

# Self Awakening

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Maha Yoga - Effortless, joyful and no-cost path to Self-Realization



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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, an effortless, joyful and no cost path to Self-Realization.

P. P. Shri Narayan Kaka Maharaj of Nashik, India was 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. This ancient tradition (Parampara) continues under the leadership of several Siddha Gurus, including the fourteen designated by P. P. Kaka Maharaj as Deekshadhikaris (those authorized to initiate Sadhaks into Maha Yoga). Additional details about Maha Yoga are available at [www.mahayoga.org](http://www.mahayoga.org).

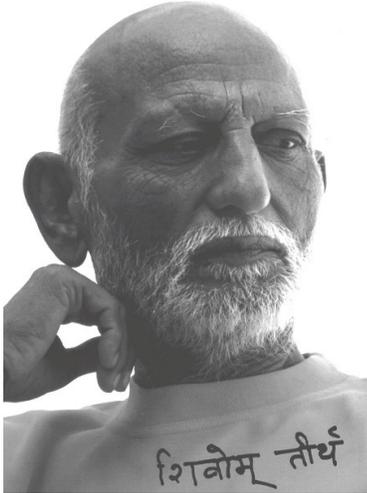
To the thousands of Sadhaks in the Maha Yoga tradition all over the world and other interested readers, this e-newsletter is intended to provide virtual Satsang. It is intended to encourage Sadhaks to remain engaged in Maha Yoga, be informed about Maha Yoga-related events around the world, and to provide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

Readers are urged to contribute questions, thoughtful articles, interesting life experiences related to Maha Yoga and news about Maha Yoga-related events to this e-newsletter.

Reminiscences of P. P. Kaka Maharaj are also most welcome. We will be glad to include them in future issues. Please send any content, comments, or questions you would like to submit to [self.awakening@gmail.com](mailto:self.awakening@gmail.com).

Past issues of Self Awakening are archived at <http://www.mahayoga.org/selfawakening.aspx>.

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts



These excerpts are 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 19<sup>th</sup> 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. They are published here with the kind permission of Swami Shivom Tirth Ashram, Inc.

The following two excerpts shed light on the role of the Siddha Guru and what it means to become one, and on the need for Maha Yoga Sadhaks to look within themselves in order to understand the virtues and vices and the baggage of Samskaras we all come to this world with.

## The Right to Initiate

This incident took place in June of 1961. Some people were going to come from Nangal for initiation. Maharajshri had finalized an auspicious time through a letter. One day Maharajshri said, "I am thinking that you should give initiation to the people coming from Nangal."

I was surprised to hear this unexpected thought from Maharajshri. I said, "Maharajshri, I have not even become a complete disciple. How then can I be a Guru?"

He replied, "Yes, you do have some limitations, but why do you think that you are becoming a Guru? The way in which you are doing all these services, such as sweeping the floor, washing the dishes, washing clothes – in the same way give initiation: as a service to the Guru. The greatest obstacle that stands in the way of being a Guru is the ego of being a Guru. If this problem is not solved by the Guru, he goes deep into the abyss of egoism. Since there is no room for a sense of service in his life he cannot establish himself in this frame of mind.

"The position of a Guru is achieved in two ways: by attaining that state as a result of continuous ongoing sadhan, or by the Guru's command. Even if such a state is attained through spiritual practice, a Guru's instruction is considered essential to save one from egoism. The humbling sense of being the Guru's servant can be easily maintained while doing the work of initiation under the Guru's command. In fact, what is effective here is the Guru's resolve, while the disciple does this work as part of his Guru-seva, his service to the Guru."

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

I said, “But in front of the disciples my personality will be perceived as a Guru’s. How can I present to them this hollow personality of mine? I never imagined that you would ask me for something like this. Please, let me become a disciple first. To do a Guru’s work many more deserving people are available. I am content with the happiness that I find in serving you at your feet.”

Perhaps Maharajshri did not think it appropriate to talk any more at that time. He became silent. The next day, during our morning walk, the topic of discussion was initiation. Maharajshri said, “Initiation is a science known to very few people. It is passed on through the Guru-disciple lineage. It begins when someone comes to the Guru with a request for initiation. Not only is a future disciple tested with discrimination, but the Guru, from his experiences, must know whether the disciple is worthy of initiation or not.”

Maharajshri described this experience elaborately and said, “At the time of initiation, when the Guru-Shakti returns after contact with the disciple’s Chitta-Shakti, it can return with good and bad karma of the disciple.” Then he talked about the experience of knowing whether the karma is good or bad. If the karma is good then there is no problem. But if it is bad then he explained how the Guru should protect himself. Sometimes the force of a kriya becomes very strong and starts to affect the situation. He explained how to control that excessive force. He mentioned a few other things that indicated how deep his knowledge regarding Shaktipat was. A disciple may make a mistake, but Maharajshri never stopped his kriya as a form of punishment. However, he described how to halt the kriyas of a disciple.

I asked Maharajshri “How do you know all these things? Do you know this through your own experience, or did Guruji [Shri Yoganandji Maharaj] tell you all this?”

He said, “At first Guruji introduced me to all this, and later it was confirmed and strengthened through personal experience. The knowledge of the science of initiation is preserved through the Guru tradition. To attain this knowledge through personal experience would take one’s whole life. One would also not know what knowledge has to be acquired. The only way is through the Guru lineage and tradition. But now the tradition of this science is becoming extinct. Once, the kriyas of a particular gentleman went out of control. His Guru was unable to control them. He was sent to me, and by the grace of the Guru his kriyas were controlled.”

I asked, “Do all Gurus know this science well?”

Maharajshri said, “I do not know who knows and who does not, but I can definitely say that all do not possess this knowledge.” Maharajshri said that there are some experiences that only a Guru can have and he described some of these experiences. I am not explaining all this extensively here because this knowledge is only for the Guru and is received through a lineage. For three days during our morning walk this was the subject. By then the people from Nangal had arrived.

