

# Self Awakening

November 1, 2016  
Volume 9, Issue 2

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



## Contents

Editor's note	1
Churning of the Heart	2
Answers to questions	8
Sadhan Shibir in Thane, India	14
Book announcement	18
Upcoming events	19
Website updates	20
How to contribute content	21

## 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).

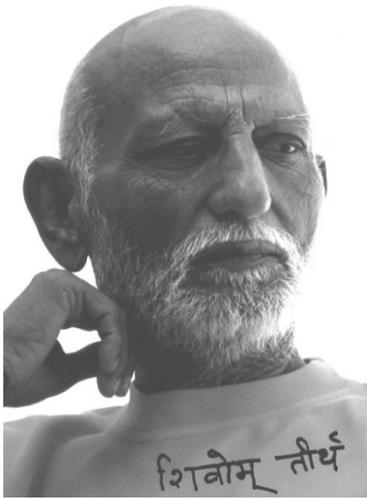
To the thousands of Sadhaks in the Maha Yoga tradition all over the world and other interested readers, this e-newsletter is intended to provide virtual Satsang. It is intended to encourage Sadhaks to remain engaged in Maha Yoga, be informed about Maha Yoga-related events around the world, and to provide 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 Real Form of Misereries

In this excerpt Maharajshri discusses how we humans make ourselves miserable because of Maya (illusion), and how surrendering ones ego to the Prana Shakti within us, the essence of Maha Yoga, is the key for getting released from our suffering and misery.  
- Editor

A disciple once came to Maharajshri and opened his bag of misereries. His bag was filled with difficulties, calamities and complications. Maharajshri told him, "This is not only true for you. All the passengers in the boat of the world are in the middle of a storm and the boat is swaying. Someone is sad due to poverty, and others are worried about protecting their wealth. Some are troubled due to too much money and family quarrels caused by that, some are burning in the fire of jealousy, while others are afflicted with hate. Some have nothing to eat, and others are unable to eat because of bad health due to overeating. Some have a miserable married life, and others are exasperated with fights among brothers. Some do not have even a hut to hide from bad weather, and others have so much property that they are too busy taking care of legal issues related to it. Some are depressed that they do not get the desired sensual pleasures, and others are tirelessly trying to be free from them. Some want to do sadhana but cannot due to their restless mind, and others are sad because they are not satisfied with their progress. Some are concerned that their disciples are not doing sadhana, and others are miserable because they could not be Guru. Some are sad for an ashram, and others are sad due to the ashram. The point here is that no one in this world is happy. If you search in their hearts, you will find unhappiness in each of them. Yes, some people do put up a show of happiness.

"How can there be happiness? As long as one depends on the world for happiness he will only find unhappiness. The world is constantly changing and illusory. Whether a person is worldly

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

or a renunciate, all are stuck somewhere. Everyone has his or her own dream about happiness. Some search for happiness in the scriptures, and others in temples. Some search for happiness in pleasures of the world, and others see happiness in giving up pleasures. As long as happiness is believed to be in some form, quality and circumstance, it will be fleeting. There may be illusory glimpses of happiness, sometimes.”

Question: “The world is not the basis of happiness in sadhana, yet Sadhaks experience unhappiness. Why?”

Answer: “The world goes beyond what is visible to the eyes. Your heart and psyche are also parts of this world. You cannot get out of the circumference of the world as long as the basis of your sadhana is your chitta [psyche]. As long as inner experiences are based on the chitta it is all Maya [illusion]. Rarely do Sadhaks [spiritual aspirants] rise above the chitta and enter the realm of chaitanya [pure consciousness, or the conscious-self]. They mostly keep going up and down within the realm of Maya. The visible world keeps on influencing the chitta, and chitta affects the world.”

Question: “Once Shakti is awakened, grants the status of a witness and turns one toward chaitanya, where is the association with the world?”

Answer: “It does not turn one toward chaitanya; rather it turns one toward activities of the conscious-self. Kriyas depend upon samskaras and they come to the surface in the form of kriyas on the ground of the chitta [psyche], Samskaras are this world and the psyche is also this world. Therefore, for the witness, the psyche and kriyas are the world. Thus the world does not disappear instantly after the awakening of Shakti. The world disappears only after sadhan is done for a long time and with the grace of the Guru. That, too, happens only when the sadhak does not accumulate new samskaras and his mind is not influenced by spontaneously occurring kriyas. The Sadhak is established in the conscious-self only after all samskaras are uprooted. Kriyas are also based upon the dissolution of tattvas [elements]. That is when the world vanishes.”

Question: “Does this mean that the spiritual journey is very long?”

Answer: “It is long, as well as arduous, unbearable, and filled with adversities. At every step of the way there is a possibility of slipping, getting lost. There are doubts and illusions. Generally aspirants remain satisfied in the preliminary stages. They neither rise above the physical level, nor are they able to experience even higher bliss.”

