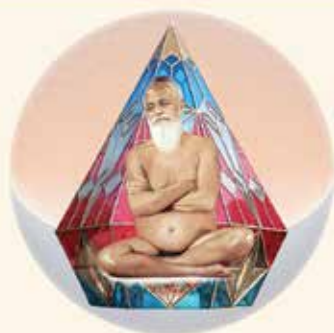


Satyam Speaks Mantra



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

Satyam Speaks
Mantra



SWAMI SATYANANDA SARASWATI

1923~2023

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Satyam Speaks Mantra



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

Satyam Speaks Mantra
Swami Satyananda Saraswati

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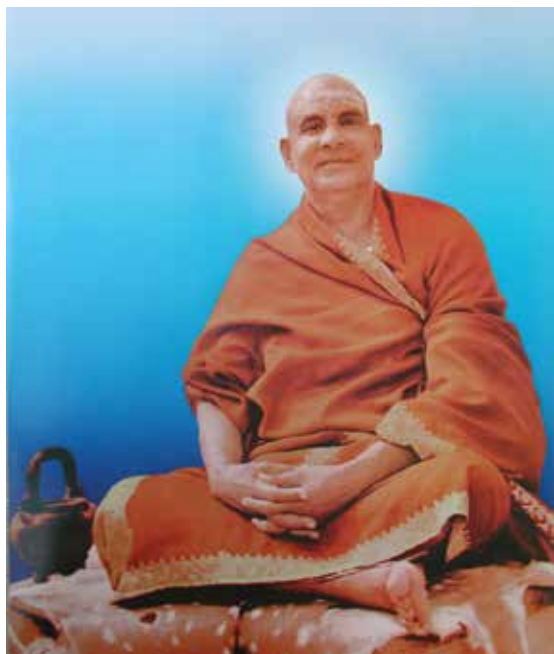
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Dedication

*In humility we offer this dedication to
Swami Sivananda Saraswati, who initiated
Swami Satyananda Saraswati into the secrets of yoga.*



Dedication

*To our guru Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati
who continues to inspire and guide us
on our yogic and spiritual journey.*

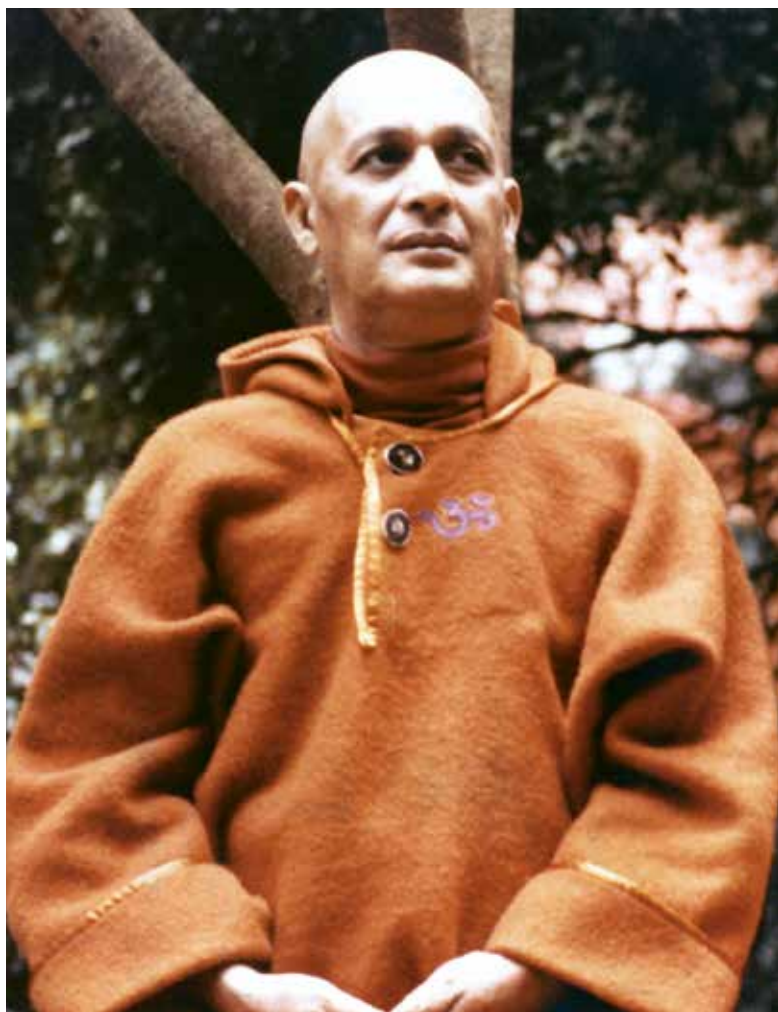
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Preface

Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati dedicated twenty years of his life to the propagation of yoga, and thus fulfilled the mandate given by his guru, Swami Sivananda Saraswati, 'to spread yoga from door to door and shore to shore'. He travelled around the globe many times bringing the message of yoga to people of all walks of life, regardless of caste or creed. Master of yoga vidya and creator of the Yoga Chakra, he adapted his knowledge and understanding of yoga to the needs and abilities of people. Swami Satyananda simplified valuable techniques and complex processes by giving systematic and clearly defined sequences. Everyone could understand and progress following the theoretical explanation and practical instructions. Everyone was able to benefit from yoga.

Satyam Speaks Series presents compilations of Sri Swami Satyananda's teachings on yoga. Each book explores a specific topic, concept or practice. The aim is to provide an easy way to understand and incorporate various components of the immense science of yoga vidya into one's daily life. For some titles, more information is provided of specific conditions or applications, which are for the information of the aspirant only and not for practice. These have been included to show the depth of understanding and experience Sri Swami Satyananda had of yoga vidya.



Satyam Speaks Series is a tribute to Sri Swami Satyananda, his teaching and to yoga vidya. *Satyam Speaks Series* is an invitation to all sincere aspirants to live yoga and thereby make the world a better place.

Learn from an accomplished yoga master, not from a book. This series is a knowledge guide and a yoga master is a practical guide.

Part 1

1

Introducing Mantra



The science of mantra is very ancient and was once widely practised in all parts of the world. Principles of sound and the ability to use sound were known to ancient peoples. The great stones of Stonehenge, Easter Island and the Mayan monuments were moved into place using principles of sound now lost to modern civilization. Reference to mantra is found in the oldest vedic scriptures, which are claimed to be more than 5,000 years old.

Literally, the word *mantra* means ‘revealed sound’. These sounds were revealed to rishis and other pure beings in psychic states or in very deep meditation, when all consciousness of the self was lost and when nothing but inner light shone in front of them. According to the ancient texts, mantra means a sound or a combination or sequence of sounds which develop spontaneously. Sound has different stages of manifestation. Every type of energy, from the primordial to the manifest state, undergoes transformations, changes frequency, velocity, etc.

Mantras do not have any specific meaning. The energy content of the mantra or revealed sound is a subtle form of prana. Their power is not in the words themselves, but in the sound vibrations created when the mantra is uttered verbally or when it takes form in the mind and is not expressed with the voice. Mantras bring about a state of resonance between the individual and the depths of his inner being. They allow the individual to unleash inner cosmic powers, forces and knowledge. The sound patterns of the mantra stimulate a certain effect on the mental and psychic nature of an individual. Each mantra will create, or draw out, a specific symbol within one’s psyche. It should not be misunderstood or misinterpreted as ‘divine name’.

Mantras composed by grammarians are not mantras, but a grouping of letters. Unless one sees a mantra in realization, one cannot formulate it. So mantra is a revealed product, not simply an arrangement of syllables. You must have read in the Bible about ‘the word of God’. Everyone trying to reach the roof of the head is given a ‘word’, which is called the mantra. Since receiving the divine sound or mantra, these saints have, in succession, given them to their disciples.

The best known mantra is the monosyllable *Om*, which is regarded as the root sound from which all other sounds emanate. The sounds *Amen* and *Amin* in Christianity and Islam respectively are derivatives of *Om* and, similarly, the ultimate God in Egyptian religion was known as *Amon*. For this reason, *Amon* frequently formed a part of the names of pharaohs: e.g. *Tutankamon*, *Amenhotep*. In Hinduism there are

similarly many well-known mantras such as *Ram*, *Om Namah Shivaya*, *Om Shanti* and so on. Each of these mantras can be most powerful in inducing transcendence if repeated with constant devotion and concentration.

The mantra is a combination or assembly of powerful sound waves. As such, the intellectual understanding of the mantra is not at all necessary. It is not the meaning, but the sound waves created by the mantra which influence the cosmos in the brain and outside.

Definition of mantra

According to vedic etymology, mantras are revealed or released during profound meditation. The definition of mantra is, *mananat trayate iti mantrah*. *Mananat* means ‘through profound meditation’. *Trayate* means ‘that which liberates’, *iti* means ‘so is’, *mantrah* means ‘a mystic syllable’. Hence, *mantra* may be defined as ‘a mystic syllable which has been revealed through profound meditation that liberates a man from his conscious agonies’. A mantra is also defined as the sound of a word heard on the unconscious plane that has been recalled to the conscious plane. It is revealed when one is in a very deep psychic state or meditation in which one is completely lost to worldly experience. The consciousness of the outer self is lost and the inner light shines forth, not on a plane corresponding to the physical senses.

The vedic scriptures have a word, *mantra drashta*, which literally means ‘the mantra seer or perceiver’, the person who perceived, visualized or realized the mantra sound in a very deep meditative state. When the rishis, in meditation were able to transcend the material consciousness, rising to a very high level, those suitable sounds heard by them in that higher plane were called mantra. To make it more clear to you – just to make up some syllables in your mind is not mantra. But those whose souls are purified, and who through meditation, have established their consciousness to a very high level, beyond this body and mind, the sounds perceived by them in that higher state are called mantra.

Through symbols, various kinds of ideas, forces and impressions find expression within us. Mantras are symbols of the unconscious and are seldom revealed to anyone. Only a few powerful souls are chosen to receive them.

Science of mantra

A sound is not just a noise. It is a wave that carries electrical vibrations with certain amounts of energy. When you practise mantra, the sound produced moves in a certain pattern. However, the sound recorded by your consciousness is not exactly the same as the sound heard through your ears. In the deeper mind, the sound of each mantra has its own archetype. Therefore, the sound of mantra has a totally different effect on our consciousness than other sounds which we may produce or utter.

Mantra is a Sanskrit word which is explained as 'by the repetition of which the mind is liberated from its identifications'. The moment you start to practise mantra, the deeper contents of the mind start to expose themselves like a mental laxative. Some mantras are very strong, like purgatives. Thoughts just pour out of the unconscious. Archetypes come up in bunches and you can't handle them.

Mantra is a vehicle for awakening the deeper forces within oneself. Each mantra has certain wavelengths and frequencies that are able to penetrate the internal structure of the mind. If you practise a mantra even without trying to concentrate your mind, the sound waves that resonate during the practice permeate through and through your physical and inter-physical system. The different types of waves that you initiate while repeating the mantra, permeate a new dimension of your consciousness according to your practices. When you chant mantra, sometimes it produces standing waves, resonant waves, or rhythmic waves. When these various waves are produced, they not only influence the atmosphere outside, but the whole mental structure of your personality.

The basis of mantra is sound, which ranges from gross to subtle. Throughout the cosmos there are slow, medium

and fast sound waves. The medium waves are perceptible to us, but the slow and fast waves are not. When the sound of mantra is audible, it has a medium range of frequency which is known as perceptible or gross sound. But when the mantra is silently intoned, it has a faster rate of frequency and becomes imperceptible or subtle sound.

Therefore, a mantra works on the earthly plane and also on the higher planes. When you produce a sound and accelerate the frequency, it affects the inner realm of consciousness. Just as when you pick up a pebble and throw it into a calm, quiet lake, the impact creates ripples and the ripples form circles which expand wider and wider according to the force and weight of the pebble. In the same way, when you repeat a mantra, the sound hits the homogeneity of consciousness and creates ripples which help expand the mind.

We are a bundle of millions and trillions of experiences which we have inherited from our previous incarnations. What are we going to do with them? Is there any system which teaches us how to get these archetypes out, these millions and trillions of experiences embedded in the layers of our existence? Tell me, have you a way? Has there been any religion in the world in the last twenty thousand years which has shown a way? Religion has shown us a way to pray. I can also pray. I can fold my hands and say, "God, forgive me," but that is not enough.

The science of mantra is a very special science. I want to stress that mantra is a very effective tool for evolving individual consciousness. And what is most significant is that the awakening, or the influence created by the mantra in the field of consciousness, is very mild and benign.

In order to experience meditation and samadhi, you need a certain type of mind. Those who practise meditation without preparing the mind do not have the right type of experience. When you meditate, the mind goes into the subconscious and unconscious plane and there it visualizes its own nature and its own contents. Therefore, before the practices of



meditation, you should clean the mind. The sounds that I am talking about clean the mind of its impurities and impressions. You have a great past hovering in your mind, not only of this incarnation, but also belonging to other incarnations. Before concentration, it is necessary to make the mind lighter by the practice of mantra. Therefore, when

you practise mantra you should not try for concentration. Mantra does not mean concentration and concentration is not necessary. If you can make your consciousness clean, concentration becomes spontaneous.

Mantra yoga

Out of all the systems of yoga, there is one particular system which is very important for the awakening of the spiritual consciousness of man, the spiritual consciousness which lies hidden behind the physical frame. It may be awakened by many other systems of yoga but there is one very powerful and simple system for awakening the spiritual consciousness in man by which he can realize the greater dimensions of his being. This system is called *mantra yoga*, or the system of mantra.

I want to explain a little about the science of mantra yoga. The mantra shastra is a very deep and great science, which if understood correctly can give you victory over your lower nature. The mantra shastra is very ancient, and in previous ages people knew this science well. Recently however, the people's faith in the mantra shastra has lessened, and gradually this knowledge has become hidden to such an extent that nowadays, in the name of mantra, anything is said. It has therefore become necessary to speak of this science for the sake of spiritual aspirants.

Mantra yoga is concerned with the audible chanting or silent repetition of combinations of sounds. These are more than mere sounds; they are sound combinations that were received by realized sages and rishis during states of deepest meditation. They realized that sound has incredible power to influence the mind and body as well as produce changes in the material world. These ancient yogis experimented with different combinations of sound and found that they could induce extraordinary changes within the mind – different sounds producing different effects. They called these special sounds mantras and they were handed down from generation to generation.

