

Self Awakening

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Maha Yoga - Effortless, joyful and no-cost path to 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, an effortless, joyful and no cost path to 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.

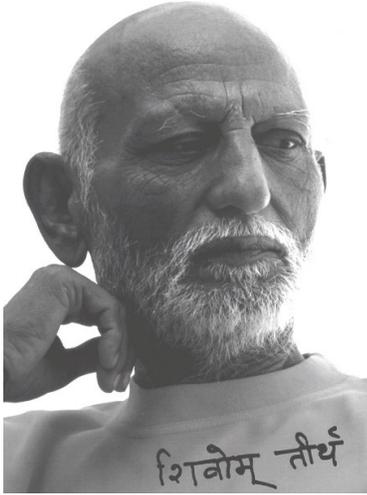
To the thousands of Sadhaks in the Maha Yoga tradition all over the world and other interested readers, this e-newsletter is intended to provide virtual Satsang. It is intended to encourage Sadhaks to remain engaged in Maha Yoga, be informed about Maha Yoga-related events around the world, and to provide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

The success of this e-newsletter will depend upon Sadhak participation and through their contribution of content. Sadhaks are therefore encouraged to contribute news about Maha Yoga-related events in their parts of the world, thoughtful articles and life experiences (not experiences during Sadhan), and questions about Maha Yoga and their Sadhan (practice) they would like addressed. Comments and suggestions regarding this e-newsletter are also most welcome. 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.

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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

A Writer's Pride

In this excerpt, Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj discusses important lessons he learned from his Guru on Karma Yoga (Yoga of Action) as described in the Bhagwad Gita. He learns that whatever action one needs to take should be done with a sense of duty; without attachment to and pride in the outcome. He explains that only when a Sadhak develops such a sense of detachment will he be able to progress spiritually. - Editor

Maharajshri would often explain that the actual support for progress in sadhana is the state of the chitta. If purity of the chitta is not attained, it does not matter how well the sadhan is going. Whatever be the kriyas, the aspirant is far from his goal. One day I was lying on my bed thinking about this. The state of my chitta was before me. I felt that its purification was very far off. I would recite the Gita daily, but the characteristics of a devotee as described in the Gita were absent in me. It was fine that I had accomplished many things, but much more was yet to be done. I could sense that. Thinking in this way, I remembered a tale. The tale is as follows:

There is a cult of ascetics in Punjab called "Suthra" who wear iron bracelets on their hands and, by playing them against a wooden stick and singing, seek alms. This tale is about their founder. At a certain place people were having spiritual discussions and singing devotional songs. The Suthra went and sat with them. When one bhajan [spiritual song] was over, the Suthra sat with his face turned to one side. After the second bhajan ended, he turned his back to the singer. After the third bhajan, he got up and started walking away. People found his behavior very offensive. Some young men ran after him, caught him and began to beat him. An old, experienced gentleman came by. He said, "Why are you beating him like this?"

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

The young men told him what the Suthra had done. The old man asked the Suthra, “Dear Sir, why did you do this?”

He replied, “When the first bhajan ended, I felt as if someone had hit my face with a stone. I turned my face away. The second bhajan ended and one more stone came. I turned my back in that direction. When the third bhajan ended, it seemed as if someone had struck me hard on the back. I couldn’t bear it and walked away. All of you who face stones and slaps daily and yet remain seated, you are great.”

I felt my state was somewhat similar. I was reciting the Gita daily and I was also in Maharajshri’s company daily. My services and sadhan were also continuing. But it seemed that everything was just passing over. The heart, it seemed, remained untouched and the knot of the mind was not untied. As a result the state of the chitta showed no signs of changing. The state of other people might also have been similar to mine, but how did that concern me? It was definite that the state of my chitta was not changing. How could it?