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

Maharajshri told the people that he was thinking that Bramhachariji should initiate them. Although they were my old friends, their faces became dull. Superficially they said, “Okay. As Maharajshri wishes. Whether you give initiation yourself or through the medium of Bramhachariji, in reality you are the one initiating so it does not make any difference.”

I went to their room and asked them not to worry. “Maharajshri himself will initiate you. How is it that I have already become a Guru?”

Then I also made a request of Maharajshri, saying, “These people have come with a desire to get initiation from you. How can they then be told that someone else will initiate them? Please grace them yourself.” Maharajshri remained silent.

In the morning at three, before the initiations, I made arrangements for Maharajshri’s bath and requested that he take one. Maharajshri asked, “Will you take the bath or should I take it?” [Prior to the initiation ceremony the Guru must take a bath.] I requested that he take the bath.

This shows the generosity of Maharajshri. First of all, getting my book *Sadhan Path* published, then encouraging me to speak at the meditation program, and now asking me to give initiation showed how eager he was to stay in the background and bring his disciples forward.

## The World is filled with Virtues and Vices

Maharajshri used to say that everyone has vices as well as virtues; no one has only vices or only virtues. However, there is usually a difference in the proportion of the two. Some have more virtues and others have more faults, but all have both. If someone is sinful in this life, perhaps he has been a holy person in many other past lives. Sattvic samskaras from those times exist in his mind. Who knows from which life samskaras came forward and made him sinful? In everyone’s mind the three gunas [qualities] remain in imbalance and the balance keeps on changing, Sometimes one guna predominates, and at other times another. Only saints are close to a balanced state of the three gunas. A perfect balance of the three gunas means that the world will be dissolved [for that person]. The body is also a part of the world. He who nurtures the pride of being a great soul -- God alone knows what kind of life he will have in the future or in births that follow. Maharajshri used to say that a spiritual aspirant must continuously look within his own self. He does not have time to look into the minds of others. Besides, someone who cannot look within his own mind is not in a position to look into someone else’s mind. He assumes faults in others, judges them, and in doing that he makes a mistake. If he looks within himself he will realize that he is full of vices. Kriyas take place while doing sadhan. One gets happy that he has kriyas, but what is that? It is nothing but an outburst of the pollution of the mind. Samskaras turn into kriyas. If you

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

want to speculate, think in this way: “If I have so many kriyas then how many samskaras must be stuffed within me!”

I had no shortage of impurities and faults. There were so many faults in me that I had become a fault incarnate, but with the grace of the Guru some virtues were emerging. To nurture those virtues and to develop them was a hard task for me. Weaknesses of the mind often dominated and struck at the newly developing virtues, shaking their foundation. Sometimes I used to get so shaken up that my only option was to accept my defeat. This struggle continued to go on within. Others thought I was very quiet. Only I knew the condition of my mind.

One day Maharajshri said, “People who come here come to see me. Your behavior with them should be such that it does not affect their relationship with me. If you consider yourself a servant then your duty is to cooperate with me and help me in my work. Whether they are good or bad is for me to decide. How to behave with them is also my decision. If you take this decision into your own hands, it will be an impediment to my work. It will be difficult for you to stay here as well.”

Maharajshri’s words became a subject for me to ponder. I cared about these things even prior to hearing what Maharajji had just said. I tried never to be an obstacle between Maharajshri and his visitors. Yes, sometimes someone would come to the ashram toward whom I would be compelled to behave coldly. If Maharajshri said this, there must be a reason. I surmised that Maharajshri expected greater tolerance.

Maharajshri had a unique way of teaching forbearance. He would sometimes scold knowing fully well that a person had not made a mistake. He would ask a person to seek forgiveness even if he was not at fault. It seemed that he would often strike at the ego and give training in tolerance. Some might say that they did not have this experience, but I am only narrating my own. How can I say anything about anyone else? Maharajshri would say that without tolerance, sadhan is only a facade.

Yes, so I was mentioning Maharajshri’s manner with visitors. During the morning walk I raised the subject. I asked, “Maharajshri, did I make a mistake in my behavior that made you tell me what you told me yesterday? I am trying to be very sensitive, but sometimes a sadhak comes along and it is very difficult for me not to be terse with him. Besides, people do not know when you are in what state, which causes some inconvenience.”

Maharajshri said, “I do not say things like this to everyone. Upon my speaking so, if someone flares up and reacts negatively, I do not say anything to them ever again. My only intention was to warn you, not to make you feel that you had made a mistake. An aspirant must know his goal very clearly.”

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

Presented here with kind permission from Swami Shivom Tirth Ashram, Inc. Thanks to Mrs. Alison Kamat for transcribing the excerpts.

“Churning of the Heart” trilogy by P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj is available from:  
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## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks

**Question:** During Maha Yoga Sadhan I occasionally find myself standing up and spinning like a top. Sometimes I happen to be spinning to my left at other times to my right. What is the meaning of this Kriya?

**Answer:** Glad to read about the spinning Kriya you have been experiencing during Sadhan. It surely indicates that your Sadhan is working on eliminating some of the accumulated Samskaras from your past and current lives. That is the entire purpose of Maha Yoga Sadhan. The physical, mental or Pranic Kriyas that happen, such as the physical Kriya you are experiencing, are a result of the awakened Prana Shakti within you bringing up various Samskaras from your past into your Chitta (mind stuff), for you to observe (as a Sakshi) and to let go. This is the cleansing process whereby the “rubbish” (Kachra) of accumulated Samskaras gets eliminated and the Sadhak’s Chitta becomes clearer and clearer.

