

Self Awakening

Maha Yoga - Simplest, no cost and highest method of self-realization

November 1, 2009
Volume 2, Issue 2



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Editor's note

Dear Readers:

The purpose of this quarterly newsletter, Self Awakening, is to inform Sadhaks (seekers of self realization) and other readers about Maha Yoga, a very simple, no cost and effective method of self-realization.

P. P. Shri Narayan Kaka Maharaj of Nashik, India is a leading teacher and exponent of Maha Yoga, a centuries old tradition, whereby a realized Guru (Siddha Guru) awakens the Universal Life Energy (Kundalini) within the Sadhak, eventually leading him/her to self-realization.

To the thousands of Sadhaks in the Maha Yoga tradition all over the world and other interested readers, this e-newsletter is intended to provide virtual Satsang. It is intended to help keep Sadhaks engaged in Maha Yoga, be informed about Maha Yoga-related events around the world, and to provide a forum for getting guidance about Maha Yoga from P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj and other Maha Yoga leaders.

As I have mentioned in previous issues of Self Awakening, the success of this e-newsletter will depend upon Sadhak participation through their contribution of content. Sadhaks are therefore encouraged to contribute news about Maha Yoga-related events in their parts of the world, thoughtful articles and life experiences (not experiences during Sadhan), and questions about Maha Yoga and their Sadhan (practice) they would like addressed. Many readers have contributed questions on various aspects of Maha Yoga, and we would like to encourage such continued enthusiasm in that regards. However, we would also like our readers to contribute thoughtful articles, interesting life experiences related to Maha Yoga and news about Maha Yoga-related events. We look forward to receiving such content from those who want to contribute. Please send any content or questions you would like to submit to self.awakening@gmail.com.

Spirituality (Dhnyan) and Science (Vidhnyan)



Dr. Vijay P. Bhatkar is a leading computer scientist in India. He is best known as the architect of the PARAM series of supercomputers and is credited with the creation of several national institutions in research and development in the fields of electronics and information technology. In addition to being a renowned scientist he is also a Sadhak, having been initiated into Maha Yoga by P. P. Kaka Maharaj. The following is an edited translation of a speech he gave in Jalgaon, India in December 2008.

First let me pay my respect to all knowledge, whether it is science, philosophy or art. In our tradition we believe that all knowledge has a divinity behind it. And in our tradition this divinity is the Goddess Saraswati. So I would like to pay my respect to the Goddess Saraswati. I would also like to pay my respects to P. P. Swami Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj who has been one of the great leaders in our Shaktipat tradition. I was able to come here to Jalgaon at the request of P. P. Narayan Kaka Maharaj, and I would like to pay my respects to him as well. I would like to welcome and convey my regards to all the teachers, conveners of this gathering, honored citizens of Jalgaon and all the people gathered here including the many students who are here to learn about Science and Spirituality.

I want to talk today about the connection or “Yoga” between Science and Spirituality, its importance in general and its relevance in these times. I am doing this because I want to understand it better and in doing so perhaps I will be able to help you all understand it as well. It is interesting, but right now we have an embodiment of the union between Science and Spirituality sitting right here amongst us, and that is the most revered Narayan Kaka Dhekane Maharaj. He has been a student of Science, having completed his B.Sc., his B.E. from the College of Engineering in Pune, and later his M.E. from the University of Calcutta and as you all know he has also been a spiritual leader over all these years, having actively benefitted thousands of people in their spiritual well being through Siddha/Maha Yoga. If any of you are wondering how Science and Spirituality can be integrated, all one has to do is to look at Kaka Maharaj, an embodiment of such integration.

In India we have had a record of science since Vedic times (2000 BCE). In the Vedas, there are all kinds of discourses on science and spirituality. But the Vedas never make a distinction between the two. The concept that science and spirituality are different from each other and “never the twain shall meet” is a Western concept. In the Indian knowledge system, however, we have never seen science and spirituality as distinct. We have never suggested that we should not integrate Dharma, i.e. true Dharma which is spirituality, with science. When we refer to Dharma, we are talking about spirituality, which is the underlying force/basis for all humans, in fact for all of creation. Dharma has

Spirituality (Dhnyan) and Science (Vidhnyan) (continued)

many expressions and the concept that these expressions cannot be consistent with science is only a Western concept. There was a reason why science got separated from religion in the West. And that was because traditional Western religions considered science to be at odds with Western religious teachings.

In the Bhagwad Geeta, Lord Krishna says to Arjun that I am going to impart knowledge (dhnyan) to you that is Savidhnayanam, i.e. it is so complete that once you have that knowledge there is nothing that will remain beyond it that you will need to know. And Dhnyaneshwar Maharaj in the 13th century CE also commented extensively and beautifully in the Dhnyaneshwari on the knowledge that seeks to address the age old issue of “Who am I?” This is the same question that Adi Shankaracharya also addressed in his work “Atma Bodha” in the 9th century CE. All these works address the all important question of who we all really are. They all instruct us on Adhyatmik Dhnyan or the knowledge our soul, in other words, on spirituality. Science on the other hand is involved in addressing the material world, the world and the universe in which we all live. I am referring here to Science broadly, as knowledge that relates to the material world, not just in the traditional sense which includes physical sciences such as Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, etc., but also to other material branches of knowledge such as the Arts and Commerce. By Science (Vidhnyan) I am here referring to both, the Arts and the Sciences, i.e. knowledge, of the material world, as distinct from Spirituality (Dhnyan), which is the knowledge of ones true self. In that sense, as students or graduates of schools and universities, we are all students of Vidhnyan or the Sciences and Arts of the material world.

In the pursuit of knowledge about the material world (Vidhnyan) we never pause to ask “Who is it that is pursuing this knowledge?” “Who is gaining this knowledge?” “Who is the observer?” “Who is taking a measure of this material world?” We never bother to ask these questions. But it is the pursuit of the answers to these questions that is the basis of spiritual knowledge.

Acharya Vinoba Bhave did an extensive study on this topic under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1943, while he was in prison during India’s freedom struggle and meditating on this issue, he developed a tenet - “Atma dhnyan (knowledge of the soul, or spirituality) plus Vidhnyan (knowledge of the material world) equals Sarvodaya (uplift of all) and Vidhnyan minus Atma dhnyan equals Sarvanaash (destruction of all)”. This is a very important issue to address in these modern times. Is Vinoba Bhave correct when he says that knowledge of the material world without spiritual knowledge spells destruction? Is this really true?