“The saints and the scriptures scream and scream and become silent, but man takes absolutely no heed of it. He hears it through one ear and lets it out from the other. Possibly God has given us two ears for this specific purpose. The reach of a sermon, at the most, is only as far as the intellect. The heart remains untouched. How will it be affected? There is a layer of illusion over the intellect. How will it listen and act correctly?” This was my state. I was reciting the Gita with my mouth. It had nothing to do with understanding. Then there was the question of incorporating it into my life. “People say that I am a great devotee. I have memorized the complete Gita. I recite it daily, but I alone know my state. I recite, but only verbally, like a parrot. It has nothing to do with understanding.” The saying, “A hollow bean makes a lot of noise,” was perfectly meaningful here. Thinking this way, my state distressed me. Sitting alone, I started to cry. I fell asleep amidst these thoughts.

Maharajshri was very kind. He would take care of me under such circumstances. At night he came to me in a dream. He said, “Recitation is certainly done with the mouth, but it should also be done with all one’s heart. Understand the meaning with the intellect and the feeling with the heart. Your mind is somewhere else. Your lips keep on moving. The scripture that you recite does not reach the mind. If it doesn’t reach the mind, how will it become a part of your life?”

When I went for the morning stroll with Maharajshri, I told him about the previous night’s dream. He said, “It is an auspicious sign when you see your Guru, a great soul, any form of God, a temple, and so forth, in a dream. It means that at the time of the dream sattva guna [harmonious qualities] was dominant in the chitta. If instructions are received in a dream, one must try to carry them out. This dream can be called an initiation. Shaktipat can take place in a dream. The instruction you have received in your dream is clear in itself. Try to control the mind. One cannot control the mind by simply moving the lips.”

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

Attachment is the cause of social activity and thus is a cause of bondage. Attachment gives rise to enthusiasm towards the world and also blocks the path of inner progress. I still remember an incident related to this. A retaining wall was being built in the ashram. I was helping build it myself with whatever time was available. This task had taken many days, but it still was not complete. A bramhachari and I decided that we must complete it one day. While we were engrossed in this work, the time for evening satsang [spiritual discussions] arrived. Maharajshri was in the satsang hall. We decided to skip the day's gathering. In those days discourses on *Yoga Darshan* were held. Maharajshri looked at the audience; the two of us were missing. He asked our whereabouts. He was told that we were building the wall. Maharajshri got up, came to us and said, "You have developed an attachment to the task of building the wall. Attachment is an obstacle. There is a feeling of sweetness in attachment. Attachment restricts the intellect. This is the time for satsang. You should have been present in the hall. Leave this work and come to the satsang." We left the work.

In his discourse, Maharajshri shed light on the topic. "People get involved in the world on a mental and physical plane, and as a result they are unable to perform a task at the time when it is to be done. They keep on doing the work to which they have become attached, due to which other important tasks suffer. Then problems arise and the mind becomes agitated. All this is due to attachment. Attachment prevents a man from making the right decision at the right time. This makes the mind weak. You all know that weakness of the mind is the greatest problem of a human. Habituate your mind in such a way that it takes interest in what is to be done and, when it is your duty to put aside the work, that it withdraws itself from it. This is the summary of the sermon of the Gita. Without such a habit of the mind, it is impossible to perform the spiritual practice of yoga [yoga-sadhana]."

Throughout the night that followed, thoughts kept on coming. At one moment I would laugh at my foolishness and later sadness would overshadow my mind. When I went for a stroll in the morning with Maharajshri, I was rather out of sorts. Maharajshri asked, "What are you thinking?"

I replied, "I am thinking about yesterday evening's stupidity."

To this Maharajshri responded, "This is the means of attaining nivritti [freedom from worldly affairs]. When one's duty is to leave an activity, no matter how great the attachment, one should give it up physically and mentally. Retire from it totally. In this manner the mind will learn to give up attachment and grow accustomed to performing dutiful actions. Once the chitta is purified, even dutiful action will withdraw and nivritti will arise. People simply discuss nivritti. They do not do anything to attain it. As long as one is living in pravritti, one is bound to remain there. There is no benefit in wearing a cloak of false nivritti."