Mantra yoga utilizes the power of sound as a method of inducing introspection and subtle mental changes, and to evoke mental and psychic manifestations. A particular mantra is usually repeated over and over again either verbally or mentally, producing mental tranquillity, concentration and awareness of the inner processes of the mind.

Discipline of the mind begins with mantra. Just as a soldier is brought to the parade ground and is drilled, left, right, about turn, likewise the mind too has to be disciplined with mantra. It is a strong force that cures the maladies of the mind. It completely overhauls the entire structure of the mind. A mantra must be used by one who wants to go high and one who wants to go deep.

During the early stages of yogic practice, the chosen mantra (given to an aspirant by a guru or spiritual preceptor) has to be repeated over and over again with effort of will and full awareness. This awareness or concentration prevents the mind from thinking of other things. Eventually, after continuous and dedicated practice, the mantra is repeated automatically without strain or effort. The mantra spontaneously manifests itself and becomes an integral part of the mind. The mind vibrates with the sound of the mantra. It becomes an integral part of the individual's being and needs absolutely no conscious effort. It repeats itself spontaneously with every breath and continues spontaneously day and night. This is a very powerful way of approaching meditational states, for the mind is rendered calm and concentrated. The mantra acts as a pathway between normal states of consciousness and superconsciousness.

Composition of mantra

Mantras are a combination of many sound waves. Unlike English and Urdu, each one of the Sanskrit alphabets has only one phonetic sound. These alphabets generate sound waves. When articulation is necessary, one of the sixteen vowels is added to the alphabet. In no other language of the world is there such a scientific sound arrangement as in the Sanskrit language, which supposedly is the oldest

language in the world. Therefore, mantras are not to be thought of as simply words formulating sentences. There is a systematic arrangement in order to suit the purpose. The ancient linguists or inventors of this language had a complete knowledge of the sound waves and they converted them into a particular mode of articulation to create certain vibrations.

Mantras are formulated from letters of the Sanskrit alphabet, each letter having its own particular vibrational frequency and corresponding effect on the consciousness. The fifty-two sounds, known as *Devanagari*, were realized by the ancient rishis of the vedic period during deep states of meditation. These highly evolved souls were able to touch on the source of all sound energy, the *shabda brahman*, the supreme consciousness, manifesting as sound.

Sound waves also have a colour and in the tantric system, this is known as *varna*. *Varna* means colour. Every sound, every mantra, has a colour of its own, according to the classification of the tattwas, according to the classification of the three gunas, and according to the classification of the seven levels of consciousness. These sounds have various colours, and these colours often appear during your practice. The mantra shastras say that these mantras, in the form of sound, are also located in different parts of the body.

In Sanskrit, the letters of mantras are known as *akshara*, 'that which is imperishable'. Science has now proved that sound waves are never extinguished, as the vibrations are ever present in the atmosphere. Once a word is pronounced, it becomes immortal. Every word creates a form which is imperishable and which has colour.

Thus mantras are a combination of *varna* and *akshara*. For example, in the word *Narayana*, there are four letters. So, the different letters or sounds are called *akshara* and each *akshara* has a different *varna*. Thus the word *Narayana* has four *akshara* and four *varna*. Different colours are perceived by us in the form of sounds. When they are accepted and assimilated by the subconscious mind they remain there and make patterns and those patterns are responsible for the

development, expression and unfoldment of the subconscious mind and behaviour.

The withdrawal and expansion of consciousness can be achieved with the help of a mantra. Every mantra has two aspects: name and form. The name and sound aspect will withdraw your consciousness from the external world. This is the process of negation. The form or symbol aspect will expand your inner consciousness till it merges in self-awareness. It must be borne in your mind that both the name and form aspects of mantra are to be practised. If you repeat only the mantra, but do not concentrate on a form, you will enter into unconsciousness. And if you neglect name or sound and concentrate only on the form or symbol, you will have to struggle lifetime after lifetime.

As such, it is stated by Sage Patanjali in the *Yoga Sutras* that through repetition of name or mantra, you bring about that state of withdrawal where you forget everything that is taking place outside. You have transcended the outer consciousness, but now what are you going to do? You have taken a jump into the ocean, but if you do not know how to swim, you are going to drown. Therefore, when you have withdrawn your consciousness to one point through the name or sound aspect of mantra, unless you take up the form or symbol aspect and allow your consciousness to stabilize itself at one point, you will surely land up in unconsciousness.

Frequency of mantra

Sound has many frequencies. At one frequency you can hear many sounds and at another frequency you cannot hear so clearly. At one frequency you can only feel the sound you cannot hear it, and when a sound is produced at the highest possible frequency, it is called thought. When a thought is brought down to low frequency, it is called sound. Therefore, in the practice of mantra, you produce a sound at such a frequency that you can think it in the mind.

According to the science of mantra, there are three levels of sound, which are: audible, murmuring or whispering, and

mental sound. When I am talking to you, this is one level of sound, but I can say the same thing to you in your meditation. You can hear exactly the same thing, but that is another level of sound, another dimension of sound. That dimension of sound relates to the inner sound and to the inner dimension of your mind as well.

One sound frequency is that which I am producing when I speak, and which you are able to listen to. You can understand me because you know English and I am speaking in English. But if I spoke in Hindi you would not be able to understand it but you would still hear it. This is a gross sound which has a limited frequency. Then there is a second frequency of sound when you whisper a sound, that is a higher frequency, whispering. Then there is a third frequency which is much higher than this, when you produce a sound in your mind, mental repetition of a sound. When a sound is repeated in the mind, the same sound I am producing with my lips now, then the frequency is much higher.

These three ranges of sound we know but when you are producing a sound in the mind and suddenly a transformation in the mind takes place, and the mind loses its link with time, space and object, and time, space and object get closer and closer, at that time sound gains a fantastic frequency. Then there is practically no difference between a sound and a sound wave, and that sound can travel into space. That sound can go deep into your own consciousness. The effect of that high frequency sound is external, as well as internal. Therefore, in my opinion, the mantra sadhana, the mantra philosophy is unprecedented. It is one of the most important and most powerful tools for a richer and higher spiritual experience.

Scope of mantra

The capacity of sound in man is known as *vak* in the Vedas of India, the ancient books of knowledge, in the Upanishads and in secret doctrines. The capacity of producing sound in different levels gives rise to the sounds of different

dimensions, subtleties and ranges. Thus there exist definite sounds which we cannot always perceive because they are too gross or too subtle for us.

Now, what we perceive of a sound is its normal range of vibration. When it is uttered, a sound or a word is just a crude sound wave. But as you transform the state of your mind and as your consciousness becomes more and more refined, the vibrations of this same sound attain a very high frequency. It still sounds the same to our ears but, in fact, the sound knows no barriers. Normally the range it travels is limited. I can hear your sound and you can hear mine, but when the vibrations of this same sound are raised to a higher frequency, then its range is increased enormously. It can cross oceans and it can travel thousands of miles in a second. Therefore, sound has different levels, different vibrations, different frequencies.

The great tantric rishis realized that not just particular words, but every word and sound constituted a potential field of energy. On that realization they formulated the science of mantra. They also conducted investigations into the number of different sounds that could exist. At first they only discovered twenty and later they discovered more, giving them a total of fifty-two. These fifty-six sounds were represented by fifty-six letters, which became the basis of Sanskrit. Hence the Sanskrit language contains the greatest number of mantras that one could possibly find.

These mantras are simply combinations of different sound waves. Every sound produces a different sound wave. Take the sounds *ga*, *kri* and *shri*. Their written forms are different and if you measured the sound waves which they produce, you would find that they are different too. Every sound has a different form, a different colour and a different frequency. And each sound produces a different kind of reaction.

When you chant *Om*, it is a sound; when you write *Om* in script, it is a form. So every mantra has a sound and a form, but the most powerful aspect is the sound. All educated people have a concept of script in their mind. If you are not

educated and have no concept of script in your mind, then you will conceive *Om* as sound only. The problem is – you are not able to separate the sound from the script. If you repeat the sound *Om*, it is not only the sound, but also the script which follows it. When you are practising a mantra, gradually try to leave the idea of script and follow the sound.

With the help of this sound you can create expansion in the area of your consciousness. Mantra is in the form of a seed. Just as you have the seed of coriander, avocado, passion fruit or wheat, in the same way this sound is in the seed form, in the *bija* or primal form. The frequencies are dormant, there is no velocity, no property, but when you produce the sound on the mental plane you create vibrations by bringing about an interaction between your mind and the sound. Mind and sound are both linked together. The sound is fixed with the mind, then vibrations are created. We can create a transformed state of sound by increasing the frequencies. When the frequency is increased, then the sound waves can act on the external plane and also on the internal plane.

So mantra is not just a holy word, it is sound and sound has frequency, velocity and colour. By expressing the mantra, thinking the mantra or practising the mantra, repeated vibrations are created. These frequencies have to be properly understood. They are waves. Animals interact with each other through frequencies. They don't say, "Come here," "Go there," "I love you," "I hate you." They have frequencies. Similarly, the vegetable kingdom, the trees, plants, leaves, flowers and fruits have frequencies through which they link or communicate.

Just as you have electromagnetic, radioactive and other forms of energy, in the same way sound is also energy. Then you have radio frequency. If you have a frequency, you have a field, a radioactive field, an electromagnetic field. Because there is a radioactive field, the radio waves are received by you in your transistor. There has to be a field. In the same way, you have a field for these frequencies and that field has to be created by you.

This is a very important subject and a lot of work has been done on the power of sound. Sooner or later, the energy produced by sound will be used by the scientists, but here I am talking about the effect of sound on the mind. People come to me every day saying, ‘Swamiji, my mind is very restless and I am not able to concentrate. Kindly give me a mantra.’ I have to tell them, ‘This is not possible. I don’t teach mantra for this purpose. But if you want your unconscious to be exploded, if you want the great treasure to reveal itself, then, I can give you a mantra.’

Conclusion

For thousands of years, you and your ancestors have been working on mind control, and most have either failed or slipped into a state of hypnosis. The mental process is an involuntary process and you cannot cut through it at any point you like. Even if you can stop the thoughts, you can not stop the process. Mind, thought and consciousness maintain their level. You only have the satisfaction of knowing that you have created a vacuum in your mind – *shoonya*, void, a thought-free mental area. But that’s all delusion; man can never be free from the thought process.

You not only think on the conscious plane – you think even though you are unconscious. When you are extrovert and preoccupied, an unseen, eternal, unbroken and protracted process of thought movement continues behind the mental curtain. You don’t see anything but there is constant movement. Mind is not a homogeneous substance – mind is a replica of proto-matter, universal mind. You talk about controlling the mind, but what are you talking about? You can definitely streamline and channelize your emotions, the pattern of your thinking and the structure of your ambition – the social mind. But the real mind is invincible and is completely indomitable. Therefore, intelligent people must realize that in order to understand and control the thought process you have to go into the deeper spheres of your mind. That is the science of mantra.

2

Exploring Mantra



Matter is not the first manifestation. This universe, this solar galaxy, this earth, was not created first. Creation is not first, creator is first. And who is the creator? Sound. In the Vedas it is written that *Om* is the first sound and from this sound all creation started, the primal form of all sounds.

The primal sound

Word means *shabda* in Sanskrit; in yoga they call it *nada*. The inner sound, the unheard sound is *nada*. The spoken sound is *shabda*. I am talking; this sound is called *shabda* because I am pronouncing the words. It has a low frequency. However, the source of this sound is an inner sound. That inner sound is the basis of creation, the basis of matter, the basis of energy.

There has to be an origin, a beginning. A tree is born out of a seed. Various sounds which you produce have to be reduced to certain sounds. There are thousands and thousands of words in the dictionary, but ultimately they are all reduced to twenty-six sounds. We deliver lectures, we talk day and night like parrots, but what is all that? The permutation and combination of twenty-six sounds, and these twenty-six sounds can also be reduced to an ultimate sound called *Om*. So, the sound *Om* is the primal sound, the seed sound or *bija mantra*. It is from this one sound *Om* that all the other sounds have developed.

This sound is known in yoga as a mantra. Please do not misunderstand me. I do not mean a holy name. I am not dealing with a religious matter. I am just dealing with what we call the phenomenon of sound. I know that even in modern science sound can be made to pierce matter. Sound knows no barriers. Sound waves travel hundreds or thousands of kilometres across continents, they can be transformed into electrical waves and again transformed into sound waves. This sound can be given a higher frequency, so much so that this sound can be transformed into explosive energy. You know there are various forms of energy in the universe: you know about electrical energy, you know about nuclear energy. I am talking about sound energy.

The mantras create their own arranged sets of vibrations and once recited they are out of the shaft like an arrow which has already sprung from the bow. These sound waves keep on travelling unto infinity until they become completely mutilated. At times these waves come in touch with other waves and cause friction. Sensitive minds are able to receive them by chance.

Origins of mantra

Mankind's most ancient scriptures are the tantra shastras, and after the tantras, the Vedas took birth. Mantra shastra has come from the tantras. Mantra spontaneously came to the person, *rishi* or seer as if dropped from heaven; a sound not produced by any man, woman or animal, nor by the hearer himself, but just heard.

Tantra contains all the yoga practices, but the main aspect underlying tantric sadhana is mantra. Consciousness expands and energy is liberated through the vibration of mantra. In tantric philosophy, mantra is a force which can be used for the awakening of our spiritual potential. There are thousands of mantras and they belong to different elements, temperaments, deities, planets, bodies, and systems. Mantras are not merely the names of gods and goddesses, they are transcendental sounds which influence the entire complex of the brain and nervous system. Mantra is the actual life of tantra.

In tantra, mantra did not mean the vedic mantras, the audible pronouncements; mantra came to be understood as a process of contemplation on the occult sound, in order to break through the fetters of the lower phases of consciousness. So mantra came to mean a process of chanting certain syllables in a particular way in order to bring about the fusion of empirical existence with the transcendental existence.

Later, during the period of bhakti, the rishis systematically developed this science of sound, of revealed mantra or of subconscious, unconscious or superconscious sound. The capacity of producing sound in different levels gives rise to the sounds of different dimensions, subtleties and ranges. Thus there exist definite sounds which we cannot always perceive because they are too gross or too subtle for us.

Seers of the unconscious

Who are these people to whom the mantras were revealed? The right word for these people is rishi. Rishi does not mean a saint or even a mahatma. Rishi means a seer. Seer of what?