It has been about half a millennium, 500 years, since the advent of the modern scientific age with the works of Keppler, Galileo, Newton and others. Just over two years ago, in January 2007, when the Indian Science Congress was held in Chidambaram near Chennai, Professor Martin Rees, who is the President of the Royal Society and a world renowned cosmologist and astrophysicist, gave a talk on “Our Final Century”. He has written a book on this topic. He is gravely concerned that the 21st century might spell the end of human kind as we know it. He wondered that despite the fact that our knowledge of the material

Spirituality (Dhnyan) and Science (Vidhnyan) (continued)

world has progressed so much through science, and many of us have spent lifetimes studying and doing research in various branches of knowledge related to the material world, will human kind be able to survive the effects of Global Warming and Climate Change. This issue, as many of you know has become a high priority one only in the past few years with the discussions at environmental conferences held in Kyoto, Johannesburg and other places. Many people consider the issue of Climate Change as the make-or-break issue for humanity. Al Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (led by Dr. Rajendra Pachauri) won the Nobel Prize for their work on Climate Change. Scientific work has shown that unabated Climate Change can lead to a significant rise in the sea level within this century. Under many of the scenarios being studied, many islands and island nations in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian oceans will be under water over the next decade or so. Some small island nations are already looking to relocate their populations in the event of such a calamity.

We have to wonder, “Why has this happened?” “During a time when we have made so much progress in the scientific field, why have we not been able to foresee and avoid such a potential disaster?” I think the reason for this is that science and our knowledge of the material world has tended until now to be value neutral. Science never informs us on how to use science. It helps us to understand nuclear energy, but it never informs us about when to use it. It helps us to understand light and to invent all kinds of applications of light but it never tells us when and how to use those inventions. We have developed lasers because of our understanding of light. Lasers can be used for beneficial purposes but also for destructive weapons applications. The same applies to nuclear energy. It can be used for peaceful purposes as intended with India’s recent agreement with the US, or it can be used to destroy cities, as happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nuclear armed nations today have the ability to destroy the world and humanity, not just once but several times over. And given the precarious conditions for peace in several parts of the world today, including in South Asia with the ongoing tensions between India and Pakistan, even a small misstep on the part of any of the governments involved in such conflicts could result in all out nuclear war with disastrous consequences for all humankind.

It is precisely in such times, when the future of humankind is potentially threatened by the use of science uninformed by human values, that it becomes imperative for all of us to look toward spiritual knowledge to guide us and to help us make decisions from a place of calm rather than from a place of high stress. The Bhagwad Geeta was revealed by Lord Krishna on the battlefield, at a time of extreme stress.

Unfortunately, spiritual knowledge is no longer taught in schools and universities. India made a big mistake when spiritual teachings were removed from school curricula. Our trove of spiritual knowledge, beginning with the Vedas, has been handed down over the centuries from Guru to disciple, and throughout our history we had never separated the teaching of spiritual knowledge from the teaching of science and material knowledge. But when India was ruled by Britain, under Lord Macaulay, the Western approach of separating spiritual teachings from the teaching of knowledge about the material world was adopted.

Spirituality (Dhnyan) and Science (Vidhnyan) (continued)

This has undermined a very important legacy of Indian thought which would have given us the spiritual basis for making material decisions.

Earlier today when I was having a discussion with P. P. Kaka Maharaj on this important topic, we both agreed that spirituality, or Yoga, should be the most important foundation for all education. The purpose of human existence is Yoga, or the union of our seemingly separate selves with the common divinity that is present in all of us. It is to experientially understand our true selves. Of course there are several different approaches to achieving this union or Yoga. There are various Yogas such as Dhnyan Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga, Hatha Yoga, etc. Depending on ones inclinations one can pursue one or the other of these various Yoga approaches. But there is also available the Swayam-Siddha Yoga, or the Self-Evident Yoga, also often referred to as Siddha Yoga or Maha Yoga, which P. P. Kaka Maharaj has encouraged us all to pursue.

The basis of Siddha Yoga is very simple. We all exist and are alive because of Prana Shakti, or the Universal Life Energy which resides in all of us. We do not have to prove to ourselves that we exist. We exist and we know we exist. It is this awareness of our existence, which through Siddha Yoga reveals to us the true meaning of life. It leads us to celebrate our existence by becoming aware of its true nature, which is the divinity within us all. It is impossible for us to describe the Divine with the limited tools of language ("Para" in Sanskrit). The ancient Seers (Rishis and Munis) in our tradition attempted to do so by referring to the experience of the Divine as "Sat-Chit-Anand" or "True Bliss". That is the Divinity or God we believe in. This God does not reside in the sky; it is none other than the Divinity that is present in all of us! This is the essence of Advaita (non-dualism) philosophy as expounded in the Vedas and extensively discussed by Adi Shankaracharya in several of his treatises. It is codified in the four Maha Vakyas (great sayings) of the Vedas: "Tat Tvam Asi" (That, thou art), "Aham Brahmasmi" (I am Brahma), "Ayam Atma Brahma" (This Self is Brahma) and "Prajnanam Brahma" (Consciousness is Brahma). These four sayings are essentially very simple. They assert that at our core we are all divine.

Material knowledge or science also has similar straightforward tenets. These are the Laws of Mechanics, the Laws of Thermodynamics, Faraday's Laws of Electromagnetism, Einstein's Law of Mass and Energy Equivalence, etc. These are very simple laws and can be expressed elegantly in mathematical terms. However, Science is not complete. It has been unable to explain Consciousness, the Chaitanya Shakti (Universal Life Energy) that resides within us all. I have met many leading scientists and Nobel laureates. I have attended lectures given by leading physicists and chemists on this topic. Some assert that consciousness automatically arises from certain molecular structures and formations, but most agree that this is not the case. Science has not yet been able to satisfactorily explain the nature of Consciousness, the nature of the Mind, and the nature of Chaitanya itself. It has also been unable to explain how life arises from non-living matter, how life becomes aware of itself, and how consciousness and mind arise in living beings. And it is not clear

Spirituality (Dhnyan) and Science (Vidhnyan) (continued)

whether Science will be able to explain any of this in the near future, or for that matter, ever at all.