I said, "This is very difficult for a common person. He has many obligations in the world that keep him engaged in inappropriate and unnecessary activities."

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

Maharajshri said, “Stop worrying about the world. Due to the weakness of its mind, the world imagines different types of obligations. Your path is different from theirs. You are free to do many things. If you fail to recognize your independence, then it’s a different story. Now just consider yesterday’s incident. If the wall is not completed in one day, what calamity will befall us? Even if it takes fifteen days, what do we lose? The services you carry out are for your spiritual advancement. If they do not result in spiritual advancement, then there is some flaw in the way they are being rendered or in the feeling with which they are performed.”

One day the thought came to my mind that, although Guru Maharaj had written so many books that were full of spiritual secrets, there was no proper arrangement for their sale. They were not reaching the common people who were thereby deprived of a possible benefit. During our stroll one day I discussed this issue. “Wouldn’t it be nice to organize the sale of your books in an orderly fashion? You have written such good books with such effort, but they do not reach the common man.”

Maharajshri remained silent for a while and then said, “I had a desire to wear a coat. I went to the bazaar, selected the cloth, had it sewn and wore the coat. My desire was satisfied so I hung the coat on a hook. Now it makes no difference to me if the coat remains on the hook or someone takes it away. My interest has either way been satisfied. I did not write the books with a desire to become famous as an author, nor to make a business out of them. I wrote them to understand the subject myself to provide some guidance to myself and for my own satisfaction. After writing them, when they get published, I distribute them among the aspirants. That’s the end of it. My interest in it is over. I have hung the coat on the hook. Whatever happens after that is fine with me.”

I requested again, “Maharajshri, your interest is satisfied. But what harm is there if your books benefit the public?”

He answered, “He who is worried about his own welfare will find his way by some means or the other. What is the use of knocking on the door of a person who is not concerned? An effort towards public welfare is, in reality, for our own benefit.”

What more could I say? I became silent. After returning to the ashram I pondered his words. Maharajshri’s perspective was quite practical and accompanied by sound logic. Study and writing can be made a part of sadhan. If they are not approached as sadhan, they become a source of pride and attachment. I had such an experience when my first book, *Sadhan Path*, was published.

In 1960 I suffered from sciatica. At the time I had many experiences, which is another topic. Much of the time I would lie in bed, moaning. For almost a month, even when there was some relief, I could not walk or move about. What could I do lying in bed? For my own guidance, I would write small notes regarding sadhan. At the time I was in Ahmedabad, where a gentleman had taken me for treatment. My knowledge of Hindi was only average,

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

so I wrote the notes in Urdu. Maharajshri knew Urdu. Upon reading my notes he said, "Okay. Translate them into Hindi."

After I translated them into Hindi, Maharajshri wrote a preface and said, "Send them to Rishikesh for printing." I was speechless upon hearing this.

"Maharajshri, how am I a writer? I have written all this for myself."

He answered, "This is the way writers are made. This is the beginning. Send it to Rishikesh."

I sent off my Hindi translation and the booklet arrived after it was printed. Maharajshri said, "Don't consider writing to be your main sadhan. It is just a supporting limb. I, too, have written things and thus I understand a little about the state of the chitta while writing. Many people will make fun of your writing and will advise you not to do this work. But as a supporting limb it is good for sadhan. It leads to the churning of thoughts. It is the way in which doubts are clarified. The sentiment in the heart grows. But do not get influenced by pride. The ego that says, 'I am an author,' deprives one of the benefits of writing."

Nevertheless, this was my first book. My mind was filled with pleasure. The pride within me was awakened. My stride became defiant. I began to think, "No other aspirant has ever written a book before. Only I have done so." Again and again I would look at the book. I would see my name on it and my pride would double. Whenever I saw someone reading the book, I would hope for praise. Whenever somebody praised the book, my mind would be overwhelmed internally. On the outside, however, I would act very humble and say, "All this is the grace of Guru Maharaj. Otherwise, how am I a writer?" My friends exacerbated my shortcomings by piling heaps of praise on me. My pride kept on growing.

