṅga*, *Parama Puruṣa*, is here, at the controlling point of the pineal gland. The divinity, the sleeping divinity, is to be exalted to that point, to the controlling point of the pineal gland. And there is the final stage of *samādhi*. That final stage of *samādhi* is called *nirvikalpa samādhi* in *yoga*, and *kaevalya* in *Tantra*. ...

That is, only one entity exists. That entity may be “I”, that entity may be “He”. But the differentiation between “I” and “He” disappears. So “I exist” and “He exists” – these two ideas disappear: only “exists” [remains]. That is, it is the stage of non-attributional consciousness. It is the supreme stage of yogic sadhana. It is the supreme stance for a *yogi*. ...

But for this one requires divine help. And I know one is sure to get divine help. And I know further that one is getting divine help. And I know still further that in future, for infinite time and infinite space, one will be getting this divine favour. And you are all spiritual aspirants. You will certainly attain that supreme stance and enjoy that divine blessedness.*

22 April 1969, Manila

* The foregoing eight paragraphs are from *Ananda Marga Philosophy in a Nutshell Part 4*—Editor.

Dashá, Bháva and Mahábháva

Humans, in spite of their numerous defects and loopholes, are divine beings. Sometimes, due to their momentary weaknesses they commit some mistakes or crimes; but after all, they are manifestations of God. Everyone is a divine creature and everyone is destined to be perfect some day. Whatever we are now is the result of our thoughts and actions in the past, and whatever we shall be in the future will be the result of what we think and do now. Our past actions determine our present state, and our thoughts and actions now will determine our future. We have all come from the invisible divine source, and again, after a limited period, we shall go back to that invisible divine source. No earthly object or human being is our permanent friend or relative. Therefore, we should not lament over anything.

*Ádarshaná ápatitah punashcádarshaná gatah;
Násao tava na tasya tvaá tatra vrthá ká parivedaná.*

[Everything has come from the world of invisibility and will ultimately go back to the world of invisibility. In fact, nothing belongs to you, nor do you belong to anyone. So why should one unnecessarily bother about anything?]

Therefore, wise persons conclude that the attainment of Brahma is the principal aim of human life; other aims are only secondary. When people withdraw all their mental propensities from all crude worldly objects and direct them towards Brahma, they are bound to feel immense bliss. Their constant contemplation of God lands them in the world of spiritual ecstasies. In Vaesńava [Vaishnavite] philosophy, these various states of spiritual ecstasy are described as *dashá*, *bháva* and *mahábháva*.

Each and every *sádhaka*, however dark and inglorious

their past might be, is entitled to spiritual realization.* Notorious criminals such as Ratnakar, Angulimala, and so on, who are said to have committed numerous crimes in their past lives, were great devotees of God later, and became the finest of human beings. The one thing that always counts is one's latent devotion and great desire to become pure and holy in life. The rest is managed by God. Since diehard criminals of this type were changed into holy men in only a short time, there is no reason why others also might not be equally blessed by the Lord. The Lord's blessings and mercy are always with men and women. Just as God has His duty towards human beings, human beings have a duty towards God. The duty of humans is to perform only those deeds which will give pleasure to God. God never makes any distinction between a holy man and a so-called sinful man. If God wills, that so-called sinful man may become a great devotee of God in no time.**

This is a kind of *savikalpa samádhi*. The conscious, subconscious and unconscious minds become fused into one. The eyes become fixed and red. The person feels the tactual presence of Parama Puruśa, and he holds Him, as it were, tightly.

* Demonstration of *mahábháva*: [A *sádhaka* was standing in front of Bábá. Bábá simply touched the index finger of one of His hands with the other. The *sádhaka* immediately fell down and began to roll on the ground. Bábá described this *samádhi* as *mahábháva*, which has been, described in Vaeśnáva philosophy.]

** Demonstration: [Bábá called a *sádhaka* and aroused his devotion by touching his *anáhata cakra* (the fourth psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus, located at the mid-point of the chest). The *sádhaka* felt the divine proximity and bliss within. He immediately lay down. He was feeling the tactual presence of God. Due to his *saniskáras* (mental reactive momenta) he was a bit restless. He was in *mahábháva*.]

This *mahábháva* is clearly distinguished from *dashá* and *bháva*. When the *sádhaka* clearly feels the thrill of divine existence around him at the time of sadhana, the state of bliss as experienced by the *sádhaka* is described as *dashá*. When the *sádhaka* feels the existence of the divine world around him, as also the source from which the divine existence comes, the state of bliss the *sádhaka* experiences at the time of sadhana is *bháva*. Again, when the *sádhaka* feels the closest proximity of Parama Puruśa, even within his embrace, that *bháva* is called *mahábháva*.

At the time of *dashá*, the *sádhaka* feels bliss within and falls down, and during *bháva*, the *sádhaka* feels proximity to God, feels great bliss and falls down.

At the time of *mahábháva*, the *sádhaka* feels the tactual presence of *Parama Puruśa* and falls down. At that time, every nerve-cell, every nerve-fibre and every pore of the human body feels the divine touch.

The entire [extent] of the conscious, subconscious and unconscious minds becomes filled with devotion. But devotional expression is much more in the heart, the sentiment being strongly aroused. During floods, the rivers, tanks and pools all become filled and begin overflowing. Similarly, the mind and heart of the *sádhaka* are filled to the brim with devotion when flooded by *bháva*.

The *sádhaka* attains states of *dashá* and *bháva* according to *saṁskáras*. Again, according to one's *dashá* and *bháva*, one attains *mahábháva*. That is why one who has attained *mahábháva* becomes sometimes restless, sometimes calm, now laughs and now weeps.*

* Another *sádhaka* also experienced the state of *mahábháva*. He was calm and placid, according to his *saṁskáras*.—Editor.

The *sádhaka* feels waves of devotion in body, mind and heart, and feels so much proximity to God that he completely forgets his physical existence. At that time, the dháma, or stratum, where he moves mentally is Nitya Vrndábana or Vaekuńtha.*

1969, Ranchi

Samádhi and Mrtyu

In philosophical parlance, *samádhi* means "unification of the unit mind with the Cosmic Mind, or merger of the unit mind into the Cosmic Mind". Ordinarily, the conscious mind performs physical actions through the sense organs, nerve-cells and nerve-fibres, while the subconscious performs thinking, recollection, and so on, and the unconscious is all-knowing. In *samádhi*, the three chambers of the mind are fused into one. During *samádhi*, the mind remains full of knowledge (*prajñá*). This is a positive state; though the mind remains inactive, still it is full of knowledge.

Mrtyu, death, on the other hand, is a negative state. Because of lack of psycho-physical parallelism, the sense organs, the nerve-cells, nerve-fibres, and so on, will stop functioning, as a result of which the entire body will be as inert as a block of wood, that is, hardly distinguishable from matter. All the expressions of mental faculties become suspended. It is a state of complete lifelessness devoid of any *prajñá*.

Samádhi is not possible merely through one's own efforts. It is absolutely dependent on the grace of Paramátmá. Death is a providential arrangement. Human beings must make

* The foregoing eleven paragraphs are from *Ánanda Vacanámrtam Part 33*.—Editor.

efforts to attain *samádhi*. So far as death is concerned, it will come as a matter of course. Through this arrangement of death, *Parama Purúsa* is continuing the flow of creation; otherwise this creation would have stopped. It is natural that when people lose their dear and near ones, they feel the pangs of bereavement. When operated upon, patients certainly feel pain, but all these things are unavoidable. One who is born must die. Anything, once created, must undergo change and, ultimately, meet destruction.

Suppose somebody does something which may cause some physical harm, should we call it the *sadhana* of death or of *prajñá*? Those who subject themselves to all sorts of tortures, who stand in deep water on chilly nights for hours together, are certainly not making spiritual progress. Even those who are taking holy baths on Mághee Purnimá [the full moon of mid-February to mid-March] are not enhancing their spiritual progress. If merely a dip in the Ganges made one holy, then the fish that are always in the river would be the most virtuous and holy. Pilgrims do not gain morally or spiritually from their holy baths, but, on the contrary, have to suffer bitter experiences – physical troubles, loss of money, mental anxiety, and humiliation at the hands of robbers and thieves. Spiritual elevation is possible by introverting all the mental propensities and directing them towards the Supreme Desideratum (one's *dhyeya* [object of ideation]) and thus becoming one with Him.*

* Demonstration: [Bábá called a *sádhaka* and told him to concentrate his mind on his toes and do the prescribed *dhyánam* there, and then at his heels. Next he was told to practise *dhyánam* on his *múládhára*, *svádhiśthána*, *mañipura* and *anáhata cakras*, and establish a devotional relationship with Paramátmá. Next, he was told to do *dhyánam* on *vishuddha cakra*].—Editor.

The more the mind gets concentrated, the more the mind goes deep, the more bliss a person will experience. Ultimately, they will become one with the Supreme Mind. On their part there will be no physical or psychic effort. They will have living bodies which, without any movement, will look like dead bodies. This is *sárúpya samádhi* – the individual and Paramátmá become one. In this state, the *sádhaka*'s mind remains full of knowledge. During *samádhi*, the body does not become as stiff as it becomes in the case of death.

At the time of sadhana, all the energy becomes concentrated and we can see the expression of that energy. Consider the Indian military, which may be stationed in Patna, Calcutta, Lucknow, Delhi, etc. Now if the entire military force of the whole of India is concentrated in Delhi alone, the whole of India except Delhi will become devoid of military power.*

1969, Ranchi

* [In order to demonstrate this point, Bábá snatched away from a *sádhaka* the vital energies from the *múládhára*, *svádhíst'hána*, *mañipura*, *anáhata*; and then went up to the highest regions. For some time the lower regions moved a little and then became motionless. In this case, the power was not taken out of the body, it was only shifted from the lower parts to the higher parts. Consequently, the lower regions became inactive and devoid of vital energy.] The foregoing six paragraphs are from *Ánanda Vacanámrtam Part 33*.—Editor.

Bhakti Yoga

Bhakti Sadhana

The word *bhakti* (devotion) means “worshipping”. For worshipping, both the person who worships and the person who is worshipped must be present. Hence as long as there remains a difference between the devotee and God, there is the opportunity and necessity of *bhakti sadhana*.

Bhakti signifies longing for the Supreme –

Sa paránuraktriishvare.

The meaning of the word “*paránurakti*” should be considered. *Rakti* denotes *rága* or “attachment”. *Anurakti* means “maintaining attachment with or being attracted by a particular entity after having understood its meaning”. *Anurakti* is of two kinds. *Anurakti* for the Supreme Brahma or Infinite Cosmic Consciousness is *paránurakti*. *Anurakti* for Brahma under the sway of *Prakrti* or *Anurakti* for crude manifestations is termed *aparánurakti*. God is an object for *paránurakti*. When aspirants consider the Supreme Brahma to be their own, it is termed *bhajaná* or *bhakti*.

The two varieties of *anurakti* exist only on account of the introvertial or extroversial actions of the mind; that is extroversion denotes *aparánurakti*, while introversion denotes *paránurakti*. The externalizing force subordinates people to their sense organs and renders them crude. These people become divested of their spiritual force. *Paránurakti*, on the other hand, releases people from the grip of the *indriyas*, and through sublime meditation, establishes them in the finer

sublimated senses, in the infinite blessedness beyond the bounds of the Universe.

Now the question arises as to whether *bhakti* is natural or unnatural for living beings. All the things we see in the manifested universe, whether they be conscious or crude, are attracted to one another. This attraction is the dharma of the created universe, as a consequence the continuity of the thought projections of the Cosmic Mind is maintained. Therefore, I say that attraction is natural for everything. It is due to the attraction between myriads of heavenly bodies oscillating in infinite space, that balance is maintained in the firmament. In every planet or sub-planet, there is the effort for self-preservation. People run and assemble at a place which yields good water, good fruits and fertile lands, because they find adequate materials for self-preservation. The bee flies around flowers in quest of nectar for the sake of preserving its existence. Every entity runs more towards that which is more lasting and secure, and which will provide it with greater safety for a longer time. People run after money because they believe that they can maintain their lives under the shelter of money, that money alone can save them. They do not know that money can provide neither permanent stability nor a securely-founded shelter. During the span of one's life, money will come and go several times. At times its glamour will dazzle our eyes and at other times the lack of money will make us cry from hunger.

Not only money, but all finite objects have this characteristic. One uses finite objects with the intention of enjoying only one of their portions, then sooner or later the residue will be reached. That which is finite cannot permanently remain the object of your enjoyment, or your

permanent resort. The existence of all these things is dependent on other things – bounded by the limits of time, place and person.

In philosophical terms, the attraction for finite objects is called *ásakti* and the attraction for the infinite is *bhakti*. *Rága* or *rakti* means both “the attraction for the infinite” and “attraction for finite objects”. *Sakasmae parampremarúpá*, that is, “*Bhakti* is the symbol of love, and this love is dedicated towards *Ishvara*, signified by the letter *ka*”. In the *Vedic* language, the letter *ka* means “God”. God is indescribable. God is the nucleus of the universe and is supreme love personified.

Sa iishvara anirvacaniiya paramapremusvarúpah.

Puruśa and *Prakrti*. Where a change in *Puruśa* occurs on account of the influence of *Prakrti*, the mind comes into being. The senses and organs are the recipients and the vehicles of the workings of the mind; so the mind is the worldly knower or subject of all worldly acts. The mind is the object of the untainted all-knowing *Puruśa*, and *Puruśa* is its subject or all-knowing self. When the mind, as object, merges into *Puruśa*, as subject, the distinction between the object and the subject ceases to exist. This is the supreme state of the aspirant. However when the mind is guided by *avidyá*, that is, when it seeks enjoyment in finite objects, then that externalized energy of the mind is ultimately identified with the crude object. This is so whether this object is a creation of the mind itself or if it is taken from the crude quinquemental world.

If the terrific speed with which extroverted people run after finite objects is introverted towards the Supreme Being,

then they can attain Brahma and achieve the supreme state. The devotee recites:

Yápriitiravivekinám viśayesvanapáyinii

Tvámanusmaratah sá me hradayán mápasarpatu.

—*Viśnúpurána*

That is, “O Almighty, may the attraction which ignorant people bear towards the objects of their mind become an eternal love for thee, through Thy remembrance”.

Pure *bhakti* cannot be based on finite objects, since the very existence of finite objects is derived from extroverted feelings. Nevertheless, I painfully observe that many people confine their love and devotion to finite objects and as a result they do not attain the pervasiveness which love confers. They do not realize that every tiny atom of this vast universe is a creative manifestation of Cosmic Consciousness – God’s grand expression. They spend millions on the installation of idols and do not relent on seeing the afflictions of suffering humanity. They do not hesitate when, in cold blood, they kill a young goat for the so-called satiation of a goddess.

Vistárah sarvabhútasya Viśnorvishvamidaṁ jagat;

Draśṭavyamátmavattasmádabhedena vicakṣāṅaeh.

—*Viśnúpurána*

The world is a changing phenomenon. Therefore, it is unwise to be attached to any object in this ever-changing world. The name and form of objects undergo changes with the changes in time and place. A child changes into a youth, the youth into an old person, and the old person into a dead person. Wise people take every object of the world as the expression of *Viśnú* alone, and are not be affected by pain

or pleasure when they witness changes in the name and form of any particular object. *Viśnú* to them remains *Viśnú*, and they lose nothing.

While practicing *bhakti*, people proceed with the feelings ingrained in their *saṁskáras*, because they derive pleasures from them. However, to proceed in accordance with the *saṁskáras* will not perfect aspirants in pure Cosmic feeling.

*Bhaktiyogo bahavidhaermargaerbhávini bhávyate
Svabhávaguṇmárgena puṁsaṁ bhavo vibhidyate.*

That is, the methods and kinds of *bhakti yoga*, are manifold. People adopt the process of *bhakti sadhana* according to their own propensities.

Támasika Sadhana – ... Persons craving for finite pleasures instead of supreme bliss, who are under the influence of violence, arrogance or jealousy are *támasika* spiritual practitioners...

Rájasika Sadhana – ... Those worshipping the Lord in a crude way, with flowers and the trifoliated leaves of *Aegle marmelos*, worship for the sake of worldly objects, fame or wealth. In fact, they long for those objects and not for the Lord. They are *rájasika* spiritual practitioners.

Sáttvika Sadhana – Those who pursue their practice with the prayer “O Lord, may my karma be annihilated. Emancipate me from the cycle of karma” and those who pursue their practice as their duty or for the fear that people may decry them if they do not do so, are classed as *sáttvika* spiritual practitioners. They are *sáttvika sádhakas* and *sádhikás*, in as much as they do not seek attainment of the Supreme.

However, this *sáttvika* sadhana is not a superior degree of sadhana or the supreme sadhana, because none of the above control the energies of the aspirants and direct them towards the adored, the Supreme Brahma. The aim of these aspirants is channelized in a different direction and they carry on with an inferior object. All the three such *bhaktas* – *sáttvika*, *rájasika* and *támasika* are *gaonii* or inferior *bhakti*. Where there is no object other than the Supreme Brahma, it is called *mukhya bhakti* [higher *bhakti*]. In *mukhyá bhakti* aspirants are free from the three *guñas*. They are absorbed in spiritual practices [which lead them] to *Nirguña Bhakti*.

In general, then, *bhakti* can be classified into many groups according to the object in view.

Nirguña Bhakti: Here the aspirants have no other object. They take themselves towards the Supreme Brahma only by the urge of their own spirit. If questioned as to why they love Him and devote themselves to Him they say: “Oh, why do I love? I do not know. I love Him just because I like to love Him. Should I not love? He is the life of my life the soul of my soul”. This type of *bhakti* is *nirguña bhakti*.

Vaadhii Bhakti: Where there is no undivided *bhakti* for the Lord and the object is only to make a show before others. Today there is a particular festival: the floor will have to be besmeared with cow dung in this way, Ganges water will have to be sprinkled, the idols will be decorated in royal fashion or in the fashion of a child, mantras will be chanted, flowers offered, the leaves of *aegle marmelos* (*bilva*) will be offered in this way, and so on. Such devotion practised within the bounds of externalized usage and rituals is called *vaadhii bhakti*.

*Yatra rágánaváptatvát pravrttirúpajáyate;
Shásanenaeva shástrasya sá vaedhii bhaktirucyate.*

[Where love for God does not exist at all but where worshipping is fully out of material desires, where remains only the domination of scriptures, is *vaedhii bhakti*, that is, devotion strictly with rules of scriptures.]

* * *

*Rágahiin jana bhaje shástrer ájñáy;
Vidhibhakti bali táre sarva shástre gáy.*

[The worshipping of God according to the instructions of scriptures without love for Him is called *Vidhibhakti*, that is, strictly to remain confined in the domain of scriptures, even disregarding the reasoning and logical arguments.]

Támasikii, rájasikii and sáttvikii bhaktis affected by the three *guñas* are *vaedhii bhaktis*.

Jñánamishra Bhakti: If *sáttvika* spiritual practitioners do not forget the adored even after the realization of their object, then gradually Supreme knowledge shines forth within their minds. This attainment is known by the name of *jñánamishrá bhakti*. This *bhakti* also may be classed as *nirguña bhakti*, but due to a dormant vanity for wealth or knowledge, the supreme state is not attained. This is also called *pradhánibhuta bhakti*. *Pradhánibhuta* [a stage of higher *bhakti*] is the highest stage of *gaonii* or inferior *bhakti*.

Kevalá Bhakti: If, from the very outset, aspirants, instead of devoting themselves to *saguña bhakti*, realize the permanence of *nirguña bhakti*, questions like “What have I attained?” and “Why do I wish to attain?” and so on, do

not arise in their minds. This is the culmination of *bhakti*, the highest pitch of *bhakti*. If there is undivided knowledge with [of?] the object, then there exists one and only one entity, and that is why it is called *kevalá bhakti*. *Kevalá bhakti* is not attained by [ritual] baths, exercises or austerity. Those who have not been blessed with divine grace, even to a small extent, cannot have any realization of it.

Mahat krpayaeva Bhagavad krpáleshád vá.

The position of *kevalá bhakti* is in all ways superior to *gaoníi bhakti*, that is why it is called *mukhyá bhakti*. Whatever progress aspirants may achieve in *gaoníi bhakti* [inferior *bhakti*], the distinction between the adored and the adorer, or between the infinite and the finite remains with them till the end. This aspect is known as *mahim jñána* [to consider in Lord Superior] in the scriptures. In the presence of *mahim jñána* the devotee feels shy to merge in Supreme Brahma.

Rágátmika Bhakti: There is no *mahim-jñána* in *kevalá bhakti*. Here, aspirants run to get close to their adored with all the zeal of their life. They consider the adored to be the life of their life and the soul of their soul. They have no time to develop any distinction between the adored and the adorer or the infinite and the finite. These aspirants do not consider themselves to be the adorer of Rama [for example] but rather the personification of Rama. They love to love, and cannot remain without loving because they entertain only this feeling.

*Íšte svárasikii rágah paramaviśtatá bhavet
Tanmayii yá bhavet bhakti sátra rágátmikoditá.*

“The first stage of *rágátmiká bhakti* is known as *rágánugá bhakti*.”