In fact, recent discoveries in science suggest that the observable universe, i.e. the universe we are able to observe with all our scientifically enhanced senses, only constitutes about five percent of the entire universe. And we may never be able to observe the remaining ninety-five percent of the universe with physical scientific instruments at all! (Editor's note: This is because recent scientific work suggests that only 5% of the universe is made up of matter as we know it - i.e. atoms. About 23% of the universe is made up of Dark Matter and about 72% is made up of Dark Energy. We do not at present know if we will ever be able to directly observe Dark Matter and Dark Energy, although we can infer from our observation of atomic matter that Dark Matter and Dark Energy exist.)

We can see normal matter which is made up of atoms. And when we magnify matter we can even see the actual atoms. And further, we can observe sub-atomic particles and even quarks. Physics and chemistry help us to understand how matter behaves at such finite but sub-microscopic levels. But as we go to still smaller scales in our attempts to understand what constitutes various sub-atomic particles, we come to a stage where even ordinary matter at those infinitesimal levels is not observable with current instruments. Nevertheless it exists, not directly observable, but as a mental concept.

For these reasons, Science, or our knowledge of the material world, is quite limited in helping us understand the true nature of our universe. If you want to understand the nature of our universe you have one of the important instruments for that purpose, and that is the mind. But we have to go beyond the mind, beyond the intellect to understand the true nature of reality, and an important approach for getting us there is the practice of Yoga, particularly Maha Yoga or Siddha Yoga. In pursuing this approach all you need to do is just observe your breath, or Prana. By Prana I don't mean oxygen. Just observe your automatic breathing process, without intentionally doing anything. If you surrender yourself and just observe your automatic breathing, the Prana Shakti (Universal Life Energy) will get awakened within you through Shaktipat (the grace of a capable Guru) and the knowledge of the true nature of the universe, and of yourself, will dawn upon you automatically and directly. This is the Yoga that P. P. Kaka Maharaj and our Parampara (tradition) refer to as Maha Yoga.

Maha Yoga has to be experienced! We can try to analyze Maha Yoga, understand what happens, why it happens, etc., but all such analysis is irrelevant. It has to be directly experienced in ones own life. Once that happens, you will get all kinds of different experiences which will help you understand the true nature of reality. The process of getting ones Prana Shakti awakened is called Deeksha (initiation) and we are all deserving of receiving it. And once we receive Deeksha we will surely reach our spiritual goals depending on our inclinations/tendencies and the diligent practice of Maha Yoga.

Spirituality (Dhnyan) and Science (Vidhnyan) (continued)

For those of you who are wondering if there is truly a need for something beyond science to help us better understand the nature of reality, I can offer you testimonies of many renowned scientists. These leading scientists, including Einstein, Newton, Schrödinger, Max Planck, and more recently the leader of the Human Genome Project, Francis Collins, and many others have recognized that scientific thought has limits in terms of what it can explain. They have concluded that only Spirituality can provide answers to important questions about the true nature of reality which lie beyond the explanations that science is capable of providing.

Both science and spirituality are in search of the truth. The scientific approach uses experimentation, observation and examination in its search for the truth, and its priorities and explanations change constantly as new discoveries are made. In our traditions of spirituality the Seers (Rishis and Munis) discovered the true nature of reality many centuries ago and it is our job to actually experience it. Since both science and spirituality are in search of the truth and since there is only one truth, both will eventually have to converge toward understanding the same truth. In the 21st century, spirituality (Dharma) will have to be more like science, i.e. it will have to be Universal. The laws of science do not discriminate on the basis of whether a scientist is a man or a woman, from Maharashtra or from Bihar (two states in India), from India or from Pakistan, Hindu or Muslim. The laws of science are the same on the moon as they are here on earth. They are universal. Similarly, 21st century spirituality (Dharma) will have to be universal. A spiritual approach or religion (Dharma) that claims to be the only path to realizing the truth, or that Salvation and God-realization is only available to those born into, or convert to, a specific religion is unlikely to be successful in the long run. It might succeed in the short-term because its followers and others may not understand the broader and longer term implications of such narrow-focused thinking, but as the world becomes more and better informed about the universal nature of science, it will begin to reject such narrow-minded spiritual approaches or religions. Therefore we all have to seek out and look for a spiritual approach (Dharma) that is universal.

Where can we find such a spiritual approach and if one does not exist how can we create one? Fortunately, such an approach already exists in the Sanatan Dharma or the Eternal Dharma, a universal spiritual approach that has been followed in India over the centuries. This Dharma aims for universal happiness and uplift for everyone; regardless of religion, nationality, creed, gender, status or any other differentiating characteristic. And it is exemplified in the Maha Yoga tradition which is truly universal and available to all.

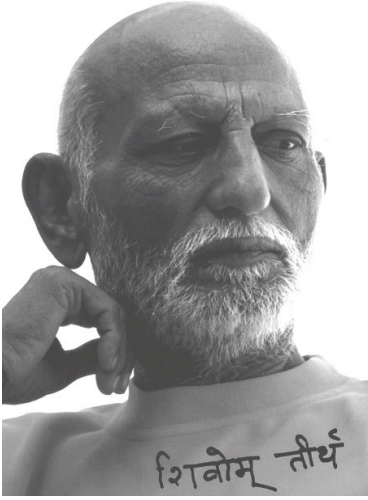
As you all are aware, India has made rapid progress economically over the past couple of decades, which has resulted in the material uplift of millions of Indians. For example, we have advanced from having one of the lowest numbers of telephones available per unit of population not many years ago, to being a world leader in the growth of mobile telephony with over 500 million mobile telephones in operation and adding about 10 million a month. We have become leaders in the field of Information Technology (IT), a field that practically came into existence only about 30 years ago. And now we are also successfully launching satellites, not just around the earth, but with Chandrayan I and II around the moon as well.

Spirituality (Dhnyan) and Science (Vidhnyan) (continued)

Not only that, but we are also launching satellites for advanced nations. In short, India has made rapid progress in the science arena over the past several years as well. Projections for the future suggest that by the middle of the 21st century India will truly become a world leader economically and scientifically. There is no doubt in my mind that we are headed in this direction. The question I have is what kind of a leader do we want to become? Do we want to dominate the world as the United States does today and which Britain did many years earlier? No! I don't want a future for India based on world domination. Instead I would like to see Mother India be in the role of a Mother to the world, a nurturer of humankind.

