

Self Awakening

November 1, 2010
Volume 3, Issue 2

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



Editor's note

Dear Readers:

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

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

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

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

Contents

Editor's note	1
Maha Yoga Lineage - Part 3	2
Churning of the Heart	6
Answers to questions	17
Sadhak activities	22
Universal Brotherhood Day	24
Book announcement	25
Upcoming events	26
Website updates	26
How to contribute content	27

Our Maha Yoga Lineage - Part 3

Editor's note: This is the third installment of a series of articles on our Maha Yoga and Shaktipat lineage. In a previous issue (February 2010 archived at <http://www.mahayoga.org/selfawakening.htm> on pages 5 and 6) we presented a couple of charts of our lineage "tree" naming the luminaries who have brought this invaluable gift of Maha Yoga over the centuries to our present times. In this issue we present short descriptions of the lives of P. P. Shri Yogananda Maharaj and P. P. Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj, the two leading disciples of P. P. Swami Narayan Tirth Dev Maharaj. These descriptions are available thanks to Dr. Kurt Keutzer from his web-site at <http://www.eecs.berkeley.edu/~keutzer/kundalini/shivom-tradition.html>

Shri Yogananda Maharaj



Shri Yogananda Maharaj, originally known as Daya Shankar, was born in Junagar, Gujarat at the beginning of the present century. The exact place of birth of Shri Yoganandaji is not known since he was always reluctant to give any details about his private life. He confined himself to talking about Yoga practices, devotion and spiritual advancement. The father of Shri Yogananda died quite early and the family became poverty stricken; consequently his educational advancement was limited. His initial efforts of earning his livelihood in Bombay failed as he was totally straightforward in his dealings with people. In addition, he had a genuine love for the company of saints. His indifference toward the world gradually increased

and ultimately he renounced his home in search of a competent master. At that time, he was attracted to Shri Tri Vikram Swami, a spiritual master who resided near Prabhas Patan, and Shri Atmanandaji Saraswati, who resided in Brahma Teertha near the river Ganges. He acquired knowledge of yoga but was not satisfied with it. Ultimately he met Shri Krishnanandaji Maharaj, a Bengali Brahmachari (aspirant of God). The Brahmachari was a great devotee and used to do japa (chanting) of the Gayatri Mantra constantly.

The two became so close to each other that they became lifelong companions. Although the Brahmachari was basically a devotee and Daya Shankar had interest only in yoga, their intimacy and liking for each other were that of a teacher and a disciple. Brahmachari Krishnananda was always keenly searching for a competent teacher of yoga for his disciple, Daya Shankar. At last Krishnanandaji came to know about Swami Narayan Tirth Maharaj of East Bengal (now Bangladesh) and they set out to meet him. They reached there after a long journey. Krishnanandaji approached Swami Narayan Tirth in the following straightforward manner: "If you really have anything to give, please shower your grace on my disciple but please do not confuse us any further."

Our Maha Yoga Lineage - Part 3 (continued)

The swami replied, "I am not a hypocritical saint. If your disciple remains unsatisfied with me, it would mean that there is something basically wrong with his state of consciousness. You have, any way, come to the right place and I can only assure you not to have doubts about the true light that your disciple can get here." The Swami thereafter initiated Daya Shankar into Shaktipat, who later came to be known as Yogananda Brahmachari and finally as Yogendra Vigyani.

Shri Yoganandaji and the Brahmachari Krishnananda stayed together in the Ashram (spiritual center) and continued spiritual practices. Shri Yoganandaji soon started having rich yoga experiences. He experienced a number of automatic movements (kriyas) during his meditation. The Swami was very pleased with Krishnanandaji, whom he wanted to empower for the purpose of initiating others, but Krishnanandaji, basically a devotee, declined this and instead requested Swamiji to empower Yoganandaji with the ability to initiate others. Yoganandaji, who was only sitting there, clarified that he was already empowered to initiate others as Swamiji had so desired through Brahmachari Krishnananda. He thereafter bowed down before the two saints who actually blessed him with that power.

On the way back from the Ashram of Swami Narayan Tirth Maharaj, Yoganandaji sojourned for some time in a few other spiritual centers. He experienced many miraculous and mysterious automatic movements during his Sadhan. Finally, he thought of settling down after constructing a cottage in the village of Mandu near the Ganges River in Uttar Pradesh. However, when the place was ready, Brahmachari Krishnanandaji, visiting there, declared that the center was polluted by the affairs of money, and that it was an undeserving place for Yoganandaji to live. Yoganandaji therefore immediately left the new Ashram and never looked back. He thereafter stayed in Swargashram in Rishikesh and established Vigyan Ashram there. Later on he became known as Yogendra Vigyani. Shri Yoganandaji initiated a number of aspirants into the Shaktipat system, including Swami Vishnu Tirth Maharaj and Swami Shankar Pururushottam Tirth. He wrote a notable book in Hindi entitled *Mahayoga Vigyan*. He left his mortal form in 1959 dissolving into the Absolute.

Our Maha Yoga Lineage - Part 3 (continued)

Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj



Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj was the Shaktipat and Sanyas Guru of Swami Loknath Tirth Maharaj and Swami Narayan Tirth Maharaj. He was also the Sanyas Guru of Swami Vishnu Tirth Maharaj. A Sanyas Guru is a spiritual teacher who initiates one into the system of, Sanyas, or renunciation. He lived in the Siddhayoga Center of Benares (Varanasi) after his own initiation into Sanyas by Swami Bharati Krishna Tirth Maharaj, who was the Shankaracharya of Jagannath Puri at that time. The following is a brief account of his career.

Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj, originally known as Shri Venukumar Chattopadhyaya, was born in Lakshmipur in the District of Tripura in East Bengal (now Bangladesh) in the year 1890. His parents were religious people and this had a definite bearing on the inclinations of his mind from the beginning of his life. He also carried strong spiritual seeds accumulated by virtuous deeds in his past life. He had a natural tendency to live in the company of holy men and to be absorbed in spiritual pursuits. His mother died when he was only five years old, but he consoled his other three brothers by telling them this: "It is true that human beings have their individual mothers but there is a Divine Mother who is the mother of all. She in fact is the mistress of this world and is the beginning and end of all. Our mother has merged into Her. She will certainly give us the best care and remove our sufferings."

Shri Venukumar, in fact, thus forgot his worldly mother and became a lifelong worshiper of Divine Mother Kali, whose blessings he sought throughout his life. After dedicating himself completely to her, he visited many holy places and stayed in a number of spiritual centers. In spite of these efforts, his desire to have a direct experience of the Divine Mother remained unfulfilled. Ultimately he received the blessings of Swami Narayan Dev Tirth Maharaj at Madaripur who captivated him for the remainder of his life.