A seer of the unconscious. Do you know what the unconscious is? It is not something that you would call completely dead stuff. No, it is unconscious in the sense that the outer consciousness is not there. In that sense, those people who have been able to see their own unconscious are called rishis.

So the unconscious is a force. It is more powerful than this state where we are at present. It is a different state of consciousness and this state of consciousness is not present here. Therefore, we say that the unconscious is not the ordinary state of consciousness. The rishis were those who entered into this state and came in contact with the primal sounds of their being in profound, deep meditation. They realized the sounds they heard as mantra. Sometimes they also heard *richa*. *Richa* means 'a collection of mantras'. Later on these *richa* were compiled and became the revealed books, not only of Hinduism, but of other religions as well. The Vedas are said to be revealed books, but then some people say that they were written down with pen and ink, so how can they be revealed? Only the people who practise those things can understand them. Sometimes in profound meditation a whole speech is given that we remember and in that profound meditation a force emanates from the depths of the ocean.

Japa yoga

The practical science of mantra is known as *japa yoga*. Here mantra can be practised mentally, in whispers or audibly; either using a mala or to the sound of a drum, to the heartbeat or pulse beat, rhythmically in a particular centre or with concentration on a certain colour or symbol. The word *japa* itself means 'to rotate'. *Japa yoga* means union of the self with the highest existence through the rotation of consciousness. A mantra is the first requirement for *japa yoga*. A mantra is a grouping of sound vibrations which have an effect on the mental and psychic consciousness of man. Tradition says it is best if it is given by a guru or in a dream. An important point is that the mind should be fully impressed by this mantra.

Now, how do you use the mantra? The method is called japa, in which you repeat the mantra with the mind and breath. The rotation of the mala and the repetition of the mantra with the breath minimize the mental waverings and tranquillize the mind. It creates explosions in the subconscious, and brings the dormant and suppressed karmas to the surface.

What happens in japa is that you slowly create a rhythm, and then a momentum in your brain is produced. After a while the mind loses touch with external objects, and the consciousness is withdrawn and elevated. A blissful state is reached and eventually it brings you to a state that is higher than pratyahara. Sometimes it gives a glimpse of meditation also. You will thus see that japa is not repetition of the Lord's name for the sake of repetition and that it is not a prerogative of Hindus.

The purpose of japa is to attain a suggestive state of mind so that the guru can help you to attain spiritual progress. He cannot change your mind, but he can prescribe certain aids, because he is well acquainted with the shortcomings and defects of people. Through the practice of japa yoga you can bring about a psychic condition in which the conception of a psychic symbol is easily imprinted. When the mantra is spoken verbally or mentally, the sound vibrations create a certain form inside the human being. This is the inner or psychic symbol and it has a physical manifestation.

The practice of japa can bring wonderful benefits if you reflect on the meaning of the mantra. Each mantra has vast power which you have to unfold. You have to merge yourself with the mantra and experience everything that the mantra evokes. Each mantra represents something that cannot be spoken about. It has to be experienced. This is why we are not very interested in explaining the meaning of mantras. This is bound to be superficial. You must find out the meaning of a mantra for yourself. Communication cannot bridge the chasm between verbal meaning and direct experience.

This process of reflection on the meaning of a mantra intensifies the whole process of japa sadhana. However, it

is really for people who have penetrating powers of enquiry and who have a one-pointed calm mind. You are not obliged to reflect on the meaning of a mantra during japa. Japa will give wonderful results without this reflection, but it can lead to the highest fruit of japa sadhana.

Yantra, mantra and mandala

There are two types of mind which you will have to deal with and in order to deal with them, you will have to utilize different types of practices. We call these two types of mind distracted mind and oscillating mind. What is an oscillating mind? It is like a pendulum. It goes and comes back. It has a centre, but it will wander away. It will go away and come back to that centre automatically. This is a higher mind, a better mind. The other mind is a distracted mind. It has no centre; it has no nucleus. It goes on jumping from object to object and from thought to thought, and finally it does not know where it stands. In order to give a nucleus to the distracted mind, a seeker must have a mantra, a yantra or a mandala. Every sound has a yantra and a mandala. Mantra means a sound, yantras are geometrical patterns and mandalas, are in the form of a statue, of a shivalinga, or anything that has the three dimensions of depth, width and height. An object that has dimensions is called a mandala. I have dimensions, I am a mandala. You should have all three or only one of them.

Mantra is the sound symbol of the universe. Yantra is the geometrical symbol of the universe and mandala is the pictorial symbol of the universe. These three things represent the subtle forces in the universe and all are present in everybody. These three things or any one of the three act as a centre for the distracted mind. They help the mind to focus itself at a point.

We do not mind the wanderings of your mind, but we feel that your mind must have a hitching pin. If the mind has a hitching pin, it will automatically come back to that, sooner or later. In yoga and tantric practices we have three types of abode for the mind: mantra, yantra and mandala. If you have

any one of these, it does not mean that you have been able to tame that wild horse. Taming the energy is not a joke and taming the mind is also not a joke. You have to be very careful and you should not at all misbehave with your mind. You should not insult your manifestations. You should not feel guilty of any mental attitude. And you must practise mantra, yantra and mandala alongside antar mouna meditation.

Whichever mantra you practise has sound and yantra and mandala. Therefore, you can awaken the higher experience through the practice of your own mantra also. It is like having a home. You may go to a shop, race course, cinema or a friend's house, but you know where to come back. If you don't have a home, where will you go after the cinema? You will stay on the footpath. A person who has no nucleus in the mind is called a distracted man, but he who has a centre for the mind is called an oscillating man. In yoga we are trying to develop the quality of the oscillating mind.

The yantra should be chosen with the guidance of a guru. There is definitely a relationship between mantra and yantra. Every mantra has a yantra and every yantra has an ishta devata. You can choose either a yantra or an ishta devata. Ishta devata and mandala are the same.

Deva means illumined being. Therefore, the symbol associated with mantra represents illumination, and this illumination is nothing but the illumination of one's experience. Experiences are taking place in the subtle bodies, in the occult and subliminal bodies of everyone. These experiences are in the form of consciousness, in the form of geometrical patterns which move in a circular motion or a triangular way. These experiences are only possible when the inner mind is able to cast illumination or light on them. The inner body of everyone is enveloped by a shroud of darkness, *avidya*, which does not allow one to see and experience things fully.

For example, a person who is angry knows and feels he is angry, but can he see it? It has a form. If a person is worried, he knows and feels he is worried, but can he see the worry?

Is worry abstract, is it formless? Has the form of fear, anxiety or happiness ever been seen? Sometimes during an absolute dream, the fear is symbolized, the passions are formulated, the anxieties are materialized in form. Every direct intuitive experience, *anubhava*, has a form, a dimension. It may not be objective or gross, but definitely every experience has some kind of density and some kind of existence. A voice can be heard but not seen. Emotion can be felt but not seen. Why? Because the mind is not enlightened.

When the mind is enlightened, it can cast light on a particular experience. Fears, knowledge, feelings, passions can be seen. Everything can be seen as a form, in a human form, in a geometrical form, in many forms. This is called *devata* and that is the concept of deva in Indian philosophy, particularly tantric philosophy. Therefore, the philosophy of tantra is not pantheistic just because it talks of gods and goddesses. It should not be confused with monotheism or pantheism. These are academic classifications and do not really matter in the case of an aspirant who is going deep into his own mind, into his own self. The yantras and mantras are so designed that they are able to create an image and excite the movement in psychic fields. These elements of tantra guide the awareness into different planes of consciousness.

Swami Satyananda's experiences with mantra

Through the practices of mantra, yantra and mandala, when the consciousness is in the process of objectifying itself, you experience the apparent objective experiences. At this time many people are scared. They think, "Oh, it's a ghost," or "An angel has come," or "My dead mother has returned to me."

I had many such experiences when I first stayed in Munger, some of them frightening, some of them beautiful, some of people I had never seen, others of people I knew. Then on 14 July, 1963, I had the darshan of my guru, Swami Sivananda. I knew that the inner awakening had taken place, and it was at the



exact moment that he left his body in Rishikesh. These experiences can come to anybody.

Ishta devata or the psychic symbol

Ishta devata is the word generally used in Hindi for the psychic symbol. *Ishta* means 'the desired' and *devata* means 'the astral being'. Thus, the desired astral being is *ishta devata*.

A mantra is a combination of different thought vibrations which create a definite form of the psychic symbol. The utterance of a mantra, verbal or mental and the sound vibrations radiating from it help to constitute the elements of psychic manifestation. The psychic symbol may be chosen either by yourself or by a guru who has made you aware of it in a dream or in waking consciousness.

All mantras, including guru mantras, have this psychic symbol. This means that they all have a form that is psychic, not physical, which, for example, may be a deity or God. When the mantra is recited, the force and form created are radiation and reflection of your consciousness. When the mind goes in, the symbol serves as the resting place for the consciousness. In Sanskrit it is known as *murti*, which means the invisible materialization of the psychic forces.

Each and every mantra has its own particular symbol. *Om*, for example, has its own sound vibrations and currents. Sound waves constitute a psychic sound which is one with the symbol. Every Sanskrit syllable, such as *ka*, *kha*, *ga*, has a different range of vibration. When they are arranged and put together to commune with each other, a specific psychic form is created. They may even call forth an angel, a flower or a particular smell. Symbols are psychic formations that are in homogeneity with the physical existence of matter. It is imperative to choose a symbol that is in accordance with your liking, faith and intellectual conviction.

Swami Satyananda's experiences with mantra

In childhood I chose Sri Rama as my ideal, but when I was initiated into sannyasa I got caught in the Shaiva tradition. It was like a man loving two women at the same time. Whom to marry? My guru told me to marry both. I wondered how and he suggested I make Sri Rama my ishta devata and Shiva my ishta mantra. Since then I have been chanting *Om Namah Shivaya* and meditating on Sri Rama. People think God may be displeased with this, but He never is annoyed. When Shiva saw me chanting

his name and meditating on Sri Rama, he said, “Very good.” When Sri Rama came to know that I meditate on him but chant Shiva’s mantra, he said, “Fine, fine.” There was perfect understanding between them. This is no loss to me, but a profit.

I decided I had been chanting this mantra for a long time without knowing who Shiva is or what he looks like. Is he Somnath, Pashupatinath, Baidyanath, Vishwanath, or Mrityunjaya – the Lord of Tryambakeshwar? I thought; let me have an interview with Shiva. I must have *sakshatkara*, his mystic vision. I was trying to discover how this could happen when this method came to my mind.

Both Shiva and Sri Rama are mutual friends, devotees, bhaktas and disciples. They admire and love each other and surrender to each other. Sri Rama thinks of Shiva continuously and Shiva meditates on Sri Rama. Shiva does japa of Sri Rama’s name and Sri Rama chants the name of Shiva. Shiva follows Sri Rama everywhere; he also attended Sri Rama’s wedding. Shiva was present when Sri Rama was playing in the courtyard of King Dasharatha and even when Sri Rama was born. This is told in the story of Kakabhushundi. Shiva was present for Sri Rama’s coronation ceremony as well.

I believed in Sri Rama because I was born into the same clan as Sri Rama. I was born into the Ikshvaku clan, and Sri Rama was worshipped in our home. Shiva was also worshipped, and in Kumaon it is common practice to worship Devi. In Almora, Garhwal and Nainital all the people are worshippers of Devi. All of Uttarakhand worships Devi and it is said that She took birth there as an avatara.

As I was born into a kshatriya family of the Ikshvaku clan, I naturally liked the bow-bearing Sri Rama. Since childhood he has captivated me. He always carried a bow and arrow and was a symbol of courage and bravery. To all he was the model of beauty and decorum, an

example of appropriate behaviour. However, I came into Shiva's community. I liked Shiva too and then I came to understand that they are admirers of each other. Shiva praises Rama and Rama prays to Shiva. No problem!

Mantra – the means of inner exploration

The spiritual consciousness can be awakened through mantra to a very great extent. When we talk about mantra, we are definitely talking about one of the manifestations of this primordial energy. Each letter and syllable of the mantra penetrates deep down into various levels of your consciousness. Mantra is not intended for concentration. Mantra is intended to facilitate a passage for concentration. Mantra purifies your consciousness, but for concentration you must have another kind of symbol. Now, remember what I said, mantra is not for concentration. If you try to concentrate during mantra you will have to face repressions. Let it take one or two or three years, but the mantra must purge more and more of your mental impurities. By constant practice of mantra the mind becomes tranquil and equipoised.

The mind first of all accepts a sound, then it repeats the sound and, as you repeat the sound, it gains a higher frequency. At one stage the sound attains the highest possible frequency. At that time there is an explosion within the mind and then the mind comes out. What you know about the mind is not the mind, it is just the patterns of the mind. Anger, ambition, passion, worry – they are not the mind. The real mind is the hidden substance within each and everybody. You have to experience the manifestations of the mind. As you go on practising the mantra you go on expressing the totality of the mind. First comes the process of purging. The schizophrenic character of the mind expresses itself first and in the beginning it is not a very happy experience. Many times we make a mistake in the beginning when we try to meditate. When thoughts surge in the mind we suppress them because we have been taught the classification of good and bad. Whether it is a good experience or a bad experience,

whether it is a good thought or a bad thought, it has to come out. When you are seated in the lotus posture and practising mantra, the subconscious mind, the deeper mind, purges itself. The purpose of mantra, the purpose of sound, is not to create concentration, but to clear the path for concentration.

Those of you who are sincere seekers should understand the difference between clearing the way and creating concentration. They are not one and the same thing. If you do not resolve the conflicts in your mind properly then they manifest at a higher state in meditation. They are known as astral experiences which do not mean anything. These astral experiences are very bewitching. You come out of your room and say, "Oh, I had a beautiful experience," but it was nothing but a manifestation of the conflict, the schizophrenia and suppression which would have manifested otherwise if you were careful. Therefore, the mantra should be practised without confrontation with the mind.

Other forms of concentration are there, but they develop experiences that you may not be able to handle. You see, the important thing in every system is adaptation. You don't have to plunge into the depths immediately before you are able to handle the inner experiences. Mantra, the sound, is most suitable because it develops only mild and pleasant experiences which you can handle and which you can like. After you have been practising mantra for some time, then you can go into the deeper practices of concentration little by little and learn to handle those experiences step by step.