It would be easy for us to say that the spinning Kriya you are experiencing might be the result of some spinning-related Samskara from your prior life that might have come about because of an attachment to some type of spinning activity you might have been practicing then. But quite frankly, no one can tell with any degree of certainty what any specific Kriya means. Each Sadhak comes with a unique set of accumulated Samskaras and every Kriya that happens, whether it is physical, mental or Pranic, is the result of a specific Samskara getting expressed. Sometimes attachments to certain types of physical activities in a Sadhak’s past or current life get expressed as physical Kriyas. Sometimes, even strong emotions from past lives that have been suppressed in one’s current life get expressed as physical Kriyas. It is important for a Sadhak to simply observe the Kriyas that happen as a Sakshi, not get attached to them nor get scared of them, not hope they happen or get disappointed if they do not happen. Only by observing the Kriyas in a dispassionate and detached manner and letting them go, will the underlying Samskaras get eliminated from the Sadhak’s Chitta. The process of Kriyas happening is the process of Kachra/Samskara elimination. So, why worry about which specific piece of Kachra/Samskara is getting expressed as a specific Kriya? Doing so will only create new attachments/aversions, thereby creating new Samskaras. Simply observe the Kriyas as they happen and let them go.

**Question:** I go to college in the US and I recently received Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) and have been sitting for Sadhan regularly. I had been doing Japa (chanting of Mantras, etc.) before I received Deeksha and I am wondering if I should resume my Japa practice, including the recitation of Stotras (Sanskrit hymns) to help my progress on the spiritual path.

I am also concerned that even though I try to sleep by 10 pm, I do not sleep as much as I used to, which might perhaps change as I progress further and Yoga Nidra (Yogic sleep) happens automatically. But I learned that P. P. Gulavani Maharaj used to advise Sadhaks not to worry much about not getting enough sleep. Please guide me on both these issues.

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

**Answer:** "Doing" Japa, or for that matter, "doing" any Yoga practice (Hatha, Japa, Laya, Raja) with intent, is not necessary for Maha Yoga Sadhaks. The entire purpose of these intent-based Yoga practices is to awaken the Sadhak's Prana Shakti. But if the Sadhak's Prana Shakti is already awakened as a result of Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha, none of these intent-based Yoga practices are necessary. In fact, doing these intent-based Yoga practices results in the creation of new Samskaras, whereas the entire purpose of Maha Yoga is to eliminate all Samskaras (good and bad) from the Sadhak's Chitta through regular Sadhan. Incidentally, some branches of our Maha Yoga Shaktipat lineage give Mantra Deeksha (Mantra-based initiation). Here, the Mantra is only used as a medium for communicating the Siddha Guru's Sankalpa (intent) of awakening a Sadhak's Prana Shakti; it does not result in the creation of new Samskaras. Without the Guru's Sankalpa behind the Mantra, Shaktipat does not happen simply by chanting the Mantra.

While "doing" Japa of some form might sometimes be needed or recommended to overcome some of the ill-effects of negative Samskaras that might be coming up in the Sadhak's Chitta, even the good Samskaras that get created from "doing" Japa will eventually also have to be eliminated. So, unless intent-based Japa is needed to overcome some specific ill effects of negative Samskaras, it is quite unnecessary for a Maha Yoga Sadhak. If Japa "happens" automatically during Sadhan, let it happen. But there is no need to "do" Japa with intent.

However, if for some reason you are feeling compelled to do some form of Japa, please feel free to do Soham japa ("So" while you breathe in, "Ham" while you breathe out) or chant "Digambara, Digambara, Shreepad Vallabha Digambara". You may also chant/recite the Stotras you had been reciting, but if you do so, as well as for the Mantras/Japas mentioned earlier, please do not chant them with any specific intent or goal. If you do them with a sense of duty, rather than for achieving a goal, the likelihood of these activities creating new Samskaras will get reduced. Maha Yoga Siddha Gurus do recite/read various Stotras as a part of their daily activities. But they do such activities with a sense of duty rather than with any specific intent. That, combined with their attitude that comes from being Karma Yogis, does not result in them accumulating new Samskaras. So, if you can "do" such japa/Stotra-recitation with a sense of duty and without any expectations of any results or outcomes of such intent-based activity, please go ahead.

Now, about your question regarding getting enough sleep. If you go to bed at 10 pm and wake up at 5 am for Sadhan, you will have 7 hours of sleep, which is more than adequate for a young person such as yourself. If you replace some of that sleep time with Sadhan, please don't worry about it as P. P. Gulavani Maharaj has advised. Sadhan has as much or more benefits compared to normal sleep. If Yoga Nidra happens during Sadhan, let it happen. But a Maha Yoga Sadhak should not try to "do" Yoga Nidra. If you try to "do" Yoga Nidra, more than likely you will only fall asleep. If sleep does not come easily when you go to bed at 10 pm, observe your normal breathing as you lie down in bed. The process of getting distracted by random thoughts will reduce and you will be able to fall asleep more easily.

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

**Question:** I am a Sadhak from Belgium having received Maha Yoga initiation over a year ago. During the past few months I have been hearing all kinds of “cosmic” sounds during Sadhan, like thundering, the sound of a conch, ocean sounds, bells, strange sounding voices that do not seem to be of human origin, etc. Sometimes I hear different tunes and they are always very soft and beautiful, but they are unearthly. The sounds happen during Sadhan but they also seem to continue to happen when I am not sitting for Sadhan. Sometimes, when I concentrate on the sounds, they stop and I only experience silence. I also feel the Prana going up my spine and flowing all over within my body. I also feel a sense of emptiness in my Ajna Chakra and a lot of activity in my Sahasrara Chakra. I also feel that my mind is gradually becoming less cluttered and more calm and I find many things that happen in life as not being as important as I might have felt some time ago. I don’t get upset or angry over things as much as I used to before. So, my question is what is the next step on this path? Should I be doing something different or simply continue with my daily Sadhan?

**Answer:** Glad to read that you have been initiated into Maha Yoga for over a year. I am also glad to read that you are experiencing sounds (Naad) during your Sadhan (meditation) and even otherwise. I am assuming that you have checked with a medical doctor, or are convinced otherwise, that the sounds you are hearing are not the result of any physiological condition or ailment. So, as a Maha Yoga Dixit (initiate) if you are hearing such sounds that are not due to any physical ailment, then one has to assume that you are experiencing a type of Kriya (involuntary physical, Pranic(nervous energy related) or mental activity).