Swami Narayan Dev Tirth Maharaj initiated Shri Venukumar into Maha Yoga by granting him Shaktipat Deeksha and he enrolled as a Brahmachari under Swami Narayan Dev Tirth Maharaj's tutelage. For eight years he served his Guru continuously with untiring labor. East Bengal is a unique country because nearly the entire area is covered by water for about eight months out of the year. To collect dry firewood, beg for food from nearby areas and provide meals for a number of guests visiting the Ashram at such a time was never an easy job. Furthermore, since his teacher was a great disciplinarian, the disciples were punished for even their smallest faults. Shri Venukumar was, however, very open minded and patient. Ultimately, Swamiji declared Venukumar to have successfully passed the test and blessed him to go out and propagate the Maha Yoga Shaktipat system in the world.

Our Maha Yoga Lineage - Part 3 (continued)

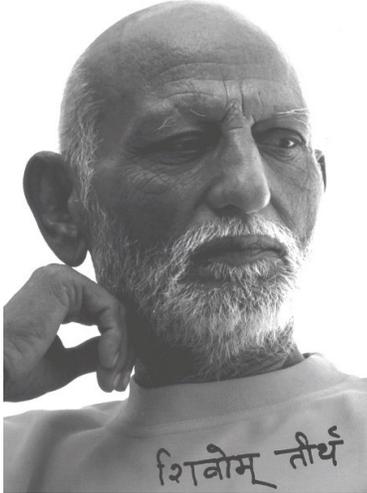
Shri Venukumar, who had come to be known as Brahmachari Atmananda Prakash, traveled far and wide and met a number of holy persons. He continued to do his spiritual practices and finally requested Sanyas initiation from Swami Narayan Dev Tirth Maharaj. Swamiji directed him to Swami Bharati Krishna Tirth of Jagannath Puri, the Shankaracharya of Govardhan Math. Swami Bharati

Krishna Tirth kindly accepted Brahmachari Atmananda Prakash and named him Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj after initiating him into Sanyas.

Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj laid the foundation of a center in Uttar Kashi near the bank of the Bhagirathi River. He called this center the Shankar Math. Since his following consisted mostly of people from West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the disciples were worried that Swamiji would not be able to spend much time with them. Therefore, another center named Siddhayoga Ashram at Varanasi was built for him shortly after this.

Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj initiated a number of disciples into the Shaktipat system and wrote several books in Bengali such as *Yoga Vani*, *Japa Sadhana*, and *Guruvani* which were later translated into Hindi. He also wrote a short treatise in English entitled *Who Am I?* Swamiji gave up his mortal body in 1958 in Calcutta and merged with Divine Mother Kali.

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt



The following is a chapter 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 19th century. In these excerpts, P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj describes his experiences and interactions with his Guru, P. P. Swami Vishnu Tirth Maharaj, who he refers to as Maharajshri or Maharajji. These excerpts are published here with the kind permission of Swami Shivom Tirth Ashram, Inc. For those Sadhaks who are interested, copies of the trilogy are available at Amazon.com

Sadhan and Social Conduct

In this excerpt, Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj discusses the role of Karma (action) and social conduct as an important element of Sadhan. He cautions Sadhaks not to run away from society and essential Karma, but to develop a sense of detachment from the fruits of social action. As Maharajshri (his Guru, Swami Vishnu Tirth Maharaj) says "performing dutiful actions does not create a state of consciousness, but it creates the chitta necessary for it". This is an extremely important message for those Sadhaks who think that spiritual progress can only be achieved by running away from society. If a Sadhak's chitta (mind stuff) isn't ready to let go of the material world, running away from it will not result in the true detachment needed for spiritual progress. Only by living in society and dealing with its ups and downs with a sense of detachment that arises from regular Sadhan, will a Sadhak be able to condition his chitta to make rapid spiritual progress. A must read for all Sadhaks. - Editor

Maharajshri considered social conduct to be sadhan. Social conduct makes a person turn away from sadhan, but it also inclines one towards sadhan. Social conduct produces attachment in the mind, but it also frees one from attachment. Social conduct is the door to sadhan and without entering it, sadhan is not possible. Whenever somebody blames conduct or social interaction, saying it should be rejected, he is talking about the rejection of conduct full of pride and attachment. Improper conduct will not go away on its own. Like a bullock at the grinding stone, a living being will keep circling around it. But pure conduct is discarded automatically after the mind is purified. Then if a person interacts with someone else, it is not painful or binding. In fact, to be freed from one's Prarabdha [destiny] one must conduct oneself socially. For the destruction of Rajo guna, too, social

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

conduct is the solution. For a sense of service, too, there is a need of a social framework. In a Guru-Shishya relationship mutual conduct plays an important role. Without relationships the protection of this body is impossible. The essence is that social conduct cannot be neglected.

But a worldly person doesn't know how to conduct himself. He turns away from spirituality before he enters society. He believes that social conduct is everything. His conduct is not a means, it is a goal. It includes attachment, affection, likes, dislikes and pride. He takes the entire responsibility for doing his tasks and acquiring its fruit on his own shoulders. He even forgets that there is an all-pervading power that controls and drives this world. He plans and works tirelessly to succeed.

If the result is consistent with his wishes, he is overjoyed and credits his capability and hard work. If the result is contrary to his expectations, he becomes sad and blames God. His every action soils his mind. He believes that performing an action is karma yoga. He plans beyond his capabilities and dreams of things he does not deserve. The distinction between moral and immoral is lost to him.

On the contrary, the conduct of an aspirant is totally different. He treats social conduct as his sadhan. He only performs actions that are his duties, and discards actions beyond his duty like a straw. He considers the joys and sorrows confronting him as the law of providence and maintains his composure without letting the mind get affected. He performs every task with concentration but upon leaving it, mentally and physically distances from it. He never makes bad or unnecessary resolutions. He conducts himself with a sense of service. Whatever be the situation he does not get agitated. His conduct, too, is a prayer to God. He performs every task with sacredness. While performing his social interactions, his face glows with happiness.

Maharajshri understood the essence of action and knew at what level a human being was positioned. He was very well aware of where each being had to rise from, how he must rise and, while rising, what precautions he must take. He understood that a common man was incapable of immediately climbing to the peak of detachment. A common man was incapable of establishing harmony between spiritual practice and action. He would have to slowly ascend one level at a time. He would have to advance cautiously and with great care. While bandaging a wound a person recoils. Similarly an aspirant would probably try to save himself from performing his dutiful action, but the task of the Guru is to bring him on track. Thus the responsibility of a Guru is immense.

Maharajshri's style of explanation was unique. He would take a very simple topic as the foundation and speak profoundly, making the subject crystal clear to the listener. The listener would not even imagine that such a small incident could have such a profound mystery hidden within. For instance, there were some fruit-bearing trees in the ashram - mango, chickoo, gromia, lime and so forth. Those who came to seek his blessings would attempt to pick them and take them away. The ashramites would object to this and occasionally there would be an altercation. Once such a situation arose. The ashramites

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

objected, which resulted in a quarrel. It did not result in a fight but it was a heated argument. Maharajshri was in his chamber. On hearing the commotion he came out. The moment he arrived the argument ended.