Question: “Does this mean that the world is the cause of suffering?”

Answer: “No, the world is not the cause of suffering. It is only a base for the manifestation of joys and miseries. Human beings have made this world a cause of suffering. This world itself is the base for release from suffering. The responsibility lies with the aspirant, either to make this world a cause of suffering or a base for freedom from suffering. The real cause

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

of suffering is illusion in the human mind, which has made room for itself there for life after life. Attachment and ego arise due to this illusion. The same illusion is the basis for the belief that the world causes suffering. Elimination of illusion is the goal of spirituality.”

Question: “What is the role of Shakti in this?”

Answer: “Shakti is the power; she will only do the work that one urges her to do. If you want to untangle the knot of illusion, Shakti will do that. If you want to tighten the knot, she will do that also. If you want to build someone a home, she will do that. If you want to destroy, she will do that. If you want to be full of attachment and accumulate impressions, she will do that. If you want to awaken her to deplete impressions, she will do that. For Shakti, nothing is good or bad. The only task for her is to impart energy to the mind to make resolves and become functional through the medium of the senses. When Shakti becomes introverted, then mind stops making resolves and becomes only a witness. Then Shakti brings forth accumulated impressions and performs appropriate kriyas. The compassionate form of Shakti is visible when an aspirant, afraid of worldly suffering, takes refuge in Shakti. Then Shakti holds the aspirant’s hand like a mother and takes him to her abode’

Question: “Then the spiritual journey becomes very easy. Simply hold the mother’s hand and you arrive.”

Answer: “No, the release from suffering is not that easy. Ego is the biggest obstacle. It does not allow you to surrender. Ego does not leave you alone even on the spiritual path. Ego wants to believe that its efforts are the only way. Holding the mother’s hand is not an act of surrender, but of ego. Real surrender takes place when the mother takes hold of the child’s hand and the child does not try to release it.”

Question: “You have shown difficulties on the spiritual path so far. Please show some easy aspects also.”

Answer: “Until the path becomes natural nothing is easy. Difficulties will come even after that, but they will not constrain progress and they will not interfere with inner bliss.”

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

### Discipline and Control over the Mind

Many Maha Yoga Sadhaks feel that once they have surrendered to the Prana Shakti within, they can let her do what is needed for their spiritual progress, they do not need to follow rules, etc. because doing so just creates new Samskaras. Maharajshri has a few words of caution in this regards. First, he says that surrendering to the Shakti within is not just words; it is the complete surrender of ones ego which is very rare in reality since most Sadhaks retain some aspects of their egos. And secondly, while following the rules will cause a Sadhak to accumulate Samskaras of discipline, doing so will reduce the Samskaras of fickle-mindedness, which will result in fewer disturbances arising in the Sadhak's mind during Sadhan and even otherwise. These Sattvik Samskaras will also help reduce the Sadhak's ego thus hastening his progress on the spiritual path. - Editor

Today I remembered the old days, when Maharajshri had come to Nangal. We took him then to see Bhakra Dam. I do not remember who was with us, but I recollect there were three or four persons. To see the dam in those days one had to walk far. I do not know what the situation is today. We bought peanuts on the way. I tried to give Maharajshri some peanuts and he said, "I do not eat while walking." The rest of us walked and munched on peanuts. No one else paid attention, but a question was constantly on my mind. I hadn't the courage to ask Maharajshri, but this question spontaneously came to my mind at the time. Even after such a long time had passed, the question was still in my mind. Why does Maharajshri not eat while walking? How is this connected to spirituality?

I broached the subject the next morning. I reminded him of his visit to Nangal. Then I narrated the event of going to Bhakra Dam and mentioned the peanuts. I asked, "Is there any spiritual reason for not eating while walking, or is it just a custom? I do not see the connection between eating while walking and spirituality."

Maharajshri was silent for a few moments, as if he were trying to recollect something, and then he said, "On the surface there is no connection between this and spirituality. One can eat while sitting, one can lie down and eat, or eat while walking. One has to eat somehow or the other. But one thing should be remembered: Every step we take has a relationship to spirituality. Today we are in the strong grip of prarabdha [destiny], which is caused by past actions. Lack of discipline in our way of life has resulted in the collection of samskaras of fickle-mindedness, and our mind cannot be steady even for a moment. We are wandering in the world today due to an undisciplined life. Hence authors of scriptures have given rules for bringing discipline into life. Consequently we will accumulate samskaras of control, and our wanderings will reduce step-by-step.