When such Kriyas happen, the role of the Sadhak should be to simply observe them; not concentrate on them, nor get attached to them, nor wish they did not happen, nor judge them. The Sadhak’s role should be that of a detached observer, not the doer, or modifier, or controller, or evaluator, of the Kriyas that happen. The various forms of Naad Kriyas during and outside of Sadhan, as well as the movement of Prana within your body, the feeling of heat in your back, the Prana movements along your spine suggest that you are making good progress on the Maha Yoga path.

However, more important than these physical and Pranic Kriyas is the feeling you have of your mind becoming calmer, the ups and downs of your material life not seeming to be as important as they did before, and the fact that you don’t get as upset and angry or experience other negative emotions as you might have earlier. This sense of detachment from the material aspects of life is called “Virakti” in Sanskrit, which is a more important indication of your progress than any of the specific Kriyas you have been experiencing.

Regarding your specific questions of what happens next, or what special thing you should do to experience a more meditative state, etc., my advice to you is to simply surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti during Sadhan and let HER guide you on what happens. As P. P. Kaka Maharaj used to say time and time again, Maha Yoga is not a Yoga of doing, it is the Yoga of Surrender, it is the Yoga of Happening. Nobody knows exactly what Kriyas will happen to a particular Sadhak at a specific stage along the Maha Yoga path.

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

Each Sadhak comes to his current life with a specific set of Sanchit Samskaras (accumulated impressions from all prior lives), and the way he conducts himself in his current life leads to the further accumulation of new Samskaras (impressions), which in turn affect the thoughts that arise in his mind and affect the actions he undertakes as a result. The purpose of Maha Yoga is to gradually eliminate the accumulated Samskaras from the Sadhak's Chitta (mind stuff), so the mind becomes calm and the Sadhak can begin to experience the presence of the Prana Shakti within all the time, not just during Sadhan. A Sadhak can enable this to happen by sitting for Sadhan and by letting the awakened Prana Shakti bring up the Samskaras one by one in the form of physical, mental or Pranic Kriyas which the Sadhak should simply observe and let go, thus negating the effects of those Samskaras on his mind going forward. The Kriyas that happen, and the Sadhak's letting go of them by simply observing them in a detached manner, are the process of "garbage removal". Only the awakened Prana Shakti within you knows what accumulated impressions you have remaining in your Chitta; even you (your aware self) do not know what lies in there. So the Kriyas that happen to a particular Sadhak are unpredictable, and while not specifically unique, the specific mix of Kriyas that happen to a specific Sadhak at a specific stage along the Maha Yoga path are unique, and are purely a function of what store of accumulated Samskaras the Sadhak has left in his Chitta. Being attached to, or giving importance to, or judging any specific Kriya is like being attached to a specific piece of "garbage" that needs to be eliminated from the Sadhak's Chitta. The entire point of Sadhan is to eliminate the accumulated impressions, not to create new ones by developing attachments, aversions or judgments about specific Kriyas.

So please do not be overly concerned about what specific Kriyas are happening, what specific Kriyas are not happening, or what specific Kriyas should or should not happen. Also, please do not pay much attention to the state of the various Chakras, etc. Doing so will only reinforce your sense as a "doer" and keep you from being a detached observer, which is the key to progress. Sit for Sadhan regularly, surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within you, observe the Kriyas that happen without forming any attachments to them or judging them in any way, and let them go. Please do not try to actively "do" anything during Sadhan. Please do not try to concentrate on anything, any Chakras, or any activity; or do any yoga posture (Asana) or Pranayam (structured breathing). If some physical, mental or Prana activities happens, let them happen. Do not try to control them in any way, either trying to enhance them or to stop them. Just let what happens, happen. The Sadhak's role should only be that of an observer. Simply experience the awakened Prana Shakti within you as she does her work of cleaning your Chitta by throwing out the "garbage" of Sanchit Samskaras. The true measure of progress is the sense of calm you experience and the detached attitude you are beginning to develop automatically towards the material world we all live in.

**Question:** I have been practicing the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga for over a month, but I am unable to sit for Sadhan for an hour at a stretch thus far. I get distracted by something or the other, my body gets stiff or I get sleepy, etc. So, if I want to apply for

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha (initiation) I am not sure I will be able to sit for Sadhan for an hour. What should I do about this? I have already been following quite diligently the dietary restrictions that initiates are asked to follow.

I would also like to know whether a Sadhak after many years of Maha Yoga practice can become a Guru, or will he need to live like a Brahmachari or a Sannyasi at the Ashram for that to happen. I would also be grateful if you can tell me the difference between a Brahmachari and a Sannyasi.

**Answer:** The key to Maha Yoga meditation is surrender, patience and acceptance. Maha Yoga meditation is not a meditation of “doing” and striving; it is a meditation of surrendering to the awakened Prana Shakti within, observing what Kriyas (involuntary activities; physical, mental or Pranic) the Prana Shakti makes happen, accepting what happens during Sadhan without having prior expectations or attachments to any specific Kriyas, being diligent in sitting for Maha Yoga Sadhan, and being patient with one’s progress. The more a Sadhak “strives” and tries to “do” things so he/she can achieve faster spiritual progress, the more his/her ego gets vested in his Sadhan, and the less progress he/she actually makes. A Sadhak should approach Maha Yoga Sadhan with the attitude of a “patient observer”, not that of a “doer in a hurry”.

The attitude of surrender, patience and acceptance are more important for progress on this path than diligently following rules and restrictions. While following rules and restrictions makes it easier for a Sadhak to experience progress, the absence of an attitude of surrender, patience and acceptance will make even basic progress well-nigh impossible. So I would sincerely suggest to you that you have to change your attitude in how you approach Maha Yoga Sadhan if you want to be on the path of spiritual progress. Sit for Sadhan on a regular basis with an attitude of surrender; it does not matter whether you are able to sit for 20 minutes or for three hours; and simply let what happens, happen, without any judgment on whether you experienced progress or not. If you are unable to sit for an hour, so be it. Gradually, with diligent and regular Sadhan, the time you sit for Sadhan will increase. But please do not get fixated on it. When it happens, it happens. The Prana Shakti within knows what you need, simply let her do what is needed for your unique situation.