Later, in discussion with the ashramites, he said, "You become excited even before you stop them from picking fruit, and thus you magnify the issue. Those people are surely at fault, but you are, too. You forget that you are not common worldly people. You are ashramites - different from common people. We haven't planted these trees for their fruit. The Lord gives us fruit without effort. We have planted those trees for beauty and elegance. If these people harvest anything, it is just the fruit. They do not spoil the beauty and elegance. To be attached to beauty and elegance is not beneficial. If tomorrow someone comes and cuts down the tree itself, you may fight with him, but you will not restore the tree. You cannot restore the lost elegance, so why fight? Why this agitation of the mind? If there is an altercation, do it in such a manner that neither does your chitta get agitated, nor is the other person's chitta affected. Now have a look at your face, how the anger in your heart is being reflected on it. Life is not for being unhappy."

Then explaining further he said, "This instance reflects how you will approach the performance of actions in general. You all are ashramites - in a way renunciates. It is your duty to solve the mystery of karma facing the world. Unnecessary karma becomes evil karma. Either by performing a task the situation gets better, or else that action is unnecessary. If you answer that your duty is to carry out the karma and not focus on the result, then karma with attachment is not your duty. If there is attachment, the attention invariably turns towards the result. Getting into a quarrel as you have is unnecessary, which suggests attachment. Nothing but agitation will be obtained from this.

In such a manner a person wastes his time in unnecessary karmas. He keeps on accumulating impressions and keeps on revolving in this cycle of death. It is true that performing dutiful actions does not create a state of consciousness, but it creates the chitta necessary for it. Karma is the only coolant that can silence the fire of passion. Karma is such a Sun that can brighten a dark house. Karma destroys karma. Hence it is necessary that the pure, harmonious and spiritual nature of karma always be there in front of the aspirant."

I was sitting quietly, listening to everything. Then I asked, "The scriptures and the saints have called the world a delusion, therefore any karma performed in this world is also a delusion. Why is karma so important?"

Maharajshri said, "You are right. If this world is a delusion, then every incident taking place in it, every word uttered and every karma performed is a delusion, too. But to realize this delusion we must first deliberately bring the notion of the world to an end. Its falseness becomes apparent only after it is destroyed. In order for this notion to dissolve we must destroy it. It is like a dream that must destroy the cause of the dream before it can be interrupted. Even if karma is delusional it can be a cause for purification of the mind. Just as the state beyond emotions cannot be achieved unless the emotions of the heart come

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

forth, the state beyond karma cannot be achieved without performing karma. Also, the dissolution of the impressions created out of ego cannot take place.

“A notion can be ended with a notion. You can also understand this idea in this manner: If this world is a delusion, then this ashram, these fruit bearing trees, the picking of the fruit by the guests, this altercation, this discussion - all this is a delusion. Then why are we agitated?

“Understand one thing. The principle of nonduality [advaita] is correct in its place, but all the rules of karma and spiritual practice are based on duality [dvaita], which indicates that while one does spiritual practice in duality, one has to achieve nonduality. A living being is in duality. If the discussion of nonduality is limited to a discussion only, then it is merely an intellectual indulgence. Only by performing karma and spiritual practice, and by thus purifying the mind, will the illusion of duality be dissolved. If, in the beginning, when the chitta is impure, one accepts the principle of delusion, then spiritual practice also becomes a delusion. This is inevitable for the state of nonduality.

“When you are hungry, you pounce upon food. Feeling hungry and eating food, both are delusional, but only eating satisfies hunger. In the same way the impressions that have accumulated in the chitta and the disturbing tendencies [rajo gunas] that have developed can be removed only by performing good karmas. We cannot overlook accumulated impressions, desires and the impurity of the mind. We cannot ignore them by calling them delusional. If we do so the delusion will continue to exist and we will remain in duality.

“Mere talking is not enough. If you want to get rid of karma then carry out karma and do so with a sense of service and duty. Inward contemplation [nivritti] arises out of social action [pravritti]. Hunger cannot be satisfied without eating food. Sleep is broken only upon waking up. The problem is most people do not understand the pure nature of karma. Some consider karma to be a cause of bondage. Others consider performing the act to be karma, while another performs a karma with attachment and driven by desires.”

After initiation I stayed in the ashram for a while. Then one day the thought came to me that I had been living there for four or five months. It was improper to be a burden on the ashram for such a long time. The place in Himachal Pradesh where I had built a cottage and lived before coming to Dewas was on my mind. I like mountainous places a great deal. I enjoyed having brooks everywhere, crooked rivers and roads. Images of high and low greenery lingered in my mind. Frequently the memories of the divine mental bliss I experienced while living there would come back and touch my heart. Therefore the thought was in my mind that, after leaving this place, I would settle in a hill station, solitary, and spend my life immersed in sadhan, in renunciation and without distraction. One day, on finding a suitable opportunity, I proposed to Maharajshri in this manner: “I first came to Dewas with the intention of staying ten to fifteen days in order to be initiated. You were in Nepal at that time, so I had to stay here for two months, awaiting your return. You blessed me with initiation one month after your arrival. Now more than two months have passed since my initiation. Therefore I pray that you grant me permission to take leave.”

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

Maharajshri asked where I would go, and I told him that I would stay at some suitable place and do sadhan. I hadn't decided upon a place, but most likely I would look in Himachal Pradesh. At this Maharajshri said, "Isn't this place suitable for your sadhan?"

I replied, "This place is the best. Guru Maharaj is seated here. There is much solitude. All kinds of facilities are here. There is a cave for sadhan. What place could be better than this? But out of embarrassment, concerned that others might think I have remained a burden on the ashram for a long time, I have considered leaving. In fact, I will always be available to serve at your feet. At one call of yours, I shall come running."

To that Maharajshri said, "People will say? Which people? This ashram does not belong to the people. I reside here; I shall keep whomsoever I wish. There is no reason to be embarrassed."

I answered, "There is one more thing. There is solitude here, but not the kind of solitude where one is completely alone. Someone or the other always comes. When people come, they gossip. This can make the mind unsteady. My mind wishes that my attention remain undisturbed."

On this Maharajshri responded, "This is your mistake. The mind doesn't become restless due to external conditions alone. Inner impressions and desires also play a part. In reality, the actual cause of restlessness lies within. You want to break away from everything [nivritti] directly, but will not be able to do so. An uninterrupted state is attained only through the experience of social conduct. From what I see, you will not be able to hold yourself away from everything [in nivritti], therefore it is best that you follow a path comprising partly of pravritti and partly nivritti. Both these states are available here. While living among people in society, the study of nivritti is more beneficial.

"Hold the ideal of Swami Gangadhar Tirth Maharaj in front of you. If in the future you develop his kind of mental state, then you, too, can do as he did, if you wish, but you need to prepare a lot for that. The mental bliss you experienced in Himachal Pradesh would not have lasted long. Inner tendencies would have risen, become activated, and could have destroyed that bliss. Do not play with your mind now. Slowly purify your mind with service and spiritual practice. Prepare it, then you may live in pravritti or in nivritti."

I could not ignore Maharajshri's order and advice. I thought that staying at Maharajshri's feet for a year would give me the benefit of serving. Maybe my welfare was in this only. After a period of time I realized it was due to my ego that I had made the decision to leave.