"If you live a life of control for a long time then you will accumulate samskaras of discipline and samskaras of fickle-mindedness will diminish. Unripe seeds pressed in the ground will decay and be destroyed. With the passage of time a day will come when the mind will be

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

completely influenced by samskaras of steadiness and control. Through fickle-mindedness and lack of control we stumble; by steadiness and control we ascend. Fickleness is the world and steadiness is spirituality. Fickle-mindedness makes you wander and steadiness gives you peace. If you consider not eating while walking in this context then it has a deep connection to spirituality. One small step is so significant for making life steady and peaceful. Perhaps you cannot see its effect immediately, but with the passage of time its effect is clearly visible, when enough samskaras of steadiness are accumulated. The rules for controlling the mind given by authors of the scriptures must be seen in this light. An aspirant may make his own rules in the light of his own mental state, in addition to the rules given in the scriptures.

“Now let us consider the subject from the perspective of yoga. When you offered me peanuts, for a moment I felt like accepting, but then I remembered the rule of not eating while walking and the feeling was controlled. Yoga is the restraint of the fluctuations of the mind. It is true that complete yoga is the control of all mental modifications, but that cannot be attained in one leap. You have to take one step at a time. If we wish, we can live a life of rules, watch mental modifications or fluctuations all day, and continue yoga sadhana all day. This way, one after another, mental modifications will be controlled, and we will keep marching forward in the direction of total control over mental activities.

“Sometimes an aspirant tries to control a particular mental modification but cannot halt its force. The mind does not listen to explanations nor to scolding. Then the aspirant must surrender to God. The unhappy aspirant yearns, ‘Oh God, please protect me, protect me. In spite of your presence, the inner demon is creating havoc. The more I try to protect myself, the greater the harassment. You are sitting with eyes closed. O God, protect me, protect me.’ The feelings in the devotee’s heart become so intense that unwanted mental behaviors are washed away. Where knowledge and yoga do not work, devotion in the heart does.

“Some people make efforts in the beginning; when they are unsuccessful they call on God. Some have no ego of self-effort, and directly surrender. This state comes only when certain commandments are before you. Thus to practice control of the mental modifications rules must be followed, Otherwise life becomes unruly.”

Question: “But in the path of Shaktipat there is no need for any such practices. Doesn’t this sadhana depend upon surrender?”

Answer: “I have told you several times that surrender does not come through mere talk. The type of surrender needed in sadhana is rare. All hold on to ego in some form or the other. As long as ego exists you will have to take care of yourself.”

Question: “I have one more doubt. We understand that you have risen above the boundaries of practices. Why do you need to make and follow rules?”

## Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

Answer: “Whether I need rules or not is irrelevant. You may think anything you like according to your feelings. But an aspirant must follow rules even after attaining everything, otherwise people will break all the rules and religious guidelines. They will free themselves from all rules.”

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

“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:** It is said that once the Mother Kundalini is awakened by Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha, the process of purification of the accumulated Samskaras (impressions from current and past lives) begins and it continues till the objective of Self Realization is accomplished. It is also said that even if there is a long gap of Sadhan even then the process of purification goes on whether one sits for Sadhan or not.

If that is the case, then why is it necessary to sit for Sadhan, regularly, daily for one hour when the process of purification goes on uninterrupted? Does Sadhan act as a catalyst in speeding up the process of purification? Please clarify.

**Answer:** You are correct in stating that once the Prana Shakti (Mother Energy) within a Sadhak has been awakened, the process of purification of Samskaras starts, and it continues until the objective of the elimination of all Samskaras and Vrutis (ingrained tendencies) gets accomplished. However, except for the case of a Sadhak who has come to this world having his Chitta purified in his past lives and is just on the verge of Self Realization, without regular Sadhan this is close to being impossible. Or at a minimum it could take innumerable lifetimes to happen. Let me explain to you why.

Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha, whereby the Sadhak's Prana Shakti becomes awakened by the grace of a Siddha Guru, is only the first major step toward Self Realization. Sadhaks pursuing other intent-based Yoga practices such as Hatha, Laya, Raja or Japa spend years, or even lifetimes, just to have their Prana Shakti become awakened. Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha makes it happen in an instant due to the grace of the Siddha Guru. But, as I mentioned earlier, this is only the first step. The awakening of the Prana Shakti means that the normally outward-facing Prana Shakti become inward-facing, just the first step in a process that can help the Sadhak eliminate the Samskaras and Vrutis (tendencies) he has accumulated during his current and all past lives.

The elimination of all accumulated Samskaras is an essential step on the path to Self Realization. This process of Samskara elimination only happens typically during Sadhan when the Sadhak allows the awakened Prana Shakti within him, which becomes inward facing during Maha Yoga Sadhan, to bring up into his Chitta (mind-stuff) his past Samskaras resulting in physical, mental or Pranic Kriyas (involuntary activities). By simply observing these Samskaras as they get expressed in the form of the three types of Kriyas, i.e. by playing the role of a Sakshi (observer) instead of the Karta (doer) of the Kriyas that happen during Sadhan, the Samskaras and the Vrutis underlying the Kriyas get cleansed from the Sadhak's Chitta. So, unless a Sadhak sits for Maha Yoga Sadhan and surrenders to the awakened Prana Shakti within him to bring up the Samskaras he has accumulated over lifetimes and lets them go, the process of Samskara purification/elimination is highly unlikely to happen.