In this context, the universality of our spiritual approach can help us become such a Mother to the world, dedicated to the uplift of all humankind. The key to such an approach can be Yoga in its many forms, and Maha Yoga, in particular. This is because Maha Yoga is truly universal and is really quite simple. As Kaka Maharaj says, anyone can experience it regardless of religion, caste, creed, gender, nationality or any other differentiating characteristic. All one has to do is ask for it! By making this spiritual knowledge available to the world, India can truly become a Mother to the world. And science can surely help make this spiritual knowledge available to all through communications technologies and the internet. In this way India will be able to become a Mother to the world through the integration of science and spirituality for the uplift of all humankind.

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt



The following is an excerpt from P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj's trilogy, "Churning of the Heart". P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj (left) was from the same Shaktipat lineage as P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj, a lineage which can be traced in recent times to P. P. Swami Gangadhar Tirth Maharaj who lived in the second half of the 19th century. In these excerpts, P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj describes his experiences and interactions with his Guru, P. P. Swami Vishnu Tirth Maharaj, who he refers to as Maharajshri or Maharajji. These excerpts are published here with the kind permission of Swami Shivom Tirth Ashram, Inc. For those Sadhaks who are interested, copies of the trilogy are available at Amazon.com

Sadhan and Sadhana

In this excerpt, Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj gets Maharajshri to clarify important differences between Sadhan and Sadhana. We Sadhaks often use the two terms interchangeably, but it is important to keep in mind that in our tradition we "sit for Sadhan" not "do Sadhana" - Editor.

The subject was the same during our walk the next day: sadhan. Maharajshri was saying, "Sadhan is an intoxication that keeps us high without drinking. Sadhan is a killer that cuts sins without a sword. It is a poison that, without being consumed, causes the destruction of our ego. Sadhan lightens the burdens on our minds, fills our lives with joy, and grants immortality to the mortal."

I said, "Maharajji! Why is sadhana called sadhan?"

Maharajshri said, "No. Sadhana is called sadhana and sadhan is called sadhan. Sadhana cannot be sadhan. Sadhana is spiritual practice involving conscious effort; sadhan is different from that. Once these spiritual practices come naturally, sadhana becomes sadhan. [In Shaktipat, sadhan is what we call the automatic spiritual practices and body movements that happen after Shaktipat initiation.] The study of mind control is sadhana. In sadhana, the task of purifying the mind is secondary because the mind can never be purified by our efforts. In sadhana, an attempt is made to condition the mind in a certain way, even though the mind has impurities. This is analogous to the way we learn to ride a bicycle. After some days we get habituated to it. In the same way the dominant characteristics of the mind are changed by suppressing negative impressions and by collecting new types of impressions, even though it is only for a brief interval of time. Sadhana is the practice of keeping the mind under control by being disciplined. It is classified under Anvopaaya [meditation involving effort]. When a living being continues to

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

practice meditation or other spiritual exercises that are devoid of Shakti but full of pride, this is sadhana.”

“If sadhana is Anvopaaya, then sadhan is Shaktopaaya [meditation performed by Shakti]. Hence sadhana is the spiritual aspirant’s effort before the awakening of the Shakti and sadhan is the self-proven and self-perfecting spiritual practice after the awakening. In sadhana there is a sense of doership and in sadhan there is a sense of an observer. In sadhana there is some aim, some goal, whereas in sadhan the only aim is the kriya. Sadhana is the outcome of effort, while sadhan is the active nature of the conscious-self. In sadhan, the basis of activity is the accumulated impressions of past lives [sanchit samskaras], according to which kriya manifests. Hence, sadhan is called an automatic process.

In sadhana the spiritual aspirant performs some specific types of practices, by which he can carve out an identity for himself, like a Dhyana Yogi, who practices meditation, a Jnana Yogi, who practices study of scriptures, a Tratak Yogi, who practices Tantra, a Bhakti Yogi, who practices devotion, and so forth. But in sadhan, there is only one spiritual aspirant who becomes at times a Hatha Yogi [one who practices yogic postures], sometimes a devotee, sometimes an accomplished singer, and so forth. As his impressions change, consequently the nature of his kriyas also changes. Sometimes the heart is filled with emotion and at times doubts start getting resolved within. In this way, two such categories are formed, the practicing aspirant [in sadhana], and the surrendered aspirant [in sadhan]. In sadhan one doesn’t have to do anything except observe and surrender. There is no desire, no plan and no obstacles in sadhan. If sadhana is owing to one’s own effort, sadhan is owing to the will of God. Hence, sadhana is done and sadhan takes place.

“It is simply your misconception that you believed sadhana and sadhan to be one and the same. Sadhana is like carrying your baggage while walking, whereas sadhan is like riding in a railway train. In the train you set down your luggage and sit down. The train will take you to the desired place.

“Sadhana can increase your ego and your pride, whereas sadhan destroys your ego. I agree that in quite a few sadhaks who are at the level of sadhan an increase in pride has been noticed. This means that they are using sadhan in the form of sadhana. But the power that does sadhan is free from ego. If a spiritual aspirant feels proud about his sadhan, his sadhan deteriorates and falls to the level of sadhana.”

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“Churning of the Heart” trilogy by P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj is available from Amazon.com, or in India from:

Devatma Shakti Society
92-93, Navali Gav
Post Dahisar, via Mumbra
Thane 400612
Tel. No.: 22-65148183

Answers to questions from Sadhaks

- **Question:** Does one need to receive Deeksha only once? Does it result in the continual purification of the Sadhak once he has received it? How long does it take to reach enlightenment after Deeksha? Is that unique to each Sadhak?

Answer: Deeksha needs to be received only once from a Guru who is capable of giving Shaktipat Deeksha (transfer of power). Once Deeksha is received (a better term is “Deeksha happens”), the Sadhak’s Prana Shakti (Universal Life Energy) gets awakened, and the moment it finds favorable conditions within the Sadhak it will display the signs of awakening.

In the normal course, in the case of initiated Sadhaks, the Prana Shakti may lie dormant until favorable conditions arise brought about by internal purification that comes from diligent Sadhan and pious and disciplined external behavior (Karma). Even if a Sadhak has bad habits and poor Karma to begin with, the awakened Prana Shakti will move him away from his bad habits and toward good Karma as long as he sits for Sadhan regularly and diligently and surrenders to the Prana Shakti. In that sense it is a continuous process of purification and the Prana Shakti will continually purify the Sadhak until he experientially achieves enlightenment.