Regardless of their progress during the time they are following the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga, on Deeksha Day, most Sadhaks experiences are likely to be much more intense and of a greater duration. So, more than likely you will also have a more intense and longer lasting Sadhan session on Deeksha Day, but I would once again urge you to sit for Sadhan on that day with an attitude of surrender, acceptance and patience. Do not consider yourself the “doer”; simply observe what happens, without judgment and without developing any attachment for the experiences you have.

On Deeksha Day, the Guru’s blessings representing the blessings of the Guru Parampara (lineage) before him result in the awakening of a Sadhak’s Kundalini Shakti. What happens subsequently is dependent on the Sadhak’s accumulated impressions from his current and

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

prior lives (Sanchit Samskaras), how completely the Sadhak surrenders himself to the awakened Mother Energy, the diligence with which he sits for Sadhan, and the patience with which he accepts whatever happens. The Kriyas he experiences are the result of these accumulated impressions being brought up to the Sadhak's awareness and then being eliminated from his Chitta (mind stuff). If a Sadhak has a preponderance of Tamasik tendencies the Kriyas he experiences will be Tamasik in nature, causing him to feel groggy or fall asleep, feel fear, anger, jealousy, etc. If he has a preponderance of Rajasik tendencies, the Kriyas will likely be physical movements, Asanas, Mudras, Pranayam, etc. If he has a preponderance of Sattvik tendencies, he might experience hearing Divine music, seeing "God" in whatever form he has been brought up to believe, or Saints, or simply experience a feeling of intense or subtle joy. Most Sadhaks have a mix of the three types of tendencies (Gunas) and as a result the Kriyas they experience will likely be a mix of all three types.

While many of the Kriyas can be pleasurable, a Sadhak needs to think of the process of Kriyas as being similar to garbage removal. When a Sadhak surrenders to the awakened Prana Shakti during Sadhan, on Deeksha Day or thereafter, the Shakti begins the process of bringing up his Sanchit Samskaras and getting rid of them in the form of involuntary Kriyas. A Sadhak should simply observe this process and not get attached to any Kriyas, because once the Kriya happens, i.e. the "garbage" of that specific Samskar has been removed; there is no need for that Kriya to recur. In fact, if a Sadhak gets attached to specific Kriyas, he develops new impressions which add to his Sanchit Samskaras, thus counteracting the whole point of Sadhan, which is to eliminate the Sanchit Samskaras. The more a Sadhak allows the awakened Prana Shakti to do this "garbage removal" by sitting for Sadhan diligently and patiently, the more rapid will be the Sadhak's progress. So instead of "sheer perseverance and patience", it is "diligence in sitting for Sadhan, surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti during Sadhan (and even otherwise) and patient acceptance of what happens" that is the key to Maha Yoga progress.

The purpose of Maha Yoga is for the Sadhak to achieve Self Realization, not to become a Guru. If you enter the Maha Yoga discipline with the intent of becoming a Maha Yoga Guru, rest assured that it will become impossible for you to achieve Self Realization, leave alone the likelihood of becoming a true Siddha Guru. The Maha Yoga path is not a goal-oriented path at all. If a Sadhak approaches it with specific goals, he will automatically get himself sucked into the world of ego and spiritual progress will simply not happen. The Maha Yoga path is the path of surrendering to the awakened Mother Energy and letting her do what is needed. If a Sadhak's spiritual progress needs for him to be in the role of a Guru, it will happen. If not, it won't. And, while someone who is not realized or anywhere near realized might think, "Wow, being a Guru seems wonderful, having all these Sadhaks following you, hanging on to your every word, etc.", the Guru in fact is completely beyond all that. He has absolutely no attachment at all to being a Guru, the role of being a Guru has happened to him; he has not desired it nor sought it. As a self-realized soul whose only remaining Sankalpa is to help others reach self-realization, he is only doing the job of a "postman" delivering the mail of Maha Yoga to Sadhaks who are interested. P. P. Kaka Maharaj used to

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

see himself in exactly this role (the May 2009, May 2010, February 2011 and the February 2012 issues of Self Awakening available at [www.mahayoga.org/selfawakening.aspx](http://www.mahayoga.org/selfawakening.aspx) have Discussions with P. P. Kaka Maharaj on this and other topics). The Siddha Guru never considers himself the “doer” even during Deeksha. He simply prays to his Guru (and thus the entire lineage) and to the Mother Energy to bless all those who seek Deeksha and let the Mother Energy do what is needed. Thus Deeksha “happens”, it is not “done” by the Guru. The reason it happens when a Siddha Guru prays for it to happen, is because the Guru being in a realized state is very close to the Mother Energy and his Sankalpa (intent) for Deeksha to happen is done without any sense of ego or self at all. If a Sadhak wants to become a Guru, his ego will clearly be in the picture and it will keep him from being a true Guru. He might call himself a Guru and even have some Sadhaks follow him, but the role of his ego will keep him from being a true Guru.

The practice of Maha Yoga does not require a Sadhak to be a Brahmachari or a Sannyasi. Most Maha Yoga Sadhaks are neither Brahmacharis nor are they Sannyasis; they are householders (Grihastas). Progress on this path does not depend on being a Brahmachari or a Sannyasi. A Brahmachari is someone who practices celibacy, while a Sannyasi is a renunciate - someone who has completely renounced worldly and materialistic life for one of spiritual contemplation. In our lineage (Parampara) some of the Gurus have been Sannyasis, others such as P. P. Kaka Maharaj and P. P. Gulvani Maharaj have been Brahmacharis, while still others have been householders as well. As a Sadhak progresses along the Maha Yoga path he develops a sense of Vairagya, which is a state of dispassion and detachment from worldly life. This is the key because it begins to put him on the path of being a true Karma Yogi. Thus, even though he might not be a Brahmachari or a Sannyasi in the formal sense, his sense of detachment allows him to function as a Grihastha (householder) without developing new attachments and aversions, while the practice of Maha Yoga Sadhan keeps eliminating the attachments and aversions that arise from his accumulated impressions (Sanchit Samskaras), thus bringing him closer and closer to Self-Realization. If a Sadhak who has a huge stock of attachments and aversions related to the material world thinks that accepting Sannyas will free him from that burden, he is sadly mistaken. He will simply be taking all those attachments and aversions with him into Sannyas, and will find himself with the added burden of dealing with the frustration of not being able to fulfill the related desires which will keep arising because the Samskaras which cause them will not have been eliminated.