Moreover, during the Sadhak's day-to-day life, when the Prana Shakti within him is outward-directed, unless he has developed the mental state of a Karma Yogi (i.e. all his actions and activities are done without any consideration of the fruits of those actions and activities), he

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

will be continually adding to and reinforcing the Samskaras he has already accumulated. Therefore, unless the Sadhak has reached the state of a Karma Yogi, which most Sadhaks do not typically experience for years, without regular Maha Yoga Sadhan the Sadhak will not only **not** reduce or eliminate the trove of Samskaras he has accumulated, but he will be simply adding to the number and the strength of the Samskaras he has accumulated. In fact, to reduce the size and strength of the trove of accumulated Samskaras, the Sadhak has to not only reduce the accumulation of new Samskaras in his day-to-day life, but he has to eliminate more Samskaras during Sadhan than he has added during other times! This means daily Sadhan is a must for Sadhaks who have not yet reached the Karma Yogi state, just to offset the Samskaras they continue to accumulate and strengthen on a daily basis during the times they are not sitting for Sadhan.

With regular Maha Yoga Sadhan, the net accumulation of Samskaras will diminish gradually and the Sadhak will also begin to experience a sense of Virakti (detachment). This is when he will begin to automatically develop the attitude of a Karma Yogi and the accumulation of new Samskaras during his day-to-day life will gradually stop happening. But even at that stage, the Sadhak has to continue to sit for Sadhan just to have the Samskaras and Vrutti that he has left in his Chitta get eliminated. He also has to be very watchful and careful that he not slip back into accumulating new Samskaras by straying from the Karma Yogi attitude and developing new attachments or aversions or strengthening the ones he already has.

The path to Self Realization is long and arduous and full of traps, even for Sadhaks who have made considerable progress on their spiritual journey. And any fall or diversion can take years and even lifetimes to correct. Therefore, unless a Sadhak has reached a stage very, very close to Self Realization, i.e. when the Sadhak is in a constant state of Sadhan (surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within him) even during his day-to-day life, regular Sadhan is a must to experience Self Realization. So, for most Sadhaks, regular Maha Yoga Sadhan is not simply a “catalyst” for speeding up the process of purification, it is the **essential ingredient** for purification to happen in the first place. That is why Sadhaks are asked to sit for Sadhan and surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within, at least for an hour every day.

**Question:** I live in France and I would like receive Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha from your Maha Yoga lineage. Will it be possible for me to receive Shaktipat Deeksha? And if possible, what are the terms? Do I need to go to India to meet the Guru in order to receive Deeksha? I am ready to receive the spiritual energy during Deeksha with the hope of spreading the message of Kundalini Awakening in Europe as an antidote to the aggressive world we live in.

**Answer:** Very glad to read that you are interested in receiving Shaktipat Deeksha. Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha is available to anyone who wants to receive it and applies for it with the sincerity and commitment needed to receive it. It is available to all, at no cost, regardless of their race, religion, caste, creed, gender, age, nationality, etc. You can apply for Shaktipat Deeksha on-line at <http://mahayoga.org/mahayoga-initiation.aspx>.

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

You do not need to go to India to meet the Deeksha Guru in order to receive Deeksha; you can receive it in the privacy of your own home. At some point over the next few months/years, if you feel like meeting the Deeksha Guru, P. P. Prakash Prabhune Maharaj, who is in charge of the worldwide headquarters of P. P. Kaka Maharaj's Maha Yoga lineage in Nashik, India, you are welcome to go there to meet him. But it is not necessary to be in his physical presence to receive Deeksha. Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha is a Sankalpa Deeksha, or a Deeksha based purely on the intent of the Deeksha Guru with the backing of the Parampara (lineage) behind him. That is why the intent can be instantly communicated to anyone, anywhere in the world and the Shakti (energy) gets transferred from the Guru to the Sadhak without the Sadhak having to be in the physical presence of the Guru.

The above link (<http://mahayoga.org/mahayoga-initiation.aspx>) has tabs that describe what Deeksha is, what happens during and after initiation, as well as the on-line application form. The Sadhak (aspirant) who wants to receive Deeksha needs to follow certain dietary and other rules and restrictions that are intended to ensure rapid and ongoing spiritual progress. The consumption of mind-altering items such as alcohol, drugs and tobacco and non-vegetarian foods (meat and eggs) and enhancers such as onions and garlic are considered to retard spiritual growth and should therefore be avoided following initiation. The aspirant should also be willing to devote one hour every day for spiritual practice/meditation (Sadhan).