Rágátmikámanusrta yá sá rágánugocyate.

“*Rágánugá bhakti* molds the aspirant’s mind into the form of *rágátmiká*.”

The dualistic aspirants who deserve *rágátmiká bhakti* aspire to be close to Brahma and feel His presence, rather than to merge in Him. This is the zenith of *rágátmika*. They do not want to become sugar, rather they love to taste it, and say that if they get transformed into sugar, then how would they realize the taste of sugar. Dualists call this stage *gopiibháva* or *vrajabháva*.

Sei gopii man yár bhávámrte yáy;
Veda-dharma tyaji sei Krśńake bhajay.

[One whose mind always remains engaged in the thoughts of personal love for *Parama Puruśa*, is true *gopii*, the ardent devotee, and he/she worships only *Krśńa* leaving the religiosity of Veda].

It has to be borne in mind that the original meaning of the word *gopa*, that is, cowherd or milkmaid, is not applicable here. The word *go* means “the sense organs”. Only the one who sustains and controls the *indriyas* is *Gopa* or *Gopála*. The word *Gopála* also means “giver of bliss”. This *vrajabháva* is the proximal stage of *kevalá bhakti*. It is different from *jñánamishrá bhakti* since there is no vanity for knowledge or the show of riches. This devotion cannot be attained through *vaedhii bhakti*.

Sakala jagate more kare vidhi bhakti;
Vidhi bhaktye Vrajabháva páite náhi shakti.

[Entire world worships me only in accordance with *vidhi bhakti*, but the truth is this that the follower of *vidhi bhakti*

can never attain *Vrajabháva*, that is, to remain constantly absorbed in the thoughts of *Parama Puruṣa* and get bliss.]

In Ananda Marga, there is no place for *vaedhii* or *jiṇánamishrá bhakti*. Ananda Margis are aspirants of *rágátmika bhakti*, and therefore, they do not desire to terminate their journey in a state of *vrajabháva*. Whatever else there may be in dualistic *vrajabháva*, there is no expression of due reverence for the wish of Brahma or His introversive phase of the creative cycle. Why do people fail to realize the nice opportunity which His grace has offered them? Why will they not merge their "I"-feeling into the immortality of the Supreme? By enjoying the bliss of divine attainment as a separate existence, the unit mind and all the sense organs shall have to be controlled. Wherever the mind is [associated] with the *indriyas*, there the apprehension of deterioration exists. That is why Ananda Margis do not accept staying in *gopiibháva*.

Bháva: For the exposition of *bhaktitattva*, the use of the word *bháva* is indispensable. What does *bháva* signify?

*Shuddhasattva visheśadvá premasúryámshu sámyabhák;
Rucibhishcittamásrñya krdasao bháva ucyaite.*

—Shrirupa Goswami

Bháva is that whereby the *citta* or mind-stuff becomes purged and is chiefly dominated by *sattvaguña*. Where all the ten directions become brilliant with the rays of the sun of love and the taste or *anurakti* for the Lord gets enlightened, then the *citta* develops oneness with Him. As a result of this *bháva*, human beings direct their natural attractive tendencies towards the adored. The adored, however is not outside them, but is the life of their life, the mind of their mind and the

life master of their entire existence. When this feeling of devotion for the adored awakens the introversion of one's tendencies, then one becomes absorbed in this *bháva*; one attains the state of realizing the self. In *Vaéśnáva* philosophy, this running into one's own self is known as *hládinii shakti* because in this path there is a progressive refulgence of the light of mellifluous realizations. ...

This fearless movement towards the Lord is termed love. ... When the mind attains supreme serenity and a feeling of affection is developed for all beings, this is eternal peace and the sages call it love. Love cannot be developed for anything mean or finite.

Atmendriya priiti icchá táre bali káma;
Krśhendriya priiti icchá dhare prema náma.
Kámera tátparya nija sambhoga kevala;
Krśñasukhaváñcá haya premete prabala.

Love and passion are mutually antagonistic tendencies. The attachment for a finite thing is an expression of extroverted energy, whereas the attraction for the Infinite is an expression of introverted energy. That is why these two can never coexist. Therefore, the aspirant has to skillfully transform passion into love. Do you love your son? No, no you don't love your son. You love Brahma in the form of your son. By loving your son and daughter as your children, you cannot love the Lord. Where there is the feeling of son or daughter, there is no Lord, and where there is the Lord, there is no son or daughter. Where you exist He does not and where He exists you are no more.

Yáñhá kám táñhá nehi Rám;
Yáñhá Rám táñhá nehi kám...

There is no distinction as to one's eligibility for *bhakti* sadhana. All beings endowed with the human frame are eligible for this sadhana.

Ánindyayonyadhikryate.

From the worldly standpoint, even so-called degraded castes are entitled to do *bhakti* sadhana. The great sage Nárada said:

Násti teśu játividyárúpakulakriyádi bhedah.

[In *bhakti* sadhana, there is no place of discriminations of caste or creed.]

The highest attainment of *bhakti* is the attainment of the Supreme, but in the mind-stuff of the devotees of *vaedhii bhakti* a desire for the pleasures derived from objects is greater than the desire for supreme Bliss. Just as a mother diverts a crying child by offering a toy, so too the devotees of *vaedhii bhakti* are as if deluded by toys. The mother is obliged to disengage herself from other jobs and embrace the child who discards the toy. The devotees of *kevalá bhakti* are shrewd like those children.

There are three grades of devotees.

1. Superior devotees

*Shástreyuktao ca nipuñah sarvathá drd'ha nishcayah
Praodhoshreddho'dhikáarii yah sa bhakta uttamomatah.*

“Those versed in the spiritual scriptures and competent in practices and of firm mind are the devotees of the highest degree.”

2. Intermediate devotees

Yo shástrádiśvanipuñah shraddháván sa tu madhyamah.

“Those who have reverence, but have no knowledge of the scripture, are the intermediate type of devotees.”

3. Inferior devotees

Yo bhavet komalashraddhah sah kaniśtho nigadyate.

“Those who are neither erudite nor earnest are the wretched devotees.”

Rágamishrá bhakti or *kevalá bhakti* is attainable only by the highest category of devotees. They alone attain the pervasive evolution of their soul. That is why in the scriptures *nirguña bhakti* is called “*puśti márga*”, while other routes are termed *maryádá márga*.

The more the aspirants of *kevalá bhakti* advance toward their *Iśta*, the more they remain oblivious of their little self and attain the qualities of their *Iśta*.

Mádhava Mádhava anukhana souñari, sundarii Mádhava bheli.

“While constantly ideating on *Mádhava*, *Radha* calls herself *Mádhava*.”

Devotees of *kevalá bhakti* perceive only *Brahma*. To them the entire universe is *Brahma*, to them all activities excepting *Brahma sadhana* are insignificant and valueless.

*Rám nám ek auñka hae sab sádhan hae shúñ;
Aunk binu kachu hát nehi auñk rahe dasha guñ.*

Therefore, O devotees, remember the Lord’s name, else

all your efforts will be reduced to cipher [nothing]. Under all circumstances and during all activities, cling firmly to His name. The dharma of your childhood is to read and practice *Brahma sadhana*. The dharma of youth is to earn money and practise *Brahma sadhana*. The dharma of your old age, when you become incapacitated for all physical activities, is only to practise *Brahma sadhana*. Prahláda says:

*Kaomára ácaret prájiṇo dharmán bhágavatániha
Durlabhamá mánuśamá janma tadapyadhruvamarthadam.*

“The wise practise dharma sadhana right from infancy because human life is rare, and rarer still is the human life perfected through sadhana.”

Brahma is the dearest to the true devotees, and therefore, every item and everything related to Brahma is dear to them.

*Yei nám sei Krśhá bhaja níśtha kari;
Námer sahit áchen ápani Shriihari.*

True devotees love the world, the society and everything around them because they perceive each and every manifestation of the artful *Prakṛti* with one universal spirit. They also love the finite, since it is also a portion of the universal. They perceive worldly pleasures as divine bliss varied by time, place and person. They keep their mind-stuff absorbed in the eternal currents of the divine flow. Such devoted aspirants are the only true enjoyers or *rasika* and their object of enjoyment is the Supreme Brahma.

The Vedas say: *Rasah vae sah.*

“Only the knower of the supreme nectar is the enjoyer.”

If divine bliss is viewed with a vile selfish motive, it turns into poison. If viewed with expanded vision, then it is attained in terms of divine bliss. Those who enjoy the Supreme Eternal are alone the true enjoyers, the true aspirants.

Poet Candidasa says:

*Rasik rasik kahaye sakale rasik kehai nay,
 Bháviyá gañiyá bujhiyá dekhle kofite gofika hay;
 Jemati diipiká ujure adhiká bhitare anal shikhá,
 Pantaunge ásiya paṛaye ghuriyá puṛiyá maraye pákhá.
 Jagat juṛiyá temati ghuriyá kámánale puṛi' mare;
 Rasajiṇa ye jan se karaye pán viṣa chári amrtere.*

The aspirants of *bhakti* should surrender their all to their adored. Everything objective is centered inside the mind. Hence if the mind itself is surrendered to Brahma, everything automatically becomes surrendered.

*Ratnákarastava grhami grhiñii ca padmá
 Deyam kimapi bhavate Puruśottamáya
 Ábhiiravámanayanápahrtámánasáya
 Dattamí manah yadupate tvamidamí grhána.*

Oh, Lord, the universe is Your abode, the Supreme *Prakṛti* herself is Your consort. You have everything. Then, O *Puruśottama*, what will I offer to You? Oh yes, I remember one thing. Your true devotees have stolen away Your mind. That is why You have need of one thing. Your mind is lost, O Lord, and I offer my mind to You. Do grace me by Your acceptance.

Parábhakti Is The Best Bhakti

Suppose *Parama Puruśa* appears before you and says, “O my child, do you want something from Me?” then what should be your reply? Your reply will be, “What I require and what I do not require is best known to You. You know better than I do. So You do according to my requirements. I won’t say anything.” But if even then He says, “O my child, say something, try to get something. Ask something, say something. I want that you yourself say, ‘O *Parama Puruśa*, I want this thing or that thing’” – in that case you should say, “O *Parama Puruśa*, give me *parábhakti*.” Or you should say, “O *Parama Puruśa*, give me *shuddhá buddhi*.”....

And what is *parábhakti*? “O *Parama Puruśa*, You know whether I am Your devotee or not. It is You who are to judge whether I am Your devotee or not – but I want You.” The child says, “O mother, I don’t want any toys from you, I want you.” So, “I want You. And why do I want You? Because I want to serve You.” And, “O my boy, why do you want to serve Me?” “Because I get pleasure in serving You; that’s why I want to serve You.” This is *parábhakti*.

But this is not the highest phase of *parábhakti*. In the highest phase, when asked by *Parama Puruśa*, “O my child, why do You want to serve Me?” the reply should be, “By serving You I want to give You pleasure. That’s why I want to serve You. I don’t want to enjoy pleasure.” This is the highest phase of *parábhakti*. This is what *bhaktas* say. And *jiñánis* maintain a gentleman’s distance. Now have you understood everything? A devotee who has developed *parábhakti* develops a family relationship with the Supreme. ...

Bhakti is Not a Path, but the Goal

The way of *karma* (*karma márga* – the path of action), *karmayoga*, is one of the ways [to God], a path of sadhana. One has to follow this path in order to move towards the goal. *Jiñánamárga* is also a path of sadhana. One also moves towards the goal by following that path. But *bhakti* (devotion) is not a path. *Bhakti* is the goal. It is the destination which we want to reach. So, *bhakti* is not a cult [practice]. It means that it is not a means or path of sadhana. *Bhakti* is that very goal which we want to reach.

Bhakti is the highest and richest spiritual experience that belongs to human beings. Many people opine that as *jiñána* is a means, a path; and *karma* is a path, that *bhakti* is also a path, but it is not so. *Bhakti* is not a path. One gets established in *bhakti* by means of *jiñána* and *karma*, through relentless service to humanity and purification of mind. When one is established in *bhakti* there remains nothing else to be achieved, so it would be erroneous to consider *jiñána* and *karma* on a par with *bhakti*.

The Means to Attain Bhakti

Now in this march of life – and particularly in human life – there are three kinds of expression. Those three expressions, or those three factors, are *jiñána*, *karma* and *bhakti*. *Bhakti* is the supreme one. And how to acquire *bhakti*, how to get *bhakti*? The simple formula is, *karma* minus *jiñána* is equal to *bhakti*.

Suppose there is a Mr. X. Mr. X has no *jiñána*, he is illiterate; but he has rendered two hundred degrees of service, selfless service, to society. So, his stock of *karma* is two

hundred degrees; and his *jiñána* is zero, nil; so, two hundred minus zero is equal to two hundred – he acquires two hundred degrees of *bhakti*. And suppose that Mr. P.K. Nair is a learned man, with an MA in ten subjects; and he has five hundred degrees of *jiñána*. In order for him to acquire two hundred degrees of *bhakti*, he will have to acquire – five hundred plus two hundred – seven hundred degrees of *karma*. He will have to render so much selfless *karma*, selfless service, to the society.

An illiterate fellow acquires two hundred degrees of *bhakti* by rendering two hundred degrees of *karma*. But that learned man has to render seven hundred degrees of *karma* in order to acquire two hundred degrees of *bhakti*. So in his case, *jiñána* is nothing but a liability. A liability! And that is why you will sometimes see people who are illiterate, [completely] illiterate, but who have developed *bhakti* easily. So the formula is, *karma* minus *jiñána* is equal to *bhakti*. You must remember it.*

* The foregoing seventy-seven paragraphs are from *Subhásita Saṁgraha Part 1*, from *Subhásita Saṁgraha Part 24*, *Ánanda Vacanámrtam Part 13*, and *Ánanda Vacanámrtam Part 32*.—Editor.

Sadguru and Yoga Sádhaná

Sadguru – The Great Path-Shower

Sadguru tam namámi.” What is the *Sadguru*? *Guru*, you know, means “dispeller of darkness”. *Gu* means “darkness” and *ru* means “dispeller”. The person who taught *alif, be, pe, te,* or *a, á, ka, kha*⁽¹⁾ was also a *guru*. The person who taught you how to fight was also a *guru*. The person who taught you how to cook was also a *guru*. So many *gurus*. The person who initiated you in *Vaedikii diikśá* was also a *guru*.

Vaedikii diikśá means this: in ancient India there were two types of *diikśá*. First a boy used to get *Vaedikii diikśá*. *Vaedikii diikśá* is to request God, request the Lord to show one the right path. And after a long time, when the Lord is satisfied, He arranges for *Tántrikii diikśá*. Ananda Marga *diikśá* is *Tántrikii diikśá*.

Now, those who initiate in *Vaedikácára – Vaedikii diikśá* – are also *gurus*. So what is the *Sadguru*? The word *sat* means “that which undergoes no change”. In modern Sanskrit, *sat* means “good” and *asat* means “bad”, but in Vedic Sanskrit, *sat* means “that which undergoes no change”

Sat. Now, the entity by whose grace one comes into contact with *sat* (*sat*, the non-changeable entity, the non-changeable stance, the non-changeable nuclear entity around which so many electrons move) – that entity, or rather, that framework through which *Parama Puruśa* is

working or *Táraka* Brahma is functioning, is the *Sadguru*, “*Sadgurum tvam namámi*” – “I do my *namah* before you, at your altar.”*

... A time comes in the life of a human being when one frantically searches for peace and longs for the realization of *Iisvara tattva* [the principle of *Iishvara*] or His closeness, by spiritually elevating one’s own sense of being an individual entity. The nature of this realization of closeness varies from person to person according to the differences in people and their *saṁskáras*. In some cases, again, after some progress, an ardent desire grows for further progress.

However, at the root of every desire or longing (*eśaná*), there lies the story of a journey. To undertake a journey one needs a guide, one who will give the right direction and simultaneously illuminate the way (with a torch, before one’s eyes). So, when the desire grows for attaining peace, when there is an intense longing for supreme peace (*paramá prashánti*), one is brought before the Guru by the force of *shuddhá máyá* or *pará prakṛti* or *viśṇu máyá* [all meaning the absolute illusory force of Prakṛti, or primordial Prakṛti]. This awakening of desire, this special kind of longing is called *sambhita* [revelation]. This sudden awakening brings one to the shelter of the Guru... and puts one in touch with the Guru.

The Guru shows the path of practical sadhana, teaches the techniques (*purascaraṇa*), enlightens the disciple and illuminates the path with the *diipajiṇá* [light of knowledge]. What a human gets from this contact with

* The foregoing four paragraphs are from *Ananda Vacanámrtaṁ* Part 3.—Editor.

the Guru is called *diikśá* [spiritual initiation] – the embarking on a journey... initiality...starting from the initial stage or initiation.

The Criteria of a Guru

Perhaps you know that the word “guru” is a very old Vedic word. It means “one who dispels darkness”. Now, this expression, “one who dispels darkness” is often used without deeper understanding. This darkness actually belongs not only to the psychic stratum or the spiritual stratum, but to all strata of human existence. That is, darkness prevails in all the three strata – in the crude physical sphere, in the psychic sphere, and in the spiritual sphere. So a guru will necessarily have to be able to remove darkness from all three strata. If he teaches the alphabet or some academic matter to students, he will be called a teacher – teacher in the academic sense. That will not do. If, again, he removes darkness from the psychic world, he imparts intellectual knowledge to his followers, that will not be enough either. And if, finally, he dispels darkness only from the spiritual stratum of his disciples, that will not do either. The fact is that a guru – if one is to be accepted as a real guru – shall have to remove darkness from all the strata of the physical world, all the strata of the psychic world, and also all the strata of the spiritual world.

Now let us look at the spiritual world. In the spiritual world, he alone can be a guru who can lift downtrodden humanity to a high spiritual level, who can illumine humanity with spiritual effulgence. That is, only a *Mahákaola* has the requisite qualification to be a guru, others cannot be gurus.

In order to be an ideal guru in the spiritual sphere, one must be thoroughly conversant with the minutest details of sadhana, every aspect of sadhana, important or unimportant. The guru must not only learn those things, but must also possess the capacity to teach those practices to others. Otherwise he should not be treated as a guru. The *Mahákaola* alone has this capacity, no one else. *Kaolas* are those who by dint of sadhana have successfully elevated their microcosmic stance and established it in the Macrocosmic one; but a *Mahákaola* is one who is a *kaola*, certainly, but at the same time possesses the capacity to help others as well to get to that exalted *kaola* position. In the past Lord Shiva was one such *Mahákaola*. Lord *Krśńa* was another. To be a guru one must be a *Mahákaola*.

One must possess knowledge regarding sadhana, not only thorough knowledge of the *shástras* [scriptures]. And in order to gain thorough scriptural knowledge, one must know as many important languages as are necessary for the purpose. That is to say, it is not enough that a guru acquire the necessary qualifications to be able to teach sadhana (that is, impart lessons on the practical aspects); he must possess adequate knowledge of theory also. That is, in order to know the inner secret of sadhana, he must possess thorough and authentic scriptural knowledge; then only should he be accepted as a perfect guru in the spiritual sphere. One who has a fairly good knowledge of sadhana and can also help others in that realm; but who is completely devoid of intellect, or knowledge of languages and scriptures, cannot be a perfectly competent guru in the spiritual sphere; for, being a guru, he will have to explain the theoretical side also. If, suppose, I say to someone, "Do this," I should

also explain why he or she should do that, and at the same time I should be able to support it in the light of the *shástras*.

You may raise the question, "What is a *shástra*?" You might point to a voluminous book and call it a *shástra*, but that would be misleading. *Shástra* in the true sense means, *Shásanát tárayet yastu sah shástrah parikiirtitah* – that is, "*Shástra* is that which disciplines and liberates humans." So a guru must be well versed in *shástra*, otherwise he cannot show the right path to humankind, [otherwise] the term "guru" would be a misleading misnomer – which is never desirable. *Shástra* does not necessarily mean the Vedas; it means "the way to emancipation through the inculcation of rigorous discipline"; it is something that prevents one from taking license in the name of liberty. It means "clear instructions that guide everyone along the path, that lead to attainment of prosperity and welfare".

Shásanát. What is this *shásana*? Does it mean torture? No. Does it mean punishment? No. Does it mean atonement? No. Not at all. Here *shástra* means *anushásana*. What is *anushásana*? *Hitárthe shásanam anushásanam* – that is, "*Anushásanam* means that degree of rectificatory punishment which will be conducive to one's well-being."

A spiritual guru must be well-acquainted with all the processes of sadhana, must have the capacity to convince others, must possess complete knowledge of the scriptures, must know many languages, and must have comprehensive knowledge and intellect, plus some extra qualifications. What are those qualifications? *Nigrahánugrahe shakto gururityabhidhiyate* – "The guru must possess the capacity

both to punish and to love, or bless, his disciples." Punishment alone, without love, is not good. Love and punishment should go together, and the degree of punishment should never exceed the degree of love. Then only can one be called a real spiritual guru.

I have already said that a guru must be an authority on all subjects in all the three strata:

As a spiritual guru, he must be thoroughly versed in spiritual science – both the theory and the practice. He must know how *Parama Puruśa* associates Himself with the *jīvas* [unit beings]; and he must know how the *jīvas* associate themselves with *Parama Puruśa* (they associate themselves just as the Ganges merges into the Bay of Bengal). Otherwise, how can he teach this science to others?