Once I had offered myself at the feet of the Guru, my mind had no right to make an independent decision. If you think about surrender, it is a very far-reaching matter. Man wants to surrender and at the same time safeguard his ego. The same thing happens in sadhan. Who can resist from interfering mentally?

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

Whatever it was, it was my decision at that time to stay at the feet of the Lord and serve. I had no experience of living and conducting myself amongst people and society. It is a fearful era. People are well versed in stabbing while talking sweetly. Selfishness and pride reign in all the four directions. Under such circumstances one is scared to talk to others. How would I survive? As it was, Maharajshri's harmonious influence was spread over the ashram. Many bad qualities prevalent in the world were suppressed once they arrived here, but who can change the flow of the times? On the one hand, there was my desire for Maharajshri's company and service, on the other my fear of problems arising out of contact with people. The majority of the people at the ashram were inclined towards the Guru, but some were still self-absorbed.

As has been said earlier, at that time the size of the ashram was very small. Not many visitors came, but what a difference they made. Whenever two or more people get together, there is a possibility of some dispute. The world is the same everywhere. Be it an institution, organization, home, shop or office, there are actions full of attachment and aversion, push and pull, and selfishness everywhere. But Maharajshri, overwhelmed by a feeling for my welfare, had ordered me to stay here. It must be for my good.

Now that I had to live in the ashram, it was important to plan my direction. BY now I had been living there for almost six months. This period was long enough for me to become acquainted with the activities of the ashram. People certainly did their sadhan, but the soil in the mind doesn't leave so easily. The impressions of many past lives are so solidly established inside that they make the mind unstable, make it follow them, and keep it wandering in the world. It was good that I had attempted to keep myself away from attachments and aversions here and, by the grace of the Guru, I had been quite successful. I would listen to everyone but remain quiet myself. Now the issue before me was that I had to spend one year here. The joy of proximity to the Guru was a great attraction for me and hence I rejected the joy of solitude. For solitude my whole life was still ahead of me.

Now the problem I was faced with was what kind of lifestyle I should maintain so as not to get entangled in any dispute. After deep contemplation and thought I reached the conclusion that, first and foremost, I should set some rules for myself regarding what to pay attention to, what to safeguard against, and what I needed to do. Once rules are laid down, they must be strictly adhered to. The following rules were finalized:

- (i) To keep myself busy with more and more seva activity. An empty mind is a devil's workshop. It invariably comes up with useless things. In this way I would avoid hearing people criticize and talk ill about others. Even if someone wanted to talk to me, he would have to wait for some time because I would be busy with my work and would be able to listen only after I had finished. In this way I kept myself free from an unnecessary environment.
- (ii) To immediately go away from wherever there is a dispute, altercation or fight. Even if one doesn't utter a single word, doesn't interfere and take side or oppose anyone, he can still be called as a witness anytime. It is clear that whatever the

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

witness says will be in someone's favor and against another. Whoever it is against is bound to become an opponent. The best thing is to slip away from such situations.

- (iii) Since the beginning I had no interest in talking ill about others, gossiping or instigating people against one another. I remember an incident: A particular gentleman was talking a lot against me. At one point I had a talk with him about this and he said that I, too, could talk against him. At that time I said, "Then what would be the difference between you and me? It is better, when you speak against me, that I still not talk against you, but rather respect you and love you as before." The same rule I finalized again. "Do not listen to anyone's criticism, nor criticize anyone." This caused me a great deal of discomfort, but my mind remained calm. I recognize that it feels very good to criticize someone and to listen to others criticize. There is pleasure in it, but its results are very frightening. Due to this rule, I became less important in many areas.
- (iv) To not complain about anyone. I was in the personal service of Maharajshri. I had many opportunities to say things about people, if I wished. In some ways I was the *via media* between Maharajshri and people. I was also aware of the situations of the other aspirants. Some were jealous of me due to my proximity to Maharajshri, but I never complained about anyone. Complaining means making that person your enemy. In response, that person covers up the actual cause of complaint, and introduces other incidents, factual or imaginary, to defend himself. He starts raising unrelated arguments. A person who has made service his goal doesn't have time to give clarifications for such unnecessary things or get involved in them. Yet, in spite of taking so many precautions, sometimes, unnecessary arguments would invariably occur. Such is the world. It thinks according to its own mental state. The more you try to keep away from it, the more it surrounds you. But this rule gave me mental satisfaction.
- (v) To avoid unnecessary arguments. When people make an argument an issue of personal defeat or victory, that argument becomes meaningless and unnecessary because the distinction between right and wrong ceases to exist. An argument is for understanding, for explaining your point of view and persuading. Upon losing, a participant may want to seek revenge. In this way unnecessary enmity can breed. To understand a topic, acceptable arguments are not unnecessary. But unnecessary arguments are a waste of time. It is a loss of service and a cause of an impure mind. At such times, get up and leave, immediately accept defeat or remain quiet.
- (vi) To try to act in complete accord with Guru Maharaj's wishes and orders. I would do everything to please the Guru. If this is not the case, then there is no point in serving. Talk humbly to Maharajshri and try to understand his intent. Follow Guru Maharaj's orders literally, in front of him and in his absence, too. Do not interrupt if Guru Maharaj is speaking to somebody, and do not try to establish

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

my importance in front of other people. Remain close to him to be able to answer if he asks anything. When Maharajshri is seated amongst people and groups, either stand behind him or sit behind the people facing him. When he is walking, walk behind him and go wherever he wishes to go. Do any job exactly as he wants it to be done. Never argue beforehand and keep quiet when scolded.

My mind was certainly impure. There was clearly a need for much sadhan, for tolerance of many things, and for generosity in order to get rid of impurities. It is not an easy task to chop off your head with your own hands. The same is the case with sadhan. Chopping off the head of our ego is sadhan. He who wants to save his head cannot reap the fruits of sadhan. I knew this fact, but pride within was getting in my way. Even though I was following the rules, there was uneasiness inside. If pride did not find an occasion to come out, it would keep churning my heart inside. I would become sad. Many times, even though I wasn't at fault, and despite his being aware of the details of an incident, Maharajshri would scold me and ask me to beg for forgiveness from some person. Upholding the command of the Guru, I would seek forgiveness, but internally I would writhe in agony. It was my ego that was being hurt and probably Maharajshri's intent was to inflict a blow on my mind. Also, it wasn't necessary for Maharajshri to explain his point of view to other people. Only a Guru knows about Gurus. Due to their impure chitta, people could have misinterpreted what he said.

I laid down rules, but it was extremely difficult to follow them. People do not judge a person based on his rules, feelings and conditions. They judge him through the blinders of their own feelings. They weigh him by their own thoughts. An aspirant who is in contact with the public and is involved in serving everyone encounters many difficulties. I repeatedly evaluated the competence of my mind, my tolerance and my capability. Eventually I decided to commit to my rules. If I do not walk, how will I get to where I am going? I have to start some time or the other. If I make a mistake, I will be scolded. That, too, will be beneficial for me. Some of the qualities imposed by my rules already existed in me. I would have to make an effort for those that did not yet exist within. In the same way I made resolutions at the beginning of the last decade of the past century, but their mention here would be out of context. In the present selfish era, one encounters a lot of difficulties in following such rules. I, too, encountered them, but by the grace of the Guru I kept surmounting these difficulties.