This pride of mine could not remain hidden from Guru Maharaj. A Guru cannot tolerate the pride of his disciple. He knows that if the disciple's pride remains intact, his downfall is sure to follow. He did not tell me anything directly, but in the evening discourse he expressed his feelings in the following manner:

"If a singer does not express the anguish in his heart, filled with emotion before God, then he sings for the entertainment of the audience. His attention is directed towards how the singing affects them. His pride in singing increases. If the priest of a temple does not worship God with a sense of service, then his attention is directed towards what particular devotees have offered. Greed increases in him. A reader, an intellectual, moves away from the real goal of searching for God and instead begins to impart knowledge to others. Assimilating darkness within, he tries to show the light to others. His pride increases. Similarly, if a writer becomes neglectful of his defects and begins to write for fame or wealth and in this way begins to regard himself as a great writer; if, instead of considering writing to be the supporting limb, he considers it to be the main trunk, it is natural for pride to arise in him. Whatever the amount of writing done by such an aspirant, he does not attain anything."

Churning of the Heart - Excerpt (continued)

It did not take long for me to realize that his observations were directed towards me. I was very ashamed. His statement was correct. To attain heavenly joys, to acquire wealth and pride – these are not our goals. These are hurdles on the path. Who am I to write? We do not know what power holds the hand and makes one write, or who gives rise to thoughts in the intellect and feelings in the heart. Why have pride?

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 Amazon.com, or in India from:

Devatma Shakti Society

92-93, Navali Gav

Post Dahisar, via Mumbra

Thane 400612

Tel. No.: 22-65148183

Answers to questions from Sadhaks

- **Question:** Is Raja Yoga the same as Maha Yoga?

Answer: Raja Yoga and other forms of Yoga (Hatha, Mantra, Laya, etc.) require the Sadhak to actively and intentionally do various forms of Yoga practices such as mind concentration, asanas, pranayam, japa, mantra, etc., usually under the guidance of a Guru accomplished in the specific Yoga form.

Maha Yoga does not require a Sadhak to actively and intentionally do anything at all. Once a Siddha Guru has activated the Prana Shakti (Universal Mother Energy) within a Sadhak during Maha Yoga initiation (Deeksha), all a Sadhak need do in Maha Yoga practice (Sadhan) is to sit quietly and surrender to the Prana Shakti and simply observe what happens. When he does so, the activated Prana Shakti within himself acts as his Guru and automatically and silently guides him through all the practices he needs for achieving enlightenment. All the Yogic activities (Kriyas) a Sadhak needs to “do” for the gradual elimination of the effects of his past Samskaras will **happen automatically** with regular and diligent Sadhan.

For example, if a Sadhak needs to be doing Asanas (yoga postures) or Pranayam (structured breathing) for making spiritual progress, they will happen automatically as he surrenders to the Prana Shakti during Sadhan. If a Sadhak needs to be chanting a specific mantra, he will automatically get the urge to do so during Sadhan and the mantra chanting will “happen”. By surrendering to the activated Prana Shakti within himself during Sadhan, a Maha Yoga Sadhak removes himself from the “Karta” (doer) role and puts himself directly in the control of Prana Shakti. As the Sadhak sits for Sadhan on a regular basis (every day for an hour) after Deeksha, the accumulated Samskaras will gradually get erased and eventually he will experience true enlightenment.

- **Question:** Despite my initiation into Maha Yoga earlier this year by e-mail I do not seem to experience anything different during Sadhan. Is this because of my involvement in worldly affairs and a strong desire and involvement in extra-marital sex? I try to be steadfast in my spiritual life, but my resolve seems to last only for a short while. And as I get involved with my strong sexual urges I begin to feel guilty for having done so. I have been attracted to spirituality and philosophy since my childhood and have tried various other methods but to no avail. Would it benefit me to be initiated in person, or should I try other forms of Yoga such as Vipassana or Japa with hand gestures (Mudras)? Or should I wait for some Guru to come into my life and straighten me out? Please help.