I would like to suggest that you become familiar with Maha Yoga by reading some of the material on Maha Yoga available at <http://www.mahayoga.org/index.aspx>. You might also consider reading some of the past issues of Self Awakening, archived at the site <http://mahayoga.org/selfawakening.htm>. Specifically, the May 2009, May 2010, February 2011 and the February 2012 issues have Discussions with P. P. Kaka Maharaj which you might find interesting and helpful. I urge you to read them all as they will help you internalize what Maha Yoga is really all about. Since Maha Yoga is a Yoga of experience rather than an intellectual exercise, we do not encourage Sadhaks to intellectualize it by focusing too much on reading about it rather than actually practicing it. But having said that, it is good for Sadhaks to understand what Maha Yoga is, how it differs from other Yoga practices, what to expect and not expect during Deeksha and during Sadhan, etc. As you await receiving Shaktipat Deeksha on the next Deeksha Day, you are welcome to try out the Introductory Practice of Maha Yoga as described here <http://mahayoga.org/mahayoga-introductory-practice.aspx>.

**Question:** I received Deeksha from P. P. Kaka Maharaj a few years ago. However, due to some issues I could not continue with the meditation practice (Sadhan) a few months after initiation. A few weeks ago I have resumed the practice.

Recently I have started experiencing muscle movement/jerks in my body many times during the day even when I am not sitting for meditation. I'm not sure why this is happening. Could you please help me understand if this is anything related to kundalini awakening?

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

Thanks in advance.

**Answer:** Involuntary physical movements, including jerky movements during Maha Yoga Sadhan are indications of the Kundalini Shakti having been awakened.

Usually, these do not continue in a significant or intense manner after the Sadhak has finished sitting for Sadhan and the Kriyas have quieted down. You might try sitting for Sadhan for a longer time than you have been doing, or sit for Sadhan a couple of times a day, so as to allow the awakened Prana Shakti to complete the physical or other Kriyas that are needed for your spiritual progress. This might help minimize such occurrences and/or reduce their intensity when you are not sitting for Sadhan.

However, despite increasing the Sadhan time and/or frequency, if you continue to have intense and uncontrollable jerky muscle movements when you are not sitting for Sadhan, the muscle jerks may have some other physiological reason and it might make sense to consult a doctor in that case, if for no other reason than to eliminate that possibility.

If your doctor does not find any physiological reasons for such movements, with longer and more frequent Sadhan, the jerky muscle movements should gradually cease to occur. Hope this addresses your concerns.

**Question:** I am interested in receiving Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha, but I am somewhat concerned by a prior experience I had with Reiki. I received Reiki Deeksha four years ago, not for my own spiritual growth or personal interest, but on the suggestion of a friend of mine. But after practicing Reiki for a while, I began to suffer from health-related problems like constipation, gas and other digestive illnesses. My Reiki master attributed these illnesses to excessive body heat. I was wondering if Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha could cause similar conditions to happen to me.

**Answer:** Maha Yoga is quite different from Reiki. It is the Yoga of surrendering to the awakened Prana Shakti within the Sadhak, without having any intention other than just the spiritual progress of the Sadhak himself. It is not for curing other people's illnesses, or for using Siddhis (powers) that may arise on the spiritual path with the intent of doing material good or harm for others or for oneself. It is simply to allow the awakened Prana Shakti within the Sadhak to cleanse his Chitta of all the Samskaras he might have accumulated in his current and past lives, eventually leading to Self Realization. The practice of Maha Yoga will not result in any physical or mental harm to the Sadhak.

In practices like Reiki, the practitioner has some material intent, either for himself or for others. When a Reiki practitioner is practicing Reiki to cure someone else of some physical or mental condition, it very well might happen that if the Reiki practitioner's Chitta is not cleansed enough or strong enough relative to that of the person he is trying to cure/help, some of the other person's maladies might get transferred to the Reiki practitioner himself,

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

thus causing mental, physical or Pranic effects on him. Since this is not the case with the practice of Maha Yoga, such a situation cannot happen to a typical Maha Yoga Sadhak.

Only when a Maha Yoga Sadhak reaches a state when he becomes capable of bestowing Deeksha on others (i.e. he is empowered to become a Deekshadhikari) does he risk taking on another person's ailments and conditions. And that is precisely why the role of a Maha Yoga Deekshadhikari is bestowed only on a Sadhak who has made very significant progress toward Self Enlightenment and his Chitta is strong enough and cleansed enough to be able to withstand the negative conditions of the Chittas of Sadhaks he bestows Deeksha upon.