Mantra and planes of consciousness

The rishis had the experience of mantra on three different levels, the realization of the mantra in three planes of consciousness. When the consciousness passes from the gross body into the subtle body, the sounds perceived at that time make one collection. The mantras heard in the subtle body form another group, and when the consciousness from the subtle or second body enters the third body, certain mantras realized at that time form a third group.

When I say body, I do not mean only body, rather, I mean body consciousness, that body through which your consciousness is functioning. When the body consciousness is realized through the medium of the five gross senses, that is called the gross body consciousness. The first body is where your mind, intellect and memory are working. Now then, what is the second body? When you practise meditation, your awareness travels deeper and deeper inside, and in that inner meditation you begin to see beautiful visions and dreams. That which is called the second body is not something tangible, it is the subtle or astral body – the *sukshma sharira*, psychic consciousness, or the subconscious body. That is the second plane of consciousness. Now what is known as the third body? When meditation becomes deeper and deeper, the state of void or *shoonya* comes. No awareness of external, nor of internal, the experience of ‘the dark night of the soul,’ like midnight, formless, sightless, where there is no awareness of ‘I’ – that is called the third body, the causal body, *karana sharira*, or the unconscious body. In the Vedas it has been called *hiranyagarbha* or the golden womb.

In the third and fourth levels of consciousness the awareness of the external world is absent. There is no awareness of my old name, my old form, but there is the experience of the eternal self, *akhanda swaroop*, this is called *samadhi*, the fourth level of consciousness or *turiya*, and many other names.

All these different levels of consciousness have been indicated in the Gayatri mantra: *Om Bhuh, Om Bhuvaha, Om Suvaha, Om Maha, Om Janaha, Om Tapaha, Om Satyam, Om Tat Savitur Varenyam Bhargo Devasya Dhimahi Dhiyo Yonaha Prachodayat.*

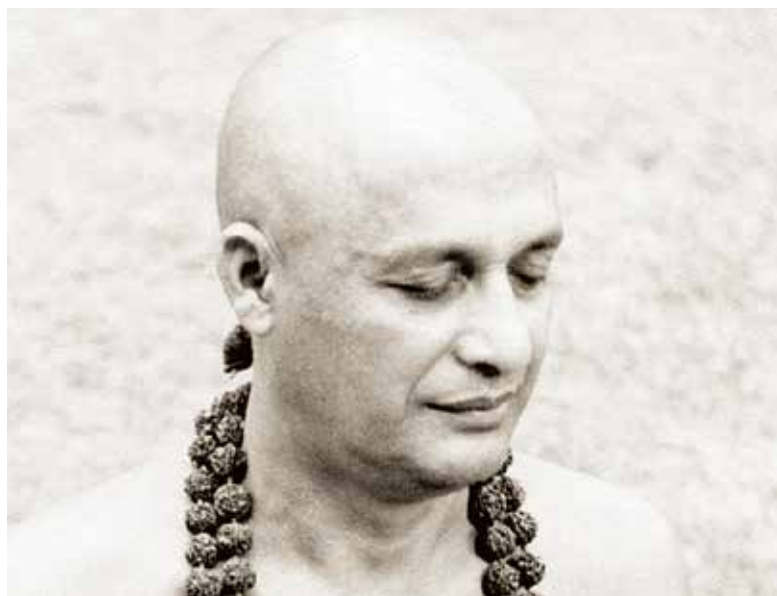
It is said in kundalini yoga and other forms of yoga, that by practice of mantra, the deepest *lokas*, or the deepest planes can be reached. This means that we are then able to contact the different planes of consciousness. This is one plane of consciousness; it is called *Bhuh loka*, one of your planes of consciousness. Then there is another plane of consciousness

where there is a subtler type of consciousness, and according to the great rishis, there are seven planes of higher consciousness and seven planes of lower consciousness. The higher planes of consciousness are divided into *Bhuh loka*, that is earth consciousness, this consciousness, the sensual mind; *Bhuwah loka*, the intermediate subtle plane; *Suvaha loka*, the higher plane of consciousness. These are the three important planes which are as a whole subdivided into seven planes, and these higher planes of consciousness are in us and we need to study them just as we study what matter is in physics.

Matter is everything. That is to say, it is in the form which we can see, and it is also in the form of energy. In the same way you can view this plane where you are conscious at that moment. But this is not the only plane of consciousness. The rishis and the Vedas, the Upanishads and the shastras, the great scriptures, have repeatedly said that this plane of consciousness to which you have arrived to date is just a very small area of consciousness, and it is subject to expansion and it is not complete. This is the plane of the body, this is the plane of the senses and this is the plane of the mind. This is called *Bhuh loka* or the sensory plane of consciousness and this is called *samsara*, the world. As we say, the man is completely separate; he is completely separate from the world. From this consciousness to which we are attached, to which we are bound, is there a way to come out of our bondage, and a way to leave this plane of consciousness and reach a more satisfying and complete plane of existence? It is in this respect that yoga says that through the practice of mantra you can contact the different planes of your existence.

Unlocking Pandora's box

When you practise your mantra the mind begins to waver. It is exactly at that time that your mind begins to explode its experiences and knowledge. If that is what they are, why not experience them? Where do they come from? What are they composed of? Are they exoteric or are they esoteric? If they



are a part of your mind, if they are inherent in you, what is their form?

The mind works like a camera. Whatever has been known and experienced through the senses remains imprinted in the subliminal part of the mind. These impressions or formations are so numerous that you may never be able to know them all, and it is not easy to classify them. Some are weak and insignificant, while others have a powerful influence on the character, habits and nature. Some are casual and periodical, while others accompany you all the time.

These are the latent impressions, samskaras, embedded in your subconscious mind. There are three types of samskaras: distraction, psychic visions and suspension of consciousness. How are you going to free yourself from these formations? Mantra is a very valuable tool for this purpose. It is necessary for everybody that all the experiences of the mind should be properly accepted, whether it is submission, passion, violence, love, charity, purity, an obscene experience or a beautiful experience. Whether it concerns family, friends or

others, you must see each and every samskara, every latent impression responsible for this life and the life afterwards.

So when you practise mantra, the deeper you go, the greater areas of the mind you explore. You will not only see the ambitions, dreams and compassions; you will see horrible fears, thoughts which you could never think on the mental, psychic or para-psychological planes. There is not one moment in the life of a practitioner when the mind is totally vacant.

Acceptance of the mind is a very important attitude, especially during the practice of mantra. To live with our own thoughts and feelings is very difficult. People suffer from inferiority and guilt due to their own mind, their own mental behaviour. What matters is that you learn to live with the mind, to understand the mind, and to utilize the perceptions that it is projecting before you. Whenever the mind is disturbed, you must find out what is the cause of the disturbance – the sound, the individual, the situation. Try to become a witness of all that is happening – this is the attitude that must be developed in the practice of mantra.

When you are practising your mantra, if an explosion takes place and the mind starts fluctuating and vacillating, don't suppress the thoughts, but try to see them clearly. On the one hand, your mantra is going on, and on the other hand, you must be aware of the forces of the mind, of the process of thinking and awareness. It is absolutely necessary to use a mala. Mantra and mala together will fix the formations of the mind. For example, while practising *Om, Om, Om*, your mind suddenly drops and visions appear. The turning of the mala will interfere with the visions and revive your consciousness. It will reverse the process of mental awareness.

This is the importance of mantra in relation to meditation and the awakening of spiritual consciousness. Before you try to experience the light, the reality within yourself, you will have to exhaust those impressions either in meditation or in the process of life.

Physiology of mantra

Not only a few hundred, but a few thousand studies have been done on the effect of sound on the physical body and the conclusions are these. When you produce a sound, when you practise a mantra, it alters the brainwaves. It decreases the necessity of oxygen consumption. It maintains a steady blood pressure. It relaxes the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems and has an all-round beneficial effect on the biochemical structure of the body.

Isolation of the brain and mind can be brought about in many ways – the most important method is mantra. The sound of the mantra has a deep impact on the behaviour of the brain and mind. The brain waves react to these sound stimuli. For example, if you practise mantra at a medium speed, the brain waves adjust themselves accordingly, and if you go on decreasing the speed of the mantra, the brain waves gradually begin to subside.

There are four types of brainwaves, known as beta, alpha, delta and theta, which rise and fall according to pressure created in the brain. When you are tranquil and composed and when your thoughts are moving with very soft speed, at that time the alpha waves attain intensity. Now, when alpha waves are intensified in the brain, the pressure is at once released from the heart. If you are suffering from blood pressure, if your heart is palpitating too much, if you are feeling scared or nervous on account of anything, or if you are very angry, at that time if you can somehow develop the alpha rhythm in the brain, the behaviour of the heart will at once become normal. The blood pressure will come down.

In a research carried out at the University of Medicine, Barcelona, the mantra *Om* was chanted by a group of people at different times and they pronounced it in different ways. The mantra was chanted aloud and recorded by an EEG machine which broke down the various frequencies and showed their effects on the brain. The first sound O produced alpha waves, and when the sound M was pronounced, the machine recorded theta wave activity. Both of these states are

associated with the more internal realms of the mind which include intuitive and creative powers.

The American scientists have gone even further than this. They say that by the practice of mantra, the repetition of a certain sound for ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes, you can change the brainwaves within that period. They have tested this. When subjects practising a mantra like *Om* were exposed to ECG, EEG and other machines which register what is happening in the body, they found at the end of the practice that the brainwaves had shifted from beta to alpha and that the heart, the lungs, the nervous system and the brain as a whole showed a very normal, healthy picture.

Purging the mind

Mantra is a sound which makes the mind free from its obsessions. Just as you clean your dirty dresses with soap, in the same way, sound can clean the mind of its impressions. What we call the mind is not the pure mind. Our mind is coloured. Say, for instance, you have a white bed sheet. If you use it for a long time some other colour is added to it. In the same way the mind is mixed with impressions. We accumulate these impressions throughout our lives. First of all, these impressions should be cleaned. In order to clean these impressions, a sound has to be used because they are embedded very deep. It is not at all easy to expel these impressions.

The mantra must be repeated, and while you are repeating the mantra, you face more and more distractions and oscillations of mind, and hosts of thoughts can be seen. You just witness them. From this, you can understand that mantra is a means to purify the realms of consciousness.

Very small things, insignificant things, disturb the concentration when you are doing japa. You wonder if you have switched off the light or not, whether the kitchen door is locked, where the baby has gone to sleep. All kinds of very insignificant things. Sometimes you wonder how these things that come into the mind during the initial practice

of meditation are effective and what role they play, what place they have in your life. You may say, “No, they have no place in my life,” but they do. Each and every experience, insignificant though it may seem to be, is very important. These impressions have all to come out, and that is why it is said in the scriptures, “Empty thyself.”

The first important result of practising the mantra is called purging, and everybody has to experience this. What is purging? When you have a bad stomach, you take a pill and you purge – once, twice, thrice, four, five, six times. Or if you are suffering from diarrhoea or dysentery, you go once, twice, ten, fifteen times, and you get tired. That is called purging. Even as you purge on the physical plane, in the same way you have to purge on the mental plane, you have to purge out your karmas, your samskaras. You have to let them out, throw them away. So, when a bad thought comes into your mind during the practice of mantra, it is an act of purging and you are getting rid of it. This will happen for some time. You must have patience; you should not expect concentration and equilibrium all at once.

When I used to practise mantra, I would hold the mala in my hand. Many times I did not know how the fingers were moving. Only when I came to one hundred and eight where there is a point of termination, I realized, “Oh, one hundred and eight I have missed,” because I was not so much aware of the mantra, I was aware of those things which you call unholy. In the beginning I did behave like a religious man. I thought this was bad and that was bad. Later I thought, “Well, if it is bad, what can I do? I have been practising for three months and it is coming again and again. Okay, let me practise awareness of all the garbage. Let me take it out, the stinking, the foul and the dirty.” It gave me a very good experience in the end. Therefore, the practice of mantra is a very important part of yoga.

So, if you are practising your mantra and your mind is restless, negative propensities loom, you become angry and greedy, mean and petty-minded, it is a good sign. Don't feel

guilty about it. When a thought comes into your mind, you try to stop it because you think that you are polluting the atmosphere of the mind, whereas it is just the opposite. When a bad thought comes into your mind, your mind is becoming purer. I have experienced it. At the verge of final experience, many saints and sages have said that when awakening of kundalini takes place, when the chit shakti of intelligence is awakening, at that time, all the garbage, all the dirt comes out. All day, all night, you think about nothing but what you call 'unholy'. The important thing is: do not interfere with the purging process which takes place during your mantra chanting. No matter what comes up, just let it come. Its meaning does not matter, it's just karma.

The process of purging

What happens when you take the laxative? You go to the toilet a number of times. The same thing happens to the mind. When these impressions are embedded in the mind, the mind becomes negative, it has pain, it has fears, it has many negative elements. We do not know why that is happening. You think that your wife is bad so you go on quarrelling, or your business is not going well and so you are unhappy, or your son or your daughter are not good and so you are worried, but that is not the cause. The world is not the cause of your unhappiness. Worries, anxiety, fears, passions are the boundaries of your mind, so you try psychoanalysis or you try to escape from the realities by going to the pictures, to clubs, this and that. It doesn't really help you. So, just as you take a laxative to clear the body, you can take a laxative to clear the mind also. Mantra is the laxative for your mind. When you practise mantra, more and more depressions come out. Worries must come out, anxiety must come out, passions, fears and suicidal tendencies must come out; all that is foul must come out. That is the purpose of mantra and therefore mantra is a sound which, when repeated again and again, allows your mind to expel its impressions.

When you are concentrating or trying to concentrate, there are moments when you have so many memories coming into the consciousness, either directly or in a symbolic form. As these images come into the mind, we become aware of the archetypes stored up in the brain. Man has hundreds and thousands of experiences from the past stored up in the brain in a symbolic form. Every experience is transferred to the brain and mind in a symbolic way. If you look at a flower and appreciate it, that experience is reduced to a symbol, which is registered or stored in your brain and in your consciousness. Like this, there are millions of these symbolic experiences in man's brain.

As these symbols are stored up in the unconscious body, when you start concentration, then they gradually begin to come out. When you start practising mantra, then the lid is opened and the samskaras, the latent impressions or the archetypes, come up from the unconscious body to the subconscious mind to the conscious area, and you begin to see many of them either as a direct image or in a symbolic form. Sometimes you visualize the incidents of the past exactly in the same way, and many times you visualize the incidents in a symbolic fashion.