Answer: If you had earnestly asked P. P. Kaka Maharaj for Deeksha (initiation) either in person, by telephone or by e-mail, and he had sent you a response granting it and instructing you to sit for Sadhan at a certain time on a certain day, rest assured that you have been initiated. Some Sadhaks feel various physical or mental Kriyas (movements/active thoughts, etc.) during initiation, while others do not feel anything at all, with a range of strong to mild experiences in between those two ends of the spectrum. As Sadhaks continue to sit regularly and diligently for Sadhan every day after

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

initiation, those who have had intense physical experiences during initiation might find the intensity of their experiences declining. On the other hand, those who have had mild or no physical/mental experiences during initiation might find the intensity of such experiences increasing with regular Sadhan. It all depends on where the Sadhak is in his spiritual evolution and what is needed for him to evolve further.

We all come to our current lives with a record of past Samskaras (imprints) which gets further imprinted by our actions, attachments and aversions in this life. During Deeksha a Sadhak's Prana Shakti (Universal Life Energy) gets activated, and if the Sadhak surrenders to the Prana Shakti within himself during Deeksha and thereafter, especially during regular Sadhan, the effects of all his accumulated Samskaras will gradually get erased and he will find his mind quieting down leading to the actual experience of uniting with his true self, the Prana Shakti which resides in us all. The cleansing process happens automatically during daily Sadhan. For some Sadhaks this cleansing process may cause automatic physical movements or sensations, especially if there are significant blockages to the free flow of Prana Shakti, but for others the cleansing process may not require them to have such physical movements or sensations. All a Sadhak need do is to have faith in Maha Yoga and his Guru, sit regularly for Sadhan (an hour every day is recommended), and simply let what happens, happen. He should not do anything intentionally during Sadhan. His role during Sadhan should simply be that of an observer, not the doer. He should just surrender to the activated Prana Shakti within himself and let her do what is needed. Over time the effects of past Samskaras will get erased and the Sadhak will begin to experience his true self.

In the literature on Maha Yoga one reads about all kinds of physical Kriyas that Sadhaks experience. But please remember that these experiences are not ends in themselves but are simply manifestations of blockages being removed. As one makes progress along this path, physical experiences will diminish and the mind will get automatically more and more centered, eventually leading to an extremely calm mental state when one becomes experientially aware of one's true nature, which is the all pervading Prana Shakti itself. The key here is to let the Prana Shakti do her job of cleansing your Chitta (mind stuff) by sitting for Sadhan on a daily basis.

We are in no position to advise you on your involvement in "worldly affairs", but one's sexuality is a fact of life. It is very difficult to try to overcome it by force; it needs to subside on its own. Feeling guilty for your loss of control is neither necessary nor productive. All it will do is depress you further and not get you any closer to the Maha Yoga path. Daily Sadhan and following the rules and restrictions you signed up for before initiation will gradually result in the automatic reduction of your worldly attachments, aversions and desires. So our only suggestion here is to sit for Sadhan on a daily basis, surrender to the activated Prana Shakti within you and simply observe what happens. Over time, your worldly desires will gradually diminish as you begin to directly experience your true self and you will begin to experience the true calmness of a Yogi. So please sit for Sadhan regularly.

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

About your question on whether you should get initiated in person; we don't think it is necessary at all. A Maha Yoga Guru such as P. P. Kaka Maharaj activates a Sadhak's Prana Shakti entirely through his Sankalpa (thought). So please be assured that your Prana Shakti has been activated. However, it is of course beneficial for a Sadhak to actually visit his Shaktipat Guru and be in his presence to get any doubts clarified. If you can do so, we would recommend that you go visit P. P. Kaka Maharaj either in Nashik or in Pune (in India) so you can meet him in person and get any doubts you might have clarified.