So, as a beginner Maha Yoga Sadhak, you have nothing to worry about if your only intent for practicing Maha Yoga is your own spiritual progress, and you surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within you when you sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan. If you experience changes in your body, mental condition or Prana flow, please consider them as Kriyas that happen for your own spiritual good, a direct result of the cleansing process that the Prana Shakti is doing within you.

**Question:** I live in Iran and I am very much interested in spirituality and especially in Maha Yoga based on what I have read. I would like to receive Maha Yoga Deeksha, but I suffer from Thalassemia, a type of anemia, and my doctor has advised me to consume meat on a regular basis. I will therefore be unable to follow the restrictions related to avoiding the consumption of non-vegetarian food. I am afraid that if I apply for Deeksha and am unable to follow the restrictions, I will be creating bad Karma for myself, and I do not want to do that. Should I try the Introductory Practice? It seems to be very similar to the silent meditation that was recommended to me by a friend of mine here who I consider to be somewhat of a Guru. Please guide me on what I should do.

**Answer:** Sorry to read about your anemia. Given your situation I think it would be best to follow your doctor's advice. This is because one's physical well-being should be given somewhat of a priority since having had the good fortune of being born as human beings so we can grow spiritually, we need to make sure we remain in the human form as long as we can so we can remain on the path of spiritual growth. So, I would suggest that you not receive formal Deeksha, but when you get over your anemia-causing situation, perhaps you can then apply for receiving Deeksha at that time.

Having said that, I would like to suggest that you follow the Introductory Practice of Maha Yoga as described here <http://mahayoga.org/mahayoga-introductory-practice.aspx> until your health situation allows you to be able to follow the restrictions required for receiving Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha. The Introductory Practice has P. P. Kaka Maharaj's Sankalpa (strong intent) behind it, so just like the formal Deeksha, which is also a Sankalpa Deeksha; it has the most important ingredient, the Sankalpa of a Siddha Guru, behind it. Following the Introductory Practice does not require a Sadhak to commit to following any restrictions, while being able to get many of the spiritual benefits that come from formal Maha Yoga Deeksha. Many Sadhaks who follow the Introductory Practice have experiences very similar

## Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

to what Sadhaks experience having undergone formal Deeksha. Depending on their Sanchit (accumulated) Samskaras (impressions from current and past lives), they experience many of the physical, mental and Pranic Kriyas that Sadhaks who have received formal Deeksha typically experience. Many Sadhaks also experience an actual awakening of their Prana Shakti by following the Introductory Practice. So, please give it a try.

While the Introductory Practice might seem to be just like some other forms of meditation such as Mindfulness Meditation, it is somewhat different in two important respects. The first difference is that it has the Sankalpa of a Siddha Guru behind it as I mentioned earlier, which makes its practice by a Sadhak who is aware of this intent (Sankalpa) directly result in the eventual awakening of the Prana Shakti within the Sadhak. And secondly, while the other meditation practices suggest that the Sadhak observe only his normal breathing, a Kriya that all living creatures experience, while ignoring or suppressing other Kriyas that might happen, a Sadhak trying out the Introductory Maha Yoga Practice should also observe the other physical, mental and Pranic Kriyas that happen. He should not ignore such Kriyas or try to suppress them; he should simply observe them as Kriyas that happen during meditation (Sadhan) and to let them go without developing any attachments to them or fearing them.

This is exactly in accordance with what is suggested to Maha Yoga Sadhaks who have received formal Deeksha. The process of Kriyas happening and the Sadhak simply observing them as a Sakshi (observer), and not thinking of himself as a “doer” is the same as suggested for those who have received formal Deeksha. And the result of playing the observer/Sakshi role during Sadhan is the same as for Sadhaks who have received formal Deeksha, which is to gradually eliminate the accumulated Samskaras and Vrutis (tendencies) from the Sadhak’s Chitta (mind stuff), eventually eliminating the Koshas (coverings) that cover up the Atma within, thus leading to self-enlightenment.

So, my suggestion to you is to follow the Introductory Practice of Maha Yoga on a daily basis with an attitude of sitting for Maha Yoga Sadhan and to observe not only your normal breathing but also any subtle or not-so-subtle physical, mental or Pranic Kriyas that may happen. Please do not anticipate that such Kriyas will or will not happen, but when you sit for the Introductory Practice, sit with an attitude of surrender to the Prana Shakti within you, observe your normal breathing as well as any other Kriyas that happen, don’t get attached to or fear anything that happens, and have a great deal of patience. This approach will also take you where you want to go, but it might take more time and patience. If at some point in the future your health allows you to be able to observe the restrictions without it causing you physical harm, you are of course welcome to apply for formal Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha at that time.

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

## Sadhan Shibir at Mahayoga Ashram, Thane, India

A well-attended Sadhan Shibir (workshop) was held at the Mahayoga Ashram in Thane, India on September 18<sup>th</sup> earlier this year. The Mahayoga center in Thane (a suburb of Mumbai) was established several years ago by P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj under the guidance of P. P. Kaka Maharaj. P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj convened and guided the Shibir despite suffering from ill health.