The example of Grandsire Bhishma, in the Mahabharata, illustrates the inner turmoil of an aspirant. He had taken a vow and throughout his life had stuck to it. Dhritarashtra, the King, was blind with attachment. He thought only about his son, Duryodhana. Every decision of Dhritarashtra was clearly stamped by this attachment. Bhishma was bound by an oath to protect the king who occupied the throne, to follow every command of his and not to question anything. He would burn internally but endure his anguish. Neither could he say anything to anyone, nor could he utter even a word of complaint. He had to fight alongside Duryodhana's allies against his own wishes and also endure the insulting, disgraceful sight of Draupadi's disrobing. He tolerated everything with a distressed heart, but his resolve did not shake. The state of a tolerant, serious aspirant is somewhat similar to this. He endures

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

insults, regarding them as the law of providence, without a word of complaint on his lips. He respects everyone, loves everyone. People condemn him; he keeps on listening. If someone misbehaves, he forgives. His goal is to subdue his mind, not to acquire the praises and applause of the world. But even in this inner fire he experiences joy. He regards the joys and sorrows experienced in the world as the fruit of his destiny. Joys and sorrows come and go. They leave behind a pure mind. Thus he hears criticism and does not react. If someone oppresses him, he forgives. He loves even those who consider him to be their enemy.

In those days I was responsible for an excessive amount of ashram activities. My schedule would start at three o'clock in the morning. In twenty-four hours, Maharajshri would have just one cup of coffee at half past three in the morning, and no more tea or coffee throughout the day. I would have to get up at three o'clock and finish my morning activities before making coffee at half past three. Then I would begin rendering services: clean Guru Maharaj's cottage, take Maharajshri for a walk, make arrangements for his bath, shop, do kitchen work, take care of the garden, look after visitors, and other things. Throughout the day I did not even have time to stop and converse. In addition to the personal service of Maharajshri, there was the responsibility of ashram activities. I was so busy that I would hardly get time for my Sadhan. For that I would enter the cave at ten o'clock at night after Maharajshri had retired for the day.

All this service was nothing, neither in its effect, nor in my feelings. The head bows down with reverence upon reading about those who have continuously served their Gurus with an unbroken sentiment. I seemed like a dwarf in comparison to the untiring effort and sense of service with which Supreme Gurudev Swami Shankar Purushottam Tirth Maharaj, now one with the absolute, served his Gurudev Swami Narayan Tirth Dev Maharaj. No one can serve Guru Maharaj. Only he upon whom the Guru showers his grace and from whom he wishes to be served can serve the Guru. Therefore the credit of service goes not to the sevak [the one rendering service] but to the one being served. While rendering my service, at times I would get angry. Pride would arise at times. All this is against the dharma [duty] of a sevak, but the impurity of my mind would trouble me. A sense of service was the remedy for it, but occasionally service would become a harsh medicine instead of a good one. Then I would condemn my mind. At times I would end up crying over my mental state.

To understand the mysteries of the way of service [seva dharma] and to draw inspiration, in my spare time I would read stores of *Guru Sevaks* published by Kalyan Press, Gorakhpur. The feelings and dedication with which those devotees served their gurus are unparalleled. I was still raw and a novice, but I could still hold them before me as an ideal. This helped me in understanding the matter.

When Shri Guru Maharaj went somewhere for lunch, and if he took me with him, all my resistances would dissolve. I would not speak without being spoken to, nor comment on anything. I would eat whatever and however much was given, and attend to the protocols of rising and sitting. Even if the pulses or cooked vegetables did not have salt, I wouldn't ask for it. Guru Maharaj's love was infinite. It wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that he

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

drenched me in a rain of love. But his reprimand had a color of its own. Whenever he resorted to reprimands, he would do so without any hesitation, leaving no stone unturned, but the next moment he would transform into his loving form.

I remember an incidence of Maharajshri's generosity. A certain ascetic came to the ashram. Some ashramites did not like his arrival. They believed that such wandering ascetics roamed only for food. They inquired of Maharajshri whether they could ask him to leave. Maharajshri said, "First give him food. It is inappropriate to ask a person who has come with a hope of food to leave without offering it. You are not aware of the difficulties of a wandering ascetic; where to eat, where to sleep. For them nothing is definite. Each day they are unsure whether they will get any food to eat or not. This is a form of sadhan." The thoughts of Maharajshri and other people were so far apart. On one side was the very personification of generosity and, on the other, a contracted heart. Spellbound, I was listening to Maharajshri's voice. The ashramites could not appreciate Maharajshri's words, but what could they do? It was an order. They served him food.

After resting for some time, Maharajshri was sitting in the courtyard. A person from the nearby village brought around twenty kilograms of wheat on his head as a gift. Suddenly Maharajshri shouted, "Call all those people who wanted to send the ascetic away without serving him food." After everyone had arrived Maharajshri said, "In return for the food you gave to that ascetic, receive this wheat."

Everyone looked at each other's face. No one had anything to say. Then Maharajshri said, "Do you think you have served him food? No one can serve anything to anyone, nor give anything. All eat according to their destiny, take according to their destiny. When a person walks, his destiny walks ahead of him. It is your misconception that you feed another. If it is not in your destiny, even if you possess everything in the house, you will still remain hungry. If it is in your destiny, even in a forest you will receive delicacies to fill your stomach. Anyone can be the medium." I have witnessed many similar incidents of Maharajshri, through which the generosity of his heart was demonstrated.

Maharajshri was always opposed to influencing the disciples of other Gurus and accepting them into his sphere of control. "Those who cannot commit to their own Guru, how will they commit to us? Even if they could, faith in one's own Guru is always beneficial. One should never interfere in the spiritual practice of someone else's disciple. If a disciple of some other Guru asked a question, the answer should be, 'Ask this to your Guru Maharaj. Do as he says.' Even if the sadhana is the same, there could be a difference in the system. The mixture of two systems can destroy the naturalness of the kriyas of an aspirant. Only the system of spiritual practice professed by one's own Guru Maharaj is beneficial to the aspirant."

In this way I would find myself at confusing crossroads. On one side were the attachments, aversions, lust, anger, greed, selfishness and other bad tendencies of the world. On another was the excessive burden of ashram services. On a third side were impurities within me. On a fourth side was Maharajshri's grace, his love-filled conduct and his simple, serene and

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

spiritual personality. Sometimes my mind would incline towards one side and sometimes toward another. While serving the ashram, my anger and pride would assail me intermittently. Generally I would keep it inside, but my mind would lose control at times. In the world attachments, aversions, selfishness and other things have captured the minds of all people. While dealing with me, if someone invoked these bad qualities, my mind would be tormented within. But what can one do about this world? Neither has it improved, nor will it improve. The impurities of the mind keep on disturbing the chitta. As long as there is garbage in the mind, defilement is bound to be there. Guru Maharaj's personality was the only support. A single, sweet, love-filled smile of his would cool the depths of my heart. Every instructional word from him would put to rest old and festering doubts, and the system of sadhan given by him would wash away all the impurities of the chitta. Until now I had just been hearing the words "Guru" and "Gurutattva" [the fundamental cosmic principle in the Guru]. Now their nature, their secrets and their difference began to clear for me.