About your questions regarding doing Japa, Vipassana or Mudras, we would suggest that while you may practice any of these Yogas if you wish, they are not necessary for a Maha Yoga Sadhak. The beauty of Maha Yoga is that once a Sadhak's Prana Shakti is activated, all he need do is to simply surrender to Prana Shakti and let her be the doer (Karta). If a Sadhak needs a particular type of Yoga for his spiritual progress, say Japa or Hatha or Vipassana or any other form, those Yogic activities will automatically happen during Sadhan. So the Sadhak should simply surrender to Prana Shakti and let her be his Guru during Sadhan. A Guru has indeed come into your life in the form of P. P. Kaka Maharaj, but as he tells his initiates, he is only the "postman" who has delivered the "letter" to you. Your ongoing Guru, who is with you at all times, is the Gurutattva, or the activated Prana Shakti within yourself. Surrender to that Guru and she will take you where you need to go.

- **Question:** In a previous issue of the Self Awakening e-newsletter it was mentioned that "receiving formal Deeksha (Maha Yoga initiation) does not require a Sadhak to give up being a householder at all". I would like to know if there are other forms of Deeksha and what one needs to do to receive them. I would also like to know what one needs to do if one wants to become a Sannyasi (renunciate).

Answer: There is only one form of Deeksha (initiation) in Maha Yoga, which was referred to as "formal Deeksha" in the e-newsletter, only to differentiate it from the practice of the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga which a Sadhak can practice on his/her own and which does not require formal initiation by a Siddha Guru. Maha Yoga Deeksha is also called Shaktipat Deeksha, because in granting this Deeksha the Siddha Guru directly activates the Prana Shakti (Universal Life Energy) in the Sadhak through his Sankalpa (wish). To receive this Deeksha one can apply for it on the web by using the form at <http://www.mahayoga.org/deekshaform.cfm> when the next Deeksha day is announced. One also has to accept the observance of certain rules and restrictions regarding the consumption of non-vegetarian food, onion, garlic, alcohol, etc. in order to receive this Deeksha. The purpose of these rules and restrictions is to ensure that the activated Prana Shakti within the Sadhak can do her job of cleansing the Sadhak's past Samskaras (impressions which create attachments and aversions) so the Sadhak can experience unimpeded spiritual progress with diligent Sadhan. There are no restrictions on a Sadhak seeking Deeksha regarding his continuing to remain as a householder, getting married,

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

etc. However, as a Sadhak progresses spiritually, he may find many of the attachments and aversions he has in the material world beginning to diminish automatically.

For those Sadhaks interested in getting a taste of Maha Yoga but who do not want to commit to observing the rules and restriction required for receiving Deeksha, P. P. Kaka Maharaj has suggested that they follow the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga (see page 15 of the May 1st, 2009 issue of Self Awakening archived at <http://mahayoga.org/selfawakening.htm>). This does not require any formal initiation/Deeksha and a Sadhak can simply decide on his/her own to follow the introductory approach. Many Sadhaks who do so also experience the Kriyas and the peace of mind similar to those experienced by Sadhaks who receive Deeksha. In that sense one can consider the Introductory Approach as a kind of informal initiation into Maha Yoga, without the obligations (rules and restrictions) of formal Shaktipat Deeksha. As with formal Deeksha, there are no householder-related restrictions placed on Sadhaks who follow the Introductory Approach.

Sannyas (renunciate) Deeksha is something quite different and is **not a requirement** for Maha Yoga Sadhaks. Most Maha Yoga Sadhaks are not Sannyasis (renunciates), including Siddha Gurus such as P. P. Kaka Maharaj and many others in the lineage. However, some Maha Yoga Sadhaks and Siddha Gurus are/have been Sannyasis, but they are the exceptions in the broader Maha Yoga Sadhak community. Some Maha Yoga Sadhaks and Siddha Gurus practice Brahmacharya (celibacy). P. P. Kaka Maharaj and some others in the Maha Yoga lineage have practiced Brahmacharya and some have also taken Brahmacharya Deeksha. But neither Sannyas Deeksha nor Brahmacharya Deeksha are needed for the practice of Maha Yoga. If a Sadhak wants to take Sannyas Deeksha or Brahmacharya Deeksha he should discuss it with his Siddha Guru and seek advice from him on whether and how he should go about doing so.