The Sadhan Shibir was graced by the presence of honorable P. P. Prabhune Maharaj who is the head of the Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Ashram Trust in Nashik, India and is in charge of the world headquarters of the Maha Yoga lineage established by P. P. Kaka Maharaj. He came from Nashik to bless and guide us Sadhaks. We all had the good fortune to sit for Sadhan (meditation) with him and listen to the enlightening speech he gave to help us clear some of the obstacles on our Mahayoga path.

The Shibir began with all of us sitting for Mahayoga Sadhan for an hour and a half. This was followed by Japa and Aarti of P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj, following which P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj recited a few chapters of Geeta and introduced P. P. Prabhune Maharaj to us and requested him to guide us.

The following are excerpts from P. P. Prabhune Maharaj's speech titled "Shaktipat and Kriyas" and the discussion that followed the speech:



**P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj addressing audience.  
P. P. Prabhune Maharaj is seated next to him**

Once Lord Brahma asked Lord Shiva "How can human beings get out of the suffering and unhappiness that arise from Maya and the endless cycle of births and deaths"? Lord Shiva replied, "There are a lot of paths human beings can pursue, but among all of them the Siddhayoga path is the easiest".

This is the same path that has been mentioned by Lord Shri Krishna in the Bhagwad Geeta. Today we read a few chapters from the Geeta and as we experienced, wherever the Geeta is being read or recited, the essence of Maha Yoga and the presence of P. P. Kaka Maharaj in his subtle form becomes evident. As Yogiraj P. P. Gulvani Maharaj used to say, "There is not a single composition in Dnyaneshwari which does not emphasize Siddhayoga".

If you have the good fortune of being a Mahayoga Sadhak and have received Deeksha from a Siddha Guru please remember that you came upon this path only because of your actions

## Sadhan Shibir at Mahayoga Ashram, Thane, India (continued)

(Karma) in your past births, good Karma in your current life, and Gurukrupa, which is the grace of a Siddha Guru in the form of Mahayoga Shaktipat Deeksha. In fact, it is not easy to receive Gurukrupa; it happens only when the Sadhak has completely surrendered his ego allowing the Guru to bestow his Krupa (grace) by directing the Sadhak's Prana Shakti inward and sharing the Sadhak's Prarabhdha (destiny).

What does "Deeksha" mean? Over thousands of past births and even in our current birth we accumulate Samskaras (impressions), also referred to as Sanchit Samskaras or accumulated Samskaras. These Samskaras get reinforced by our actions and in turn cause us to get into the endless cycle of births and deaths and keep us from experiencing our true selves, i.e. they keep us from experiencing Self Enlightenment. It is therefore essential for Sadhaks seeking Self Enlightenment to eliminate the Sanchit Samskaras and quit adding new ones. Siddha/Mahayoga Deeksha is the key to directing a Sadhak's Prana Shakti inwards so the process of elimination of the accumulated Samskaras can begin. With regular Sadhan following Deeksha, these Sanchit Samskaras get gradually eliminated and we experience the purity and peace that comes with Self Enlightenment.



View of the attendees

During Sadhan thoughts are certainly going to arise as they are the actions of the mind. . We can't understand how and from where these thoughts arise; we shouldn't even try to stop them. If we try to stop them with intent we will fail. Just observe them from within, but distantly. Don't pursue them. Let them come and go. A calm and desire free mind means Moksha. And "Mukti "comes after Moksha.

Siddha/Mahayoga Sadhaks must sit for Sadhan every day. And when we sit for

Sadhan we should not expect or want specific Kriyas to happen; rather we

should just allow the awakened Prana Shakti within us to do what she wants/needs to do to help us go further on our spiritual path. Nor should we compare our Sadhan experiences or Kriyas that happen to what we might have heard from other Sadhaks. Kriyas happen based on our own Samskaras; and because each of us has different Sanchit Samskaras, the Kriyas we experience during Sadhan will differ from what other Sadhaks may experience. The Kriyas that we experience during Sadhan will happen based on what is uniquely needed for our own spiritual progress. Our experiences during Sadhan are just milestones that we pass on our spiritual journey, they are not the final destination, and therefore we should not develop any attachments to them. Sometimes the Kriyas are very subtle and we mistakenly conclude that we are not having any Kriyas or experiences. But as we sit for Sadhan on a regular basis, we will begin to notice the subtle Kriyas as well. Therefore, we should sit for

## Sadhan Shibir at Mahayoga Ashram, Thane, India (continued)

Sadhan regularly without expecting any experiences or Kriyas to happen, and if they happen we should just observe them and let them go; not get attached to them.