All a Sadhak has to do after receiving Deeksha is to allow the Prana Shakti to do what it needs to do to take the Sadhak towards enlightenment. He simply needs to “Sit” regularly (every day say for about an hour) for Sadhan, during which time he should:

- sit comfortably
- close his eyes
- relax his body
- allow whatever happens to him, physically or mentally, to happen
- observe his automatic breathing and what happens to him physically and mentally, and not think of himself as the doer

He should only open his eyes when he feels compelled to do so and end his Sadhan for the day.

After Deeksha, a Sadhak’s progress will depend upon:

- the intensity of his desire to achieve enlightenment
- the regularity and consistency of his Sadhan
- his ability and willingness to surrender himself to his Prana Shakti as it purifies him through Kriyas (physical or mental actions) during Sadhan
- diligent observance of the rules and restrictions (as described in the Deeksha request form) designed to purify him further

Hence, those Sadhaks who are very strong in the above attributes will progress rapidly and achieve enlightenment in this birth. Others might need an additional birth or two to get there depending on their intensity, diligence and commitment. However, once awakened, the Sadhak’s Prana Shakti will take him toward enlightenment no matter what!

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

- **Question:** Does the experience a Sadhak gets during the Global Trial Day or during Purva-abhyas (introductory approach to Maha Yoga) constitute a glimpse, or “zalak”, of Shaktipat? Does P. P. Kaka Maharaj make an intention (Sankalpa) for the Sadhak to have such a glimpse? Does the Sadhak’s Kundalini get awakened during such times even if he is not getting formal Deeksha, and will it stay awakened after the Global Trial Day or Purva-abhyas is over? Is the Global Trial Day or Purva-abhyas a type of Deeksha? If so, then why would Sadhaks need to take formal Deeksha? How is the Global Trial Day different from Purva-abhyas? And finally, if Sadhaks get some good experiences during Purva-abhyas or as they participate in Global Trials, should they consider P. P. Kaka Maharaj as their Guru, i.e. will he be responsible for guiding them as they progress on their spiritual paths?

Answer: Many Sadhaks who participate in the Global Maha Yoga Trials, or who practice Purva-abhyas, experience a glimpse or “zalak” of Shaktipat. P. P. Kaka Maharaj has designed and has intended the Global Trials and the Purva-abhyas approach just for the purpose of enabling aspirants all over the world to get such a glimpse without having to make any formal commitments for receiving Deeksha (initiation).

Sadhaks who approach the Global Trials or Purva-abhyas with faith, piousness and diligence, and surrender themselves to the Prana Shakti during such times, will experience an awakening of their Kundalini Shakti. Once a Sadhak’s Kundalini is awakened during a Global Trial or Purva-abhyas, and the Sadhak continues to sit diligently and with total surrender for Purva-abhyas thereafter, his Kundalini Energy will continue to progress further. However, given the worldly involvements of most such Sadhaks, the process of purification will be slow, and will likely require multiple births before enlightenment is experienced.

Formal Deeksha (Shaktipat initiation) is a major step beyond participation in Global Trials or Purva-abhyas. It requires commitment from Sadhaks to make changes in their lifestyle and to sit diligently for Sadhan. In that sense, it requires a greater degree of surrender to the Prana Shakti on part of the Sadhak, as well as providing his awakened Kundalini a more conducive path for making rapid progress. Since participating in the Global Maha Yoga Trials or sitting for Purva-abhyas do not require any kind of commitment on part of the Sadhak, they cannot be considered to be formal Deeksha. It is P. P. Kaka Maharaj’s intent that the Global Trials and the Purva-abhyas approach give Sadhaks a glimpse of the divine experience of Maha Yoga so they get motivated to make the commitments and the level of surrender to the Prana Shakti needed to receive formal Deeksha. Receiving Deeksha will enable them to reach higher planes of divine experiences and to achieve enlightenment sooner.

Global Trials are held at times determined by P. P. Kaka Maharaj to be very auspicious periods for Sadhaks to get a glimpse of Maha Yoga and Shaktipat. While Purva-abhyas is not a specific event, it is an approach for the introductory study of Maha Yoga that can be undertaken by anyone at anytime. Once a Sadhak

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

participates in a Global Trial event and he enjoys the experience, he may continue sitting for Sadhan every day. This is nothing but Purva-abhyas.

Surrender to Prana Shakti is the key for making progress in Maha Yoga. A Sadhak who feels a need or desire to approach a Global Trial event or Purva-abhyas with a sense of surrender toward the Guru who represents the Prana Shakti, can consider P.P. Kaka Maharaj as his Guru. Moreover, P.P. Kaka Maharaj is very generous with what he has to offer and is extremely eager to embrace the entire world in his arms. He will be more than happy to guide any Sadhak on this path, regardless of whether the Sadhak is participating in Global Trial events, practicing Purva-abhyas or has received formal Deeksha.

- **Question:** I had requested Deeksha from P. P. Kaka Maharaj on September 20th, 2009 and on that day, as instructed I sat for Sadhana at 6:00 am for an hour. However I did not have any of the Shaktipat experiences described at the website or at other locations. Did I not do something right or did I miss something?

Answer: It is very important to keep in mind that each Sadhak's experiences during Deeksha or during regular Sadhan are unique and depend on one's Samskaras. They are beyond one's capacity to predict, and attempts to try to compare one's experiences with what one reads in books or on websites can be counter-productive.

It is interesting to note that you were able to sit calmly for an hour without having any physical disturbances, all the while observing yourself. You observed that no physical movements or kriyas of the type you read on the website were happening to you. The fact that you could sustain this while remaining in an observer role for an hour without experiencing an urge to get up is itself a good sign of sustained and stable meditation and is a clear sign of Kundalini awakening. If you ask non-Sadhaks to sit still for 10 minutes doing nothing you will find that most of them will be unable to do so. You will notice innumerable movements in their bodies because of the inability of most people to remain in a calm and stable mental and physical state for any significant length of time while awake, and they will want to get up and leave right away.

Very subtle bodily movements, such as a slight inclination of the neck, or the unintentional but gentle swaying of the body, often occur during Sadhan without the Sadhak noticing them. Such slight movements might have occurred without your notice, but even if they did not occur, it is clear that you had a good meditative experience. Please keep in mind that physical kriyas and experiences during Sadhan are not ends in themselves but are only the means by which the Prana Shakti achieves the spiritual purification needed by you. You will only experience those physical kriyas that are uniquely essential for your spiritual progress. Therefore you did nothing wrong, nor did you miss anything relevant. Nothing happened, and you

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

observed this for one complete hour. That was indeed a marvelous meditative Sadhan!