Question: My wife and I are searching for peace of mind and are interested in finding a Guru who can help us achieve that. We are both quite young, in our early 30s, but despite that we find ourselves caught up in the worries and stresses of daily life and feel like we have lost our mental peace. We would like to regain our mental peace and be able to live a joyful, healthy and fearless life. Someone directed us to visit the Maha Yoga website, but since we missed the last announced Deeksha (initiation) day we have not been able to get initiated as yet. Having read some of the material at the website we feel that God has directed us to Maha Yoga and would like to get guidance on how we should proceed. Please guide us.

Answer: P. P. Kaka Maharaj is a Maha Yoga Siddha Guru who is capable of granting Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha (initiation) to Sadhaks through his Sankalpa (thought). A Sadhak's Prana Shakti (Universal Life Energy) gets activated during initiation, and once initiated, all a Sadhak need do is to sit for Sadhan every day. During Maha Yoga Sadhan a Sadhak does not have to do anything at all; he simply surrenders himself to the activated Prana Shakti within himself and lets her do what is needed for his spiritual progress. In

Answers to questions from Sadhaks (continued)

that sense, the activated Prana Shakti plays the role of his Guru and is often referred to as the Gurutattva or the essence of the Guru.

Sorry to read that you and your wife missed the previous deadline for applying for Deeksha. However, there will be another Deeksha Day in a few months for which you both can apply when the specific date is announced. The new Deeksha Day announcement will be made at the website www.mahayoga.org and at the Yahoo group <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kundalinishaktipatayoga/>. But meanwhile you can practice the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga as described on page 15 of the May 1st, 2009 issue of Self Awakening archived at <http://mahayoga.org/selfawakening.htm>. It will give you an experiential sense of what Maha Yoga is about, even before you receive Deeksha. Sit for this Sadhan every day at your own home and simply observe what happens.

It would also be good for you to develop an understanding of Maha Yoga prior to receiving Deeksha. In that regards we would urge you to visit the website www.mahayoga.org and read up on the information there about Maha Yoga. You might find the section on Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) very informative. Please also read the three discussions with P. P. Kaka Maharaj in the archived issues of Self Awakening e-newsletter (May 2009, May 2010, and February 2011) at <http://mahayoga.org/selfawakening.htm>. They will give you a direct feel for P. P. Kaka Maharaj's teachings. Please also read the four part article on Maha Yoga published in the four issues of Volume 1 of Self Awakening, again available at <http://mahayoga.org/selfawakening.htm>.

Your interest in Maha Yoga is a very good thing. Maha Yoga is the best Yoga approach for our lives in this modern world with all the daily distractions and demands. It is an effortless, joyful and absolutely no-cost approach to peace of mind and eventual spiritual enlightenment. And you can practice it in the privacy of your own home under the guidance of the Gurutattva within yourself, once it is awakened by a Siddha Guru.