And who knows this science? Only *Parama Puruśa* knows it, because He Himself has created everything. He has created our sense organs, and He has created the *tanmātras* that our sense organs detect. He can create anything He likes. But remember, He does not do anything. His "doing" means His thinking. Things will take shape as He thinks. No one but *Parama Puruśa* knows how He does it. So how can people know *Parama Puruśa* if He does not teach to others the science of knowing Him? Only *Parama Puruśa* knows the science and the method to realize Him, to know Him; because He has created both human beings and the path that they must move along. So people can know the method by His grace only. Hence it has been said in *Ānanda Sūtram*, *Brahmaeva Gururekah nāparah* – that is, "Brahma alone is the *Guru*." Through His physical structure He teaches the actual science to spiritual aspirants. People should clearly understand this.

There are many people who are prone to think that in the spiritual realm there is no need to acquire intellectual knowledge for God-realization; and in support of their thesis they mention the names of some great people. Now it is true that for God-realization, academic qualifications may not be necessary at all: there is no differentiation between a learned person and a foolish one. But in order to be a guru, one must be a learned person. God-realization is not enough for a guru, he must possess other qualifications as well. So a person who is devoid of learning and scriptural knowledge and the capacity to teach others, and the twin capacities to punish and reward his disciples, should never be accepted as a spiritual guru. A guru does not mean only a spiritual guru, he must be a guru for the intellectual and physical worlds also.

After the spiritual sphere comes the psychic sphere, which is cruder than the former. That is, the guru must be aware of the nature of the human mind – what it is made of, how it should be elevated step by step from crude to subtle, how all the unit minds can march together in unison towards the goal – in a word, he must know both the theoretical and the applied sides of psychology. He must know a thousand times more than is written in books. He must assimilate everything through his own refined intellect. And then only can he teach others perfectly. That shows that he must be not only a spiritual guru, but also a guru in the psychic world. There is a sense of want in the human mind. One who can remove the sense of want is a guru. In order to qualify as a guru, one must have the power to remove psychic wants.

As in the spiritual sphere, so also in the psychic sphere:

a guru must be learned. He should be well-versed in the humanities; in fact, in all branches of human knowledge. In order to be a spiritual guru, it will be sufficient that he have mastery over scriptural treatises; but to be a guru in the psychic sphere, he must be well-versed in all branches of human knowledge. A limited knowledge of a few scriptures will not do, and simultaneously, he must be conversant with the style in which the human mind functions, as well as the methods to control and guide it properly.

Next comes the physical world. The followers, the disciples, of the guru, are men and women of flesh and blood, having physical structures. They have their sorrows and miseries, their tears and smiles. This is their life. They have their problems of food and clothing; they have their pleasures and pains, their tears of pain and tears of joy; they become elated in happy circumstances and depressed when things go wrong. It is the duty of a guru to provide his followers with the wherewithal for their progress. This is what an ideal guru is to do in the physical sphere. As a guru in the physical world, he will have to teach humankind such techniques as will solve their worldly problems – problems of food, clothing, education and medical treatment. A guru must see to it that their mundane problems are solved.

So in order to be a guru, one must come onto this earth with the highest qualifications in the spiritual field, and with the greatest capacity to face the mountainous obstacles in the physical world. To shoulder the responsibility of a guru is not child's play.*

* The foregoing fifteen paragraphs are from *Ānanda Vacanāmṛtam Part 21*. –Editor.

Microvita and the Guru's Grace

Do microvita influence the mind first, or matter first, of any human or living structure? Negative microvita can function directly at the physico-psychic plexus [*vishuddha* cakra], but they cannot reach even directly to the occult plexus [Guru cakra]. Only positive microvita can touch the lunar plexus [*ájñá* cakra] and they may be elevated up to the occult plexus, but negative microvita may be elevated to the lunar plexus by another course. If negative microvita affect the mind, the mind may undergo derangement, but negative microvita cannot affect the mind directly.

Positive microvita may be used for intellectual development and for imparting certain occult powers, but not for spiritual power or spiritual development. Suppose a person is deaf and dumb. As the functions of hearing and speech are controlled by nerve cells or nerve fibres, they are activated with the help of nerve cells or nerve fibres. Nerve cells are controlled with the help of the lunar plexus. Positive microvita may function directly up to the lunar plexus, but there at the lunar plexus, if positive microvita are to influence the nerve cells, they require some special power. Positive microvita cannot do something supernatural with the help of the nerve cells – they require the special power of some powerful person.

Suppose the *Sadguru* is saying something, and a deaf or dumb person wants to hear it, but cannot. If they concentrate the mind on *varábhaya mudrá*, there will be the direct effect of positive microvita on the auricular or other nerve cells and also on the controlling cells, and it may be that all of

a sudden this person may get back the power of hearing. One should look towards these two *mudrás* and not to anything else. Microvita are radiated through these two *mudrás*. This is the inner secret.

This is supernatural, but not illogical. Certainly it is supernatural because it does not come within the scope of natural phenomena. Here the inner secret does not lie with microvita, it depends on something else.

During the last *Vaeshákhii Púrñimá* at Ananda Nagar, there were many spiritual aspirants who wanted that the speed of our progress should be accelerated regarding the establishment of Ananda Marga on this planet. Did you mark that after Dharma *Mahácakra* (DMC) the speed has accelerated? This is the effect of positive microvita through these two *mudrás*.

If a deaf person sincerely wants to hear what the *Sadguru* is saying, the positive microvita radiated through these two *mudrás* are sure to help – they will certainly help that person. During this DMC, some boys mentally expressed that we should go on fighting. Now see our boys and girls will go on fighting, and fight in the realm of spirituality means victory.

The highest point up to which negative microvita can function is the physico-psychic plexus, but with the application of some force they can be raised up to the lunar plexus. This raising is called *risti* or *rusti*. The lunar plexus is the highest point of positive microvita, but if positive microvita are raised above this point, it is called *krpá*. That is, raising positive microvita from the lunar plexus to the occult plexus is called *krpá*, and raising them from the lunar plexus to

the pinnacled point of human glory is called *karuṇá*. Without *krpá* there cannot be *karuṇá*, there cannot be any galloping jump. Raising negative microvita above the psycho-physical plexus is *rusti* or *risti*. You should always try to avoid *rusti* and always try to receive the glamour of *krpá* or *karuṇá*.

...

A human being is just like a machine, or a mechanical doll – in the hands of the Macrocosm. Perform spiritual practices to satisfy *Parama Puruṣa*, the Supreme Cognitive Faculty, and He will do everything. If one gets the guidance of a sadguru at the age of thirteen, fourteen or fifteen, and diverts one's potentialities towards *Parama Puruṣa* through spiritual practices, one is sure to be successful in life. ...*

* The foregoing eight paragraphs are from *Microvitum in a Nutshell*. –Editor.

Diikśá, Mantra and Yoga Sádhaná

To gain knowledge of Brahma, one's ideation – ideation on the *so'ham mantra* – will have to be continuous. Continuous ideation is not possible through mere parrot-like repetition of a *mantra*. This subtle science of psycho-spiritual practice is the discovery of Tantra.

Japakriyá and *dhyánakriyá* [with auto-or outer-suggestion, and meditation with unbroken concentration] are the subtle techniques prescribed by *Mahákaolas*. *Tantrics* also say that mere repetition of *mantra* will not serve any purpose unless there is a rhythmic parallelism between the incantative flow (the flow of the *mantra*) and the mental flow (the flow of the unit mind). To perform *japakriyá* while harbouring harmful thoughts is futile. One can only attain success in *japakriyá* if all the psychic propensities are diverted towards the deeper spirit of the *mantra*. (This will simultaneously bring about stillness of the *váyus* [energy flows in the body]. ...

The mind runs in one direction towards its object of fascination; its object of ideation lies in another direction; the vital energy moves in yet another direction; and the *váyus* run in all directions uncontrollably. In the midst of such chaos ideation on *Parama Purúsa* is impossible, even in billions of *kalpas* [ages]. ...

The controller of the *indriyas* is the mind, and the controllers of the mind are the *váyus*." In spiritual practice the *indriyas*, the mind and the *váyus* cannot

be ignored. They must be consolidated and directed towards *Parama Puruṣa*.*

The Sadguru's System of Initiation

In Tantra the system of *diikṣá* [initiation] is highly scientific. Initiation has two important aspects: *diipanii* and *mantra caetanya*. *Diipanii* means "torchlight"; *mantra caetanya* means "conceptual understanding of and psychic association with a *mantra*". Regarding the interpretation of *diikṣá*, the *Vishvasára* Tantra says,

*Diipa jñānaṁ yato dadyát kuryát pápakṣayam tatah;
Tasmátdiikṣeti sá proktá sarvatantrasya sammatá.*

The process which produces the capacity to realize the inner import of *mantra* and which expedites the requital of the *saṁskáras*, or reactive momenta, is called *diikṣá*.

You may have noticed that some people become extremely sad or extremely happy after being initiated. This is a good sign because it shows that the *saṁskáras* are being exhausted very quickly, but this sort of reaction does not occur merely by hearing the *mantra* or repeating it parrot-like. One must be initiated according to the prescribed system. Only then will the *mantra* be effective. This will be clear to those practising Ananda Marga meditation. ...

You must know that both *diipanii* and *mantra caetanya* must precede the repetition of a *mantra*.

"The sight of the reflection in water of a sweet fruit

* The foregoing four paragraphs are from *Subhásita Saṁgraha* Part 8. —Editor.

hanging from the branch of a tree does not give one the taste of the fruit." Similarly, what is the value of book knowledge of Brahma if a person has no actual spiritual realization? In this regard Tantra says, *Aham Brahmasmi*, ... The realization *Aham Brahmasmi* ["I am Brahma"] is the only way to dispel the darkness of ignorance. ... Now this *Tantrikii diikśá* has three phases, rather you may say three sub-phases: and they are *diipanii*, *mantrágháta* and *mantra caetanya*.

Diipajiñanam. What is the first letter? *Dii*. Then, *kuryát pápakśayam tatah. Kśayam* – what is the first letter? *Kśa*. So the word becomes *diikśa*, and the feminine term will be *diikśá*.

Now what is *diipanii*? Everything lies covered within the self. The Supreme Entity is also within your I-feeling. [He] is with you, but you do not know Him. That is, the Supreme Entity is with you, but You cannot see Him. You cannot realize Him. Why? Because you are covered by, you are surrounded by *Máyá*, the cimmerian darkness of *Máyá*. This *diikśá*, *tantrikii diikśá*, is just like a torch. And by focusing the torch, you see your route through the darkness. That is why the first sub-phase is *diipanii* – *diipanii* means "showing the torchlight". But no such thing is there in the term "initiation".

Diikśá gives the aspirant the route, the way, or rather the path, of bliss. It shows the path of bliss. And to show the path of bliss, light is required; and that light is also supplied by *diikśá*. This light is *diipanii*.*

* The foregoing eight paragraphs are from *Subhásita Samgraha Part 8*. –Editor.

Mantracaetanya, Mantrágháta and Purashcaraña – Only After Diikśá

Unless the *kulakuṅḍalinii* is raised upwards in the process of spiritual practice, the repetition of a *mantra* becomes meaningless. The system of raising the *kulakuṅḍalinii* upwards is called *purashcaraña kriyá*. *Mantra caetanya* literally means “to imbibe the proper spirit of a *mantra*”. If a *mantra* is repeated with the understanding of the inner spirit, *mantra caetanya* will be an easier task. To repeat the *mantra* without understanding its spirit is a waste of time...

Then, *pápakśayam*. You know what *pápa* is: *pápa* is negative reactive momenta. Whatever you do, the reaction is there, and when the reaction is not satisfied, not quenched, it remains in dormant form. The momentum is there, but not expressed. And there is also the case of positive work, that is, when you do something for the advancement of living beings – that is, something positive, it is a positive action. In *samája shástra* [social scriptures] this positive action is called *puńya*, and when you do something against the public interest, this negative action is known as *pápa*. Now this negative action in reactive form, that is, this negative reactive momentum, is called *pápa*; and *pápakśayam* is brought about by *diikśá*. And how is that *kśayam* to be effected? Through actions – through reactive actions. These reactive actions may be on the physical plane, or may be on the psychic plane. But *diikśá* teaches us how these reactive momenta are to be satisfied on the psychic plane, thus freeing the person from the bondages of *pápa*. Now this process of freeing a person from the fetters of *pápa* is divided into two sub-phases: *mantrágháta* and *mantra caetanya*.

Mantrágháta means, as I have already told you, that “each and every *mantra* has the support of an acoustic root: and when that acoustic root strikes at the root of the coiled serpentine, it is aroused”. This is called *mantrágháta*. After that this roused coiled serpentine moves with the force or the stamina it gets from the *mantra*. It moves towards the supreme positivity, and this movement is called *mantra caetanya*. With the help of this *mantrágháta* and *mantra caetanya*, a spiritual aspirant is freed from all mundane bondages, bondages both on the physical and on the psychic plane. One cannot see even the most valuable objects in a dark room. Similarly, a valuable *mantra* cannot be used properly without the help of *diipanii*...

To practise sadhana is to wage a tremendous war against *Máyá*; and by ultimately overpowering that *Máyá*, to be established in the supreme stance. But before launching an all-out attack against *Máyá*, the spiritual aspirant will first have to master the proper technique of sadhana from a competent *guru*. Who is the *guru*? The one who leads a spiritual aspirant from the darkness of ignorance to the effulgence of spiritual realization is the *guru*. In this sense Brahma alone can qualify as the *guru* of the spiritual aspirant. When does one find such a genuine *guru*? *Muktyákáunkśáyá Sadguru práptih* – “When the human mind becomes restless for the attainment of freedom from the bondage of *Máyá*, then *Parama* Brahma, in the form of a *Sadguru*, appears before the seeker and helps in that person’s spiritual progress by imparting *diikśá* [initiation]”. So, in the spiritual sphere the role of *Sadguru* and the importance of initiation should be properly understood by spiritual aspirants. What is *diikśá*?

*Diipajiñanam yato dadyát kuryát pápakśayamítatah
Tasmát diikseti sá praktá sarvaTantrasya sammatá.*

The process which leads to enlightenment and the exhaustion of *saṁskáras* accumulated over many lives is *diikśá*. Usually there are two types of *diikśá* – *Vaedikii diikśá* (initiation according to the *Vaedic* system) and *Tántrikii diikśá* (initiation according to the Tantric system). *Vaedik diikśá* inspires the seeker to adopt the true dharma and tread the path of spirituality, which leads to the attainment of the Supreme Entity. Many *shlokas* of the Upanishads and other scriptures are utilized in *Vaedik diikśá*. The imparting of proper spiritual training produces a spiritual awakening in the human mind, causing spiritual aspirants to seek that path which leads to the attainment of their *Iśta* or spiritual goal. A competent spiritual teacher then will impart the practical guidance to those aspirants. That spiritual direction is called *Tántrikii diikśá*. *Tan jádyáta tárayeh yastu sah tantrah parikiirthita*. The practical process which leads to freedom from dullness is called Tantra. The process of initiation according to the science of Tantra is called *Tántrik diikśá*. Strictly speaking *Vaedik diikśá* is not real *diikśá*; at the most it may be called a process of purification. Only *Tántrik diikśá* deserves to be called *diikśá* because it includes the necessary factors required for *diikśá* such as *diipanii*, *mantra caetanya*, and *abhiśeka*. If spiritual aspirants learn the proper techniques of sadhana from a competent master and practice the same regularly and with utmost sincerity and devotion, they will move towards *Parama Puruśa* with firm steps. Their entire existence becomes illuminated with the effulgence of Supreme veracity, of divine realization. Such spiritual aspirants no longer remain under the domination of *Máyá*.*

* The foregoing six paragraphs are from *Subhásita Samgraha Part 8* and *Ananda Marga Philosophy in a Nutshell Part 4*.—Editor.

Mantra and Diikśá

Last night I told you many things about the real meaning of the word *mantra*. I told you that the spiritual meaning and ordinary meaning of *mantra* are not the same. In the spiritual domain, *mantra* signifies "that which helps you to attain permanent liberation". By virtue of this [*mantra*] you will get permanent emancipation (*nivṛtti*) from internal and external bondages. I also told you that the acoustic expression of all the Indian alphabets can be rightly termed as *mantra*.

Wherever there is existence or dynamism, there will, of course, be *mantra*. When you are walking, you produce a type of sound – *khať, khať, khať. Khať, khať* is the acoustic expression of the action "walking". In Sanskrit such acoustic expressions are called *bijamantras*. So, every expression in the form of action and movement must have a *bijamantra*. This *bijamantra* is a fundamental sound or a collective form of sounds taken from the fifty basic sounds (There are fifty basic sounds from *a* to *kśa* in the Indian alphabet). At the end of the expression *ańi, anusvar* [a nasal sound in the alphabet] is suffixed. This is how *bijamantras* are created.

E is a sound or *svara*. It represents the action of teaching. *A* suffixed with *anusvar* becomes *eńi*. The palatal *sha* sound is the expression of the mutative force. The dental *sa* and the cerebral *ś* are symbolic of the sentient and static forces respectively. The letter *sha* and the letter *ra* represent the mutative force and *shakti* [energy] respectively. *Ra* represents all forms of energy— magnetic, electrical—energy of all kinds. So, wherever the mutative force is active and there is the fascinating attraction of the mutative force and, along with this, is the vibrant expression of energy, there, *sha + ra* yields *shra*; its feminine form is *shrii*. When *anusvar* is

added to *shrii*, the *bijjamantra shriim* is created. Every human being longs for *shrii*. That is why there is an ancient practice in India that the name of an individual is prefixed with *shrii*. There is also the prescription of prefixing more than one *shrii* before the name of a great personality.

Thus we can create countless *bijjamantras* by permutation and combination of the basic acoustic roots in different ways. But do they all have utility in the realm of spirituality? It has been said –

*Caetanrahitá mantrá proktá varnástu kevalam,
Phalam naeva prayachhanti lakśakoti japaerapi.*

[A *mantra* devoid of proper ideation remains a mere letter or sound,

It never brings any result even after millions and billions of incantations.]

In the realm of spirituality, it is not enough to make use of sounds. Along with this there must be something more, and that is called *mantracaetanya*. When a *Mahakaola* or *kaola*, with the help of some fundamental and special sound of *mantra*, arouses the crudest entitative existence of His own [self] or of others and raises it upwards continuously, and ultimately takes it to the pinnacle of spirituality, it is called *mantracaetanya*. You know that the point from which the expression of the universe originates, that is, the primordial point of the process of creation, is termed *shambhuliṅga*. The words *sham* and *bhu* combine to make the word *shambhu*. *Sham* means “to control”. So, the word *shambu* means “the entity whose principal function is to control or regulate all worldly actions and existences”. The word *shamkara* is similarly derived. The derivation *sham* + *kr* +

al gives the word *shamkara*, meaning “the controlling entity of everything [inanimate and animate] in the universe”. The word *shambhu* also means the same. The verbal root *bhu* means “to be”. “The entity which comes into existence in order to control everything in the universe” is *shambhu*. This *shambhu* is the starting point of creation, so it is called *shambhuliṅga* because it is the fundamental force of positivity of the whole universe. The causal matrix of the origin of human beings or any created being is related to *shambhuliṅga*. *Liṅga* means – *liṅgate gamyate jasmin talliṅgam*. It signifies that “*liṅga* is the supreme desideratum of the entire creation”. During the operational stage of the creative process, when the vibrated entities (*jiiva*) reach the stage of temporary pause, such desiderative pause is termed as *svayambhu liṅga*. At this *svayambhu liṅga*, located at the base of the spinal column, lies the unit spiritual force of human beings in a microcosmic form and in a dormant state. [It] is the divine force in human beings in latent form; it marks the point of commencement of the process of *sadhana* for all spiritual aspirants. The human spiritual journey originates from this point. That is why it is termed “the fundamental force of negativity or *kulakuṅḍalinii* [coiled serpentine]”.

Since this divine power lies dormant in living beings [human beings] what should a *Mahakaola* do to make use of this power? He, by His individual efforts, raises the *kulakuṅḍalinii* of the spiritual practitioner to the state of *shambhuliṅga*, that is, to the supreme point of the fundamental force of positivity. In Tantra, this is designated as *purascaraṇa*. The *mantra* by which a *Mahakaola* effects such *purascaraṇa* is known as “the *mantra* energized with ideational force within it” (*caetanyayukta mantra*). In the

spiritual sphere, only this *mantra* is to be applied. This is also termed as a *siddha mantra* [a *mantra* consecrated or perfected by a Guru]. So, in the spiritual sense, an ordinary *mantra* is not enough. You require a *siddha mantra* and it is only a *Mahakaola* who can be the creator of a *siddha mantra*. An ordinary *guru* or *kaola* cannot do this.