- **Question:** I was told to just sit for Sadhan at 6 am on Deeksha day. Is there anything else I should do other than sit on an asana as prescribed? Should I chant a Mantra? Should I do something specific?

Answer: On Deeksha Day, prior to 6:00 am you should do as suggested in the instructions you received. At 6:00 am please be seated on your asana, close your eyes and relax your body as much as you can. **You don't need to "do" anything else.** The Deeksha will happen. Just let the Deeksha "happen" and let the Prana Shakti (Universal Life Energy) do what it does. Your role is not to be the "doer"; it is just to be the "observer". In that role you can observe your natural breathing or whatever kriyas (involuntary and automatic physical actions such as body movements, asanas, pranayams, japa etc.) you might find your body compelled to do. Let whatever happens happen. Just be assured that it is the Prana Shakti which is automatically making the kriyas happen in order to purify your body, mind and spirit. Sit for an hour, or longer if the kriyas continue, or as long as you feel compelled to continue to sit.

Compared to many other forms of meditation where a Sadhak is expected to "do" something during meditation (like doing pranayam or asanas, or chanting a mantra, etc.), Maha Yoga does not ask the Sadhak to "do" anything. In fact the less a Sadhak associates himself as being the "doer" the more rapid will be his progress. His role during Deeksha and even beyond, during his daily Sadhan, is to not think of himself as the "doer" at all. His role during Sadhan is to just sit with his eyes closed and his body relaxed, to let the Prana Shakti do what she needs to do, and just observe what happens. He can observe his normal and automatic breathing, or if he finds specific pranayams (structured breathing) or other kriyas (body movements) **happening**, he should just let them happen and observe them. Unlike other forms of meditation, where a Sadhak is making efforts to have his Kundalini (Universal Life Energy) awakened through strenuous and rigorous practices, Maha Yoga and Shaktipat Deeksha automatically awakens the Sadhak's Kundalini through the grace of a qualified Guru/Master. Once the Sadhak's Kundalini is awakened, the Kundalini Energy guides the Sadhak through his Sadhan. All a Sadhak has to do is to sit for Sadhan regularly following Deeksha, and to allow the Kundalini Energy to do what is necessary for his spiritual progress. It is really that simple.

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

- **Question:** Do I have to sit in my own home to receive Deeksha or during Sadhan after I have received Deeksha? Is it okay to sit for Deeksha or Sadhan in a hostel?

Answer: When receiving Deeksha it is preferable that you sit for it alone in your Puja (worship) room, if you have one, in your own home. But if that isn't possible you can sit in any place that can give you the privacy you will need. When you receive Deeksha you should not sit in the presence of others, including those who might have already been initiated. It is very important that the place where you receive Deeksha be very private and exclusively yours, at least for the duration of the Deeksha.

When you sit for regular Sadhan it does not matter if you are not in your own place. The place should provide you with some level of privacy so you will not feel constrained about letting the physical and mental experiences or "kriyas" from happening to you during such times. If there are other people around you who do not know anything about Maha Yoga, they might feel that something abnormal is happening to you during Sadhan, especially if they see some of the physical kriyas that often happen to Sadhaks. And your concern about what others might think, might keep you at a conscious or sub-conscious level from allowing the kriyas to happen. For this reason we ask Sadhaks not to sit for Sadhan in front of others, especially in the presence of those who have not received Deeksha. You can sit for Sadhan in any place where you can have some privacy and not be in the presence of others who have not been initiated.

- **Question:** I am doing Purva-abhyas (introductory approach to Maha Yoga) and when I sit for Sadhan I try to follow the instructions of observing my breath, etc. However, while I can feel my breath when I inhale (because it is cool) I cannot feel it when I exhale. Kindly advise me on how I can concentrate on my breath. Further, when I sit cross-legged for Sadhan, I am unable to relax my thighs and my back muscles. I also try to keep my spine erect when I sit. Please advise me on how I can relax my body when I sit cross-legged for Sadhan.

Answer: A Sadhak following the Maha Yoga approach should not consider himself the "doer" during Sadhan. Whether it is Sadhan after having received Deeksha or as Purva-abhyas, all a Sadhak should do during Sadhan is to close his eyes, sit, relax his body and observe his automatic breathing or Kriyas (physical or mental movements) if they happen.

A Sadhak who has received Deeksha might have physical kriyas happen to him during Sadhan. His role is to just be the observer of those kriyas, not consider himself the doer. A Sadhak sitting for Purva-abhyas may not have kriyas happen to him (most likely not in the initial stages of Purva-abhyas), so he should just sit in a relaxed position, close his eyes and observe the natural intake and exhalation of his breath or Prana. He should not do any specific type of Pranayam (structured breathing), but just let his automatic breathing happen, and he should just observe the

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

breathing process. If distracting thoughts arise, he should not do anything other than redirect his attention back to observing his automatic breathing. He should not try to "concentrate" his thoughts on anything, not even on his breathing. He should just be an "observer". Therefore there is no need to "feel" your breath as it goes in and out. Just be aware of your body as you automatically inhale and exhale.

The natural breathing process is an involuntary process, so the Sadhak cannot consider himself as the intentional "doer" of his own automatic and involuntary breathing. By putting himself in the observer role of his own automatic and involuntary breathing, the Sadhak is taking the first step toward letting his Prana Shakti be the doer during Sadhan and himself being just the observer. This is an important step toward letting go of his ego and the conscious control over his body and mind. Only when he begins to do that will the Sadhak begin to get a feel for the Chaitanya Shakti that resides in us all. This is not just something to be read, it has to be experienced by sitting for Sadhan, whether as Purva-abhyas or after Deeksha.

About your posture during Sadhan we suggest that the Sadhak sit cross-legged on a comfortable asana, close his eyes, relax his body and observe his automatic breathing. The Sadhak should not try to keep his spine erect/straight at all. Just sit comfortably on an asana, cross-legged or otherwise and relax your body. Let your neck and spine be relaxed. If your leg muscles hurt if you try to sit cross-legged, then just sit comfortably without crossing your legs. The idea is to get your attention and direction away from your body, so trying to keep the spine erect, etc. and making your body do something specific is entirely unnecessary and in fact counter-productive. If during Sadhan you **automatically and involuntarily** find yourself doing some kriyas such as specific asanas or Pranayams, i.e. such kriyas start happening, then that is fine as long as you just observe the kriyas and don't willfully do them.