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

A Sadhak's experience on Deeksha Day

Too much desperation is not the way

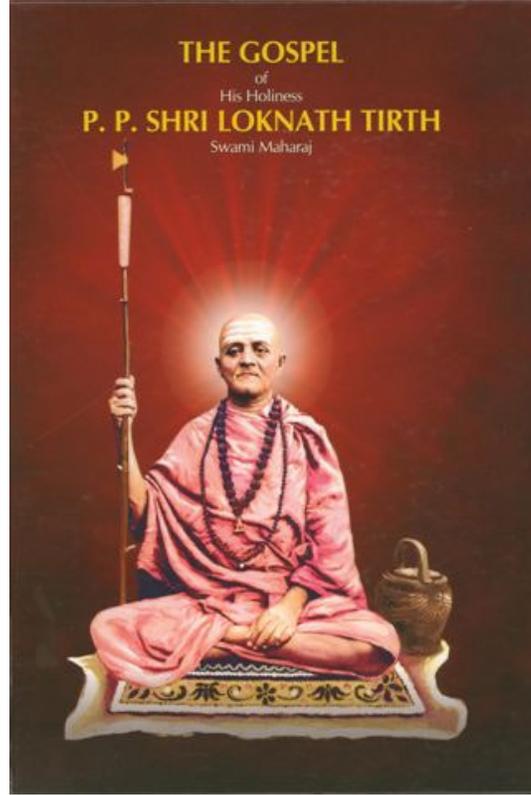
I received Deeksha (initiation) from Shri Gurudev, today (May 15, 2011) and I want to share my experience and thoughts about it with readers of Self Awakening, only so others may benefit from it.

The night before Deeksha, scheduled for 6:00 am the next day, I was very anxious and did not get much sleep. My sleep was interrupted time and time again by dreams, and being anxious about waking up early for Deeksha I found myself waking up again and again during the night to watch the clock and to make sure I would not oversleep. Finally, I woke up when the alarm went off and after a shower and after having followed the preparatory steps for receiving Deeksha I sat as instructed. Very shortly, I began to sweat quite profusely, I thought probably because of the hot shower I had just taken. That didn't help me even attain the level of concentration I had been able to achieve in my Sadhan prior to Deeksha. Additionally, someone in the next room was watching TV and the sound from the TV was disturbing me immensely. I found myself becoming angry at the people around me, including the ones close to me. I thought I needed to go to some remote place in order to meditate.

But soon after I found myself thinking that way, thanks to Sadguru Kaka Maharaj, I realized the fault was neither that of the other people in the house nor of the place where I was sitting; rather it was my own feelings of desperation to get divine experiences during Deeksha which were making me so anxious and uneasy. Instead of being still and letting things happen, and observing what was happening, I was mentally in the state of a doer and getting frustrated that I wasn't doing something right. I wasn't surrendering myself to the Great Mahamayi Kundalini Shakti (Universal Life Energy) but was instead getting preoccupied with superficial things. So I calmed down and sat quietly for quite some time before I felt like my Sadhan was done. After returning home following my regular morning walk to a nearby Ganesh temple, as I sat on a chair watching TV, I felt a mild sensation at the base of my spine. The mild sensation gradually turned into a strong feeling of warmth at that spot and I realized that I was feeling the Kundalini Shakti awakening in the Mooladhara Chakra. Thanks to Gurudev I had gotten initiated into Maha Yoga and my spiritual walk had begun!

The lesson I learned from my experience on Deeksha Day was that when one receives Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha one should simply throw oneself in the hands of the Great Mahamayi Kundalini Shakti and forget one's typical role of a doer or worshiper and just be a witness to the play of Shakti. One shouldn't feel desperate and anxious about getting specific divine experiences but approach Deeksha and Maha Yoga with a sense of surrender, and simply observe what happens. I know it is quite easy to say this to others but it is very difficult to have such an attitude. But I think it was my over-eagerness for something dramatic to happen to me during Deeksha that might have made me miss the chance to observe the subtle play of Kundalini Shakti. I do realize now that my Kundalini Shakti has indeed been awakened and when I sit for Sadhan I simply observe her play.

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:

P. P. Shri Vasudevanand Saraswati Swami Maharaj &

P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Trust

Vasudev Niwas

41/17 Erandvane,

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Phone No. +91-20-25455584

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.

Website Updates:

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.

New Maha Yoga Blog:

We have also started a Maha Yoga blog at <http://mahayoga-blog.blogspot.com/>. The purpose of the blog is to share with Sadhaks P. P. Kaka Maharaj's guidance on issues related to Maha Yoga, and to keep them updated on Maha Yoga-related events and new developments. Please feel free to join the blog and comment on the content.



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The goals of our e-newsletter are:

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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:

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

May all desire to follow this nectarous Siddhayoga Path!