A *kaola* is one who, with the help of a *siddha mantra* created by a *Mahakaola*, can raise his or her own *kuṇḍalinī* to the level of *shambhuliuṅga*. And that Supreme entity who creates the *mantra* and transforms it into a *siddha mantra* is the *Mahakaola* (Sadguru). Lord Sadashiva was a *Mahakaola*. No one other than a *Mahakaola* can create a *siddha mantra*, nor can anyone else vitalize the acoustic expression of that *mantra* or the *bijamantra* by infusing spiritual power or the ideational power of consciousness into it. A *siddha mantra* is an absolute necessity for all forms of spiritual practice, including *japakriyá* [incantation], *dhyánakriyá*, and so on, or, in other words, a *mantra* imbued with consciousness is absolutely essential. A *mantra* which has not undergone the process of *purashcaraṇa* or has not been transformed into a *siddha mantra* is nothing but a mere collection of some words or sounds. If you repeat that *mantra* even thousands, millions and billions of times, it is not going to bring an iota of result for you, simply because it is not at all a *siddha mantra*. Now, you can understand that, in the spiritual realm, ordinary words, letters or sounds are of no value at all.

It is not simply the case that human beings have to attain *mokśa* [permanent liberation]; they are carrying a huge burden of *saṁskáras* [reactive momenta] of numerous past lives. They have, of course, to be liberated from those *saṁskáras*. This [accumulation of *saṁskáras*] is what is

called *prārabdha*. How can human beings free themselves from this *prārabdha*? There are two aspects of a *mantra*; one is *mantrāghāta* and the other one is *mantracaetanya*. What is *mantrāghāta*? When a spiritual aspirant ideates on a *siddha mantra* for the first time [that is, when one hears it for the first time at the time of *diikśā*], then that *mantra* has its special characteristic effect on the *svayambhu liuṅga* or *kulakuṅḍalinii*. It imparts a huge jolt to the *kulakuṅḍalinii* at that very moment. What happens when you strongly shake a person who is fast asleep? The person wakes up. When the *kulakuṅḍalinii* of a human being is struck by the *siddha mantra*, the *kulakuṅḍalinii* is aroused from the dormant to the wakeful state. I have already spoken about *mantracaetanya*. In the process of sadhana, when, after *mantrāghāta*, *mantracaetanya* conjoins it (*saṁyukta* in Sanskrit), this is called *diipanii*. *Diipanii* means “spiritual effulgence”. Due to *mantracaetanya*, the *kulakuṅḍalinii* is aroused, and while moving upwards, it gets the help of the illumination of *diipanii*. *Diipanii* is like a torch light – a spiritual torch. Suppose, there is dense darkness all around, but if you have a torch with you, you can easily move ahead. This is how *diipanii* helps a spiritual aspirant to move forward constantly along the path of sadhana.

As the sleeping divinity’s power gets aroused and proceeds towards *shambhuliuṅga*, the accumulated *saṁskāras* or the entire *prārabdha* of the spiritual aspirant get completely burnt or exhausted by the fire of sadhana. This state of a spiritual aspirant is called *dagdhabiija*. It means that the seeds of *saṁskāras* or *prārabdha* have been completely exhausted (without any possibility of further germination). This is known as *pāpakśay* or “the elimination of sins”, or in other words, “the termination of all sins”.

In all Tantra, there is mention of the term *diipajiñanam*. The real significance of *diipajiñanam* is “that entity or special personality who brings you on the right path, one who illumines the path of your journey”. You know that the word *diipa* signifies “effulgence of light” or “a lamp”. *Diipávalii* means “a garland of innumerable lamps” or “an ordered arrangement of lights”. Similarly, by virtue of the effulgent light which you receive from *diipajiñanam* you come to know and understand how you have to move forward on your way. What happens when the *kulakuñḍalinii* moves upward? One’s sins get exhausted. This very process is called *diikśá*. The first letter of *kulakuñḍalinii* is *dii*, the last letter of *pápakśaya* [exhaustion of sin] is *kśá*. Combined together, they produce the word *diikśá*, its feminine form being *diikśá*. So the most appropriate meanings of *diikśá* are:

- (1) That by which you obtain the *siddha mantra* which has been duly energized by *purascaraña*, and by which you move towards the goal by the refulgence of that light
- (2) That which exhausts your accumulated sins or *prárabdha*. *Diikśá* is absolutely essential for spiritual progress
- (3) *Diikśá* is associated with the appropriate *mantra*.*

10 November 1979, Hyderabad

The foregoing ten paragraphs are from *Ánanda Vacanámrtam* Part 16. —Editor.

Shravaña, Manana and Nididhyāsana

...Spiritual practice is essential for human beings; and for spiritual practice, initiation is necessary. Those human beings who do not perform spiritual practice are under the influence of the Cosmic principle. They are guided by the Cosmic rhythmic order, but as this is an impersonal entity they will never be able to enjoy liberation or salvation. So what is the way out? In what direction must they move after *mantra caetanya*? They have to do an about-turn and cross the three phases described [below]. They have to return to their original abode. They have to merge back into the One from whom their existence sprang.

Ānando Brahmeti byajānat

Ānandādhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyāt.

Ānandena jātāni jīvanti

Ānandam prayantyaabhisamvishantiiti.

[Know that *ānanda*, bliss, is Brahma. It is out of *ānandam* that the five fundamental factors have emerged. All created beings live within *ānandam*, and finally merge with *ānandam*.]

What then is to be done? The scriptures say that you do not have to exert very much. I have said before that there can be no progress, neither in the realm of physicality nor in the realm of intellectuality. Those who hanker after progress in these fields are indulging in a self-cheating business. Whether they admit it or not, they know that they know nothing. Ask them whether they are getting pleasure in the realm of physicality. They will admit that they are not. Ask a good businessman whether he is earning good

profits. His reply will be, "What profit? I am incurring losses." This will be his reply, whether you belong to the Income Tax Department or not! To run after progress in the realm of physicality and intellectuality is utter foolishness, a waste of time, as there is no progress in these fields. But I have already said that you may make efforts in these directions provided you can convert or metamorphose them into spirituality. But as far as spiritual sadhana is concerned, or as far as efforts to achieve bliss are concerned, there is no touch of pain in them, as bliss is infinite pleasure, alone. Sadhana, then, is what wise people have to do. And in sadhana, the first thing to be done is to use *mantra caetanya*.

In simple words, what we have to do is to return home from whence we came. We have all come from *Parama Puruśa*, the Supreme Entity – from the *práña-kendra*, the nucleus of the universe – that is, *Puruśottama*. We have to return to the same place. It is like a boy who has played throughout the day, away in the fields, and now that evening comes, returns home. Sadhana is the process of returning home. The child has played outside for the whole day. As evening approaches, he thinks, "Father must have returned home. Let me also return home and sit next to him." When one is tired of this world and worldliness, one yearns to go back to spirituality, that is, to one's home.

And what is our permanent abode – our home? It is *Parama Puruśa paramáshrayah Shriinivásah*. Here *Shrii* refers to the universal creative faculty, or *Paramá Prakrti*. The abode of this universal faculty is also your abode. Therefore, going home is a simple task. It requires no scholarship, no knowledge, no intellectual capacity – no long and tedious lecturing. The scriptures tell us to remember three

points in order to return home. They are *shravaña* [hearing about the Supreme], *manana* [ideating on the Supreme] and *nidi-dhyásana* [meditating on the Supreme with an unbroken flow of mind].

We know that the vibrational faculty converts subtler waves into cruder waves in the phase of creation. *Hari kathá* [devotional talk] provides subtler vibrations. You must allow yourself to receive these subtler waves. It has already been said that sound waves are the subtlest in the chain of Cosmic expression. The importance of *hari kathá* in spiritual development is great. Hearing about God is much more important than studies in spirituality, as sound is subtler than visual form. Therefore, wherever there is an opportunity, listen to His name and speak it to others.

When you speak His name to others, you also hear it. This dual enjoyment in reciting His name is called *kiirtana*. *Bhajana*, on the other hand, is "hearing His name by oneself". You must do both – both *bhajana* and *kiirtana*. This is *shravaña*. The effect of *shravaña* is that vibrations of sound which are moving from crude to subtle are set in motion against the flow in the vibrational faculty, where wordly sounds are moving from subtle to crude. This will set in reverse motion a flow of sounds, and this will take one up to the starting point of the vibrational faculty.

I have already stated that the starting point of the vibrational faculty and the culminating point of the primordial faculty are one and the same. You will therefore reach the culminating point of the primordial faculty. The vibrational phase is called *bhava* – also *bhava ságara* or *bhava párávára* [the ocean of creation]. The word *bhava* thus denotes "the entire realm of the vibrational principle". This is the world

of mundane involvements. The *caetanya*, or cognitive principle of this faculty is called *bhava*, and the *shakti*, or operative principle of this faculty is called *bhavánii shakti*. This is the worldly bondage. Only through the medium of *hari kathá* can one cross this ocean of *bhava*, the entire range of the vibrational faculty.

Thereafter comes *manana*, that is, “thinking only about *Parama Puruśa* and about no one else”. If any other person or thing comes in the mind, ascribe Brahma-hood to that person or thing. This process is *manana*; you learn this process through the medium of *guru mantra*. The effect of *manana* will be that it will take you from the last point of the primordial principle or faculty, and gradually take you to the starting point of the primordial faculty.

At this point you meet the basic faculty or basic principle. The basic principle or faculty is a point in the unbalanced triangle of forces. It is situated at a particular vertex of the triangle of forces. *Manana* can take you up to that point. What is now left is the point of “I”, the ego. Now we have to wipe out this “I”.

All burdens, all confusions, all considerations of respect and disrespect, are connected to the “I”. When someone does not agree with you, you file a suit in court. Why do you take such trouble? Only to vindicate yourself. All bother and frustration are solely due to the unit ego. The fact is that even after surrendering everything to *Parama Puruśa*, your arch enemy – the “I” – remains. Because, you will say, “I have surrendered everything to God.” “I”, “I”, “I” – my friend, surrender that “I” to God. Then alone will your surrender be complete. All the trouble is due to this “I”.

*Ratnákarakastava grham grhiñi ca padmá
 Deyam kimapi bhavate Puruśottamáya,
 Abhiiravámanayanápahrtamánasáya
 Dattam mana yadupate tvamidam grháña.*

[Your abode is brimming over with gems and jewels. The goddess of fortune is Your housekeeper. What can I offer to You, O Lord? Oh yes, there is one thing You lack, as it has been stolen by Your devotees; it is Your mind. I therefore offer my mind to You. Please accept it.]

After the surrender of this "I", *Parama Puruśa* is satisfied, as you have reached the central point in the triangle of forces.

Actually, the only task to be performed is to give away everything to Him. All that you possess – your body, your name, fame, wealth, everything – you have received from Him. So what are you to give to Him and how are you to do it? So far you were only giving God's own things back to Him. What you must give Him now is something of your own. This is the crux of the matter. Suppose someone gives you a flower as a gift, and you return the same flower to that person. This is not proper. Why not give your "I" to Him, which anyway, to you, is the source of all troubles, all confusions, all complications? There is nothing dearer to you than this "I". It is most difficult to give it up. Thus, in the above *shloka*, the devotee exclaims, "O Lord, this universe is Your abode. It is full of precious jewels. Whatever of value which exists in this world belongs to You. What precious gift can I give to You? You have no desire for anything. What is the use of offering anything to one whose house is full of precious jewels? The almighty Prakrti is Your own consort; at Your will She will make innumerable jewels

in a moment – *aghatāna ghatāna patīiyasii Māyá* [‘the dexterous hand of Māyá that can even create things impossible to create’] – this creative power is ever ready to serve You. O Lord of lords, although I have a yearning to offer You something, I do not know what that thing should be. Although I want to offer, You have no desire or want. If You lack nothing, what can I offer? If I knew of anything that You did not possess, I would offer it to You.

“O Lord of lords, we hear that Your great devotees have stolen Your mind from You. The Lord becomes the slave of his devotees. A devotee steals the heart of the Lord – almost forcibly. The deed is performed openly and not in secrecy. Therefore, O Lord, You lack one thing – You have no mind.”

The devotee says, “Despair not, O Lord, I am offering my mind to You. Please accept it.”

This offer of one’s mind to the Lord is *nididhyāsana*. The inner sense of *nididhyāsana* is that all the propensities of the mind are to be concentrated at a point, to be offered to *Parama Puruśa*.

Today, the human mind consists of fifty dominant propensities. Definitely, when the human structure becomes more complex in the course of evolution, the number of these propensities will increase. The number of these *vṛttis* is not going to remain fifty forever. It will increase. Similarly, the number of glands will increase, and also the number of sub glands. Not only will the number of mental propensities increase; the propensities will also undergo change. The concept of beauty will also change with the change in outlook

of the human mind. An owl may then appear beautiful, and a peacock, ugly.

Shravaña therefore enables one to cross the vibrational faculty. *Manana* enables one to cross the primordial faculty and *nididhyásana* makes it possible to merge with the Supreme Entity. This is God-realization. The essential thing therefore is to awaken the mantra, whether one also does intellectual things such as reading and writing or not. What is important is to have proper *shravaña*, *manana* and *nididhyásana*. If one does this, one will no longer find it difficult to learn to do anything. *Mantra caetanya* is sure to lead to *mantra siddhi*, to the attainment of the supreme goal. The process of sadhana will automatically arouse devotion.

When you come in close contact with the Supreme Entity, you will find that you have no wealth superior to devotion. All worldly possessions will prove of no avail. Only devotion enables you to come into close contact with Him. This is the goal of human life. This is true progress.

You have been wandering through the labyrinth of a myriad of lives. You have been ever advancing toward this stage. Knowingly or unknowingly, you are being drawn unto Him. This is the summum bonum of life. As long as you have not realized Him, there is no *siddhi* in your life.*

28 May 1967 DMC, Allahabad,

* The foregoing eighteen paragraphs are from *Subhásita Sanigraha Part 1*, from *Ananda Marga Ideology and Way of Life Part 11*.—Editor.

Mysticism and Yoga

When the aesthetic sense, based on the subtle aesthetic science, comes to touch a certain standard, it is what is called "mysticism". And when this mysticism reaches the pinnacle of human glory, or the excellence of human glory, it is called "spirituality". What is mysticism? Mysticism is the never-ending endeavour to find out the link between the finite and the infinite. It is a never-ending endeavour to find out a link between the self and the Super-Self, *khud* and *Khudá*. This is mysticism.

It is one of the human wants that human beings are never satisfied with something finite. They are never satisfied with something limited. In Sanskrit it is said, *Nalpe sukhamasti bhunaeva sukham* ["Human thirst cannot be satisfied with something limited, human hunger cannot be satisfied by something finite"].

That is, in the quest for the Infinite, human beings first come in contact with aesthetic science. Aesthetic science does not always mean to get something pleasant; it may mean to get something troublesome, something embarrassing – it may or may not be something pleasant. Aesthetic science is that which one can express in a subtler way, from subtle to subtler, and when it reaches the subtlest point, that point is the pinnacle of human glory. Now, it is the duty of artists to express their work in a nice way, in a lucid way, and place it before the world. Not everyone can do this, but enjoying something with aesthetic taste or aesthetic charm is within the capacity of each and every human being.

When human beings started their movement towards the

Supreme Being, in quest of supreme bliss, they first came in contact with spirituality. As spirituality is coming in contact with the Infinite, that is, the finite comes in contact with the Infinite, it is called *yoga*. *Yoga* is the unit moving in quest of the Infinite, the finite moving towards the Infinite in a mystic style. In Sanskrit, *yoga* means "addition". For instance, two plus two is equal to four. But for a mystic, for an aspirant of the mystic goal or the mystic desideratum, *yoga* is not only addition; here *yoga* means "unification". What sort of unification? It is just like sugar and water. Say there are two plus two apples. In the case of addition there will be one apple, then two, then three and then four apples. Every apple will maintain its individuality or its identity. The identity of the apples remains unchanged before and after the addition. But in the case of unification, that is, in the example of sugar and water, the sugar does not maintain its identity because it becomes one with the water. This is unification. In the realm of mysticism, *yoga* means this type of unification. That is, it is unification like sugar and water, and not simply addition like two plus two.

Now, the starting point is aesthetic taste or aesthetic science. The culminating point, that is, from the culminating point, starts the movement of supreme charm. In that movement with the goal of supreme charm, human beings become unified with the Supreme Entity, whose seat is above the pinnacle of existence.

This movement for *yoga*, for the unification of the unit with the Supreme, the finite with the Infinite, is a must for each and every human being. The human physical and psychic structure is most suitable for this purpose. Animals and plants act according to their inborn instincts. They are mentally undeveloped, and because of this their brain is also

undeveloped. The cranium is very small and the conscious portion of the mind is sufficient for them; there is no necessity or little necessity for the sub-conscious or unconscious strata of the mind. A plant gets pleasure or pain when its inborn instincts are either encouraged or discouraged. When the inborn instincts of a plant or an animal are encouraged it gets pleasure, and when the inborn instincts are discouraged, suppressed or depressed, it gets pain. This is how the brain or the mind of plants and animals functions. But in the case of human psychology, human psycho-spiritual movement cannot be suppressed, cannot be checked. There lies the speciality of human existence.

Now, yoga. Yoga is the most developed and most valuable expression of human wants, so it is in the first phase of *yoga* that one expresses oneself through so many arts and sciences. The final point of all artistic movement and the final point of all branches of sciences is the supreme source, the perennial source of all energies, the supreme seat of all energies. It is *Parama Puruśa*, the Supreme Entity, who is the Father of all, the Causal Matrix of all created beings in this universe, both animate and inanimate. That is why for all people, whether they are intelligent or illiterate, thin or fat, educated or uneducated, the Supreme Entity must be the goal of life. That is, the Supreme Entity is the culminating point, the desideratum of all human expressions. When human beings are lacking in this spirit of movement, they degrade themselves from the human status. All you boys and girls, you should remember this supreme expression of veracity.*

14 September 1979, Istanbul

* The foregoing ten paragraphs are from *Ananda Vacanámrtam Part 14*. -Editor.

Yoga Sádhaná and Gandha Parikramá

Yoga and the Olfactory Inference

... There is a foul smell from the body of those who are not careful about their food and who do not allow their sweat to exude. (Sweat does not have any smell of its own but if it is allowed to collect on any part of the body for about forty-five minutes or more after it has exuded from the body, the rotten sweat begins to emit a foul odour. So, it is desirable – it is really very good, in fact – if immediately after sweating, the concerned part is wiped with a cotton napkin or a towel). In contrast, the secretion of hormones from the relevant parts of the *anáhata cakra*, *vishuddha cakra* and *ajiñá cakra* [higher *cakras* above the navel] from the body of those who practise yoga sadhana or who loudly sing *kiirtana* for a long time, has the light fragrance of jasmine or a ripe jackfruit (it is not possible to define it exactly). That is why a naturally devout person or a practitioner of yoga (*yogácárii*) generally has a sweet smell about them. Of the many symptoms of devotion to God, one is this essence of sweet fragrance. So much so, that if a person spends some time alone and try to feel the close presence of *Parama Puruśa*, they will feel some fragrant air about their nostrils, which is actually a deposit of fragrant secretions in the tip of the nose. It is biological, but how can we explain it, except as the grace of *Parama Puruśa*?

If you come near a great person (*mahápuruśa*)— why only a great person— an elevated *sádhaka*, even an ordinary

sádhaka on a day in which they have had a very satisfactory sadhana - you can smell a good fragrance around them. If *dhyána* is done for a long time, then such a fragrance certainly comes. Even long *japa* [*sabiija japa*] or singing *kiirtana* releases this fragrance and brings about serenity of mind. When the mind is engrossed in high thoughts, then the sweet fragrant secretion that emanates from certain parts of the *sahasrára cakra* [pineal gland] fills the mind of the *sádhaka* with ecstasy on the one hand, and on the other hand it melts parts of the *ajiná cakra* by vibrating it in such a way that the fragrance comes out through various sense organs of the body. What does not come out gathers in the *nábhi cakra* [the navel gland] and remains active in the body for a long time.

From time to time you must have come across people who think materially, who are busy in gross mundane thoughts, who talk about nasty things, who discuss dances, songs and poems of a very low standard, and who are carried away by pornography - you will find a stinking odour there. If there is sweating at the back of their head when that person twists their tongue after bragging, "I do not care about God or such stuff, that is all the effect of opium", then it will emit a bad smell.

If that sweat glides down to the navel and other smells also mix with it, then the stench of that person will be far worse than the stink of an overgrown billy goat, almost an incarnation of Shriimat Swámi 108 Shrii Shrii Boṭkánanda Maháraj [the great human incarnation of the stinking overgrown billy goat]. On the other hand, if you go to a village, you will see that after sundown the farmers, on completing their day's toil, sit on the ground or on a simple

wicker mat and sing *kiirtana* rapturously, with full-throated ease. They may be ignorant, they may be illiterate, they do not possibly understand anything of politics, but the kind of sweet, sacred atmosphere that is created after their *kiirtana* is free from any bad smell. Instead, a very soft *champá*-like [magnolia] fragrance fills the air. If by chance you smell a bad odour you should know that some materialistically-minded person has infiltrated the group with some ulterior motive. Sometimes you will see that staunch materialistic leaders engaged in materialistic agitations, feel uncomfortable about their own bad body odour, what to speak of others.