I was enclosed in four walls, such that there was no door between the two walls of worldly attachments and aversions, and of the impurities of my mind. The wall of service had a small window that, nevertheless, had a persistent filter of pride and anger. Through it I could see the beautiful scenery outside and cool air entered inside. The fourth wall, that of Guru's grace, had a huge gate and, through that, one could pass without anyone stopping or questioning you. The Guru's grace is the only door to come out of this prison, that is, the painful illusory web of this world.

At Maharajshri's feet my faith increased. Now while carrying out the services of the ashram, going to the bazaar or in the kitchen, everywhere, every moment, I was experiencing the divine energy of Maharajshri. Everything happened on an experiential plane in my sadhan, and the same state also persisted in my conduct. While working, the mind would think of going to see Maharajshri. Fifteen minutes, half an hour later, I would make a trip to Maharajshri's room under some pretext or the other.

Presented here with kind permission from Swami Shivom Tirth Ashram, Inc. Thanks to Mrs. Alison Kamat for transcribing this and all previous excerpts from "Churning of the Heart".

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

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Answers to questions from Sadhaks

- **Question:** What happens to us after we die? How is Maha Yoga relevant in this context?

Answer: P. P. Swami Vishnu Tirth Maharaj, in his book Devatma Shakti, had the best explanation for what happens after death and how reincarnation and Moksha can be best understood. His explanation, summarized here, is as follows:

All bodies, vegetative, animal and human are made up of two parts--- physical and metaphysical, both connected together by Prana, the life force, which shines in them and makes them animate. The first is called the physical body, an organism composed of physical elements, while the second is known as Sukshma Sharir or subtle body, composed of finer principles such as the Chitta, or “mind-stuff”, and the soul.

Chitta is a comprehensive term for mind-stuff which includes the subconscious mind, impressions of perceptions, inferences, passions, likes, dislikes, emotions, sentiments and other aspects of mental functions. Impressions that are imprinted on Chitta are never obliterated, and during the lifetime of a human being they get revived again and again as the occasion demands.

At death, the Prana leaves the physical body, which decomposes into the physical elements. But death does not cause the separation of the astral body from Prana. At the time of death the Chitta transforms the impressions gained during the life (as well as from prior lives) into a seed form. This seed body, comprised of Vasanas (instinctive attachments, aversions and fear that result from all the heretofore accumulated impressions), is also called the Karan Sharir, or the causal astral body. It is called “causal” because it has in itself the potential to bring the impressions of the past life to fruition in a fresh physical body and evolve in the next life the mental and intellectual powers in furtherance of the development achieved through the series of previous births. The rays of Prana, which during life radiate from the self, stop their outflow and revert to their centre within the causal body i.e. Karan Sharir, taking within their fold, the senses, mind, intellect, and consciousness intact into the subconscious part of the Karan Sharir which migrates to take up a fresh physical body. As long as the Vasanas exist, a Karan Sharir will form at death seeking a fresh body to migrate into in order to attempt to bring the accumulated impressions to fruition.

In the new body the Chitta, or the mind-stuff, serves like a depository for the impressions or imprints of every perception, feeling and thought that act upon it, and these impressions remain there with a potentiality to be revived and brought into action in due course of time. They serve as seeds for actions in the new life or a future one, for all our activities have their origins in ideas and desires (Vasanas) which are the direct outcome of the reminiscence of these past impressions. So long as the formation of new impressions continues and the past ones have not been obliterated, there is no possibility of putting a stop to the cycle of births and deaths. The key to Moksha (liberation from

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

the cycle of births and deaths) is therefore avoiding the conversion of impressions into attachments, aversions and fear (Vasanas) and the nullification of the potentiality of past ones.

The consciousness of one's self is the sap that nourishes the trio of attachments, aversion and fear. As the consciousness of self (ego) fades away the hold of the Vasanas gets weakened. When a person is involved in deep thought, even though his mind is active, he loses his feeling of self. He becomes for a time immune to the influences of attractions, aversions and fear. With continued and diligent practice his mind achieves such a level of stability that it hardly stoops to the level of worldly likes and dislikes and ceases to be ever over-awed. The deep meditative state of Samadhi has even a more lasting effect, it enfeebles the hold of Vasanas as he becomes experientially aware of his true self as being unbound by space and time and the transitory material world. His desires for material enjoyments and pleasure, and physical aversions and fears are replaced by the realization of a permanent bliss. The worldly attractions cease to charm him and misfortunes lose the sting of horror. He achieves Moksha, or liberation from the cycle of births and deaths, and at death, components of the astral body undergo an evolution and one after the other evolve into pure Prana and the soul's exigency of taking up another physical body is eliminated.

Maha Yoga is a direct and effective way to begin to actually experience the meditative state, the diligent practice of which will over time reduce and eliminate the accumulated impressions of current and past lives, replace the consciousness of one's material self and ego with a true awareness of the unbounded spiritual self within us, and free us from the need to continue with the cycle of death and rebirth, i.e. lead us to Moksha.

- **Question:** We all know intellectually that Chaitanya (Universal Life Energy) is present in all living organisms. But how can we go beyond just having this intellectual understanding to actually realizing it? Because, without this realization, the Dvaita (duality) feeling, i.e. the feeling of our separateness from Chaitanya, will continue to remain.

Answer: You are right, it is extremely important for a Sadhak to go beyond the intellectual understanding that Chaitanya pervades all living beings to actually experiencing it. But this cannot be achieved through reading alone, or through any thing that a Sadhak does with intent. As long as the Sadhak is in the Karta (doer) mode, he will be unable to shed his ego and without that he will not experience the Chaitanya within himself as being the same Chaitanya that pervades us all. Diligent Maha Yoga Sadhan, during which the Sadhak surrenders to the Chaitanya within himself, is the only sure fire way to actually experience the presence of the all-pervading Chaitanya within oneself.

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

When you sit for Sadhan, simply surrender to the Chaitanya Shakti and let her be the doer. Put yourself in the role of an observer and simply watch and experience all that happens. If physical Kriyas (actions) happen automatically, let them happen. Just observe them. If a feeling of Bhakti (devotion) towards a specific form of God you revere arises, let it happen. Such a feeling is Dvaita Bhava (feeling of duality) but there is nothing wrong with that. It is simply a form of mental Kriya that may be essential for you to experience on your path of spiritual progress. Do not get attached to it, simply observe that it is happening and continue sitting for Sadhan on a regular basis.

Gradually, with regular and diligent Sadhan, you will find that your mind will become emptied of physical and mental attachments and aversions, and the feeling of “separateness” or Dvaita will also go away, and eventually you will experience the Advaita (non-duality) stage on a sustained basis.