- **Question:** I have recently received Deeksha, but when I sit for Sadhan I do not have Kriyas happening to me. I have been told to observe what is happening, but if I do not have physical kriyas happening to me what should I observe?

Answer: After Deeksha (initiation) a Sadhak should "sit" regularly for Sadhan for about 1 hour every day. He should not consider himself the "doer" during Sadhan but should play the role of an observer. If any kriyas such as Asanas, Pranayams, Mudras or Bandhas happen to him he should let them happen and he should just observe them. If specific physical kriyas do not happen, he should not be concerned about that because he is not the doer. He should just observe the kriya that happens to all living beings, which is his normal and automatic breathing. He should observe his breath, which is the physical manifestation of Prana Shakti (Mother Energy) as it goes in and out of his body. He should not try to control it or "do" Pranayam; just observe his normal breathing process. If a certain thought arises as a distraction, he should gently redirect his attention to his breathing. This will

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

automatically result in his letting go of that thought. Over time he will find himself observing his thoughts, eventually leading to observing the interval between thoughts. When he begins to do that, i.e. be the observer during the thoughtless state between thoughts, he will begin to get a glimpse of true enlightenment.

- **Question:** During Sadhan I sometimes find myself getting sleepy. I am not sure if it is true sleep, but I seem to nod off which sometimes disrupts my Sadhan. Is this some kind of an obstacle (“Vighna”) to progress? How should I best deal with it?

Answer: If you feel sleepy during Sadhan, let “sleep happen”. There is nothing wrong in allowing it to happen. It is also a “Kriya” and you should just accept it without any guilt. Sometimes such sleep is useful in removing certain obstacles to progress in the brain itself; therefore such sleepiness should be taken to be an automatic sign of progress. When your sleepy mode ends just continue with your ongoing Sadhan.

- **Question:** I have taken Deeksha, but due to a severe case of diabetes my doctor has advised me to include eggs and chicken in my diet. Please advise me on what I should do.

Answer: If your health needs require you to consume food that is considered detrimental to Sadhan but is prescribed by your doctor, you should feel free to follow your doctor’s prescription. While your inner faith and confidence in Maha Yoga might move you toward ignoring your doctor’s prescription, you need to keep in mind that health is paramount for maintaining a sound body. And although one cannot make generalized statements on this topic, it is best to follow your doctor’s advice in the interest of your health.

- **Question:** I have received Deeksha a few years ago and now my sister is interested in receiving Deeksha. However, I am concerned she may not be able to strictly observe all the restrictions described in the Deeksha form, especially those concerning the consumption of onion and garlic. She is a housewife and in that role she prepares meals for her family. She is concerned that she might have to prepare her meals separately if she had to follow the restrictions on the consumption of onion and garlic and is therefore somewhat less enthusiastic about receiving Deeksha. I do not want her to not take Deeksha only for this reason. Will it be acceptable for her to not eat onion and garlic on purpose except when she has to in preparing meals for her family? Please guide me on this issue.

Answer: It seems from your questions that **you** are more interested in having your sister receive Deeksha than **she** is. Your sister needs to have a keen desire to receive Deeksha on her own; enough to be willing to do what it takes to avoid consuming onion and garlic.

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

Preparing food with onion and garlic for others in her family will not pose a problem for her Sadhan at all. There are many Sadhaks who prepare food for others without consuming onion and garlic themselves.

- **Question:** With all due respect to our Vedic traditions, I would like to know about the importance of Sadhaks avoiding the consumption of onion and garlic.

Answer: The consumption of Sattvik (spiritually enhancing) food improves a Sadhak's progress along the path of Maha Yoga whereas the consumption of Rajasik (action/activity promoting) and Tamasik (ignorance/laziness promoting) food such as meat, onion and garlic retards it. Practically, the more Sattvik a Sadhak's diet, the more easily will he find himself reaching a calm state during Sadhan. It has been found that the consumption of non-vegetarian food, onion and garlic causes a higher degree of mental activity in a Sadhak and creates unnecessary attachment to food. This causes an increase in the incidence of random thoughts arising during Sadhan, which can be very distracting and results in a Sadhak taking a much longer time to achieve a calm mental state during Sadhan, thus significantly retarding a Sadhak's progress.

P. P. Kaka Maharaj's Visit to New Delhi in September 2009

In continuation of his life's mission of spreading the path of Maha Yoga to persons from all walks of life, P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj visited New Delhi to meet with leaders in the field of Indian politics. His week-long trip (September 4th to 11th) was full of all kinds of notable events. During the trip he met politicians and ordinary citizens alike, launched the New Delhi Maha Yoga Center, and even met with a high-level Guru from the Jain religion, among other activities.

An important highlight of the trip was a meeting with the Honorable President of India, Mrs. Pratibhatai Patil, at the President's official residence, Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. During his meeting with the President, P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj briefly explained to her the salient points of Maha Yoga and discussed with her its importance to the nation and to the world. He also had her participate in the introductory approach (Purva-abhyas) for a minute.



P. P. Kaka Maharaj with the President



Dr. Kalam with P. P. Kaka Maharaj

Another highlight was Kaka Maharaj's meeting with India's ex-President Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. It was about a month ago in Pune that Dr. Kalam happened to meet Kaka Maharaj at a social function, and their brief interaction then was enough for Dr. Kalam to specially invite Kaka Maharaj to New Delhi to discuss Maha Yoga in more detail. Indeed, the meeting at Dr. Kalam's New Delhi residence was quite fruitful. It lasted for almost 45 minutes, in which Kaka Maharaj explained to Dr. Kalam the path of Maha Yoga and how can it be practiced by anybody. He also had Dr. Kalam participate in the introductory approach

and explained to him how the practice of Mahayoga could be very useful for building a strong moral nation and for cultivating better citizens.