In any case, a human being, inspired by noble thoughts, makes vigorous efforts to surrender to God – I say ‘vigorous efforts to surrender’, because it is not a joke to surrender oneself; what a human being generally does is just a sincere effort to surrender. This happens when a human, spiritually inspired by the endeavour of surrender, says, “How insignificant is a human! How little is my capacity! All my boastings, all my ups and downs are functions of His power and they strictly follow the course ordained by Him.” The spiritual aroma that emanates at this stage not only fills one’s mind with the bliss of ecstasy but also purifies and pervades the entire atmosphere. The atmosphere that I am talking about now is called *gandhaccháyá* [aromatic chiaroscuro].

*Surá pána karine ámi sudhá khái jay kálii bale,
Mana-mátále mátál kare mada-mátále mátál bale.*

[I do not drink wine; I drink the nectar I find in uttering the name of Goddess Kali.

I am intoxicated by the spiritual ecstasy, but people call me a drunkard.] Ramprasad

Sometimes this fragrant secretion creates a feeling of intoxication. Ignorant people think that the *sádhaka* is drunk. On seeing the upcast third eye of Lord Shiva, the ignorant people think that, possibly under the influence of cannabis and bhang, Lord Shiva has lost his senses. Actually, Lord Shiva is engrossed in enjoying the nectar secreting from the crescent moon decorating his head [pineal gland]. That precisely is the reason why Lord Shiva is called *sudhámshusekhra* [one who has the nectarean moon on the head].

By releasing so many sense perceptions emanating so many inferences, *Parama Puruśa* is continuously playing with the *jīvas* [created living beings]. The five sense perceptions [in common language] are: sound, touch, form, taste and smell (*pañca tanmátra*). By scattering these five *tanmátras* kaleidoscopically, He has displayed them before His creations in various ways. And He keeps on watching how, caught in this maze of *tanmátras*, which creature is doing what, who is laughing, who is crying, who is jumping, who is crawling on their chest...who is thinking what in the mundane world, who is planning to teach somebody a lesson and how, who is thinking of asking a favour and from whom, who is burning in the fire of repentance, who is puffed up with the pride of ones ego. He watches everything in His magic mirror (*máyá mukura*), in His *ganhádarshii* [crucible of aroma].

... As *Parama Puruśa*, sitting before what we call the "magic mirror" or *ganhádarshii*, watches the activities of

every creature – their games and their dances – He keeps on smiling – a smile that charms everybody, maddens everybody. While looking in His magic mirror He continues His charming, maddening smile on seeing the effects of His multiplicity of divine plays (*lilá-vaecitra*), as the world gets entranced. You can see the flicker of the smile of the *Parama Puruśa* in the face of elevated spiritualists. This smile becomes a part of their physical beauty – a replica of the sweet smile of the *Parama Puruśa*.

... Smell – whether pleasant or repulsive – is an entirely relative factor. A smell is called “pleasant” or “repulsive” depending upon one’s likes and dislikes caused by the inherent reactive momenta in the human mind. This is not only true for human beings. The vibrations of smell are conveyed to the nerve cells in the brain to produce the sense of smell in all creatures whose nostrils have the capacity to carry minute smell particles or the waves created by smells.

[One’s perception] of a type of smell is determined by one’s innate reactive momenta and the vibration of the smell conveyed to the sense organs. The capacity to carry smell vibrations is highly evolved in many undeveloped creatures. For instance, a tiger or a wolf is inferior to a human being in all respects, but the capacity to sense smells is not less developed in tigers and wolves than in human beings. So, living beings consider some odours pleasant and others repulsive due to their peculiar reactive momenta or the degree of the capacity of their propensities.

When the corpses of dead animals are dumped in a boneyard, one avoids the place, and if forced to go there under the pressure of circumstances, one will cover one’s

nose with a handkerchief. But as soon as the foul smell from a decomposed corpse enters the nostrils of a vulture, it flies in the direction of the smell and easily locates the corpse. For the vulture, the smell of the corpse is not foul, and the rotting flesh of the corpse is not harmful for its health either. But if human beings eat rotten flesh, their death is inevitable.

The differences between [the criteria of] pleasant and repulsive smells amongst human beings depend upon their inherent reactive momenta. For example, an inhabitant of *Rárh* is repulsed by the smell of dried fish, but there are many regions in the world where people think the smell of dried fish is like a fragrant bouquet. This difference between the sense perception of one person and another is due to differences in the inherent reactive momenta.

There are people who cut slices of flesh off dead animals in order to cook and eat them. Once I observed a vulture eating part of the rotting corpse of a cow, as a girl cut off another part and carried it away in a basket. Who knows if that rotten flesh was sold to a nearby restaurant or hotel! Was there any difference between the behaviour of the vulture and the girl? With my own eyes I saw the girl cut off the flesh with one hand and drive the vulture away with the other hand, and the girl was a human being! Although the flesh was not completely rotten at the time, there was definitely a foul smell coming from it.

So, a pleasant or repulsive smell depends on whether the type of vibration it produces in the mind is pleasant or repulsive. When the vital energy or *práñáh* – the controlling force of the body – wanes, and when the psychic force – the controller of the vital energy – also wanes, the physical

body starts to decompose and disintegrate. One part of the body becomes separated from the other parts because the force that controls the vital energy is conspicuously absent in a dead body. If the vital energy or the psychic energy wanes and is lost, a person very quickly becomes inert and lifeless, and we say that the vital energy of the person has become dormant. In that state it is not possible for the person to connect one part of the body with another part and correlate one sense organ with another. Likewise, if the vital energy remains largely intact but the psychic power is considerably weakened, then it will not be possible to control the vital energy of the body because the vital energy is a material force – a blind force. In the absence of proper directives by the psychic power to the vital energy, the person will find it impossible to control the physical body – one cannot do anything. Vital energy is somewhat like the power of electricity. It is the psychic power of human beings that controls electricity, otherwise the electricity may cause serious problems at any moment. So, either there is first the death of the mind and then the death of the body, or there is the suspension of the vital energy in the body and then the death of the mind. When there is the death of both the body and mind, that is actual death.

In many people, clear physical awareness persists to the last moment of breathing, so we say that they died a conscious death. In such cases, the mind functions for some time even after the death of the vital energy. Even if one is declared physically dead after clinical tests, the mind does not die simultaneously. If by some means or another the life force or the vital energy is revived, one may survive. Similarly, if one is declared mentally dead, the vital energy

does not die simultaneously. A physician may be able to revive the lost psychic energy with the help of the vital energy. Hence, it is advisable not to cremate a dead body until the death of both the body and the mind. Usually people cremate a dead body after only one of the forces has left the body.

As a result of the loss of control by the vital energy directly and the psychic power indirectly in the human body, the different parts of the body start to disintegrate and merge into the five fundamental factors. Until this process of disintegration and merger is complete, some kind of foul smell continues to be emitted during this process. When a sub-part of the body separates from the whole, at that point a huge quantity of foul smell is released. The smell particles enter the nostrils, and after they move through the smell carrying afferent nerves by producing a sympathetic vibration in the nerve fibres, which in turn creates a similar vibration in the nerve cells, one perceives the foul smell. The subtle entities which are created to consume rotting objects and are carried by the medium of smell, are negative microvita. Similarly, the subtle entities which are created to consume sweet, pleasant smells are positive microvita. I have already said that both sweet and foul smells are relative.

Just as a foul smell is produced as a result of internal disintegration due to the lack of vital energy and psychic power, a sweet smell arises when, as a result of the combination of physical energy and psychic power, two or more entities synthesize. Positive microvita come there. Sometimes even a static object is connected to various mutative or sentient objects through the process of

disintegration, resulting in a pleasant smell. By static object, I mean that which comes within the scope of ordinary sensory perception. A mutative object means that which comes within sensory perception with a little effort, and a sentient object means that which comes within sensory perception after long or short mental concentration or meditation.

Whatever can be attained through a brief period of meditation can certainly be attained through prolonged meditation or prolonged ordinary penance. When spiritual aspirants develop a certain degree of psychic concentration through incantation and thereby attract the blissful mood of *Parama Puruṣa*, it is also a type of penance. This is called "incantation" or *japa*. Similarly, when human beings surrender all their concentrated mental power into the cosmic infinitude and become free from microcosmic bondages, that is also a kind of penance, and is called *dhyána yoga*. In order to penetrate into the subtle world, static energy will have to be transformed and assimilated through the processes of incantation, *japa yoga* and *dhyána yoga*. Thus, spiritual aspirants will have to saturate their mental pabula with the greatest amount of cosmic ideation.

To ordinary people, this is usually conveyed though such terms as *japa yoga* and *dhyána yoga*. In fact, the terms *japa* and *dhyána* represent the vastness of cosmic ideation only partially, not fully. It is disadvantageous for both the teacher and the disciple if cosmic ideation is not conveyed with immensely suggestive language, hence the custom of conveying ideas symbolically. Teachers are forced to convey the value of incantation through the term *japa*. In the same way the word *dhyána* has detailed explanations in *karma yoga*, *dhyána yoga*, *kriya yoga*, *karma dhyána*, *anudhyána*, *avidyá dhyána*, etc. For all these various aspects of *dhyána*,

we loosely use the common term *dhyána*. This *japa yoga** or *dhyána yoga* which elevates human beings through constant self-analysis, obliterates the very existence of the non-spiritual, and expedites one's elevation to the supreme spiritual stance, is practised with the help of positive microvita by the grace of *Parama Puruśa*. Hence, whatever might be one's intellectual attainment, the essence of everything is *prapatti* or "complete surrender". Without the wish of *Parama Puruśa*, not even the leaf of a tree moves – not even a blade of grass grows. The gradual ascension of a unit being towards the supreme spiritual stance, which is helped by positive microvita, brings a kind of very pleasant smell. Spiritual aspirants, at a particular stage, sense this smell. But it should be remembered that the sensation of smell is a minor thing – it is a mere drop of cosmic grace.

So, pleasant and unpleasant smells are relative matters. A standard which has been followed since ancient times is that spiritual aspirants are required to concentrate on the *ājñā cakra* or the pituitary gland, and to try and bring their mind under control. The pleasant smell that arises through this process of meditation is highly attractive. The group of smells that create pleasant feelings in the minds of those engaged in this type of *yoga sadhana* are good smells, and all other smells are bad smells.

Microvita, whether positive or negative, is a very subtle entity, hence it is conveyed through inferences. The subtlest

* According to the author, the *japakriyá* which is psychic, *sabija* [with *siddha bijamantra* or *istmantra*], and which has intense urge and ideation for *Parama Puruśa*, is *japayoga*; this is the real *japasáadhaná*. *Upanishu japa*, *vácanika japa*, etc. are useless. In spiritual sense, they are termed as lowest stage of *sadhana*.—Editor.

of these inferences is sound (which is accepted and conveyed by the auricular nerves, and is vibrated naturally by dynamic objects such as aerial waves, liquid waves, and electromagnetic waves). Cruder than the sound inference is the inference of tactuality (which arises due to the touch of other objects). Cruder than touch is the form inference (which is carried and received through light waves). Cruder still is the taste inference (which is the fluidity of a liquid substance). The crudest of all is the smell inference (which is conveyed by smell particles). Usually, the subtler the inference, the easier it is for it to convey positive microvita, and the cruder the inference, the easier it is for it to convey negative microvita. ...

But there is something more to this. The movement of positive and negative microvita is determined by the following principle. If smell, the crudest inference, is associated with something subtle, then it becomes an ideal carrier of positive microvita. If the same smell is associated with something crude, then it will ultimately create a wave of negative microvita. Again, if someone makes a sound like "ra, ra, ra - cha, cha, cha," or if someone sings, "Follow my song! Let us sing and dance our way to hell," these are sound inferences, but they carry a very crude idea. Hence, each and every sound inference is not necessarily an ideal carrier of positive microvita only. Conversely, it cannot be said with certainty that each and every smell inference is an ideal carrier of negative microvita only. An intelligent person should select and absorb sound inferences associated with subtle ideas and avoid sound inferences associated with crude ideas. At the same time, they should effect the large scale emanation of subtle vibrations, and dissolve crude vibrations

in the vast wave of cosmic ideas, leaving them to rest forever in the ocean of forgotten expressionlessness.

The pervasive, stinking smell which results from the decomposition and disintegration of rotting animal or plant bodies attracts negative microvita. This negative microvita causes the creation of newer carbon atoms and other sub-atomic particles. These particles then create unicellular life, and sometimes, somewhere, multicellular heterogeneous life also. The origin, existence and disappearance of these entities are rooted in negative microvita. Similarly, in ascending order, is the path of high grade spiritual practice – the path of supreme synthesis – for many diverse elements and ideas. This happens in the highest world of wisdom – in the highest world of intuition – beyond the domain of all kinds of dialectics. This is the path which human beings will have to select.

Those who opt for the path of synthesis are bound to enjoy some kind of spiritual aroma. This divine aroma can hardly be compared with any worldly smell. We can say that this divine aroma somewhat resembles the fragrance of a champak or magnolia flower, but people will have to remain satisfied with the description, “somewhat resembles”. If spiritual aspirants concentrate their minds on particular parts of the *sahasrāra cakra* or *ājīṇa cakra* (as learned from one’s spiritual master) and practise meditation assiduously, they can and do enjoy the sweetness that lies in the different layers of the vast storehouse of divine aroma. But the most important thing to remember is this: spiritual practice is not done to come in contact with divine fragrances – rather spiritual practices are performed to attain *Parama Puruṣa*. Ideal spiritualists will never ask for occult powers, which

are devoid of even one percent of all the inferences. They will only ask for the controller of the cult, not the occult power...

*Bhaktir Bhagavato sevá bhaktih prema svarúpiñii;
Bhaktiránanda rúpá ca bhakti bhaktasya jiiivanam.*

Every spiritual realization – from the higher spiritual realm to the comparatively low psycho-spiritual realm – comes about through the medium of hormones secreted by the *ájiñá cakra* and the *sahasrára cakra* (these hormones are called *sudhá* in scriptural language). According to some people, women are not entitled to this sort of higher spiritual realization because of certain physical shortcomings.

In this regard, I want to clearly state that certainly there are differences between men and women in certain crude *vrttis* [propensities]. (This is not the proper occasion or time to explain it, but if I find time in the future I will explain about human propensities in detail.) It is true that as there are some differences in the expression of certain *vrttis*, there will also be differences between men and women in the lower glands and sub-glands. The number of glands and sub-glands is also different. Certainly, there are also some subtle differences in the *ájiñá* and *sahasrára* cakras, as these centres directly control the lower glands and sub-glands, but we should remember that these differences pertain to only a few crude propensities. (For example, attachment. When a woman looks upon someone as an enemy, she sees them as a fierce enemy and if she looks upon someone as a friend, she takes that too to the farthest extreme, and so on.) But in the spiritual, supramental and psycho-spiritual spheres, there are no differences between men and women. Rather, women can

attain the highest spiritual experiences that men can attain. There is no logic whatsoever to justify depriving women unnecessarily or making their path of progress thorny. There is no logic in the contentions that only males are entitled to liberation or salvation or that women must be reborn as men to attain liberation or salvation. Rather, these statements imply an inherent selfish, exploitative psychology, [focusing on] the personal and collective interests of men. If anyone tries to advance illogical arguments to perpetuate such exploitation, that sort of cunning will not last long.

Both sons and daughters receive the affection of *Parama Puruśa*, both are His beloved children. Logic tells us that *Parama Puruśa* cannot make distinctions or discriminate between His sons and daughters. It is not reasonable to think that He, being the Supreme Father, will take the boys on His lap and feed them sweets, and deprive the girls of all opportunities.

*Sirii náru khábe shudhu khoká kole base,
Ár khuku tomár ela bujhi vāner jale bhese'!*

[Will you seat your son on your lap and feed him sweets, and consider your daughter only as a burden?]*

* The foregoing fifteen paragraphs are from *Microvitum in a Nutshell* and *The Awakening of Women*.—Editor.

Rájadhirája Yoga Sádhaná

Rájadhirája Yoga in the Light of Sadáshiva

After the Aryan settlement in India, a great man was born into the non-Aryan society. Born into a Mongolo-Aryan family, this great man had a high nose and fair complexion. He was a great Tantric – a great yogi. The name of this *mahápurúsa* of the non-Aryan society was Shiva. For one man to have so many qualities and endowments at the same time was beyond the comprehension of the people, so He was called *Guńátiita* or *Nirguńa* [Transcendental or Non-Attributional] *Puruśa*. As the result of His Tantra sadhana He attained extraordinary powers, which He employed for the good of humanity. It was He who systematized the science of Tantra and thus He was the Guru or the father of *Tantrics* and yogis. To this Self-realized *mahápurúsa* there was no distinction of high and low. People of all classes, from the highest to the lowest, were dear to Him. Irrespective of class - Aryan, non-Aryan, Dravidian, Austric or Mongolian – all flocked to Him. He showered His grace on them all equally...

When the Aryans came to India, roughly during the period of the Atharvaveda, they learned Tantra sadhana to some extent after coming in contact with the Indian *Tantrics*. This resulted in the Atharvaveda being pervasively influenced by Tantra. Even if orthodox *Vedics* try to reject the many Tantra-influenced portions of the Vedas as later interpolations, they will not be too convincing, for Tantra has now infiltrated

into the marrow of the so-called Aryans. Although during the post-Vedic Buddhist era, as well as the post-Buddhist Brahmanical era, changes in the religious outlook of the people were apparent, the process of sadhana remained Tantric as it does even today, for without Tantra spiritual sadhana is impossible. Yoga, which is the paramount factor in spiritual practices, is itself based on Tantra. The great Tantric Vashiśtha, when he returned from China after learning the Chinese techniques of sadhana, brought about a great improvement in Tantra sadhana. He was widely acclaimed as a great *yogi*. His book *Yogaváshiśtha* is a philosophical exposition of the subtle spirituality of Tantra sadhana...

Tantra can be roughly divided into two branches, one crude and the other subtle.(8) The subtle aspect of Tantra is also called *yoga márga* [the path of *yoga*]. *Sadāshiva* was the propounder of both branches of Tantra, hence there cannot be any contradiction between them.

... *Sadāshiva*, who was born into this world about seven thousand years ago – and who, by His holy birth, consecrated, as it were, each and every dust particle of this earth, utilized His whole life for the sole purpose of advancing the cause of universal welfare. Remember, I have not said “human welfare,” because in our world, not only are there humans, there are also birds and animals, trees and plants. Shiva belongs to all; and for all living beings, He gave His all. Hence the people called Him *Sadāshiva*; *sadā* means “always”, and *shiva* – as I have said earlier – means “welfare”. So *Sadāshiva* means “one whose only vow of existence is to promote the all-round welfare of all living beings”. ...

Now, Shiva's greatest contribution to humanity is the concept of dharma. Here it should be remembered that at the time of Shiva, many Aryans had already arrived in India, many were on the way, and many were still preparing to come. For those Aryans there was no clear-cut concept of dharma; they had no spiritual awareness or spiritual urge. Each *r̥ṣi* propounded his views differently from the others..... Shiva showed human beings how to attain peace; and that path to supreme peace should not be called a path of ordinary attainment, but of supreme attainment. Here the spiritual realization is *aparokṣánúbhuti* – is direct. This path, as shown by Shiva, is known as *Shaeva Dharma* [Shaivism].

Tantra did exist before Shiva, but it was scattered, not well-organized. As I told you a little earlier, Shiva made everything systematic and regulated. He brought about a harmonious synthesis between those scattered Tantras and the people's spiritual urges for supreme fulfilment, and created His *Shaeva Dharma*, which was above all sorts of geo-sentiment and socio-sentiment. This path of Shiva, which was a happy blending of the existing Tantra and His practical processes, was an ideal adjustment between the objective world and the subjective world...

This Shiva Tantra inspired people to move towards the supreme truth on the one hand, and on the other hand it exhorted people, "Do not neglect the practical world. Maintain a congenial adjustment with the external world." His instructions were, *Varttāmaneśu vartteta* [Live in the present]. Try to penetrate as deeply as you can into your mind, keep moving inwards – *Caraeveti, caraeveti* [Proceed on, proceed on]. But do not forget the realities of the external world, because if you ignore the external realities, your internal

peace will also be disturbed.” This *Shaeva* Dharma became the essential dharma of India.

It was Shiva who determined what kind of activity should be performed, depending on which nostril the breath was flowing through, and depending on whether the *id'á* or *piuṅgalá* or *suśumná* channel was active. He set down specific rules and regulations as to when one should undertake physical, psychic or spiritual activities. He further instructed when and in what circumstances one should do asanas, *práñáyáma*, *dhárañá*, *dhyána*, and so on.

Maharshi Kapila* wrote *darshana shástra* for the first time; by that time alphabetical [OR written] script had been invented. People were charmed by his erudition and almost all the scholars of the society venerated him as the first exponent of *darshana shástra*, calling him *Ádividván* [“First Scholar”]. This erudite personality of *Rárh* enumerated the fundamental causes of the mystery of this creation and presented them in a systematic way before the society of scholars.