- **Question:** Even though we lose awareness of our bodies during Sadhan, we often seem to be doing some kriya (action) or the other. Is this the same as what is commonly known as “Kriya Yoga”?

Answer: When you sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan, you are not to be the doer, you are simply the observer. During Maha Yoga Sadhan, kriyas happen automatically and only as needed for the spiritual progress of the Sadhak. This is distinct from you performing any Asanas (yoga postures), Pranayam (structured breathing), Japa (chanting) or any other physical or mental activities with the intent of performing them. Let whatever happens during Sadhan, happen. Just play the role of a spectator towards such happenings. Any movements during Sadhan, both of the body or of the mind, should be allowed to occur, and simply observed as automatic kriyas, without a sense of doership on part of the Sadhak.

Kriya yoga is quite different from Siddha/Maha Yoga. It requires a Sadhak to intentionally do certain activities and practices. In Maha Yoga the Sadhak does not do anything. He simply surrenders himself to the Prana Shakti within, the automatic divine power that resides in all of us, and is the “doer” during Sadhan.

- **Question:** I sit for Sadhan regularly. What else can I do to make more progress towards achieving the goal of Atma-Sakshatkar (self-realization)?

Answer: Atma-Sakshatkar is the final stage on our paths to achieve spiritual bliss. It is best achieved by sitting for Sadhan and experiencing it on a regular and diligent basis. No special efforts need be made as the Mother Energy (Chaitanya/Prana Shakti) is the Master of Maha Yoga Sadhan and she will eventually take you to Self Realization. If you have the time available, you can sit for Sadhan more often than you do now. By doing so you will allow more opportunities for Prana Shakti to do what is needed for your spiritual progress.

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

- **Question:** How can I control my mind during Sadhan so it does not wander from one thought to another?

Answer: You should not try to control your mind or your body during Sadhan. Attempting to do so will only make the Sadhan ineffective and frustrating. Please remember that you are not to “do” anything intentionally during Sadhan other than to sit in a relaxed position, close your eyes, and observe the automatic breathing or other physical or mental kriyas (actions) that happen.

The automatic breathing that happens is the outward manifestation of Prana Shakti (Mother Energy) and it is a kriya that happens to all living beings. As you observe your automatic breathing during Sadhan, you might notice that a thought has arisen in your mind. This very act of observing the thought puts you in the position of being a Sakshi (observer/witness), at least for the short duration you spend observing the thought. Do not willfully try to suppress the thought. Attempting to do so will only cause you to dwell further on that thought or another one that follows. Instead, simply direct your attention to your automatic breathing and when you do so you will realize that the thought has gone away. After a while another thought might arise. Once again move your attention to your automatic breathing and you will find that the new thought too has been let go. Gradually the time intervals between one thought having been let go and a new thought having arisen will begin to increase. These intervals are the moments of bliss and calm which is the essence of Sadhan.

The key to Maha Yoga Sadhan is complete surrender to Prana Shakti. The mental and physical kriyas (activities) that happen during Sadhan should simply be observed. Trying to control them will only make the surrender incomplete. Surrender to Prana Shakti and let her do what is needed for your spiritual progress; simply observe her doing!

- **Question:** During Guru Pournima (full-moon day last July celebrated in honor of ones Guru) festivities I noticed many Sadhaks, both male and female, wearing traditional clothes such as Pitamber (silk vestment) and Nauwari Saris (nine yard saris). Is there any significance to wearing such clothes? Do they help improve Sadhan?

Answer: The Maha Yoga path is an ancient tradition, progress in which is dependent upon the surrendering of ones ego to the Prana Shakti. Physical clothes and dresses, etc. are in themselves not very relevant, but to the extent the use of traditional and special clothes and dress helps a Sadhak subsume his/her ego and realize that he/she is a part of a long tradition (Parampara), it can be beneficial for spiritual progress.

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

- **Question:** Are there any restrictions on the timing of food intake before and after Sadhan? Do these restrictions also apply to Sadhaks who have not received formal Deeksha (initiation) but are following Maha Yoga Purvabhyas (introductory approach to Maha Yoga)?

Answer: Food intake should be avoided for three to four hours **prior** to Sadhan or Purvabhyas and for about 15 minutes to half an hour **after** Sadhan or Purvabhyas. Our digestive process depends on Prana Shakti for its proper functioning. When our bodies and Prana Shakti are involved in the digestion process, which takes about three to four hours after food intake, we should not sit for Sadhan (or Purvabhyas) because it will conflict with the digestive process and vice versa. Also, once a Sadhak gets up after Sadhan, Pranashakti remains involved with internal Sadhan for 15 minutes to half an hour afterwards. Therefore a Sadhak should avoid food intake during that time as well. It is important for the Sadhak to make sure that during Sadhan (or Purvabhyas) he remains completely open to receiving the divine blessings from Prana Shakti. He should allow Prana Shakti to reign supreme during that time and not be involved with significant bodily processes such as food digestion. Whatever applies for Sadhan also applies for Purvabhyas.

Editor's note: Please send your questions regarding Maha Yoga and Shaktipat to: self.awakening@gmail.com.

Sadhak activities from around the world

Editor's note: P. P. Narayan Kaka Dhekane Maharaj (Kaka Maharaj) has said many times that he would like everyone on this earth to become aware of the effortless ease with which Maha Yoga can bring joyous experiences and serenity to Sadhaks at no material cost to them. With that in mind, he has urged Sadhaks, to the extent possible and to the extent they are comfortable, to inform people about the easy availability of Maha Yoga and to give them an opportunity to actually experience it through the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga (as described on page 15 of Self Awakening e-newsletter Volume 1, Issue 4, May 2009, link: <http://www.mahayoga.org/newsletter/Self Awakening Vol1 Issue 4.pdf>).

Inspired by Kaka Maharaj's sincere efforts to make everyone aware of this divine gift available to all, several Sadhaks around the world, including in the United States, Europe, Russia, Japan and India have taken the initiative to conduct such sessions. Other Sadhaks have also worked to create Sadhak communities within the cities and towns they live in, so as to provide opportunities for Satsang and support for each other. Following are two short reports, one on a Sadhak couple's efforts to increase awareness of Maha Yoga in Japan, and the other on a gathering of a Sadhak community in India. Readers interested in sharing their efforts to increase awareness of Maha Yoga or to create Maha Yoga communities, can send their reports to self.awakening@gmail.com

Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga in Japan

Mr. Omkar and Mrs. Renuka Bhawalkar have been living in the town of Ayase in the Kanagawa prefecture in Japan. They are both Maha Yoga Sadhaks, and although it is difficult for non-Japanese to become friends with the Japanese because of cultural and language barriers, the Bhawalkars have made friends with several Japanese people since they moved there.