When we sit for Sadhan we should sit comfortably, let our body loose, without trying to exercise any control or stressing our bodies, and put ourselves in the role of a witness and simply observe what happens. We should not try to do anything. If we become the “doer”, then Sadhan will not happen. So we have to give up on logic and sit for Sadhan with trust in the Prana Shakti within us and Samarpan (submission of our ego) to her. To understand Samarpan, P. P. Prabhune Maharaj gave the example of ice versus salt, both of which dissolve in water. When ice dissolves in water, it does not give the water any of its characteristics; it doesn't retain its uniqueness, its “ego”, it becomes one with the water. This is Samarpan. But when salt dissolves, it makes the water salty; so even though it has dissolved in the water, the “ego” of the salt, its salinity, still exists. This is not Samarpan but it is called Visarjan. So for Sadhan to happen, we have to sacrifice/give up (Samarpan) our ego. We have to get into the witness mode, rather than being the doer

P. P. Gulvani Maharaj has said that as long as we are externally directed, i.e. we harbor desires, motives, retain a thirst for success, etc., thoughts will keep coming up in our minds during Sadhan. When this happens, we should not try to stop the thoughts as that will never work, and even trying to do so puts us in the role of the “doer” during Sadhan. Instead we should simply observe the thoughts that arise and without getting involved in them, we should simply let them go. Doing anything on our part to stop the thoughts will be an act of doership and Sadhan will just not happen.

With mesmerizing oratory, using references from Dnyaneshwari, Bhagwad Geeta, Dasbodh, etc. P. P. Prabhune Maharaj blessed us with this splendid explanation of Shaktipat and the role of Kriyas. During his discourse, members of the audience got so completely immersed in the discussion that they lost track of time. Eventually we all had lunch, which was followed by us watching videos of P. P. Kaka Maharaj that were taken years ago during his visit to the US and other countries. A video of a previous Wadi-Yatra (visit to Narsobachi Wadi) with P. P. Kaka Maharaj was also shown to make the Sadhaks aware of the various events that take place during this annual multi-day visit. Everyone felt the presence of P. P. Kaka Maharaj; as if he was right there in front of us, talking and explaining the Wadi Yatra.

Now was time for Sadhaks to get their doubts cleared regarding Mahayoga, Sadhan and other spiritual issues. Both P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj and P. P. Prabhune Maharaj guided us during this discussion. It was a pleasant surprise to see young Sadhaks willing to come forward and share their experiences with rest of us, while explaining how Mahayoga Sadhan is helping them in their studies and work and how Mahayoga Deeksha and Sadhan have changed their lives.

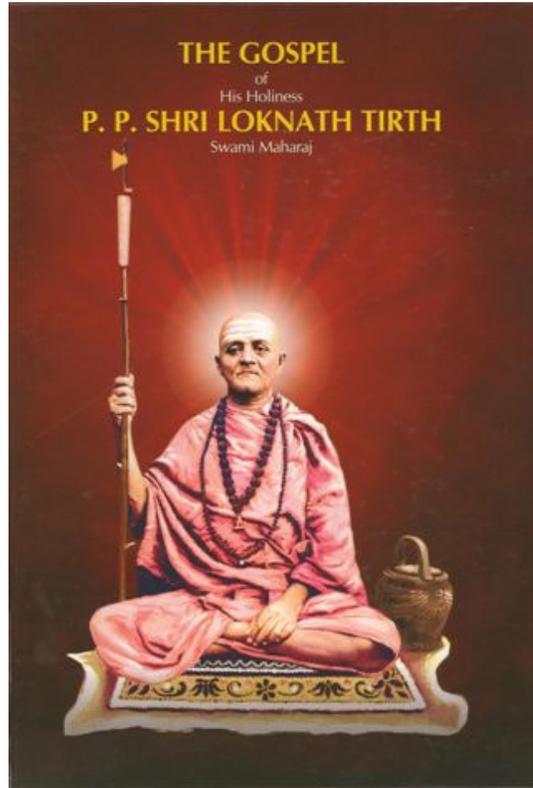
This discussion was followed by the attendees once again sitting for Mahayoga Sadhan for an hour blessed by the presence of the two honorable Dikshadhikaris (those authorized to grant Mahayoga Deeksha), P. P. Prabhune Maharaj and P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj.

## **Sadhan Shibir at Mahayoga Ashram, Thane, India (continued)**

Following the Sadhan, the Sadhaks left happily for home taking with them the energy, joy and feeling the blessings that they experienced during their participation in the Sadhan Shibir.

**By: Shri Sachin Gadkar**

## 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 November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

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 2 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>.

We also recently began a Twitter feed at [https://twitter.com/Mahayoga\\_Org](https://twitter.com/Mahayoga_Org). Please check it out for photographs of the recent events held at various Maha Yoga Ashrams.



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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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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!**