Shiva was a tremendous personality; it is impossible to explain such a great personality within the scope of *Sámkhya* philosophy. There is a clear difference between Shiva's teachings and the assertions of *Sámkhya* philosophy. Shiva has clearly stated that this universe originated from a conscious Entity; it is maintained in the vast body of that conscious Entity; and it will finally merge again in that conscious Entity. Shiva's greatness overwhelmed the *váda*, *jalpa* and *vitañd'á* of the *Sámkhya* philosophy.

* According to the author, Maharshi Kapila came approximately 3500 years before.—Editor.

The basic foundation of a comprehensive philosophy rests on *váda*, *jalpa* and *vitañdá*. If the foundation is not sufficiently strong, the duration of the philosophy's existence is not long. Sámkhya philosophy defeated many later schools of philosophy by marshalling many arguments with the help of its intricate weapons of *váda-jalpa-vitañdá*, and continues to do so even today. However, the propounders of this philosophy were so overwhelmed by the greatness of Shiva and the radiance of His personality, though much older than themselves, that they could not give any idea of Shiva to humanity. Their own eyes were dazzled.

I was referring to the three weapons of philosophy – *váda*, *jalpa* and *vitañdá*. One of these is *váda*: “to strengthen one's position through logic”; the second is *jalpa*: “to demolish the structures of the other philosophy or doctrine through logic”; and the third, *vitañdá*, is “to capture the zone of intellectual influence of the defeated philosophy”. Sámkhya philosophy possessed all three of the weapons of logic, but it avoided the great practical personality of Shiva.

Now, it is ridiculous to compare Párvatii with the *Prakṛti* of Sámkhya philosophy, because Shiva is not to be considered one of the innumerable *puruṣas*.

Long after the Sámkhya philosophy was propounded, another great philosopher was born in *Rárh* – Maharshi Patanjali*. He took special care to correct some of the basic defects of the Sámkhya philosophy, but in some matters he lagged behind. ... Moreover, [he] did not explain clearly and

* The period of Maharshi Patanjali is much later than that of Maharshi Kapila, that is, only two thousand years ago.—Editor.

conclusively how *Ishvara* exercises His supreme authority in controlling the universe, nor why people should practise *yoga*, why they should try to suspend all their psychic propensities, etc. Thus the fundamental difference between Shiva and the *Ishvara* of Patanjali's philosophy is obvious.

Shiva looked upon all living beings of the universe as His loving children. He raised them with loving care and, at the end of their physical existence, took them on His affectionate lap. Not even a hint of the glory and sweetness of Shiva's ideology can be found in the Pátanjala philosophy. *Pátanjala yoga* is a dull, dry school of yogic discipline; it does not make the yogi's heart ever-fresh and evergreen. Yet unless the heart of a *yogi* is fresh and tender, the seed of devotion, although sown in time, does not sprout. Without that blissful flow of devotion which vibrates and inspires living beings to attain the highest spiritual realization, the Pátanjala school of philosophy could not create a large group of devotees, a *Hariparimañdala* [circle of devotees around the Lord].

Not only are the gods fond of the fragrance of flowers; devotees also want to string garlands for their beloved *Iśta* with the fragrant flowers of the devotion of their hearts. If a flower has no fragrance, it has no value for a devotee. One should remember that, together, the fragrance of a flower and the tender sweetness of a devotional heart make a perfect combination.

What does the perfume of a flower represent? The worldly activity which a devotee does with a heart filled with love is the perfume of the flower, and the overflowing devotion for one's *Iśta* is the tender sweetness in the

devotee's heart. With these two together, the devotee makes a garland. Now, if there are fragrant flowers, but there is no sweetness in the devotee's heart, then the devotee cannot make a garland for their *Iśta* – then there is no question of garlanding Him at all, and though the flower basket may be full of flowers, they wither with the pain of emptiness and the agony of unfulfilled yearning. Then if the Beloved does not accept the garland, what is the use of holding the basket full of flowers and crying –

Bhará sáji ki go
He mor Devatá
Emni bhariyá rabe.

[O beloved Lord,
 Will my basket of flowers
 Ever remain full?]

The Pátanjala philosophy may have accepted Shiva as *Ishvara*, but certainly did not accept Him as the Lord of the heart. This was indeed a great injustice to Shiva, because He was the Supreme Lord of the human heart. The glory of Shiva is not properly reflected in the light of Pátanjala *yoga* philosophy. How, indeed, can it be reflected? Compared to the dazzling brilliance of Shiva's effulgence, the dim light of the Pátanjala philosophy is fainter than that of a glow-worm...

Shiva loved this created world with all His heart. Education, medicine, a social code, music, dance [Shiva first introduced *Tándava* dance for physical, psychic and spiritual benefits. He also introduced *Lalita* dance through his spouse, Parvati], rhythm, percussion, intuitional science – Shiva taught all these to His loving children. He took them on His

lap – caressed them and pinched their cheeks – and with His own hands He showed them everything. Had He considered this world to be false, He would have certainly turned His face away and neglected it – but then Shiva would not have been Shiva as we know Him. He would have been in fact *shava* [a corpse]. ...

Long ago people learned to perform sacrifices. They realized in theory that God exists, but they did not know how to attain Him – how to develop God-consciousness, how to make themselves fit instruments for the attainment of the Supreme. Shiva prepared the path of sadhana for them and taught them how to evolve their minds with the help of *mantras*. *Mananát tārayet yastu sah mantrah parikiirtitah* [“A *mantra* is that collection of sounds which, when meditated upon, leads to liberation”].

Shiva also taught the people how to develop themselves spiritually with the help of *mantra yoga*, *rāja yoga* and other branches of *rājādhirāj yoga*.^{*} Then people accepted unanimously that Shiva was *mantrādhipati*, or *mantresha* – “the Lord of *mantra*”. Shiva equally loved animals and human beings. As He protected the animals, He was addressed as *Pashupati* [“Lord of the Animals”]. In the spiritual world, He gave shelter to the spiritual practitioners of *viirabhāva* [a kind of Tantric ideation]. So, He was

* Elsewhere, the author has explained the difference between *Rājayoga* and *Rājādhirāja Yoga* as follows: The scope of *Rājayoga* is extended from physical to psychic and from psychic to qualified spiritual (*saguṇia*), whereas the same for qualified spiritual is from physical to mental, from mental to qualified spiritual and from qualified spiritual to non-qualified spiritual stance (*nirguṇia*). Ananda Marga sadhana, as introduced by the author, is *Rājādhirāja Yoga sādhanā*, incorporating many more useful practices added to it by him.—Editor.

respectfully addressed as *Vireshvara*. And as He was the guardian of those spiritual aspirants of noble character and developed intellect, He was addressed as *Mahádeva* [the “Lord of Lords”]. *Devánám devah ityarthe Mahádeva* [“The Lord of lords is *Mahádeva*”].

For ages those exalted entities considered as *devas* have said,

*Tava tattvaṁ na jánámi kiidrsho'si Maheshvara;
Yádrsho'si Mahádeva tadrsháya namo namah.*

“O *Maheshvara*, it is not possible for the unit mind to understand You. Whenever I have tried to fathom You in any way, I did not succeed, so I do not know what You really are. But whatever You are, I pay my deepest salutation to You.”...

Love for dharma or love for the Transcendental entity is an instinctive propensity of all living beings, including humans. The natural tendency of the vital force lying at a dormant stage at *kulakuṅḍalinii* [coiled serpentine] is to get thoroughly drenched in the ideation of *Parama Puruṣa*. Hence the spiritual practice in accordance with the *kulakuṅḍalinii tattva* is *sahaja sadhana* [a form of spiritual practice].

*Muralii shuñiyá mohita haibe sahaja kuler bálá
Dvijja Chañdídás kay takhani jánibe piiriti kemana jválá.*

[A girl spiritualist of the *sahaja* cult will be enchanted by the sound of a flute,

Then only can one know how the agony of love feels, says Dviija Chañdídás].

Based on this *sahaja* theory, a school of spiritual practice called *sahajíá** was introduced at the juncture of Buddhist and Shaeva eras in Bengal. Some part of it has been included in the *Rájádhirája yoga* of Ananda Marga...

The *Siddhántácára*, *Vámácára* and *Kulácára* of *Shaeva* Tantra [Shiva Tantra, Shaivite Tantra] are recognized by both the Hindu and Buddhist schools of Tantra. The Buddhist *Vajrayána*, *Mantrayána*, *Tantrayána* and *Kálacakrayána* sub-schools of Tantra recognize all of these *ácáras* and follow them in actual practice. The purest part of *Shaeva* Tantra, which is beyond both *Dakśínácára* and *Vámácára* and was formerly to be learned in *Sámrajya diikśá* [a kind of Tantric initiation] from a *kaola guru* [Tantric guru], is now included in *Rájádhirája yoga*. Some of the subtler processes of Ananda Marga sadhana bear a close relation to *Rájádhirája*. Maharśi Aśtávakra, while staying at Vakreshvar *tirtha* [place of pilgrimage], introduced *Rájádhirája* and gave the first initiation of that school to the young Prince Alarka. In Hindu Tantra, Buddhist Tantra, and *Rájádhirája Yoga*, this concept of *Parashiva* in the unmanifested balanced triangle of forces has been recognized implicitly or explicitly. *Naerátma Devii* of *Kálacakrayána* and *Shúnyátma Devii* of *Kaunḱála-málinii* Tantra are simply alternative names of *Parashiva*.

In later years, the school of *Shaeva* Tantra altogether lost its high-grade spiritual cult, and there remained only the more inconsequential of *Vámácára* Tantric practices, such as dancing with a dead body and performing a type of sadhana with a skeleton. In a later period, lasting about a hundred

* The period of the *sahajíá* cult was approximately 2500 years ago.—Editor.

and fifty years, when the school of *Terapanthá* Jainism was to be found throughout all of northern India, *Vámácára*-oriented *Shaeva* Tantra had become practically extinct in India, particularly in Bengal. The school of Aghorpanthá, which is still to be found covertly practised in Bengal, is also a distorted form of *Vámácárii Shaeva* Tantra.

The original features of *Shaeva* Tantra, in the absence of a competent Tantric master and deserving Tantric disciples, have today become confused. Now it is like a labyrinth. *Saora* Tantra, *Gáhapatya* Tantra, and *Shaeva* Tantra do not have adequate scriptural literature, as *Shákta* Tantra and *Vaeśháva* Tantra have; *Saora* Tantra and *Gáhapatya* Tantra have almost no literature of their own. Once, I came across a few manuscripts of *Shaeva* Tantra written on palm leaves in red ink. The owners of the manuscripts could neither read them nor understand their meanings, if they heard them, nor were they willing to transfer ownership of them to anyone else. But this much can be said, that their basic theme is *Parashiva*-oriented. It can also be said (through pure philosophical analysis and analysis of the cult which they prescribe) that their basic theme is the *Parashiva Guñamaya* of *Shaeva* Tantra.*

* The foregoing thirty paragraphs are from *Namah Shiváya Shántáya*.—Editor.

Visheśa Yoga Sádhaná

What is the meaning of the word *váránasii*? In both English and Bengali the meaning of the word *vár* is “to check” or “to stop”. *Vár + anat* = *váraña* which means “to forbid”. It is a negative command. Similarly, *ni – var + anat* = *niváraña*. Now, *anas* means “birth”. *Vár + anas* = *váránas*. In Sanskrit, *váránas* becomes *váránasii* in the feminine gender. Philosophically, *váránasii* refers to a particular point or *vindu*.

In the spiritual sphere, when one reaches that *bindu* one no longer takes rebirth – the cycle of birth and death stops and the aspirant no longer has to return to this world. In *váránasii* there is no rebirth. It should be understood that this *váránasii* does not refer to a particular city of Uttar Pradesh in India but to a point situated between the *ájñá* and *sahasrára* cakras, that is, between the pituitary and pineal glands. Spiritual aspirants, through the practice of sadhana and with the help of the Divine Spirit, become established in that point, attaining great mental power and omniscience. Such people do not have to take another birth in this world. That is why it is said that if one dies in *káshii*, one will never be reborn. *Káshii* does not refer to a city, but to that spiritual point.

Traelokye yáni bhútáni táni sarváni dehatah. Whatever exists in this world also exists within your body. You are a microcosmic expression of the universe. That is why it has been said, “Know thyself. Acquire self-knowledge or *átmajñána*”. How can you acquire self-knowledge? Go deep within to the centre point of your existence. First, go to your

centre plexus and then to your *muládhára cakra*. Your *muládhára cakra* is an ideational entity orbiting like a satellite around the supreme *muládhára*. If you make the effort to know your inner self, if your desire for self-knowledge is strong, all the secrets will be revealed to you. *Traelokye yáni bhútáni táni sarváni dehatah.*

That point, that *váránasii*, which, as I have said, is situated between *ájiṇá* and *sahasrára cakras*, is bright and luminous. It is the true *káshii*. *Káshii* is derived from the Sanskrit root verb *kásh* + *al* + *striiyám* + *iṇiip*. *Káshii* means “very luminous entity”. I think its meaning is crystal-clear.

Some people say that the town *Váránasii* is so-called because it is situated between the rivers *Varuná* and *Ashi*, but that is not correct. If that were so, the name would have been “*Varuńásii*” and not “*Váránasii*”. The correct derivation is *vár* + *ánas* = *váránas* which becomes *váránasii* in the feminine gender. Is the meaning clear to you now?

Vár means “to forbid” and *ánas* means “birth”. Those who die at *váránasii* are not reborn. It is not a city in India, but a *bindu* or point. One may learn the secrets of this point through the practice of *Vishesha yoga*.^{*} During this meditation the mind ascends to such a height that there is no further need to acquire a new body. Those who have not yet learnt

* *Vishesha yoga* sadhana is the highest sadhana of Ananda Marga spiritual practices. It has many lessons. In one such lesson, the mind is concentrated on the particular point indicated by the author here. All practitioners of *vishesha yoga* are to perform this lesson in their daily sadhana. Like other *Ácáryas/Ácáryás* *Vishesha yoga* sadhana can be practiced by *Grhii Ácáryas/Ácáryás*, but after certain period of time and appearing in a special tests for it.—Editor.

Vishesha yoga will learn it in the future, will come to realize its significance, and will like it.

To establish the mind on this point of *váránasii* or *káshii*, one has to quickly elevate the mind. Those who have learnt the technique of Tantra *sáadhaná* or *kápálíka sáadhaná*, know what joy can be derived from this. It helps to establish the practitioner in the cult of *váránasii*. Those who have not yet mastered it, will one day be established in the cult of *váránasii*. Why not? Those who have acquired a human structure will surely be established in *váránasii*.*

Visheśa Yoga Sádhaná and Service

Service can be of two types: internal and external. This entire universe is the expression of the greatness of *Parama Puruśa*, and therefore, whatever a person does for a particular living being is as good as rendering service to *Parama Puruśa*. Wherever you are, and whatever you may be, whether you are leading a family life or the life of a recluse, you need to serve all created beings, for they are the veritable expression of the Supreme Entity. While serving living beings one should never allow a feeling of vanity to develop. One should always remember that one is serving *Parama Puruśa* and none other. Had *Parama Puruśa* not come in your contact in the form of living beings, you would not have an opportunity to serve Him. He comes to you as a sick person or as a beggar to solicit your assistance. Naturally you are more grateful than the person you serve because *Parama Puruśa* has given you the opportunity to serve Him. Thus everyone should render external service.

* The foregoing seven paragraphs are from *Ānanda Vacanámrtam Part 7*. —Editor.

Japakriyá and *dhyána* should also be practised with the ideation that one is serving *Parama Puruśa*. This is internal service. If this is done one will achieve intense psychic concentration. Of course, one must serve without expecting any reward in return. If this spirit of service is fully awakened during *japakriyá* one will attain everything. A service-minded spiritual aspirant can attain liberation merely by repeating *náma mantra*, but those yogis who perform higher spiritual practices will attain nothing in the spiritual sphere if they shun service.*

* The foregoing two paragraphs are from "Bhágavata Dharma" of *Subhásita Saṁgraha Part 8*.—Editor.

The Secret “Gáyattrii Mantra” of Life

If one wants to carry a very heavy thing from one place to another, the most intelligent way to do it would be to carry its seed. It is very difficult to carry a banyan tree from one place to another, but it is easy to carry the small seed of the banyan tree instead. To carry the seed is to carry the tree [in its potentiality].

When many words or utterances are stated briefly, that brief statement is called a *sútra* [aphorism]. Similarly when many ideas are to be expressed in condensed form, we call it *biija mantra* [the seed mantra or acoustic root]. The seed of many words is called a *sútra*; the seed of many ideas is called *biija mantra*. Scholars write many books, thick volumes. Suppose what is said in twenty pages of a book is summed up in four or five words. Those four or five words would be called a *sútra*. Since ancient times, philosophers used to preserve their philosophical discourses in the form of *sútra*. Maharshi Kapil, and Maharshi Patanjali have left their philosophies – Saṁkhyasútram and Pátanjalarshana respectively – in the form of *sútras*. Similarly, the philosophy of Ananda Marga has been presented in the form of *sútras* in *Ánanda Sútram*.

Where lies the existence of God? Well, *Tasya sthiti amánasikeśu* [“Its state is beyond the mind”]. Where lies *samádhi*? Well, *Tasya sthiti amánasikeśu*. It is thus stated in a very brief phrase. A proper explanation of it may call for three or four books. Just like this, the *biija mantra* of the intellect that inheres in human beings – whatever its

external manifestation may be – is *aem*. This creation flows on in innumerable diversified channels. The *bijja mantra* for the entire creation is *am* or *a*. The *bijja mantra* for this huge world made of five elements is *ka*. That is why *ka* is the first consonant in our [indian] alphabet. In Sanskrit, of course, *ka* means many things. For example, *ka* is (1) the first consonant (2) the seed of creation made of five elements (3) *Kárya Brahma* [*Brahma* in actional form] (4) *sañbriṭṭi-bodhicitta* [the cognitive state of the Supreme Entity]. (When the mind of *Parama Puruṣa* is in the state of *sañbriṭṭi*, that state of the mind is called *ka*. One who maintains and nurses this *ka* or the created world, is *kápálika*, that is, a *kápálika* serves the creatures of the world.

(5) Another meaning of *ka* is “water”. Thus, the word *kaccha* means “a place which is surrounded by water on all sides”. In Gujarat in India there is a huge expanse of land known as “*Kaccha*” [“Kutch”].

In Ananda Marga we often use this kind of *sútra* or *bijja mantra*. For example, one of the branches of our Ananda Marga is the Education Relief And Welfare Section. We call it ERAWS; the job is done briefly in just one word. Similarly, every human must have a philosophy of life. To talk about a philosophy of life entails a lot of talking. It is as difficult to speak about it elaborately as it is difficult to remember it. That is why I created the *bijja* of philosophy of human life (*jivana dharma*) and of guidance of human conduct (*jivana veda*) a long time ago. I told some people about it in private conversation but I never said it publicly. Today I shall focus on this. It is also summed up like a *sútra* – *bhavisca: bha, vi, sa, ca*.

A human being should remember these four letters in every walk of life, then one will surely prosper. It is a secret *biija mantra*. You can call it a secret "Gáyattrii Mantra" as well.

Bha

Now take the letter *bha*. Here *bha* means *Bhagavána* [God]. Here the word *bhagavána* is used in the sense of *Parama Puruśa*. *Parama Puruśa* is God. The word *bhaga* stands for some attributes. We say, for example, Bhagavana Buddha, Bhagavána Shrii Chaitanya, Bhagavána Shankaracharya, etc. Similarly the Supreme Being is also *Bhagaván*. Here my intention is to retain the idea of the Supreme Being. In Sanskrit, in common speech *bhaga* means *bhágya* [fate]. For example, in ancient Sanskrit there was a word, *bhagadhara*. *Bhagadhara* means *bhágýadhara* [fortunate]. This very word became *bahadhar* in ancient Persian. In Punjabi it became *bahadar*, in Urdu *báhádur*, in Hindi also *báhádur*; and again, in Bengali also *báhádur*. The word *bhaga* in *bhagaván* when used in the sense of the *Parama Puruśa* means:

*Aeshvaryiṅca samagriṅca viiryashca yashasah shriyah
Jiṅána-vaerágyaiṅca śannám bhaga iti smrtam.*

[*Bhaga* is a collection of six attributes: *aeshvarya*, *viirya*, *yasha*, *shrii*, *jiṅána* and *vaerágya*.]

There are eight kinds of *aeshvarya* [occult power]: *ańimá* [the occult power of assuming an extremely small, almost invisible form], *laghimá* [the power of making one's body light or subtle at will], *garimá* [spiritual glory], *iishitva* [supremacy, domination], *vashitva* [perfect capacity to overpower someone's mind], etc. *Ańimá* is the ability to enter

into the mind of somebody by making oneself very small or invisible, and know what is happening in the mind of that person. *Laghimá* enables one to be all-pervasive by making oneself very light, and know what is happening around one. *Mahimá* enables one to demonstrate certain qualities of the mind and show that all kinds of qualities may reside in one thing or in one container. *Ishitva* enables one to get a something done sometimes by controlling, sometimes by chastising, sometimes by frightening, sometimes by scolding, sometimes by explaining affectionately. There are eight such kinds of *aeshvarya*.