Concentration is like a laxative. Light concentration is like a laxative, and strong practices of concentration are like purgatives. You take a laxative and it comes out; when you take a purgative, it comes out forcefully. When you concentrate, all the samskaras, all the impressions, all the latent impressions in your mind for years and years together come out from the depths of your mind to the upper surface. You can see them clearly, sometimes you can see them symbolically. Whatever you see is within you. It is a process of purging, and it is only when you repeat your mantra that those thoughts come. If you are eating, drinking, walking, talking or driving, nothing will come to your mind. But take the mala in your hand and immediately the purging begins. When you practise your mantra, you are looking into yourself, and when you look into yourself, you see what is there.



Therefore, it is much better to force the karmas out as long as you are on the conscious plane. When you transcend the plane of consciousness and you go to the subconscious plane, or what you call semi-samadhi, deep meditation, then the images that come to you cannot be controlled because your ego is not present. So, you don't know how to strike them off, how to eliminate them. I'll give you a very simple example. If you sit in a particular place and if a very unhappy idea comes to you, you may say, "I don't want it." You just eliminate it by willpower. But if you are dreaming in the night and if you dream that somebody is coming with a revolver to shoot you, you can do nothing because ego is not there. In the dream whatever is happening has to happen.

The efficacy of mantra

When you think about hatred, when you think about love, when you think about passion, does it vibrate through and through your body or does it not? Even a sound can disturb you. If you are walking along the road and somebody shouts, "Hey, you dirty rascal," that's enough. It disturbs you so much that you are not able to sleep the whole night. If a thought can vibrate through and through your body, through and through your emotions, through and through your feelings,

through and through your personality, then why not this mantra? This is the logic.

You can't say that mantra is useless. When you are practising mantra, it becomes a part of your mind, a part of your consciousness, a part of yourself. How can you say it is ineffective, how can you say it is futile? Anything that becomes a part of your mind, of your consciousness, is not futile. It is going to have some effect on you.

If there was a machine which could register the thoughts you have during mantra, you would be terrified to see the picture. No thought is complete at that time. And every thought is superseded by another thought. Reflections of the past, anticipation of the future and the situations in the present, all come in a very distracted manner. Sometimes you think, "No! I am not going to think anything." Like a watchdog you are watching that no thought should come up and suddenly you find that you have been thinking. You get completely tired of these funny things. At the end of your japa, you are very frustrated.

When you do not face the mind and you are in the company of pleasant objects, then you are constipated. You can also say that you are escaping from life, or rather you are escaping from the real picture of your mind. When you practise the mantra, it disturbs the mind and makes you face the mind. Mantra is a light dose, it is not a heavy or powerful dose. There are certain practices that can make you purge very heavily. Sometimes you cannot handle the purging. Whatever comes in your mind during mantra is a part of your mind, your personality.

Whichever life you experience leaves an experience behind in the form of a seed. These seeds, these experiences become a part of your mind. They influence your behaviour, your personality, your responses and your aspirations. When you practise mantra, there is a progressive relaxation of these samskaras. Therefore, when you practise mantra, you should not stop this manifestation. If you practise your mantra with this attitude, in the course of time your mind will enter into meditation by itself.

I have a philosophy, which I have established for over thirty years. I am a little bit of a doctor also. Suppose you are suffering from diarrhoea and you go to the toilet twenty times a day. I call it cleansing. Bad and fermented acid, broken mucous membranes and infectious matter is coming out. At the same time, I will ask you to not take every type of food. If you take meat or something which is hard to digest, you will continue to go to the toilet and there will be many other complications. So, I have two attitudes, one, to allow the purging, and two, to stop the purging. These two attitudes are practised side by side. If you are allowed to continue the purging, you will have another problem called dehydration.

In yoga, there are two types of practices. A guru must know this very well. If you face extreme purging of the mind, then there will be what we call dehydration in the form of dementia. Therefore, we have to take care of two things at the same time, purging of the mind on one level and equilibrium of the mind on the other level.

When you are practising your mantra and purging is going on, you must also recheck your lifestyle, your intentions, desires and responses. Maybe there is something wrong in your lifestyle, thinking style, food style or behaviour style. Therefore, during mantra, do not fight with your mind. Do not check the purging processes of your subconscious mind. If the purging is too little, then you don't have to worry at all. If the purging is too much, if the distractions are too many, then it is better to do some sort of analysis. Analyze your relationship with your husband, wife, children and friends; analyze your attitude towards money, your profession and the problems and difficulties you are facing. If you find that anything in your lifestyle is unscientific, correct it a little. By this you will be able to eliminate the acuteness of purging.

There is another important thing to remember if you are doing mantra. If you go on uprooting the grass from this valley, you will have to do it for a whole lifetime, because the grass is inherent, the foliage is inherent in the quality of the soil. If you see a person who is going on uprooting the grass

and saying, 'I am going to make the whole valley grass-free', he is a foolish man. You cannot make your mind completely free from samskaras, impressions and distractions.

What we aim at in mantra is to remove the shrubs and the forest, the dense things, so that the plot is clear for planting nice flowers, fruits and trees. Therefore, do not try to uproot the grass from the valley all your life, instead plant nice trees and take care of them. Clear up your mind a little bit through mantra, then develop awareness of a deity or a symbol. When the awareness of the symbol is overloaded by thoughts, clear it a little bit. That is all.

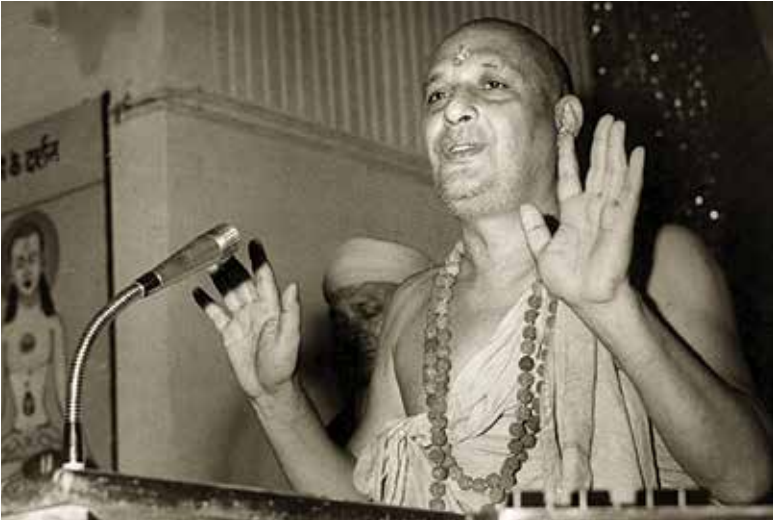
Conclusion

Mantra is a combination or assembly of powerful sound waves. As such the intellectual understanding of the mantra is not at all necessary. It is not the meaning, but the sound waves created by the mantra which influence the cosmos in the brain and outside. When you pronounce a mantra, it influences the astral sphere of the universe, like an atomic blast influences or even burns down the thermo-nuclear atmosphere, even though we don't see it. In the same manner, the mantra influences the deeper, greater, and more astral and subtle spheres of the cosmos, the microcosmos and also the macrocosmos. The microcosmos is that which is me, and the macrocosmos is the whole totality of creation.

Thus mantra plays a very important role in our spiritual life. It brings about a great change or transformation of our consciousness by the sound vibrations which are intrinsically attached to the mantra. Therefore, it is very important for practitioners to accept and receive the right mantra which will influence the whole body, the entire brain and influence their behavior, their thinking, and everything else in the right way. The mantra which you have received from your guru can give you a higher experience. Therefore, when you are practising your sound, when you are practising your mantra, you are trying to accelerate the pace of your evolution.

3

The Power of Mantra



Your being is infinite. You can go deep into yourself for miles and miles, for eternity, and you will never come to an end. That is what Indian philosophy has been talking about for thousands of years. Physically you are finite, one hundred and twenty pounds, five feet and three inches tall. That is talking about the body, but you are beyond the body. When you talk about consciousness, awareness, the self, the *chit*, you can go far into yourself. So, with the help of the mantra you have to explore your own depth.

Man is limited – mind is not

Modern psychology says that mind has three dimensions: conscious, subconscious and unconscious. Tantric philosophers also said that there are three levels of consciousness: gross, subtle and causal. These three classifications of mind are very broad and general because the concept of mind is based on *avidya* or ignorance. As long as there is a divided field of energy there is this worldly mind. When the unified field of energy is realized then the duality of this individual mind, and the cosmic mind or the universal mind is completely mitigated.

If fifteen or twenty or any number of pitchers containing water are placed in a well of water they are divided. There is water inside the pitcher, there is water outside the pitcher in the well, but still the two waters are not mingling because there is a barrier. What is that barrier? It is the pitcher, so you break it. Once the pitchers you have put into the well are all broken then the water in the pitcher and the water in the well intermingles. That is called unified field of energy. When the individual consciousness and the universal consciousness become one it is a unified field. This unified field theory can be best understood by understanding the relationship between the individual mind and the universal mind. Individual mind and universal mind are not two different entities; they are one and the same. The only thing is that in the individual mind is contained its own stuff, its own karma, its own samskaras that it is carrying. You must destroy those karmas and samskaras.

This mind which you do not know has millions of layers and during your lifetime, during one day of your life, you are functioning on more than one level of awareness. This you must understand. During the twenty-four hours of the day, whether you are happy or unhappy, your consciousness is functioning or you are living in different realms or layers of this consciousness. You are not existing on just one layer. By practice and training you can develop your awareness so that you are able to function on thousands and millions of layers of consciousness during your lifetime.

You find it difficult to function on all levels at the same time because you have limitations. Human beings have limitations. You are able to function only within your limited range of awareness and not beyond that. Through the practice of yoga, you will have to overcome these limitations so that you are able to function on unlimited layers of mind and consciousness. But how do we break the boundary? How can we break the confines of evolution? It is possible by sound. Sound is an explosive force. Even the gross form of sound can completely destroy big rocks. Mantra represents this science. As sound attains higher frequency, the mind also attains a higher frequency. With the evolution of sound, the mind also evolves.

Ranges of the mind

The mind has two ranges – individual and universal. In fact, in the whole universe there is only one mind, but this mind becomes individualized according to each separate circuit. For example, your mind and my mind are not two minds; our minds are different circuits of one mind. So the truth is that the individual mind is part of the homogeneous, universal mind. Therefore, the individual mind can always be connected with the universal mind if we know how to do it. We must remember this as a law, for it is of utmost importance in spiritual life. The mind is a universal mother and its nature is that of the three *gunas* – *sattwa* or equilibrium, *rajas* or dynamism, and *tamas* or inertia. According to the manifestation of reality, mind is known as *buddhi* or discriminative intellect, *chitta* or mind contents, and *ahamkara* or ego.

When we begin to practise mantra, we create vibrations in the outer mind. As the mind becomes calm, quiet and concentrated, these vibrations are transferred to the universal area of the mind. Then the barrier between the individual and universal mind is broken. Because of this barrier, our minds are cut from one another; you don't know what I think and I don't know what you think. But when this barrier is broken, your mind and my mind become one mind.

Mind is homogeneous awareness. This awareness is twofold – external and internal. When you have sensual perceptions, then you know that the awareness is external. When you dissociate the mind from the senses, the awareness becomes internal. The mind can turn either way. When the mind becomes extrovert, it has the experiences of form, sound, touch, taste and smell through the five different sense organs. The sensual experience is the game of the mind.

If the mind is introverted, the senses are inert and lifeless. Then one does not hear, see, smell, taste or touch. This is called *pratyahara*. When the mind turns inwards, you approach the barrier and begin to see the cosmos, which is an infinite experience. It has no beginning and no end, no circumference and no centre.

We define awareness as external or internal, material or spiritual. The material awareness is an external experience of the mind. Spiritual awareness is an internal experience of the mind. When the mind has a barrier, it is limited to material experience, but when the barrier is broken, then it has spiritual experience. In yogic philosophy, this barrier is known as *avidya*, ignorance, or *maya*, illusion. By the practice of mantra this barrier is broken.

Power of mantra

There are two forces, two powers in the mantra. One is the power of consciousness Shiva, called Purusha. The other is the force of nature, matter, or Prakriti. Through *sadhana*, these two forces are awakened, and after awakening they will continue to help you for the whole of your life.

According to occultism, there are invisible powers and deities hidden in every mantra beyond ordinary vision. If anyone were to argue that a mantra is simply an arrangement of syllables, nobody would believe it because this view is scientifically untenable. Theosophists like Leadbeater, Annie Besant and Madame Blavatsky have clearly stated in their writings that a mantra is totally different from a mere alphabetical congregation. If you come across the book

Garland of Letters by Sir John Woodroffe, you will realize that a mantra has secret power and meaning. The mantra *Om Namah Shivaya* literally means 'I pay homage to Lord Shiva', but if you examine it in the light of esoteric science, you will find that every syllable has a definite and different range and frequency of vibration. If you study the science of music, you will understand what I mean. The sound 'Ni' has a definite length, frequency, depth and range. The sound 'Ma' will differ again. Therefore, each syllable in a mantra has a different form and meaning.

Our hypothesis is that the real power is in the mantra itself. Just as the explosive power latent in a cartridge remains unreleased unless put through a rifle, likewise the divine power in any mantra remains unreleased unless approached through faith and willpower. In addition to this, it is necessary to aim the mantra with one-pointedness. When the mantra is awakened and becomes potent its invisible power comes into operation.

All mantras, whether intelligible or not, were uttered by saints after full realization. Thus, the supramental expressions came to be known as mantras. Over thousands of years, innumerable yogis have realized and received the divine sound or mantra, which they have, in succession, given to their disciples. If you want evidence or testimony, you will find it in all the holy scriptures of the world, that the word was always revealed.

Levels of mantra

When you practise the mantra incessantly, it develops in you the vision of a higher force and enables you to live amidst the sensualities of life with indifference to them. When you throw a pebble into a still lake, it produces circular ripples. In the same way, when you repeat a mantra over and over again, the sound force gathers momentum and creates vibrations in the ocean of the mind. When you repeat the mantra millions and billions of times, it permeates every part of your brain and purifies your whole physical, mental and emotional body.