While in New Delhi, there was a continuous flow of visitors, including sadhaks based in New Delhi who had come to meet with Kaka Maharaj. He also obliged some of the sadhaks in New Delhi by visiting their homes. It was during his visit to sadhak, Mr. Gopal Yadav's home, that Kaka Maharaj announced his intention to open the New Delhi Maha Yoga Center at his residence. Mr. Yadav



New Delhi Maha Yoga Center

P. P. Kaka Maharaj's Visit to New Delhi (continued)

was more than happy to be honored with this assignment. Kaka Maharaj addressed the gathering of more than 40 people, including children, and had them all participate in a 10-minute Maha Yoga meditation.



At the Jain workshop

Kaka Maharaj was also invited to give a discourse at the concluding ceremony of a 3-day workshop on the Jain religion that was held during his week in New Delhi. He addressed the gathering of over 300 participants and informed them about the philosophy behind the path of Maha Yoga. He also led the participants in a 10 minute introductory approach to Maha Yoga meditation. After the meditation session many participants reported that they really felt very calm and were very happy to have participated. The Jain dignitaries too, sitting on the dais, were so impressed that their Chief Guru, Acharya Samrat Shiv Muniji, asked Kaka Maharaj to provide more

ongoing guidance and asked for a personal meeting.

During the personal meeting with Acharya Samrat Shiv Muniji, Kaka Maharaj again explained the path of Mahayoga and asked him and others who were present to sit for Maha Yoga meditation. It was an amazing experience for Acharya Samrat Shiv Muniji. He was not able to control his body movements because of the physical Kriyas (movements) he was experiencing and ended up lying on the floor in deep meditation. He was unable to open his eyes for quite some time. He said to Kaka Maharaj that he had been practicing meditation according to the Jain religion for a very long time but he never had this kind of an experience. He later said suggested that if Kaka Maharaj permitted him, he would ask his followers to include Maha Yoga meditation in their daily routine. Kaka Maharaj happily granted the permission and wished Acharya Samrat Shiv Muniji and his followers in the Jain religion eternal bliss.

During his visit to New Delhi, various people, including politicians, bureaucrats and others, including ordinary citizens of New Delhi, came to meet with Kaka Maharaj. To all these visitors, not only did Kaka Maharaj explain what Maha Yoga is all about, but he also had everyone sit for the introductory approach to Maha Yoga meditation so that they all got a practical experience of what Maha Yoga has to offer to all those who are interested.



Kaka Maharaj with Mr. Jawadekar

P. P. Kaka Maharaj's Visit to New Delhi (continued)

Among the various visitors were Mr. Prakash Jawadekar, Member of Parliament; Mr. Shyam Jaju, In-charge, Bharatiya Janata Party National Office; Dr. Ram Abhyankar, Director, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research and Mr. Ganesh Ramdasi, Deputy Director, Maharashtra Information and Publicity Center.



Kaka Maharaj with Mr. Ramdasi and Mr. Jaju

Toward the conclusion of Kaka Maharaj's visit, a press conference was organized at the Maharashtra Bhavan where Kaka Maharaj talked to the media about his New Delhi visit and some of its highlights. He also told members of the media about Maha Yoga meditation. At Maharashtra Bhavan too, Kaka Maharaj continued to have various visitors. Among them were Mr. Rathod, Deputy Commissioner, Delhi Police and Mr. Goyal, Residential Commissioner, Maharashtra Bhavan.

Finally, on 11th Sept 2009, Kaka Maharaj returned to Nashik from New Delhi after a very successful trip.

Reported by Shri Milind Joshi

Universal Brotherhood Day and Global Maha Yoga Trial - November 23rd, 2009 from 6:52 am to 7:13 am local time

P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj would like to invite everyone on this earth to participate in a Universal Brotherhood Day and Global Introductory Trial of Maha Yoga Shaktipat (Siddhayoga) for the uplift of all humankind. This introductory trial will be held on November 23rd, 2009, from 6:52 am to 7:13 am local time. Those interested can participate during that time at no cost, from the privacy of their own homes. All are eligible to participate in this trial regardless of religion, race, sex, age, caste or creed. This world-wide trial can be considered to be a “trailer” or a precursor for the awakening of one’s Kundalini Shakti (Universal Life Energy) through Shaktipat (transfer of Energy) from a Siddha Yoga Master. It is a rare opportunity to experience first-hand such a transmission of Energy from a Siddha Guru.

Here’s how to participate:

- At the designated time (November 23rd, 2009, from 6:52 am to 7:13 am local time) sit comfortably with your eyes closed in a quiet location in your home. Instantly observe a wave of energy along your spinal column.
- Relax your body completely in order to minimize the awareness of your body.
- Let your mind observe your involuntary breathing.
- Observe your experiences during the designated time interval and if you wish you may share them by e-mail with P. P. Narayan Kaka Maharaj at (mahayoga_kaka@yahoo.com).

Upcoming Events:

Deeksha Day (Initiation Day) on November 23rd, 2009

Those desirous of receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) should go to the website: www.mahayoga.org for instructions.

Universal Brotherhood Day/Global Maha Yoga Trial on November 23rd, 2009

Please see announcement on the previous page

San Francisco Bay Area, US

Introductory meditation (Purvabhyas) sessions for interested non-Sadhaks and Sadhaks are held each month in the San Francisco Bay area. Sadhaks also meet each month to conduct a Samuhik Sadhana (group meditation). For information about future such events in the Bay Area please contact Mrs. Neha Vishwarupe at (neha.vishwarupe@gmail.com).



P.P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami
 Maharaj Mahayoga Trust
 Shirang Nagar, Gangapur Road,
 Nashik 422013, Maharashtra, INDIA

Phone: 91 - 253 - 2311616

E-mail: self.awakening@gmail.com

Self Awakening is the English language quarterly e-newsletter of the P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust.

Editor: Mr. Dilip Kamat

Design: Mrs. Neha Vishwarupe

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What's New

The Ashram website has been updated with lots of new information. Please go to:

<http://www.mahayoga.org/>

How to contribute content to the e-newsletter

The goals of our e-newsletter are:

1. Spread the word about Siddha/Maha Yoga.
2. Provide virtual Satsang to Sadhaks
3. Share relevant life experiences which might help the Sadhak community
4. Seek and provide guidance on Siddha/Maha Yoga
5. Share news about Siddha/Maha Yoga events around the world

If you want to contribute content (articles, news reports, questions, life experiences) related to any of the above objectives please send it to:

Self.awakening@gmail.com

We're on the Web!

<http://www.mahayoga.org/>

May all desire to follow this nectarous Siddhayoga Path!