Then, the second attribute is *viirya* [valour]. There is a saying that one who loves somebody also fears them. Why does it happen like this? There is a saying in Hindi, *vinu bhaya hoi ná piriti* ["There is no love without fear"]. Without some fear there cannot be true love. One must also have some fear for the person one loves.

Yasha means *prashamísá* [praise] – there is positive *prashamísá* and negative *prashamísá* [defamation]. While some people will highly praise others, some people will again will also vehemently oppose them. You must have noticed that Sadáshiva left seven thousand years ago, but even today many people are full of praise for him. Again, there are some people who slander him and try to explain him in their own way with their imaginary arguments. One who understands, acts in one way ; and one who does not understand, acts in another way. But in a sense, both are only spreading fame.

The fourth attribute is *shrii*. *Shrii* means "goodness, beauty, attraction". [That is, one possesses this to such a degree] that people rush to them from all sides. In fact, people cannot help rushing to them ; it does not matter whether

that person scold them or love them. It is this quality which is called *shrii*. There is a custom prevalent in India of writing *shrii* before one's name. *Sha, ra, ii = Shrii*. *Sha* stands for *rajoguña* or "the mutative principle". *Rajoguña* means *rájasikatá* or "magnificence". *Sha* stands for *rajoguña*. *Ra* stands for "energy or efficiency in work". We get the word *shrii* by adding [to *sha + ra*] the feminine suffix *uṣiis̄*. So etymologically, the word *shrii* refers to "the thing or the individual which works [on the basis of] on the mutative principle and in which energy or work efficiency is conspicuously manifest". Everyone wants *shrii*, hence the practice of writing *shrii* before one's name.

The fifth attribute is *jiñána*; that is, "one who knows everything and understands everything".

The sixth attribute is *vaerágya* [detachment]. *Vi - rainj + ghain̄ = Virága*. *Virága + vyain̄ = vaerágya*. One who is associated with everything but is not emotionally involved in anything, or one who is not influenced by anything, may be said to have *vaerágya*. *Vaerágya* does not mean running away from everything; it means being immune to any kind of influence.

Bhaga is the collective name for the sum total of all these six divine powers. The word *bhagavána* is formed, in the sense of "the possessor of *bhaga*" by adding the suffix *matup* to *bhaga* [*bhaga + matup = bhagaván*]. That is why I placed the letter *bha* at the beginning. This means that you must remember *Parama Puruśa* before you start any work; you learnt this at the very beginning of your lessons in sadhana. Be careful that you never forget it, because human beings are very forgetful; even they know something, they still forget it. Or, you may say, they do not really forget it or, but remain unmindfull of it

The first letter of the word *bhabisca* is *bha*. If *bha* is used properly before starting a work, then ones thoughts will also run in the right direction. If *bha* is used properly while dealing with a person, one's behaviour will be decent. Therefore it is necessary to remember *bha*.

Vi

The next is *vi*. *Vi* means *vinay* [humility]. While talking to someone, a person often suffers from some complex. That person thinks, "The person I am talking to has little knowledge, they belongs to a low caste, are poor and have no intelligence." Thinking all these things, they behave arrogantly, and as a result of this arrogant behaviour, they first of all become unpopular. Furthermore, the person who was treated disdainfully will never like to meet them again, [thus suffering a loss from the societal point of view,] and the person who lacked in *vinay* will also find it difficult to work. They may be a scholar but they will not get popular support. So, the second thing is *vinay*.

Sa

The third is *sañjam* [self-restraint]. Whatever a human being may do or think, everything must be expressed with self-control. Buddha says:

*Cakkhuná sañvaro sádhu sádhu sotena sañvaro,
Ghánena sañvaro sádhu sádhu jihváya sañvaro,
Káyena sañvaro sádhu sádhu vácáya sañvaro.
Manasá sañvaro sádhu sádhu savvathva sañvaro.
Savvathva sañvaro bhikkhu, savva dukkhae pamucyate.*

[O *sadhu*, control your eyes, control your ears, control your sense of smell, control your tongue, control your speech. Control your mind, *sadhu* ; control everything. Then you will never suffer from sorrows.]

This means that you should avoid seeing what may have a pernicious influence on your mind. Suppose there is a picture. You know that that picture is bad. If you see the image will strongly influence your mind and you cannot escape that influence. In that case, it is better not to see that picture. This is “controlling the eyes”. *Sádhu soten samvaro*. When you hear a crude song or an obscene discussion, or you have an apprehension that some obscene discussion is about to be held, you should take [yourself, i.e.] your ears, away from there before such a thing happens, because once such a discussion reaches your ears, you will not be able to control them. So you should be on your guard beforehand. *Ghánena samvaro sádhu*. Keep a control on your *ghrána* [olfactory sense]. Suppose some drunkards are drinking somewhere, and you can smell the [alcohol]. In this regard, there is a story about some tea-addicts. One day some people were drinking tea. Let us presume that the vapours carrying the aroma of tea reached the nostrils of a particular person. Immediately, that person had a desire for tea. He persuaded himself – “Even though it is not the time for tea, let me have a cup of tea.” He thus fell victim to *ghrána* [olfactory sense].

Sádhu jihváya samvaro. Similarly, one must resist the temptation of the palate. Suppose, somebody is suffering from loose motion. In that situation, they should not eat jackfruit. You must always think whether what you wish to eat will do you good or harm. You will see many people who are suffering from dyspepsia, gastric ulcers, etc. If you enquire, you will find that most of the time they did not have any control over their diet; they ate anything that came their way. It is said that “Some people will even drink tincture of iodine if somebody else pays for it.” In such a situation, observe *sádhu jihváya samvaro*. *Káyena samvaro sádhu*

sádhu vácáya samívaro. Keep control over your body. It is not proper to attack somebody or kill them with a bomb just because they do not agree with your views. Perhaps it is actually your habit, so you should give serious thought to the issue before you resort to any application of force. *Sádhu vácáya samívaro*. Similarly, before you speak, think what kind of your words will have. It is not proper to speak out whatever comes to your mind. Keep control over your speech (*vákya*). *Savvathva samívaro bhikkhu, savva dukkhae pamucyate*. If you observe such restraint in every walk of life, you will never suffer.

Ca

The fourth is *caritra*. *Caritra* is the collective name for all the actions of a person : a comprehensive term that takes into account what a person eats, how they walk, what they do, etc. *Car + lyut = caraña*; *á - car + lyut = ácaraña*. *Ácaraña* means “to move in” different kinds of movement. The way someone uses their hands is also a kind of *acharaña* movement or action. In Sanskrit, the movement or action of the hands is called *shilpana*. One who skillfully draws a picture or fashions an image with one’s hand, is a *shilpii*. One who sings well cannot not be called a *shilpii*, because it is not the hands but the throat that is used in producing a song. So the word *sañgiita-shilpii* [*sañgiita* means “song”] is a misnomer. *Shilpa* is “handiwork”. People use words like *kañthashilpii*, good *shilpii*. But such use is not correct. [*Kañtha* means “throat” (*Bhála* means “good”, so *kañthashilpii*, *bhála shilpii* is colloquially used to means “a good singer”]

Caritra is the sum total of all actions [of a person]. Let us now see what is meant by *caraña*. To be included in the category of *caraña* there must be simultaneous movements

of both thoughts and actions; otherwise it cannot be called *caraña*. Suppose, you are doing some work and at the same time you are getting some satisfaction from doing the work. Since you are getting some mental pleasure as well, it is *caraña kriyá*. But suppose somebody is forcefully getting something done by you, making you a drudge, then it is not *caraña kriyá*, because, your mind does not get any sustenance out of it; you are just doing it under duress. A cow, while walking, also chews the cud; so it is *caraña kriyá* for it. So we say, *garu cárche* [The cow is grazing]. But when a human being walks, we do not use the word *caraña*, we use *calana*, because a human being does not eat while walking. But suppose, while a person is walking they are also eating peanuts. Then we can say, *Se cárche* ["They are doing *caraña kriyá*"]. The *caritra* of a person is the sum total of all their movements and actions – the way they eat, the way they talk, the way they walk, the way they use their sensory or motor organs, the way they look [at something], the way they hear, etc.

Remember that culture is the collective name for the various manifestations of a particular human society ; and the collective name for the various actions of an individual is *caritra*. Thus we talk about *Báunḡáliir játiya caritra* [the national character of the Bengalee people].

What will be the nature of this *ca* in individual life? You have to be always conscious of your *acaraña* [behaviour] when you are talking to a person or doing something. You must always ask yourself "Am I behaving properly?" If you keep a constant watch on your *acaraña* [behaviour], then you can have control over your *caritra*, which is the sum total of your behaviours. This constant watch will help us

improve in quality, and then we can say, "My *caritra* has improved". When the regular practice of this becomes a habit a person says, "No, I shall never behave like that again, I shall not eat with both hands, I shall use only one hand, and I shall wash my hands before eating". Then the time has come when they will not be influenced by anybody. When the firmness of someone's behaviour has turned into a habit, then we can say that they have firmness of character. Then a person says, "This is my principle, this is my ideal, I shall not swerve an inch from it, eating such stuff is not good for my mental health, it is against my moral principles". When someone sticks to their own views firmly, when they attain this firmness, they have acquired firmness of character. Unless one acquires this one can never do any great work. Until now you were possibly under the impression that the word *caritra* is used in a limited sense. However, it is necessary to use it in its real sense and not keep it confined to its limited sense. In order to acquire this firmness of character in the totality of one's behaviour, it is necessary to keep a constant watch on oneself. One must ask oneself, "Does the work that I am doing reflect the firmness of my character" ? Suppose you are fighting with an enemy and then somebody from the enemy camp comes to you and tells you, "Look, here is twenty thousand rupees. Take it, and support us secretly". To accept such a proposal would mean the disintegration of your character, because it is a bad action that would seriously damage your total character. So, during every action you must check whether that action reflects the strength of your character. This is the meaning of *Ca*.

There is a rule about the incantation of the "Gáyattrii Mantra". Here is a part of the *mantra*.

Oṃ bhúrbhuvah svah

Oṃ tatsaviturvareṇyam.

Bhargo devasya dhiimahi

Dhiyo yo nah pracodayát Oṃ.

[“The Supreme Father who created the seven strata of manifestation – we meditate on His divine effulgence. And why do we meditate on His divine effulgence? So that He may guide our intellect unto the path of bliss, unto the path of supreme blessedness.”]

This is the manifest, uttered or expressed “Gáyatrii Mantra”. How does the *isṭamantra* of a person become part of the rhythm of one’s breathing? It so happens on account of regular practice. The *mantrajapa* [incantations] continues automatically, even when one is sleeping. That condition is called “secret ‘Gáyatrii’ [secret Mantra]”. When you have reached the stage of “secret ‘Gáyatrii’”, you should [use an] *isṭamantra* which you will never utter aloud under any circumstances, not even in a place where you are alone and there is nobody to hear you. A secret “Gáyatrii” always remains secret. In the same way, you should use the word *bhavisca* in your personal life like the secret “Gáyatrii”. You will see that it is immediately effective; you will get the result at once.

(Some portions of the discourse had to be left out on account of the indistinctness of the tape. In some parts there may be an anomaly between the original thought and the text).

1 October 1971, Katikata

* The foregoing twenty-seven paragraphs are from *Ánanda Vacanámrta* Part 24. –Editor.

The Great Exceptions

In every sphere of this world, in all motion and in all existence, one finds an exception to the rule. The Bengali word for exception is *vyátikrama* (*vi - ati - kram + al*) which literally means "departure from the usual." In Hindi, it is called *apaváda*. In Bengali, *apaváda* has a different meaning: "censure" or "blame".

Since the days of Australopithecine, a new kind of creature slowly evolved: the proto-ape or ape-man. At a certain stage in evolution, one of these creatures became an exception to the norm of the community, [later] resulting in some evolving into chimpanzees, some into orangutans, some into gorillas, and some into human beings. All of these creatures are tailless. These diverging evolutionary branches occurred due to an exception somewhere along the path of evolution.

Various fishes have evolved from the *silákantha*, the original ancestor of all fishes. One would think that, having all evolved from the same source, all fishes would be of the same appearance – but this is not the case. Due to many exceptions along the path of evolution, different species of fishes emerged. If such exceptions had not occurred, all fishes, all primates, such as chimpanzees and gorillas, would have been of the same type.

These exceptions were not accidental but were preplanned to bring about certain changes in the process of evolution. Their occurrence led to different evolutionary lines branching off the main established line. Had there been no

exceptions, there would have been no major evolutionary changes.

The same thing also happen in the case of language. The Sanskrit word *cikitsá* was in vogue for a long time until somebody distorted the pronunciation to *cikicchá*. Similarly, at a certain point in the past, someone wrongly pronounced the word *mahotsava* as *mahocchava*. Later, the word changed to *mocchava*. We should never say that these deviations were wrong.

Many deviations have occurred in human society due to human ignorance, human inefficiency, and a number of other reasons. These deviations formed new branches which opened up new vistas of human intellect. One of the most important factors on the path of movement is the "exception". The value of these exceptions should never be underestimated.

In India, princes and princesses used to eat sumptuous food, dress well, and travel extensively. One day, however, a prince thought, "Why do humans suffer from so much pain and affliction? What is the cause of this suffering? What is the reason behind it? I will have to go deep into the matter to find out why. I will have to step down from the throne to make a thorough investigation." This exception to the rule occurred in a prince's mind and led to the birth of Buddhism.

There was a great scholar who had a sudden realization that mere pedantry would not lead to the cessation of misery; that it would not bring any lasting joy or happiness, so he gave up his worldly life and started wandering through the

streets. This led to the birth of *Gaodiiya* Vaesnavism.

Those people who are society's exceptions are extraordinary people. Keeping our ideology fixed before our eyes, we must also become exceptional people. For those people who are treading a new path, who are constructing something new, [being an exception] is as valuable as their very lives.

Most people spend their lives on this planet eating and drinking. Sometimes they contract diseases, their stomachs become distended, and they die. Yet there are certain exceptional people who say, "No, we have not come to eat, drink and make merry." Those who lead licentious lives foolishly get involved in brawls and fights, but exceptional people say, "No, we don't want to live such a life." Missionary life was started on this planet by such people who today are glorifying that tradition in ever increasing numbers. They alone will make this line of exceptions even more brilliant, and will build human history. Others cannot and will not do it. The poet Rabindranath Tagore said;

*Kon áloṭe práñer pradiip
Jváliye tumi dharáy ása
Sádhak ogo premik ogo
Págal ogo dharáy ása.*

[Enkindling the light of your lamp
With what divine light have you come to Earth?
O spiritual aspirant, O devotee, O intoxicated one
With what divine light have you come to Earth?]

These exceptional people are sometimes seen as a bunch

of lunatics by others, but the fact is, these so-called lunatics do something new and constructive for society.

Je tore págal bale

Táre tui balisne kichu.

—Rabindranath Tagore

[To those who call you a lunatic

Do not say anything.]

You should also know that you are exceptions. You, too, will do something great, will build something historical.*

* The foregoing fifteen paragraphs are from *Ānanda Vacanámrtam*
Part 8.—Editor.

GLOSSARY

ÁBHOGA. "Psychic pabulum", or the assuming of a form in the mind.

ÁCÁRYA m. or ÁCÁRYÁ. Spiritual teacher qualified to teach all lessons of meditation.

ÁDARSHA. Ideology or impersonal goal.

ÁGAMA AND NIGAMA. "Nigama" means questions on spiritual topics; or the theoretical side of Tantra. "ágama" means answers to the questions; or the practical, applied side of Tantra.

AHAM, AHAM'TATTVA. Doer "I", ego, second mental subjectivity.

AHÍMŚÁ. Non-harming others, by thought or deed.

APARÁBHAKTI. Attraction to Apará Brahma, the expressed aspect of Brahma. see also *parábhakti*.

AŚTÁUNGA YOGA, AŚTÁUNGIKA YOGA. The eight-limbed path of yoga.

ÁJINÁ CAKRA. Sixth, or lunar, psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus; the "yogic wisdom eye". See also CAKRA.

ÁJINÁ NÁD'II. Nerves connected to the motor organs.

ANÁHATA CAKRA. Fourth psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus; the "yogic heart". See also CAKRA.

ÁNANDA. Divine bliss.

ANANDA MARGA. Path of divine bliss; Ánanda Márga Pracáraka Saṁgha (Ananda Marga organization).

ÁNANDA SÚTRAM. "Aphorisms leading to ananda, divine bliss". The framework of Ananda Marga ideology expressed in eighty-five *sútras*. ideology.

ANNAMAYA KOŚA. the physical body, composed of the five fundamental factors.

ÁNTAR. Internal, from a distance.

ANUDHYÁNA. Intently pursuing one's object of meditation, that is, "Intently pursuing one's object of meditation in *dhyána*"

APÁNA – one of the ten vital forces, collectively known as *pránáh*.

APARA. Objective; controlled. see also PARA.

APARIGRAHA. Adjusting with the minimum necessities of life.

ÁSANA SHUDDHI. One of the three *shuddhis*, which are a must in meditation. *Shuddhi* means a process of withdrawal or fixing the mind on the object of meditation. *Shuddhis* are done in successive stages.

ASANA. The third limb of *aśtáuᅅga* (eight-limbed) *yoga*. Asanas are postures for curing physical and psycho-physical problems, especially those that interfere with *sadhana*.

ASAT. untruth, opposite of *Sat*.

ASATSAUᅅGA. Bad company.

ASTEYA. Not to take possession of what belongs to others, non-stealing.

ATHARVAVEDA. The last Veda, composed approximately 3000 years ago, older than the Jain scriptures.

- ÁTMAJÑĀNA. self-knowledge.
- ÁTMA, ÁTMAN. Soul, consciousness, *Puruśa*, pure cognition. The *átman* of the Cosmos is PARAMÁTMAN, and that of the unit is the *jīvátman*.
- AVIDYÁMÁYA. centrifugal, or extroversal force; aspect of the Cosmic Operative Principle which guides movements from the subtle to the crude. see also Vidyámáyá.
- BÁBÁ. Literally, “dear” or “dearest One”. It may be used to refer to PARAMA PURUŚA, and is an affectionate name for Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti.
- BHAGAVÁN. The owner of *bhaga*, the collection of six attributes: *aeshvarya*; *viirya* – valour, command; *yasha* a fame, reputation; *shrii* a charm; *jñāna* a knowledge, especially self-knowledge; and *vaerágya* a renunciation; one who has fully imbibed the six qualities; Lord.
- BHÁGAVATA DHARMA. The “divine” DHARMA of human beings, that is, the dharma to attain the Supreme. Bhágavata dharma rests on four pillars: 1) *vistára* (expansion); 2) *rasa* (literally “flow” – surrender); 3) *sevá* (service); 4) *tadsthiti* (final ensconcement in the Supreme).
- BHÁGAVAD GIITÁ. “Song of God”, The sacred book which contains Krśńa’s advice to Arjuna on the battlefield, just before the Mahábhárata war.
- BHAJANA. Devotional song or songs.
- BHAKTA. Devotee, spiritual aspirant who has devotion.
- BHAKTI. Devotion.
- BHÁVA. The expressed universe.

BHÁVA SADHANA. Spiritual practice of auto-suggestion

BHOJANÁSANA. Simple cross-legged posture for sitting on the floor.

BHÚTASHUDDHI. One of the three *shuddhis*, which are a must in meditation. *Shuddhi* means a process of withdrawal or fixing the mind on the object of meditation. *Shuddhis* are done in successive stages.

BIJJA MANTRA. Acoustic root; particular sound vibration from which a particular type of action stems.

BRAHMA. Supreme Entity, comprising both *Puruśa*, or SHIVA, and *Prakṛti*, or *Shakti*.

BRAHMA CAKRA. The Cosmic Cycle – the cycle of creation out of Consciousness, and dissolution back into Consciousness, through *saiṅcara* and *pratisaiṅcara*.

BRÁHMAÑA (BRAHMAN) The uppermost social group in India, who traditionally perform priestly functions or live by intellectual labour

CAKRA. Cycle or circle; psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus.

The *cakras* in the human body are all located along the *suśumná* canal which passes through the length of the spinal column and extends up to the crown of the head.

Some *cakras*, however, are associated with external concentration points. The concentration points: (1) for the *múládhára cakra*, the base of the spine, above the perineum; (2) for the *svádhísthána*, the genital organ; (3) for the *mañipura*, the navel; (4) for the *anáhata*, the midpoint of the chest; (5) for the *vishuddha*, the throat; (6) for the *ájiṅá*, between the eyebrows; and (7) for the *sahasrára*, the crown of the head. There are two other

cakras which are needed in certain spiritual practices, so the *cakras* are nine in number.

CANDIDASA. Famous fourteenth-century Vaeśhava poet of Bengal.

CITTA. done "I", objective "I", objective mind, mind-stuff.

CITTABHÚMI. Mind-stuff which takes the form of an object; also known as 'ectoplasm'.

DEVAYONI. A unit mind whose body has only three fundamental factors: ethereal, aerial and luminous. The word *devayoni* literally means "an entity which has a number of divine qualities". There are seven varieties of *devayoni*. They are *yakśa*, *kinnara*, *gandharva*, *vidyádharma*, *prakṛtiliina*, *videhaliina* and *siddha*.