At one level the sound is gross, but the same sound, when it attains a high frequency can also become an explosive force. In mantra yoga, there are various techniques to increase the frequency of sound. Even in the science of physics we know that sound can create holes through solid metal. We also know that sound can travel and re-travel many times every second. That is the science of the radar. Everything depends on the frequency of the sound and sound has micro-waves and macro-waves. According to tantra and yoga, mantra has four main frequency levels, chanting of mantra in a louder tone, in a medium tone, on the mental plane and on the psychic plane.

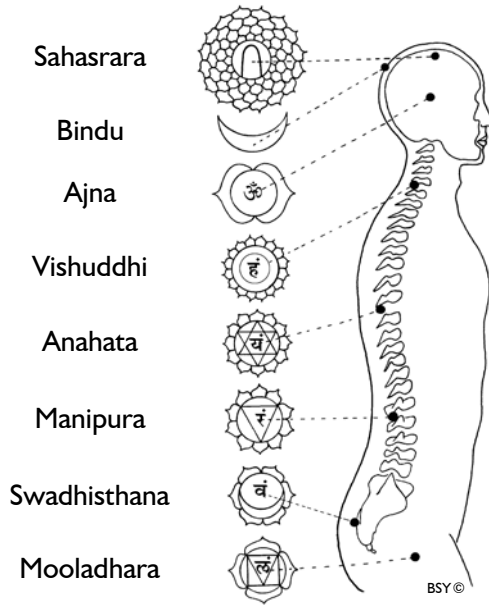
The gross sound has a limited frequency. Then there is a second frequency of sound when you whisper the mantra that is a higher frequency. Then there is a third frequency which is much higher than this, when you produce a sound in your mind, mental repetition of mantra. When a sound is repeated in the mind, the same sound I am producing with my lips now, then its frequency is much higher.

By practising it at these four levels, kundalini awakens methodically and systematically. You can also use the mantra by repeating it mentally in coordination with the breath, or you can sing it aloud in the form of kirtan. This creates a great potential in mooladhara and awakening takes place. There are certain mantras that concern the awakening. Whenever one takes a mantra from anyone, even from me, one has to be very careful. If it is true that the mantra is just the name of God then you can take it from every Tom, Dick and Harry. But if mantra is a sound that influences the psychic aspect of your life then you must take it with utmost enquiry and with utmost care.

Subtle physiology of mantra

In nadis and chakras

We have six major chakras: mooladhara, swadhisthana, manipura, anahata, vishuddhi and ajna. These are located along the pathway of *sushumna*, an energy channel which



flows through the centre of the spinal cord. The chakras are connected to a network of psychic channels called *nadis*, which correspond to the nerves, but are more subtle in nature. Each chakra is represented by a lotus with a certain number of petals. The petals of the lotus are inscribed with the *bija mantras* or seed sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet. They represent the different manifestations of psychic energy connected with the chakras, and the nadis leading into and out of them.

The seed mantra which is indicated in each and every chakra represents the dormant energy. The seed letters are called *bija mantra* and they are *Lam, Vam, Ram, Yam, Ham, Om*. Each mantra represents one *tattwa*, one element. In the structure of creation, everything is composed of the five elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether. These five elements are known as primordial elements.

Each chakra has one letter which represents the predominating *tattwa*. Mooladhara, for example, is predominantly

of the earth element and therefore its mantra is *Lam*, representing the sound waves which symbolize earth. These five elements have different frequencies, densities, waves, vibrations and colours. Therefore, each and every tattwa or element is represented by one sound wave. The bija mantras represent the inherent elements of each chakra.

When mantra is awakened in the breath the whole body is recharged. Psychic toxins are eliminated and blocks in the nadis, which are the main source of physical and mental disturbances, are removed. The mantra awakens sushumna and permeates each and every particle of the body. When sushumna begins to vibrate, self-awareness becomes active. When ida starts vibrating, the mind becomes active. When pingala starts vibrating the prana becomes active and energy flows through one's whole system, extending even outside the physical body.

In the body

The mantra shastras say that mantras in the form of sound are also located in different parts of the body. These sounds, as you may have studied in the science of acupuncture, in the different points of the meridian, in the different points of the chakras and in the flow of energy in the pathways are different points where each and every sound is located. The chart of this is well defined in the tantric system. In this physical body you have a miniature universe. Therefore, by mantra, you can create an influence. Mantras have vibrations. These vibrations can be sent to those positions or centres in the body. Just as radio waves can reach from Rome to different parts of Italy or any part of the earth, in the same way mantra waves can reach any part of the body.

The word *nyasa* means 'to place'. It is a practice in which specific mantras are 'placed' and felt at different parts of the body. Nyasa involved the use of specific mantras which were placed, felt or experienced at different parts of the body. In tantra there is *matrika nyasa*, *varna nyasa*, where these akshara are projected throughout the body. First the name of the

part was recited, then it was visualized or touched, and the mantra was placed there. Nyasa was a means of consecrating the physical body by instilling higher awareness or divine consciousness into the various parts.

All these methods of nyasa are very powerful. They can be either external or *bahir* where the parts of the body are physically touched, or they can be internal or *antar* where the mantras and awareness are mentally placed. A vast selection of mantras is utilized, including *Om*, *Phat*, *Hreem*, *Kreem*, the Gayatri mantra and so forth. The bija mantras of the chakras can also be utilized and rotated throughout the six chakras. The mantra chanting and rotation of awareness harmonizes the nervous system, balances pranic flows and renders the mind one-pointed. Each part of the body is systematically charged with the energy of the mantras. The whole body and mind are purified and prepared for meditation.

Inner vision

Vision means seeing inside. This is also vision; I am seeing you and you are seeing me, but it is external. When you close your eyes and you see, that is called vision. This vision is not imagination, not fantasy, not hallucination. What you see within you, what I call vision, is your own consciousness evolving. Therefore, for your spiritual evolution, it is important that you must explode and must experience these visions. Many wise men, painters, poets, singers have visions, and these visions are not untrue. Many times we have visions and we go to psychologists and they think that it is a mental problem. No, it is not a mental problem.

When you meditate and concentrate, when you practise a mantra, the inner forms come from inside your unconscious. Sometimes these visions come from the subconscious mind and sometimes they come from your unconscious. In the human conscious, subconscious and unconscious mind, there are many images, forces, ideas and impressions. In the subconscious and unconscious mind these visions take the form of symbols. In dreams, in meditation and in general

behaviour the subconscious mind is expressed through symbols.

When you practise mantra, gradually the breath becomes slower and slower, and when the breath becomes slow, the brain becomes slow. The speed of thought, the speed of mind become less and less. When the mind becomes tranquil and calm, you begin to see some sort of visions. When you begin to see the visions, at once stop the practice. Don't continue. Immediately shift your mind from the tip of the nose to the centre of the eyebrows. In the middle of the eyebrows, practise concentration on a symbol that you have chosen for yourself. If it is a bright star, concentrate on it. If it is a full moon, concentrate on that. If it is a bright sun, concentrate on that. Whatever symbol you have chosen for yourself at that time you must meditate on that, because now your mind has become capable of seeing the object clearly. The psychic visions prove that now your mind has become capable of visualizing the symbol. This is the easiest and best practice.

While you are chanting the mantra, you can feel a candle light at the eyebrow centre, or some people can feel a lotus. Others can feel their ishta devata; there are many experiences which you can have. They are called *anubhava*, inner experiences. You can call them spiritual experiences or psychic experiences and they can be beautiful. Mahatma Gandhi wrote, "Sometimes I can hear the flute of Krishna." He is not talking about something intellectual; he is talking about his psychic experiences.

Role of the guru

Mantra is the link between you and your transcendental man. In the life of a spiritual aspirant, there are three important things which have to be kept in mind. He has to form a link with the three aspects of his existence. The first aspect of his existence is this external man. He is called the empirical man. He is also called the mortal man. The second aspect of his existence is the transcendental man. He is called immortal.

Some call him atma. Some call him God. I call him the transcendental man. That is your highest nature.

In between the external man and the transcendental man, there is a middle man. Just as between this electrical bulb and the power station there is a transformer station somewhere in between. When the high tension energy line comes from the power house, it is transformed to low tension for household use. This transformer is called the middle man. This middle man is the guru. He gives you a mantra. Mantra is a part of the relationship between guru and disciple. Once you receive a mantra from your guru, it forms a bond between you. This represents an acceptance of the relationship on both sides. This relationship is purely spiritual. The mantra is the replica of the guru's existence in you; it is a constant reminder.

In order to forge a link between the external man, the middle man and the transcendental man, some practices should be done every day. Out of the twenty-four hours, we sleep about eight hours. We work for eight hours and for the other eight hours we do something else. All the time we are linked with the external man. Never are we aware of the transcendental man and the middle man. Therefore, out of twenty-four hours, set apart just ten minutes and during that period try to forge a link with the middle man and the transcendental man.

The guru knows the science of sound and the composition of a mantra in relation to the elements, in relation to the sound vibrations, and so on. He knows what the proper mantra for an aspirant is. The expert guru who knows the science will provide you with a mantra which will help you to expand your consciousness, to bring about a state of integration in the pattern of your consciousness.

The point is how to focus the mind which is forever running after maya, the mind that is so engrossed in worldly objects, the mind that is running after the shadow, the mirage. This fickle, capricious, covetous mind needs to be focused somewhere to make it one-pointed. A prop is needed to act as a focal point. The guru is necessary because he can



act as a focal point. The guru shows the path; he directs and guides. The mantra the guru gives is the master key to all the locks of one's life.

Swami Sivananda told me to stay in the ashram, work hard and purify myself. I immediately started to work. I used to collect bricks and firewood, do typing and construction work, and walk five miles to the market, purchase the vegetables and carry them back on my head. During this period, I worked each day until nine in the evening, took a bath and sat on the banks of the Ganga for meditation. I would practise mantra and my inner space was always illumined. There were no thoughts or impressions; there was no past or future. I did not even exist; there was only the mantra. It was just like a dream, and before I knew it, it would be three or four in the morning. I was not sleeping at all, and this continued for many months, but I was not aware that I did not sleep.

In the true guru-disciple relationship the disciple's mind is always on his guru so that he becomes totally one-pointed in his devotion and dedication. When the disciple has bhakti, no distance can separate the feeling of the guru's presence, command via ajna chakra, and grace working in the affairs of his life.

Guru mantra

When one accepts a mantra from his guru, he is receiving a sound of great power. Everybody has a guru inside them, but in a dormant and potential condition. This inner guru has to be awakened and in order for this to happen the external guru is very necessary. This is the purpose of the guru-disciple relationship, and in this relationship mantra plays a very important role. When you accept a mantra from a guru, he passes on to you a lot of his energy. Whether the mantra is given by me or by another guru, you should be aware that you have in your possession one of the most precious things in life.

A mantra is like a seed. When you sow a seed in your garden, you cover it with soil. After a few days it germinates and produces shoots. The heart, the mind, the consciousness of the disciple is like fertile soil. When you aspire to spiritual life, when you are trying for and searching for inner awareness, higher awareness, then you have already made your soil ready. In that fertile soil a seed has to be planted. The guru mantra is that seed. In the course of time the seed germinates, sprouts, grows and fructifies. In the same way, this mantra will grow in the form of inner awareness. This is a very wonderful and powerful beginning to spiritual life because the mantra creates inner experiences which bring you closer to your inner self. The mantra transforms the quality of the mind. The gross mind becomes subtle and more and more refined. It gives relaxation, tranquillity and equipoise. Then according to the efforts which the disciple himself has made, the mantra begins to produce illuminating experiences. Eventually it blossoms into the beautiful flowers of enlightenment.

You must see the mantra from the practical point of view. Just as you sow a seed, you must plant the mantra deep within so that in the course of time it will permeate your whole being. Every morning before you commence your daily activities, and at night before you retire to your bed, you should repeat your mantra.

Mantra siddhi

The science of mantras is so precise and scientific that it creates the awakening in the psychic fields. Therefore, mantra shastra is the foundation of tantra shastra. The various provinces which are lying in the inner space of man are always in tune with those vibrations, which a powerful mantra is capable of creating. Different dimensions of nada have been perceived and passed on by the great yogis, rishis and munis in the form of mantras. Inner knowledge of mantra is known as *mantra siddhi*. Therefore, a mantra which belongs to the tantric tradition may or may not have any intelligent meaning, but it is capable of piercing through the various states of psychic consciousness.

When the rishis were in the depths of meditation, they had the realization of two things at the same time: mantra and devata. They not only heard the sound but also saw a figure. Every revealed sound has a revealed symbol. In samadhi, in the depths of the unconscious, one hears and one sees. When taking up a particular mantra, there must be a clear concept of mantra, rishi and devata. One must know which mantra one wants, to which rishi it was revealed, and what the symbol is.

When you practise mantra with your natural breath, it has greater frequency and less velocity. The greater the frequency, the greater the strength, willpower and vision it gives to your consciousness.

Mantra siddhi also means that the sound waves, the patterns of the mantra, have become part of your inner body. We have three bodies – the gross body, the subtle body and the causal body. The mantra has to influence these three

bodies and when it influences and awakens the third one, the causal body, after many years of practice, this is called mantra siddhi, the perfection of the power of mantra. Mantra is to be used for spiritual evolution and must be received from a guru.

Changing destiny

The unconscious body is called *hiranyagarbha*, the golden egg. By the practice of mantra sadhana we can penetrate it deeply and eliminate all kinds of karmas, one by one. That is why they say that by the practice of mantra one becomes free from the entanglements of karma.

All the experiences that you have by the practice of mantra are a process of re-expression. I will explain what re-expression means. When you eat food and then eliminate it, this is re-expression. You eat food and then re-express it. In the same way, you experience some object through your senses, you take it in, but how do you pass it out? This is called psychic elimination and this re-expression is so important for working out the karma. You can't work out the karma unless the mind is made free from the totality of experiences.

When you are practising your mantra, whichever it is, this sound attains a very high frequency in the mind. Just as you put a satellite onto a rocket, which takes off at a speed of thirty thousand miles per hour and then it is detached, in the same way, we have the relationship between mind and mantra. First we use the mind and we place the mantra in it. Then we go on practising the mantra and gradually, in the course of time, the mind assumes greater frequency. When the mind attains greater frequency, at that time, the experiences come out. First of all, you begin to think of all the things around you. Gradually you transcend them and then you have experiences – mystical experiences. First they are of a very ordinary quality. Later they are of greater quality, then they are of a beautiful quality, and then they are of absolute quality. You can have all kinds of mystical

experiences, not only beautiful experiences. You can have frightening experiences. You can experience death and birth. You can experience beautiful flowers.