If Brahmacharya or Sannyas happens, i.e. a Sadhak **truly** realizes that he has no attachments/aversions and desires he wants fulfilled in those regards, he may in effect live like a Brahmachari or a Sannyasi by being truly detached while remaining a Grihastha, or he may take the formal vows of Brahmacharya or Sannyas and follow those precepts. But please do not think of becoming a Brahmachari or a Sannyasi under the belief that it will speed up your spiritual progress or is essential for becoming a Maha Yoga Guru. Sit regularly and diligently for Sadhan, surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within, observe what happens, and patiently accept what happens without judgment. Gradually, your Chitta will become calm and become free of its Vrutis (tendencies), you will increasingly find yourself

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

becoming detached but contented (Vairagya) and you will begin to experience the bliss of Maha Yoga. As you become more of a Karma Yogi, when your actions arise out of a sense of duty rather than with specific goals in mind, and you truly believe you do not have to fulfill any duties as a householder (Grihasta), might you think about becoming a Sannyasi. Sannyas or Brahmacharya should happen for them to be effective; they should not be taken on without the needed sense of detachment.

**Question:** Sadhaks who have received Maha Yoga Deeksha experience Kriyas when they sit quietly and follow the instructions for Sadhan. How come they don't experience Kriyas when they are working or doing other things like singing, playing, etc.?

**Answer:** Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha (initiation) leads to what is colloquially referred to as the awakening of the Kundalini Shakti (Universal Life Energy, Mother Energy, etc.). But in reality this "awakening" is the redirection inward of the normally outward-directed Prana Shakti (Life Energy). The inward redirection of the Prana Shakti during Shaktipat causes the Prana to flow upward through the Sushumna with the characteristic sensations, Kriyas, etc.; and that is referred to as the awakening of the Kundalini Shakti.

This does not mean that the inward-directed Prana during initiation (Deeksha) stays inward-directed at all times in the Sadhak's life. When a Sadhak is engaged in his day-to-day activities like work, play, etc., it stays outward-directed because the Sadhak's focus is directed externally. During those times his actions are caused by him with intent. When a Sadhak sits for Sadhan, or engages in any activity that causes the Prana to become inward-directed, and he surrenders his Karta (doership) role to the Prana Shakti within, he experiences the sensations and the Kriyas (involuntary activities) that typify the awakened state. Incidentally, some externally-focused activities such as singing or listening to devotional music, visiting places of worship and holy places imbued with spiritual meaning to the Sadhak, being in the presence of spiritually advanced people, or even experiencing something intensely thrilling, can also cause the Prana Shakti in an initiate to become inward-directed and cause the Sadhak to experience the sensations and Kriyas of an active Kundalini. In fact, as a Sadhak progresses spiritually with regular Sadhan, i.e. he spends a lot of time being inward-directed, he begins to experience the sensations of awakening every time he closes his eyes or puts himself in the role of an observer instead of the doer.

But with spiritual advancement, the Kriyas too become more and more subtle, i.e. they no longer remain in the physical realm but occur more in the Pranic realm.

By the way, the Kriyas during Maha Yoga Sadhan are a byproduct of the purification process by which the accumulated impressions (Sanchit Samskaras) of a Sadhak's past and current lives get removed from his system, eventually leading to Self-Realization. Eventually, when the Sadhak has advanced to a stage where the cleansing process of the Kriyas is complete, his Prana Shakti becomes completely inward-directed and his Atma (soul) becomes one with the ParamAtma or Brahman (Universal Soul). This is where he completely loses his ego

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

(separateness) and becomes “Self-Realized”. This state is also referred to as the one where the Kundalini Shakti merges into the Sahasrara, i.e. he achieves Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

The key here is to understand that the activated Prana Shakti is always active. When a Sadhak allows the Prana Shakti to become inward-directed, by surrendering to the Prana Shakti within him during Sadhan, the inward-directed Prana Shakti causes Kriyas to happen as the cleansing process progresses. The Sadhak is not the “doer” at such times; it is the Prana Shakti which is the doer. The Sadhak’s role is simply that of an observer who has surrendered to the awakened Prana Shakti within him, and is letting her do what is needed for him to progress spiritually. He just observes the Kriyas as they happen. This state is quite the opposite of those states when the Sadhak is externally focused during work or play and his Kriyas (actions) are the actions he does with intent, not the actions that happen as a result of surrendering to the Prana Shakti within.

**Editor’s note: Please send your questions regarding Maha Yoga and Shaktipat to: [self.awakening@gmail.com](mailto:self.awakening@gmail.com).**

## Visit to the Siddhayogashram in Varanasi, India

While on a tour of Northern India earlier this year, I had the good fortune of visiting Siddhayogashram in Varanasi, India. This is the Ashram established by P. P. Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj to honor his Guru, P. P. Swami Narayan Tirth Dev Maharaj in 1934.