DHÁRAÑÁ. the sixth limb of *astáuᅅga* (eight-limbed) yoga: restricting the flow of mind to particular points in the body; conception. (*Tattva dhárañá* means restricting the flow of mind to, or conception of, the fundamental factors.)

DHARMA. Characteristic property; spirituality; the path of righteousness in social affairs.

DHARMA MAHÁCAKRA. A gathering of spiritual aspirants for spiritual programmes and the collective performance of *Ishvara prañidhána*. It was held on special occasions, and featured the physical presence of Marga Guru.

DHARMAĆAKRA. Collective meditation; Buddha's "wheel of dharma".

DHÁRMIKA. adjective of dharma.

DHYÁNA. The seventh limb of *as̥tāṅga* (eight-limbed) yoga: meditation in which the psyche is directed towards Consciousness.

ECTOPLASM. In the yogic sense, the mind-stuff which takes the form of an external object.

GÁÑAPATYA TANTRA. The worship of worshippers of *gañapati*, the group leader; worship of Ganesh.

GAOÑII BHAKTI. Inferior *bhakti* or devotion.

GAOĐIIYA VAESNAVISM. The Vaesnavism of Bengal.

GOPA m. Or GOPII f. Village cowherd boy or girl; devotees of the lord.

GUÑA. Binding factor or principle; attribute; quality. Prakṛti, the Cosmic Operative Principle, is composed of: *sattvaguña*, the sentient principle; *rajoguña*, the mutative principle; and *tamoguña*, the static principle.

GURU. *Gu* means "darkness", *ru* means "dispeller"; hence "dispeller of darkness"; spiritual master.

GURU CAKRA. The inner side of the SAHASRÁRA CAKRA, or pineal plexus; occult plexus. See also CAKRA.

GURU MANTRA. "Important" mantra, learned as a lesson of Ananda Marga sadhana.

GURUDAKŚIÑÁ. An offering made to the Guru after initiation.

GURU PUJÁ. The offering of mental colours to the Guru.

HARI. Literally, "that which steals"; one who steals others' sins to lighten their burden and pave the way for their

liberation; another name of *Parama Puruṣa* – the entity responsible for the preservation of unit beings.

HARI KATHÁ. Discourses or stories on Hari.

HIRAÑMAYA KOS´A. The subtlest of the *kośas*.

HIRAÑMAYA LOKA. The subtlest *loka* or layer of the Cosmic Mind.

HLÁDINII SHAKTI, RÁDHIKÁ SHAKTI. An expression of *vidyá shakti*, or *Vidyámáyá*, which one experiences as a desire to do something practical towards spiritual attainment.

ÍDÁ. The left of the two *nadiis* [psychic-energy channels] that crisscross the spinal column. The literal meaning of *idá* is “very pale black or pale blue”. The *nadiis* are important and essential for yogic practices.

IISHVARA. The Cosmic Controller; literally, “the Controller of all controllers”.

INDRIYA. One of the five sensory organs (eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin) or five motor organs (hands, feet, vocal cord, genital organ and excretory organ). the eye *indriya* (for example) comprises the eye itself, the optical nerve, the fluid in the nerve, and the location in the brain at which the visual stimulus is transmitted to the ectoplasm, or mind-stuff.

JADÁ. Crude.

JIIVA. An individual being.

JIVÁTMÁ. See ÁTMÁ.

- JINĀNA. Knowledge, understanding; in the true sense, spiritual knowledge, self-realization.
- JINĀNA MÁRGA. A form of spiritual practice which emphasizes discrimination or intellectual understanding.
- JINĀNII. A *sádhaka* who follows the path of knowledge or discrimination.
- KABIR. A saint who sought to foster harmony among human beings. Very probably he lived around the close of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century.
- KAOLA. One who practises *kula sáadhaná* and is adept at raising one's own *kuṇḍalinii*.
- KÁPÁLIKA SÁDHANÁ. A form of spiritual practice which causes the aspirant to confront and overcome all the inherent fetters and enemies of the human mind.
- KARMA. Action; sometimes, positive or negative action which produces *saṁskáras*.
- KARMII. A *sádhaka* who follows the path of action or work.
- KIIRTANA. Collective singing of the name of the Lord, combined with instrumental music and with a dance that expresses the spirit of surrender.
- KRŚŅA. Literally, "the entity which attracts everything of the universe towards its own self", *Parama Puruṣa*. A great Tantric guru, the historical Krśńa of about 1500 BC; second TÁRAKA BRAHMA or Mahásambhúti.
- KRPÁ. Spiritual grace.
- KULÁCÁRA. A branch of ancient Tantra where the practices invariably involve the *kulakuṇḍalinii*.
- KUṆḌALINII, KULAKUṆḌALINII. Literally, "coiled

serpentine”; sleeping divinity; the force dormant in the *kula* (lowest vertebra) of the body, which, when awakened, rises up the spinal column to develop all one’s spiritual potentialities.

KÚRMA NÁDII. Energy channel related to vocal cord.

LAKŚMII. The goddess of wealth.

LALANÁ CAKRA. A plexus, or *cakra*, between *vishuddha* and *ájiñá cakras* used in yogic practices.

LILÁ divine sport.

LOKA. A “level”, or “layer”, or “sphere” of the Macrocosmic Mind.

MÁDHAVA. A name of Krśńa.

MADHURA BHÁVA, RÁDHA BHÁVA. “*Rádha bháva*” means literally the devotional attitude which Rádha held as the beloved of Krśńa. “*Madhura bháva*” means literally the “sweet”, or “honey-like”, devotional attitude.

MAHÁBHÁRATA. “Great India”; the name of a military campaign guided by Lord Krśńa around 1500 BCE to unify India; the epic poem written by Maharshi Vyasa about this campaign.

MAHÁKAOLA. A Tantric guru who can raise not only his own *kuñḍalinii*, but those of others also; in Buddhist Tantra, *Mahákaola* is sometimes symbolic of PARAMA PURUS’A.

MAHÁMÁYÁ. Prakrti, the Supreme Operative Principle.

MAHÁPURUŚA. A person highly evolved psychically and

spiritually, especially one who has consequently developed a charisma felt by other people.

MAHARSHI. Great sage.

MAHAT, MAHATTATVA. "I" ("I am," "I exist") feeling, existential "I"

MAHATMA. "Great soul" – a spiritual title of respect.

MAHÁYÁNII/MAHÁYÁNA. One of the two major schools of Buddhism, the northern school as opposed to the southern school, or Hiinayána Buddhism.

MAHESHVARA. A name of Shiva.

MÁNAVA DHARMA. Human dharma.

MANTRA. A sound or collection of sounds which, when meditated upon, will lead to spiritual liberation. A *mantra* is incantative, pulsative and ideative.

MANTRA CAETANYA. The awakening of a *mantra*; conceptual understanding of and psychic association with a *mantra*.

MÁNUŚA. Human being.

MAÑIPURA CAKRA. The third psychio-spiritual centre, or plexus; the controlling point of the pancreas. See also CAKRA.

MÁRAÑA. One of the six actions of Avidyá Tantra. *Mára* literally means "annihilation". So *máraña* means "to kill a person" by applying Avidyá Tantra. The practice of Avidyá leads to degradation.

MÁRGA. Path.

MARGI. A member of ANANDA MARGA; literally, "a follower of the path".

MÁYÁ. Creative Principle, PRAKRTI in Her phase of creation. One aspect of *Máyá* is the power to cause the illusion that the finite created objects are the ultimate truth.

MICROVITUM. An entity which comes within the realm of both physicality and psychic expressions, which is smaller or subtler than atoms, electrons or protons, and in the psychic realm may be subtler than ectoplasm. The term was first used by Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti, explained extensively in his books.

MOKŚÁ. Spiritual emancipation, non-qualified liberation.

MUDRÁ. Meaningful gesture; a yogic exercise similar to an asana but incorporating more ideation.

MÚLÁDHÁRA CAKRA. Lowest, or basal (or terranean), psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus, located just above the base of the spine. See also CAKRA.

NACIKETÁ. A truth seeker in the stories of the Upanishads.

NÁDII. Psychic-energy channel; nerve.

NÁRADA. Literally *nárada* means “one who distributes devotion”. A mythological figure as a devotee of Náráyaña.

NÁRÁYAÑA. The Supreme Entity; literally, “the Lord of Nára (Prakrti)”.

NÁSTIKA. Atheist.

NIRGUÑA BRAHMA. BRAHMA unaffected by the GUÑAS; Non-Qualified Brahma.

ONM, OṆMĀKÁRA, (OM). The sound of the first vibration of creation; the *bija mantra* (acoustic root) of the

expressed universe. *Oṅm'kára* literally means "the sound *oṅm*".

OTA YOGA. The association of Puruśottama with each unit creation individually in His introversial movement; Puruśottama's intimate relation with every entity.

PADMÁSANA. Lotus pose – a sitting posture or asana ideal for meditation.

PÁIṆCABHAOTIKA. Made of the five fundamental factors.

PAIṆCA BHÚTA. Five rudimental factors – ethereal, aerial, luminous, liquid and solid.

PAIṆCA KOŚA. The five *kośas* or layers of the mind.

PANDAVAS. The five sons of King Pandu, representing the *dhármika* forces in the Mahábhárata war.

PÁPA. Sin.

PÁPII. Sinner.

PARÁBHAKTI. Highest devotion to the Supreme; devotion to Para Brahma, the unexpressed aspect of Brahma. See also *aparábhakti*.

PARADHARMA. Animal dharma.

PARAMA PURUŚA. Supreme Consciousness.

PARAMÁTMÁ. Supreme Consciousness as the witness of His own Macroscopic conation.

PARÁSHAKTI. Introversive pervasive force.

PARASHIVA. PARASHIVA GUÑAMAYA. The Cognitive Faculty in the unmanifested balanced triangle in the pre-creation stage.

PÁRVATII. Colloquial version of "Parvata Kanyá" – "Daughter

of the Mountains”; one of the three wives of SADÁSHIVA.

PIUNĠGALÁ. The right of the two *nadiis* [psychic-energy channels] that crisscross the spinal column. The literal meaning of *piunġalá* is “muddy or pale yellow”. The *nadiis* are important and essential for yogic practices.

PRAHLAD. An ardent child-devotee of God in the mythological stories.

PRAKRTI, PARAMÁ PRAKRTI. Cosmic Operative Principle. The Cosmic Operative Principle is composed of *sattvaguña*, the sentient principle; *rajoguña*, the mutative principle; and *tamoguña*, the static principle.

PRÁÑA. Energy; vital energy.

PRÁÑÁH. Vital energy.

PRÁÑÁYÁMA. The fourth limb of *astáunġa* (eight-limbed) yoga: process of controlling vital energy by controlling the breath. a lesson of Ananda Marga sadhana.

PRAPATTI. The approach of “whatever is taking place in the universe is all due to the cosmic will”.

PRATISAIŇCARA. In the Cosmic Cycle, the step-by-step introversion and subtilization of consciousness from the state of solid matter to the Nucleus Consciousness. (*Prati* means “counter” and *saiŇcara* means “movement”).

PRATYÁHÁRA. the fifth limb of *astáunġa* (eight-limbed) yoga: withdrawing the mind from absorption in the physical senses

PROTA YOGA. The association of Puruśottama with all creation in His extroversial movement and with all the unit creations collectively in His extroversial movement.

PURUŚA. Consciousness

PURUŚOTTAMA, PARAMASHIVA. The Nucleus Consciousness, the witness of *saiñcara* (extroversion from the Nucleus) and *pratisaiñcara* (introversion to the Nucleus)

QUINQUEELEMENTAL. Composed of the ethereal, aerial, luminous, liquid and solid factors, or elements.

RADHA. The personification of the ideal devotee.

RAJAH, RAJOGUÑA. See PRAKRTI.

RÁJASIKA. Mutative.

RÁMÁYAÑA. An epic poem of India. It is the story of King Rama, or Ramchandra.

RÁRH. The territory, mostly in modern-day Bengal and Jharkhand, stretching from the West Bank of the Bhagirathi river to the Parasnath hills.

RASA. Cosmic flow; taste

RÁSALIILÁ. *Parama Puruśa* has created an endless network of waves from the Cosmic Nucleus according to his own sweet will . . . each of these waves is a *deva*, but the fundament upon which these waves have been created is called *rasa* . . . the divine sport of these innumerable waves is called the *rásaliilá*".

RATNÁKARA. Another name of famous poet Valmiki who composed the epic *Rámáyána*.

RGVEDA. The oldest Veda, composed over the period between fifteen thousand years ago and ten thousand years ago.

RŚI. Sage; one who, by inventing new things, broadens the path of progress of human society

SADÁSHIVA. SHIVA (literally, "eternal Shiva").

SADGURU. Great spiritual master.

SÁDHAKA. Spiritual practitioner

SADHANA. Literally, "sustained effort"; spiritual practice; meditation.

SÁDHÁRAÑA PRÁÑÁYÁMA. PRÁÑÁYÁMA without *kumbhaka* (retention of breath).

SÁDHIKÁ. Female spiritual practitioner

SÁDHU. Virtuous person, spiritual aspirant.

SADVIPRA. Spiritual revolutionary.

SAGUÑA BRAHMA. Brahma affected by the *guñas*; qualified Brahma

SAHAJA PRÁÑÁYÁMA. PRÁÑÁYÁMA with *kumbhaka* (retention of breath).

SAHASRÁRA CAKRA. Highest, or pineal, psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus, located at the crown of the head.

SAINCARA. In the Cosmic Cycle, the step-by-step extroversion and crudification of consciousness from the Nucleus Consciousness to the state of solid matter. (*Saincara* literally means "movement".)

SAMÁDHI. "Absorption" of the unit mind into the Cosmic Mind (*savikalpa samádhi*) or into the *átman* (*nirvikalpa samádhi*); there are also various kinds of *samádhi* that

- involve only partial absorption and have their own distinguishing characteristics, according to the technique of spiritual practice followed
- SÁMAVEDA. *Sáma* means “song”; the song portions of three Vedas collectively made up the Sámaveda. So the Sámaveda is not a separate Veda.
- SÁMĀKHYA PHILOSOPHY. The oldest school of philosophy, first propounded by Maharshi Kapila. The word *sámkhya* means “that which is related to *saṁkhyá*, or numerals”.
- SÁMSKÁRA. Mental reactive momentum, potential mental reaction.
- SAMĪJĪNĀ NĀD’II. Nerves related to the sensory organs.
- SANNYÁSII m. or SANNYÁSINI f. literally, “one who has surrendered one’s everything to the Cosmic will” or “one who ensconces oneself in *Sat*, the unchangeable entity”; a renunciant.
- SANSKRIT. The classical language of India. It first emerged during the Post-Shiva period, and as a spoken language it began to be supplanted by *Prākṛta* prior to the Kṛṣṇa period. Although not a spoken language today except in very limited circumstances, it is still important for its vast literature, especially spiritual literature. Sanskrit and English are the languages of the world that have the richest vocabularies. Sanskrit pronunciation was perfected by non-Aryan Tantrics in such a way that each of the fifty letters of the Sanskrit alphabet constitutes one acoustic root of Tantra.
- SAORA TANTRA. A branch of Tantra. Literally *saora* means “related to the sun”. So this branch of Tantra takes the sun as its goal or the symbol of its goal.

SAT, SATYA, SATYAM. "That which undergoes no change"; Absolute Reality.

SATSAUNGA. Good company, i.e. beneficial for spiritual growth.

SATTVAGUÑA, SATTVA. See PRAKRTI.

SÁTTVĪKA. Sentient, pure.

SATYALOKA. Literally, "Abode of Truth"; highest layer of mind; supramental state of witness-ship.

SESHVARA SÁMKHYA. The Branch of Sámkhya philosophy believing in the existence of God propounded by Maharshi Patanjali.

SHAEVA. Shaivite; pertaining to the Shiva Cult or Religion.

SHAEVA DHARMA. Shaivism; the theoretical or philosophical side of spirituality as taught by Shiva.

SHAEVA TANTRA. Shiva Tantra; the applied, or practical side of spirituality as taught by Shiva.

SHÁKTA. A follower of Sháktácára, the Shakti Cult; hence, any aspirant who embodies the characteristics of Sháktácára, especially the judicious application of power.

SHAKTI. Prakrti; energy; a deification of Prakrti.

SHAMBHÚLIUNGA. The force of fundamental positivity, the primordial point of creation.

SHÁSTRA. Scripture.

SHIVA. A great Tantric guru of 5000 BCE who guided society while His mind was absorbed in Consciousness; hence, Infinite Consciousness.

SHLOKA. A Sanskrit couplet expressing one idea.

SHRÁDDHA. The last rite performed in India or elsewhere after death.

SIDDHA MANTRA. A *mantra* "perfected" by the guru.

SIDDHÁNTÁCÁRA. One of the several branches of Tantra.

SIDDHÁSANA. Asana used in *dhyána sádhaná*.

SIDDHI. Literally "final success". Spiritually it means highest fulfilment in sadhana.

SITA. Wife of Rama.

SIXTEEN POINTS. The central pillar of Ananda Marga conduct rules: sixteen rules of hygiene and conduct amid which are reiterated all other conduct rules.

STHÚLA MANAH. Crude mind.

SUŚUMNÁ. The Psycho-spiritual channel within the spinal column through which the KULAKUÑÐALINII rises during meditation.

SVÁDHIŚTHÁNA ÇAKRA. Second, or fluidal, psychospiritual centre, or plexus. See also ÇAKRA.

TAMAH. See PRAKRTI.

TAMOGUÑA. See PRAKRTI.

TANMÁTRA. literally, "minutest fraction of that," i.e., of a given rudimental factor of matter. Also translated "generic essence" or "inferential wave". the various types of *tanmátras* convey the senses of hearing, touch, form (vision), taste and smell.

TANTRA. A spiritual tradition which originated in India in prehistoric times and was first systematized by Shiva. It emphasizes the development of human vigour, both through meditation and through confrontation of difficult external situations, to overcome all fears and weakness. Also, a scripture expounding that tradition.

TÁNTRIKII DIIKŚÁ. Initiation into Tantra sadhana.

TÁND'ULERAKA. The herb mint.

TÁRAKA BRAHMA. Supreme Consciousness in Its liberating aspect.

TATTVA. A category of existence; a reality; the existence of the essential root entity hidden within every entity.

UCCHÁĀTANA. One of the six actions of Avidyá Tantra. *Ucchátana* literally means "forcibly evicting one". The practice of Avidyá leads to degradation.

UPANISHAD, UPANIŚAD. Literally, "that which brings one near"; certain philosophical sections of the Vedas.

VAEŚŅAVA. Vaeshnavite; Pertaining to the Viśnú Cult or Religion.

VAESHÁKHII PÚRNIMÁ. The birthday of Shrii Shrii Ánandamúrti in the first month of the Bengali year.

VÁMÁCÁRA TANTRA. A school of Tantra that attempts to overcome Máyá by fight, but without any clear goal.

VARÁBHAYA MUDRÁ. *Vara* means "grace" and *abhaya* means "fearlessness". This is a highest blessing given by the Sadguru to spiritualists.

VASHISTHA. The guru of Rama.

VASHIIKÁRA SIDDHI. The fourth stage of control of the mind in which the spiritual practioner has achieved success in controlling all the *vrttis*.

VASHIIKARAÑA. One of the six actions of Avidyá Tantra. *Vashiikaraña* literally means "to make one subjugated to ones' wishes". The practice of Avidyá leads to degradation.

VEDA. Literally, "knowledge"; hence, a composition imparting spiritual knowledge. Also, a religious or philosophical school which originated among the Aryans and was brought by them to India. It is based on the Vedas and emphasizes the use of ritual to gain the intervention of the gods.

VIDEHALIINA. One of the six DEVAYONIS.

VIŚŃU. Literally, "entity which pervades each and everything"; All-Pervading Entity; Preserving Entity; a mythological god.

VISHUDDHA CAKRA. Fifth psycho-spiritual centre, or plexus, related to the vocal cord and to the thyroid and parathyroid glands; controls sixteen propensities.

See also CAKRA.

VIVEKA. Conscience, power of discrimination between good and evil.

VRINDAVANA. Historically, the home of the young Kṛṣṇa, Vraja Kṛṣṇa. Spiritually, the place where Kṛṣṇa resides in the hearts of devotees.

VRTTI. Mental propensity.

Yoga in its true sense is the unification of the unit consciousness with Supreme Consciousness; and the practices developed over millennia to achieve that unification are correctly called *yoga sādhaná*. *Yoga sādhaná* may be called “yoga” for short, but it is unfortunate when a few of its practices alone, omitting the higher and more subtle practices, are presented as the whole of yoga. The articles in this book begin by correcting the popular misunderstandings of yoga, but soon go beyond mere correction, as they guide and inspire us powerfully on our path toward unification with our inner Self.

When human beings started their movement towards the Supreme Being, in quest of supreme bliss, they first came in contact with spirituality. As spirituality is coming in contact with the Infinite, that is, the finite comes in contact with the Infinite, it is called yoga. Yoga is the unit moving in quest of the Infinite, the finite moving towards the Infinite in a mystic style.

from “*Mysticism and Yoga*”



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