Thus according to the science of mantra shastra, a mantra can be used for correcting the errors of destiny and setting the wheel of life in order. Whether you think it to be true or not, people in general believe that various mantras can fulfil various purposes in life. To quote an example, I would like to mention the case of Sir John Woodroffe, the Justice of the Calcutta High Court. One day in the courtroom, he was about to pronounce judgement and as he was writing it down, his thinking changed completely. After some time, he tried to pass judgement on the same case, and again his mind changed midway. He tried many times, and in the end he asked his steno, "Why does this happen? I have all the facts and I have made the decision, but I am unable to announce it before the court." The steno replied, "It seems that someone is tampering somewhere. The person who is facing charges must be chanting some mantras, in order to influence the judgement." The judge tried many times but could never pronounce the judgement.

At last he made personal enquiries into the matter and found out that the two parties being examined were both practising mantras on him in order to change his mind. Each time, he was overpowered by the mantras. In the end, this made Woodroffe take to the study of mantra and tantra shastra. As you know, he made intense research all over the world and is accredited as the first European to be well informed on this topic. This is only one example of many just to give you some idea of the effect and impact a mantra can have on the conscious and subconscious mind. For those purposes, there are specific mantras generally not revealed to the public. Tantra is a science of occultism in which the mind waves are converted into force and force into effect.

Modern psychology and yoga agree that even during deep sleep when you are not aware of time and space, name and form, your mind is still working. Remember the

unconscious mind is the storehouse of all past experiences or karmas not only in this life, but in our previous lives as well. Every action has a fixed result; the result is destined and everyone is under the control of destiny. No action is without reaction and everywhere the fruit of action is fixed. Whether you can see it or not, action bears fruit. That destiny can be changed through the power of mantra.

Process of disassociation

While repeating the mantra it is not necessary that you should try to concentrate the mind. I have always been telling everyone throughout the world that it is not important to fight with the mind – you must ignore it because there is no such thing as mind. As you go on repeating the mantra, as you are aware of the mantra, you will find that everything is setting into a capsule of experience, and this experience is born of mantra. This experience is not a quality of mind. The hallucinations and imaginations which you have are the qualities of the mind. An experience of kundalini or of psychic upliftment is not a product of mind. Therefore, the philosophy that the mind should be transformed, pulverized, purified is not a sound philosophy. It is a religious philosophy, not a tantric philosophy. The religious philosophies say, “Purify your mind.” How can you purify the mind?

On the one hand you say that the mind is nothing but a bundle of evil thoughts, and on the other hand you are asking about purifying the mind. You are trying to clean charcoal with Surf. You will have to ignore the idiosyncrasies of your mind. It has passions, ambitions, jealousy, fears, insecurities and depressions – let them be! Do not worry at all about the mind. That can be done only by the mantra. By continual practice of the mantra you are gradually becoming disassociated from the mental neurosis. I call it psychoneurosis. All of you are neurotics. You are totally neurotic because you say, “I am getting angry, my God! I am feeling jealous; it is bad! No. Why is my mind always thinking and thinking?” This is neurosis. We are all neurotics, obsessed by the mind.

Throughout the world, if you meet people, if you read a lot of books, you will find that everything is directed towards the mind. Modern conditioning has made you so aware of the mind that you are totally affected by it – therefore, you cannot handle it. Do you think that you can handle the mind by analyzing or by intellectualizing? No! You can never handle it that way. You are only suppressing it. When you maintain constant awareness of the mantra, then gradually you learn to be disassociated.

This may take you many years, not just a few days or one week. You may feel better in one week because the more you are away from this idiot mind, the better you will feel, but one week is nothing. It takes time, as disassociation of yourself from the mind is a slow process. You become less and less acquainted; the distance grows. That is the meaning of mantra. The word *mantra* literally means ‘by the repetition of which you are freed, you are disassociated’. It means this, ‘by the contemplation of which you become free’. Therefore, mantra should be understood in this light.

Mantra leads to meditation

The purpose of a mantra is not to suppress the mind; it is to explore the mind. Everything must come out; all that you can think about must come out. That is called the practice of pratyahara, the practice of raja yoga in which you are expressing the whole mind from subliminal depths to the conscious plane. However, this depth cannot be explored by external means of exploration. The frequencies have to be increased. So the mantra is a tool which you can utilize for making the mind free from the external experiences which keep on disturbing you during the moments of your silent meditation. Before you go into yourself, before you experience your inner self, the total silence, the totality, it is important that the mind must remain undisturbed. The mind is disturbed all the time now by the external experiences which are brought through the medium of the senses. When you concentrate on the mantra, the symbol or the mandala,

it will crystallize all the energy forms, all the forms of nervous energy, emotional energy, physical energy, muscular energy, spiritual energy and whatever else is there in you. They will all be crystallized on that and that crystallization of various forms of energy is the spiritual experience.

When you practise *dhyana* or meditation, then you have to create a substratum or base for the mind so that it does not become vacant. For that purpose, you have three practices in yoga and tantra. One is called mantra, the second yantra and the third mandala. This is important, for if you want to understand the mind properly and realize the whole mind, then you have to create a substratum, a basis. Mantra relates to the sound, internal sound and external sound. Every sound is considered to have immense power and potential. When the mind is brooding over a sound for a particular period of time, then certain changes take place in the frequency of the mental energy. The inner waves change. Mantra has a twofold purpose: the first is to fuse awareness into the form of the mantra. When this has been achieved this mantra can become the vehicle or the transport agency for your consciousness, taking you to any person or place at will. The latter aspect is the creative aspect of the mantra – it becomes a kind of rocket and your idea, personality, consciousness and thought are fixed to it. Then the mantra is projected outside and works as efficiently as an object.

Mantra leads to meditation. You should not embark upon the practice of meditation by force. Meditation is *dhyana* yoga. Meditation is inner awareness. If you make unusual and undue efforts and force yourself in meditation, it will lead you nowhere. Meditation is the spontaneous culmination of concentration. You don't practise meditation, it comes by itself when the mind is ready. First, practise the mantra. This leads to concentration. Concentration is practised on a symbol. Everyone has a symbol: a star, a deity or something psychic. From the mantra you go to a symbol, and from the symbol you go to meditation. This is yoga, and everybody, everywhere should remember that spiritual life and the

practice of yoga are a must for every human incarnation. The accomplishments of this worldly plane will not give us everlasting satisfaction. The sensual experiences of this life have to be gone through, but they are not the ends, they are the means, and the means can never lead us to the ultimate.

We are only concerned about the spiritual effect of mantra on your personality for meditation, and to induce one-pointedness, relaxation, knowledge and light. Therefore, when you take a mantra, you must allow your mind to function. How long can the mind function? How long will the distractions remain? Finally, the mind will be transcended. Meditation is an outcome of one-pointedness. When your mind continuously thinks of one sound or one symbol or one form, for a period of time meditation takes place. Tantra says something else. Meditation is an effect of the awakening of kundalini. Awakening of kundalini is not an effect of meditation, you should mark these words very carefully. Meditation is an effect of the awakened kundalini.

Conclusion

Sound is a force, and this force affects a certain part of the universe and creates ripples in the vast ocean of the cosmos. Just as electromagnetic or radio waves can't be heard even though they pass through the atmosphere, in the same way, a mantra has its own field by which it travels.

In this universe which we see around us, there are thousands of channels or waves. We call them layers or zones. In one layer, radioactivity travels, in another layer electromagnetic waves, in the third layer thought waves. When you produce a sound, it attains a certain frequency. If your mind is concentrated, then the frequency is high; your mind is a part of the cosmic mind. But when your mind is not concentrated, then you are not in communication with the cosmic mind.

Throughout our lives we have been thinking and thinking, almost incessantly. Just imagine what a huge book you would fill if you were to register each and every thought you had

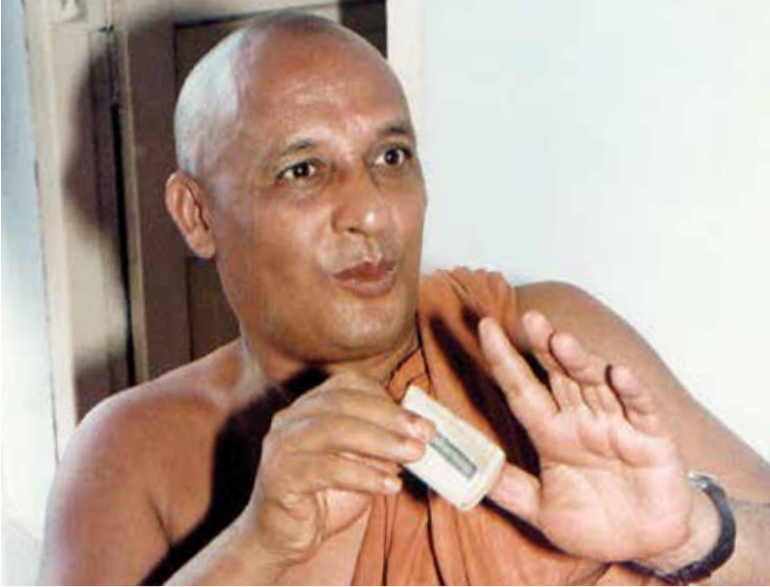
since the age of five! From today, keep a written account of each and every thought you have. In a very short time they will amount to millions. Then, one fine day, take your diary and a red pencil. Sit down quietly and read each thought you have recorded. Ask yourself, "Was that necessary?" If the answer is no, strike it off. If you are perfectly honest with yourself, I'm sure you will find almost ninety-nine percent of your thoughts were unnecessary. This means that your mental energy was wasted on all those thought processes. Every time you think, you are drawing a lot of energy from your storehouse of prana.

As long as you are playing a transistor radio it is consuming the battery, and if you leave it on all day, the battery will soon be flat. In the same way, if you squander away your prana shakti in endless thought processes, your battery will soon be flat. However, if you have a method by which you can conserve your prana shakti, you will have a lot of vitality. Now if you can understand that thinking consumes energy and mantra conserves energy, then you will realize the secret of mantra.

Most of us would have strong willpower if only we had a base on which to centre our minds. Then we would not suffer mentally or emotionally. Our sufferings are not due to any divine curse. They are our own creation; they are the result of our mismanagement of the great power that is in our hearts and minds. We have misused it and today we lie here impotent. Our minds are dull, our memories are cloudy and our hearts are broken by anxiety. So, to all of you who have a mantra and to those of you who are about to receive one, I will remind you once again that everything in life can fail, but the mantra never will. Every morning, when you have finished your asanas and pranayama, take your mala and sit down for ten minutes. Close your eyes, relax your body and mind. Forget your name, forget your home and forget your environment. Just repeat your mantra, immerse yourself into it and become the mantra itself.

4

Types of Mantra



There are thousands of sounds in the universe, but the universal sound is *Om*. *Om* represents time, space, object and transcendence. Apart from *Om* there are many thousands of sounds in the universe existing at high frequencies. You cannot hear them now, but some people who raise the frequency of their own minds can hear those sounds which are known as mantras.

There are many kinds of mantras, such as universal or personal; some are long, some medium, some short. Important universal mantras include: *Om*, *Gayatri*, *Mahamrityunjaya* and *Ramacharitamanas*, which is a collection of mantras. A universal mantra is good for all, but because we have different temperaments, stages of evolution, needs of life and weaknesses of mind, we should have a personal mantra. Throughout the world people have different eating habits. If I give you spicy Mexican food, you may not be able to eat it and if you give me a Spanish meal, I may not be able to eat that. So we could establish a universal meal also, it's a good idea, but because we all have different nutritional requirements, eating habits and tastes, the plan would not succeed.

Om is a very powerful universal mantra, but if you give it to an emotionally unstable person, he will start having experiences immediately. He won't be able to face them and will think he's going crazy, so for him a longer personal mantra is more suitable. Universal mantras are for people like swamis who are evolving in spiritual life and are transcending the social barriers. All swamis have *Om* as their mantra because they have transcended certain barriers and are trying to come closer to reality. So we should start with a personal mantra, evolve ourselves and gradually come to a point where we transcend certain created definitions. Then we can discard the personal mantra and use a universal mantra.

Other types of mantras are tantric mantra, vedic mantra, nishkama mantra, sakama mantra, ishta mantra. Tantric mantras are those which influence the deeper nature of the universe. They are also intended to fulfil certain desires. Tantric mantras are very powerful and when you practise them, they create a great force in the atmosphere. Vedic mantras are intended for worship of the divine and for self-realization. They change the nature of a person and make him more devotional. In vedic mantras, you have the mantras of Shaivas and Vaishnavas.

All mantras belong to two categories commonly known as sakama and nishkama. Some of the mantras are *sakama*,

wish-fulfilling, and some are *nishkama*, spiritual, like *Om*. When repeated without self-interest, it is *nishkama japa*. This forms a part of pure devotion, while *sakama japa* is repetition of a mantra to achieve a particular end. Which are the sakama mantras? There are many mantras which are sakama. Just as there are special types of knives for chopping vegetables, for applying butter or for cutting necks, similarly, there are different kinds of mantras. Some people use them for curing, others use them to hurt their enemies. There are lakhs of sakama mantras. Those who do japa of sakama mantra for curing a sick person should do the mantra practice according to the rules laid down in the scriptures. There are many rules and regulations regarding the type of *mala* or rosary, the system of doing japa, purificatory rites, etc.

If you want to do nishkama japa for spiritual upliftment alone, there is no rule as such. In such a case, you can practise japa either before or after bath, and at any place and time. There is no regulation of direction, time, place and process. Mantras for spiritual evolution must be practised for a set amount of time every day. If the mantra is repeated too much, it will affect the whole system. Then again, every mantra has twofold usefulness. When it becomes the *ishta* (desired) mantra, one has to do a certain number of beads daily. When we repeat our *ishta* mantra, either daily or occasionally, it forms a part of our prayer. Today you may do a Devi mantra and after some time you may give it up. But this is not so with the *ishta* mantra that you receive through a guru, in dhyana or in a dream. The *ishta* mantra must be repeated regularly every day. However, you can repeat other mantras as well if you need them.

Then you have specific mantras. You also have some mantras of which the meaning and purpose are unknown. There are many mantras.

Mantra for different personalities

A mantra is not what you see; it is a secret part of man, hidden in the inner recesses of man's personality. Mantra is a sound which denotes your personality. Everybody has his own

mantra; the same mantra does not work on all. Mantra is the occult aspect of our personality. This sound is present in each and everybody in the form of unmanifested vibration and frequencies. Just as everybody has an individual face, in the same way everybody has an individual mantra for themselves.