Siddhayogashram, Chhoti Gaibi, Varanasi, India

## Visit to the Siddhayogashram in Varanasi, India (continued)

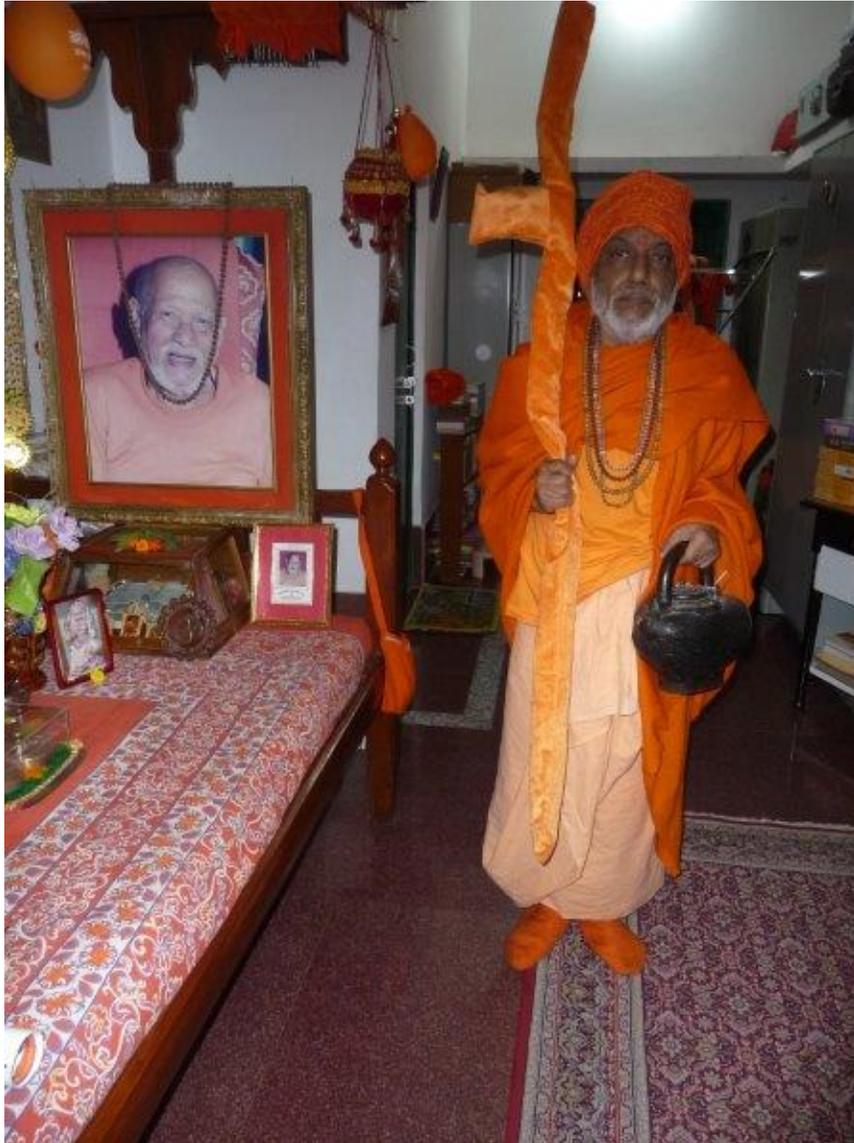
P. P. Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj, one of the stalwarts of our Maha Yoga lineage, was the Guru of P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj, who in turn was the Guru of P. P. Gulavani Maharaj as well as P. P. Narayan Kaka Maharaj. P. P. Swami Narayan Tirth Dev Maharaj and P. P. Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj were instrumental in bringing the message of Shaktipat and Maha Yoga to the common man in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries from the earliest historically known Siddha Guru in our lineage, P. P. Swami Gangadhar Tirth Maharaj. For those interested Sadhaks, our Maha Yoga lineage has been described in the February 2010, August 2010, November 2010 and May 2011 issues of this Self Awakening e-newsletter, archived at <http://www.mahayoga.org/selfawakening.aspx>.



Meditation room on the ground floor of the Ashram

## Visit to the Siddhayogashram in Varanasi, India (continued)

Despite my unannounced visit in the middle of the afternoon, P. P. Swami Atmananda Tirth Maharaj, the current head of the Ashram, graciously granted me an audience.



P. P. Swami Atmananda Tirth Maharaj

## Visit to the Siddhayogashram in Varanasi, India (continued)

Being a Monday, the day of the week he observes Mouna (silence), he did not speak with me, but nonetheless communicated with me through signs and by writing in Hindi. He was delighted to hear about my Maha Yoga practice over the years despite my residing in the US and the little bit of Guru Seva I do in my role as editor of this e-newsletter, and he granted me his blessings. I told him I would love to sit for Sadhan in the Ashram and much to my surprise he asked me to join him for Sadhan in the very room that P. P. Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj used to reside in.



**P. P. Swami Shankar Purushottam Maharaj's room**

I feel very fortunate to have been given this wonderful gift and will treasure the experience. I asked him if I could take a few photographs of him and P. P. Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj's room for inclusion in the e-newsletter and he kindly allowed me to do so. He asked if I could come see him the next day, but unfortunately I was unable to do so because of the tour schedule I was on. But I sure intend to visit the Ashram the next time I am in Varanasi.

**Dilip Kamat**

## Request for Remembrances of P. P. Kaka Maharaj

Shri Shri Gurave Namaha

### Request for Remembrances of P. P. Kaka Maharaj for Inclusion in an Upcoming Publication Honoring His Memory Due Date: July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015

Dear Sadhaks:

In 2013, in honor of P. P. Narayankaka Dhekane Maharaj (P. P. Kaka Maharaj), the P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust, Nashik, issued a well-received publication of remembrances of P. P. Kaka Maharaj written by leaders in a variety of sectors. Since P. P. Kaka Maharaj had affected the spiritual and material lives of innumerable people and Sadhaks during his presence on earth, the Nashik Trust has decided to issue a new publication of his **remembrances by Sadhaks in all walks of life**, with the express purpose of informing coming generations about this great soul! Sadhaks are therefore requested to contribute their personal remembrances of P. P. Kaka Maharaj for the upcoming publication. Sadhaks interested in contributing their remembrances should kindly follow these guidelines:

- Please do not consider whatever remembrances you might have as trivial. They are all invaluable in portraying the many amazing facets of P. P. Kaka Maharaj. Your written contribution does not have to be literature-grade; we will edit it so it reads well without altering the central theme.
- It would be good to include remembrances that inform others about P. P. Kaka Maharaj as well as those that might be particularly helpful to other Sadhaks on the Maha Yoga path.
- Please only include your own personal experiences/remembrances/events, not those of your friends, acquaintances or relatives.
- Please send remembrances related to spiritual matters on pages separate from those related to material matters.
- If needed, we will edit the material you send so it reads well; please do not consider such editing as a negative.
- Your contributions can be in prose or poetry forms; your choice.
- Please include with the remembrances your name, age, address, phone number and Guru's name.
- It would also be great if you can be specific about the locations and dates related to your remembrances.
- Please feel free to include photographs with your remembrances. Scanned photographs would be ideal, but if you send printed photos and would like them to be returned, please write your name and address on their backs so we can return them to you.