The Japanese are mostly Buddhist and are somewhat familiar with meditation, so when Mrs. Bhawalkar invited 12 ladies from her swim club for a Maha Yoga meditation session and dinner in August this year, they were glad to attend. Mr. Bhawalkar led the group in an introductory Maha Yoga session with the help of one of the ladies who was familiar with English. And despite the language barrier, the ladies had a wonderful meditative

experience and many of them indicated that they would like to continue the practice in their own homes. The Maha Yoga session was followed by dinner and the ladies went home fed, both physically and spiritually.

Sadhak activities from around the world (continued)

The success of that session in August has inspired the Bhawalkars to talk to their other Japanese friends about Maha Yoga. More recently, Mr. Bhawalkar invited his Japanese teacher, Mrs. Izumi Ikeda and her husband for a Ganesh festival celebration because they had indicated an interest in Indian culture and Mr. Ikeda had been to India three times. Since the Ikedas are comfortable with English, Mr. Bhawalkar led them through an introductory Maha Yoga session which the Ikedas thoroughly enjoyed. Mr. and Mrs. Ikeda were very thankful to the Bhawalkars for having introduced them to Maha Yoga and they indicated that they intend to practice the introductory approach daily. The Bhawalkars are now very enthusiastic about introducing as many of their Japanese friend to Maha Yoga as possible!

Maha Yoga Sadhak Gathering in Thane, India

Nearly 75 Sadhak initiates from the lineage of P. P. Swami Loknath Tirth Maharaj gathered recently for a four hour Satsang session in Thane, a suburb of Mumbai. They were all Maha Yoga initiates of P. P. Gulvani Maharaj, P. P. Datta Maharaj Kavishwar or P. P. Narayan Kaka Dhekane Maharaj, Maha Yoga Gurus from the lineage of P. P. Swami Loknath Tirth Maharaj.

As Dr. Shyamrao Deshpande Maharaj explained in his welcome speech, the purpose of the gathering was for the Sadhaks to meet each other or renew old acquaintances, share their Maha Yoga and life experiences and the insights they have received through the unique guidance of their Maha Yoga Gurus, all with the intent that this sharing would benefit the Sadhak community at large in Thane and other Mumbai suburbs. Nearly 20 Sadhaks shared their experiences and insights at the gathering which was facilitated by Mr. Pradip Kulkarni of Borivli (Mumbai suburb).

Sadhak initiates of P. P. Gulvani Maharaj talked about their initiations many decades ago and also the divine guidance they have received from him through dreams even after he left this earth in 1974. A Sadhak initiate of P. P. Gulvani Maharaj also mentioned his extraordinary diligence in responding to the numerous daily letters he got from Sadhaks and the love he showered them with in his interactions with them. Initiates of P. P. Datta Maharaj talked about how their Maha Yoga initiation



led them away from prior vices, how his guidance helped them overcome difficulties in their lives and the special effort P. P. Datta Maharaj undertook to bring Maha Yoga to speakers of the Kannada language in the Indian state of Karnataka. Initiates of P. P. Kaka Maharaj shared the guidance they have received from him on Maha Yoga and in their day-to-day lives, their experiences during their travels with him, the love he projects to Sadhaks, and the countless ways he has given them the strength to deal with the vicissitudes of life.

The session ended with a recitation of “Pasayadan”, a benediction composed by Sant Dnyaneshwar.

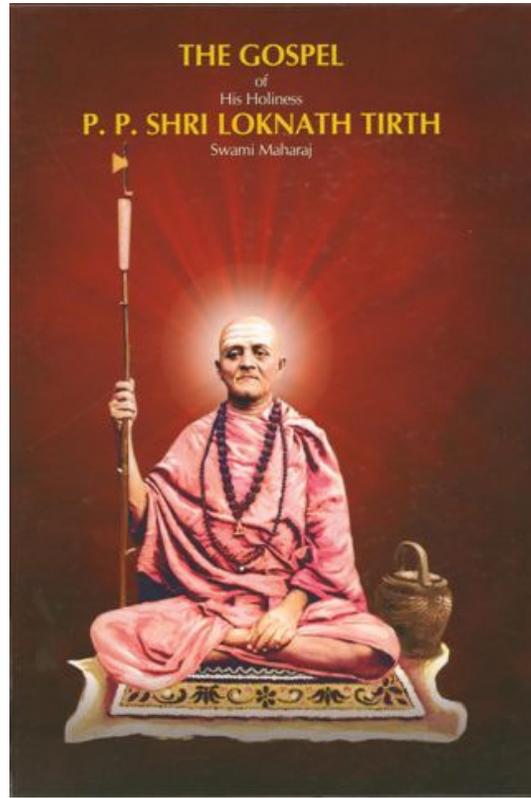
Universal Brotherhood Day and Global Maha Yoga Trial - December 12th, 2010 from 7:03 am to 7:24 am local time

P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj would like to invite everyone on this earth to participate in a Universal Brotherhood Day and Global Introductory Trial of Maha Yoga Shaktipat (Siddhayoga) for the uplift of all humankind. This introductory trial will be held on December 12th, 2010, from 7:03 am to 7:24 am local time. Those interested can participate during that time at no cost, from the privacy of their own homes. All are eligible to participate in this trial regardless of religion, race, sex, age, caste or creed. This world-wide trial can be considered to be a “trailer” or a precursor for the awakening of one’s Kundalini Shakti (Universal Life Energy) through Shaktipat (transfer of Energy) from a Siddha Yoga Master. It is a rare opportunity to experience first-hand such a transmission of Energy from a Siddha Guru.

Here’s how to participate:

- At the designated time (on December 12th, 2010, from 7:03 am to 7:24 am, local time) sit comfortably with your eyes closed in a quiet location in your home. Instantly observe a wave of energy along your spinal column.
- Relax your body completely in order to minimize the awareness of your body.
- Let your mind observe your involuntary breathing.
- Observe your experiences during the designated time interval and if you wish you may share them by e-mail with P. P. Narayan Kaka Maharaj at (mahayoga_kaka@yahoo.com).

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



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:

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Sadhaks outside of India can send an e-mail indicating their interest, including their postal address, to self.awakening@gmail.com. The price will be determined by the number of orders received from each country and estimated shipping cost, and Sadhaks will be notified accordingly. The price is unlikely to exceed US\$20.

Upcoming Events:

Deeksha Day (Initiation Day) on December 12th, 2010

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

Universal Brotherhood Day/Global Maha Yoga Trial on December 12th, 2010

Please see announcement on page 21.

Website Updates:

The Maha Yoga website www.mahayoga.org has photographs of P. P. Kaka Maharaj's meeting with the Shankaracharya of Shringeri Math, HH Jagadguru Shankaracharya Bharati Tirth Maha Swamiji. The website also has pictures of visits by Shri Pratapdada Sonawane and Shri Harishchandra Chavan, both Members of Parliament, India to the Nashik Ashram.

The Maha Yoga videos website at <http://www.mahayogavideos.org/> has available videos of various Maha Yoga related events and speeches by P. P. Kaka Maharaj.

We also 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.



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How to contribute content to the e-newsletter

The goals of our e-newsletter are:

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

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

self.awakening@gmail.com

We're on the Web!

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

May all desire to follow this nectarous Siddhayoga Path!