## Request for Remembrances of P. P. Kaka Maharaj (continued)

- Please indicate the date, location and people in the photographs on the back of each photograph or on a separate page accompanying the photographs.
- If your contribution is hand-written, please make sure the content is legible. You can send the material by post, registered mail or by e-mail.
- **Please send your material to the Nashik Center at the address/e-mail address below by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015.**
- We will do our best to publish all deserving contributions.
- The editorial committee's decisions regarding publication will be final.
- Please inform other Sadhaks you know about this request for contribution of remembrances in case they might not have been informed.

We humbly request all Sadhaks who have had the good fortune to have interacted with P. P. Kaka Maharaj to contribute their remembrances for the upcoming publication. We look forward to your enthusiasm and support.

Sincerely,

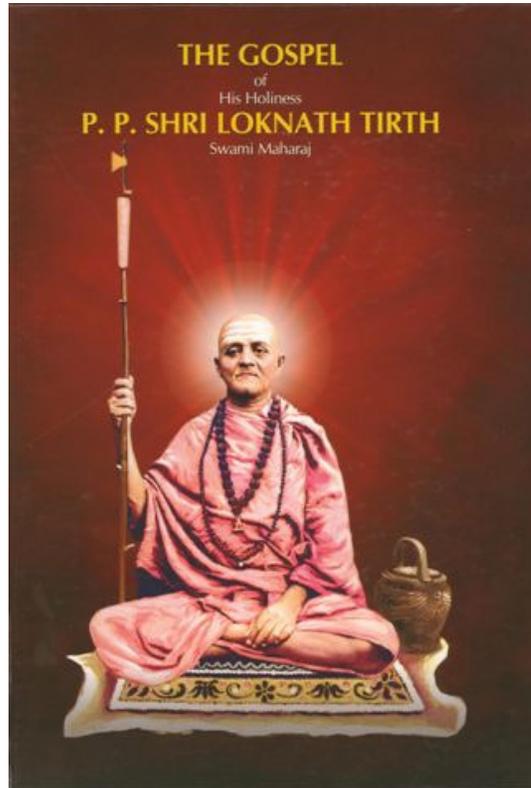
P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust,  
P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Chowk,  
Shrirang Nagar,  
Gangapur Road,  
Nashik 422013,  
India

Phone number: (91) 253 2311616

E-mail address: [mahayoga\\_kaka@yahoo.com](mailto:mahayoga_kaka@yahoo.com)

Website: [www.mahayoga.org](http://www.mahayoga.org)

## P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj's biography- English translation



The English language translation of P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj's biography is now available in hardcover edition! P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj was the Shaktipat Deeksha Guru of P. P. Narayan Kaka Dhekane Maharaj as well as P. P. Gulvani Maharaj. The original biography was written in the Marathi language by Shri A. S. Potbhare and it was translated into English by Dr. R. V. Urankar.

Copies of the book are available in India for Rs. 299 plus postage at:  
P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust  
P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Chowk,  
Shrirang Nagar, Gangapur Road  
Nashik, Maharashtra, India 422013

Phone: +91-253-2311616

## Upcoming Events:

### **Deeksha Day (Initiation Day) on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

Those desirous of receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) should go to the website: [www.mahayoga.org](http://www.mahayoga.org) for instructions. The online application form is also available at the website.

### **Maha Yoga Sadhan Shibirs (workshops) at Nashik Ashram**

The Nashik Ashram holds Maha Yoga Sadhan Shibirs on the first Sunday of each month from 8 am to 1 pm. Sadhaks sit for Samuhik (Communal) Sadhan, which is followed by a discourse on Yoga. Maha Prasad (lunch) is also served. About 250 Sadhaks typically attend this monthly event. These and other events at the Nashik Ashram and at other locations are posted at <http://www.mahayoga.org/progcal.aspx>.

The Nashik Ashram is located at:

P.P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust

P.P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Chowk, Shrirang Nagar, Gangapur Road,  
Nashik 422013, Maharashtra, India.

Tel. no.: +91 - 253 - 2311616

### **Lecture Series at the Maha Yoga Ashram in Thane, Maharashtra, India**

The Thane Ashram hosts a series of lectures/talks on Maha Yoga and Yoga on the first Sunday of every month.

The Thane Ashram is located at:

A/9 Sector # 7, Behind Omega Apartments

Vasant Bungalow, Shree Nagar, Wagle Estate, Thane 400604, India

Please contact P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj in Thane, India at 22-2581-2811 for additional information. The Thane Ashram also hosts Samuhik Sadhan (communal Sadhan) every Sunday from 8:30 am to 9:30 am. The lecture will follow the Samuhik Sadhan (communal Sadhan) on the first Sunday of every month.

## Website Updates:

We have an active discussion group at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kundalinishaktipatayoga/>

Please feel free to post messages there about Maha Yoga, the website, or this e-newsletter. You will need to join the group to read or post messages.

We also have a Facebook page, Mahayoga World at:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/mahayogaworld>.



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

**Phone:** 91 - 253 - 2311616

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**Editor:** Mr. Dilip Kamat

**Design:** Mrs. Neha Vishwarupe

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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) or comments related to any of the above objectives please send them to:

[self.awakening@gmail.com](mailto:self.awakening@gmail.com)

**We're on the Web!**  
<http://www.mahayoga.org/>

**May all desire to follow this nectarous Siddhayoga Path!**