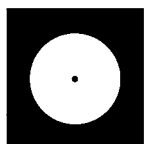
By the practice or recitation of a particular mantra you can awaken in yourself the hidden and the secret spiritual awareness. Each and every sound which you produce has a psychic pattern which can be realized in deeper meditation and every sound does affect some particular part of your being.

These mantras are actually sounds and these sounds have to do with the *tattwas*, the elements, the structure, the velocity, belonging to the psychic personality. The mantra is different for every person depending on the nature and personality. These are related to the five elements, for example someone who belongs to the element of water has a different mantra from someone belonging to the element air. The discovery of sound depends upon one's quality of elements and you can realize the quality of your elements by your astrological sign. According to the astrological sign, one has a sound for oneself. When this mantra coincides with the breath, one notices how one attains peace and quiet.

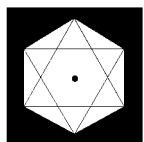
Therefore, when the mantra is taken and when the mantra is given, it is an absolute scientific duty between the giver and the receiver that they know what they are giving and what they are receiving. It is not on the basis of faith, just because you love a mantra you take it. If that be so, then mantra is inefficacious. It is the strength of the sound, it is the colour of the sound, it is the frequency, velocity and temperature of the sound that is responsible, and it is on that basis that mantras are constituted.

Mantra, tattwa and chakra

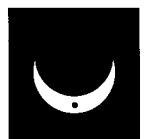
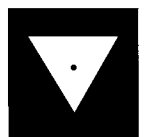
According to the science of mantra, sounds are divided into five tattwas or elements: ether, *akasha*; air, *vayu*; fire, *agni*; water, *apas*; and earth, *prithvi*. In the structure of creation, everything is composed of the five elements, which are known



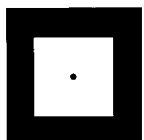
as primordial elements. In yoga and tantra they are known as the *pancha tattwa*. Permutation or combination of these elements brings all matter into existence, brings creation into existence.



These five elements have different frequencies, densities, waves, vibrations and colours. Therefore, each and every tattwa or element is represented by one sound wave. The seed mantra which is indicated in each and every chakra represents the dormant energy. Each mantra represents one tattwa, one element. These mantras belong to different elements, different planets, different bodies, different psychic systems, and they concern the entire complex of the brain and the entire complex of your nervous system.



Thus all the mantras are classified into five categories. Some mantras are for the earth element, others for fire, water, air and ether elements. *Om* belongs to the ether element; *Ram* to the fire element; *Gam* to the earth element; *Kleem* to the water element and *Ham* to the air element.



Each mantra possesses two divisions – sound and form. Form is also known as devata which means ‘divine form’. For instance, *Kleem* is a sound, a bija mantra, and it has an image which is revealed by a simple mantra. So, we have the bija mantra and the simple mantra – *Kleem* is the bija mantra and *Krishna* and *Namaha* is the mantra which exposes the form. It is like this: when you explain the form to others you have to say something about the form and the explanation is long, and for this we have the simple mantra, whereas the bija mantra is the seed mantra and it is very powerful.

Take for instance the word *Ram*. Well, Rama was the son of a great king, but here the word *Ram* is the symbol of the fire element. It is not the name of a god, it is not the name of a person, don’t mistake it. Don’t confuse the things. It

is the word *Ram*. It is the bija, the seed, it is the dormant potential, the source of its original sound, and it belongs to the fire element. The source of its origination is manipura, the solar plexus behind the navel. Now if you go on repeating the mantra *Ram, Ram, Ram*, it is going to influence your manipura chakra, the solar plexus first, and it is through this influence that it is conducted to the corresponding centre of consciousness in the brain. When a mantra is recited, the construction or the compiled construction of the mantra is a combination of different tattwas, different elements, having different velocities and intensities. In addition to that, every sound has a separate influence on a particular chakra and the influence is conducted to that part of the brain which corresponds to that particular centre.

That is why you might have seen in the diagrams of chakras in kundalini yoga, each and every chakra has a particular mantra which is known as the bija mantra. It doesn't mean that the particular part of the body contains that sound. No! That particular chakra or psychic centre is the conductor of the sound to the brain, and it is through the sound that the awakening takes place in the deeper realms of the brain, in the deeper realms of human consciousness.

Tantric mantras

An integral part of tantra is the use of sound in the form of mantras as a method of invoking higher forces. In the tradition of tantra, knowledge of the structure and combination of gross and subtle sounds is *mantra shastra*, and is considered to be very important. Tantric mantras are those which influence the deeper nature of the universe. They are also intended to fulfill certain desires of man. Tantric mantras are very powerful and when you practise them, they create a great force in the atmosphere.

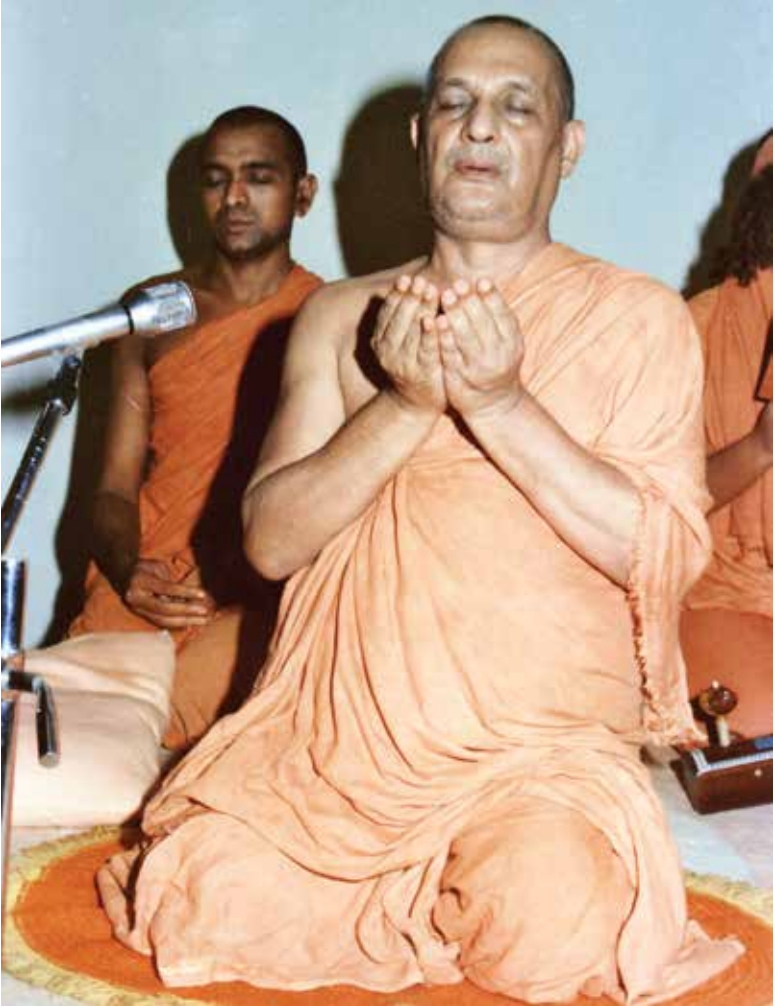
In tantra there are all kinds of mantras; some are personal mantras for use in japa and other meditation practices, and some serve a specific purpose. So, before seeking a mantra it is very important to know what you are seeking it for. If

you are undergoing some problem in life, then the mantra you employ to get rid of it will be a temporary one, not your personal mantra. When the problem subsides, the mantra will be of no further use to you. On the other hand, if you are trying to awaken the kundalini or psychic powers, then you must have the correct personal mantra. Now you have to know whether this mantra is for you and in tantra you have those mantras which concern not only awakening, but also relaxation. Mantra plays a very important role in our spiritual life. It brings about a great change or transformation of our consciousness by the sound vibrations, etc., which are intrinsically attached to the mantra.

The practices of tantra are so powerful that everyone can benefit from them. You may not be able to practise in the traditional way, you may not be able to chant the many mantras and perform the various rituals, but definitely you can repeat a mantra and practise concentration on a yantra. In the tantric tradition one needs to be cautious in selecting and using mantra while doing mantra anushtana. In the tantric tradition the significance and use of panchakshara, shadakshara and ashtakshara (mantras with five, six and eight syllables) is different, and it is dependent upon one's samskaras. For example, if a bullet is just lying somewhere, nothing happens, but if the same bullet is loaded into a gun, it can kill. When tantric sadhana is done, the mantra is energized by the guru and then repeated.

According to tantra shastra, the mantra shakti or mantra devata is awakened by undergoing various hardships and other similar disciplines. The same shakti can then be released against one's enemy. There are two paths for the tantric practice of mantra. One is *tapasya* or hardship and the other is the *pancha makara* or five ingredients in which the practitioner drinks wine, eats meat and fish, performs coitus and the like, as items of sadhana. Siddhis accruing from such sadhana are never used for noble ends.

The following tantric texts containing mantras, hymns and prayers are extremely powerful in bestowing siddhis.



- Durga Saptashati
- Ananda Lahari
- Devi Sukta
- Atharva Shirsha
- Kshama Yachana
- Thirty-two names of Durga
- The mantras of the ten Mahavidyas

Tantric mantras to ward off disturbances

When a man suffers from ailments he is always conscious of it. His son is sick, there is trouble with his job, dissatisfaction in his married life, his whole energy is wasted in brooding over these things. I ask such people to do the Durga path, Gayatri japa, Mrityunjaya and *Ram Naam* japa, recitation of the *Bhagavad Gita*. You may argue that you believe in one God and not in many gods. You are saying the right thing, but is your faith strong? Will your faith give you relief from the tensions of life? Even if you try to stop it, the mind wanders into the problems at the time of meditation.

If you say you worship the sun and recite Gayatri, and, therefore, you do not recite the Vishnu mantra, you are wrong. This is intellectual confusion created by our western brothers mostly. Most of them, though good at reasoning, are ciphers in faith. If you worship many gods and recite many mantras, you are doing more justice to your inner personality, which is full of conflicts. It is better if you give a variety of mantra recitations to your mind and keep it occupied.

There is one more mantra which is very powerful. It is the thirty-two names of Durga. It has cured and solved many difficult problems which even perplexed me. It is a fact and we have come to know through results. The beginners will take five minutes to do this japa. Later on, with practice, it takes three to four minutes. It is never done either mentally or in whispers. You have to chant it loudly and pronounce it. This is a very powerful mantra. You can write it in any local language and read it.

College boys come to me and complain of certain diseases. I ask them to read *Hanuman Chalisa*; the results are positive. After reading it, a change comes over them in the physical cells, mind and inner body. Many people come to me and ask about the marriage of their daughters. I prescribe *Katyayani* mantra japa. Then there is the Mrityunjaya mantra. One mala takes fifteen minutes. You can do it mentally. In Mrityunjaya japa you can imagine the third eye of Shiva. If you have any disease, or you fear that you are going to meet

with an accident (before you actually face it, you generally face it mentally and have nervous accidents, or it may not actually happen at all), this Mahamrityunjaya mantra is very good.

Shiva gave one mantra. It is called *Ramtaraka* mantra, *Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram*. It was the mantra of Samarthha Guru Ramdas. By this you can remove factors which disturb peace in the house, quarrels between the family members, etc. Generally, in domestic life conflicts happen. It is like a delicate machine, its parts keep on getting out of order, sometimes you may not get spare parts even. At that time, this japa brings peace in the family and gives good understanding to the people, makes them successful and gives common sense.

There are many more mantras which we have to recite at times and by their timely repetition we can remove our difficulties. Normally, you do not know the cause of your troubles. You have disease, you go to the doctor, but the cause is different. Our diseases and troubles are tremendous. In order to know them and their causes, you must know that because of many actions done in past lives we are suffering. Recitation of many mantras is not against yoga, you may repeat thirty-two times Gayatri, one mala of Mrityunjaya, one mala of Sri Rama. As you practise japa the tensions, fears and doubts will subside automatically. The troubles of life will not disturb you.

It is within common experience that various maladies are removed by japa. Curing snakebite by mantra is not an unusual sight in India. Also, hypertension, fever, hysteria and blood pressure are cured by japa. It evidently goes to show that there is a divine power latent in mantra japa which is released through faith and willpower.

Swami Satyananda's experiences with mantra

I had an experience in my childhood. I was in Allahabad at the age of seven or eight. One day, I saw two fellows playing with a snake. One of them had made a circle on the ground with a stick. In that circle was a first-class

snake, a big cobra. The cobra belonged to the snake charmer and there was some kind of argument between him and the other man.

Being young I could not follow their words entirely. It was all mantra-tantra business. The other man said, "Now I will see how your snake gets out!" Taking a stick, he drew one or two more lines, and the snake just sat there. It would come up just to the line and turn back. I was watching all this, not understanding anything, so I asked him what was happening. He said, "I have thrown mantras on all four sides of the snake, so it cannot come out."

They were fighting in a peculiar way. One wanted to throw grains of rice or dal on the other, but didn't for fear that the other man would also throw rice on him. They circled each other trying to throw the rice for about ten or fifteen minutes. At last, a big crowd gathered, bringing their tantric battle to an end. The cobra was released.

This incident stuck in my mind for days, but eventually I forgot about it. I grew up, went on with my work and the curiosity I once had about mantra disappeared.

Many years later, I came to my guru's ashram in Rishikesh. This was in 1943, and the ashram was surrounded by dense forest. At night you could easily step on a scorpion. An American family came to stay at the ashram. One day, their little girl was stung so severely by a scorpion that it seemed she would be dead within ten minutes. The scorpion sting is very painful. Even the strongest person will weep the whole night when stung by one. So you can imagine how that girl was crying. I thought she would surely die.

Right next to the ashram was a police station and somebody fetched a constable. He had a small knife with him. With that knife he removed the poison within five minutes. In another five minutes the girl was completely normal. I asked, "What mantra did you use?" He said,

“Kali Kalkatte wali.” The goddess Kali is the patron deity of the city of Calcutta. I was very surprised.

I was raised by Arya Samajis, a sect which does not accept the concept of personal gods and goddesses. I was educated at a convent school by Christians, and many close relatives at home were Muslim. When I heard his mantra, my entire faith was shaken. I wondered that Kali is just a name and Calcutta a place, so how could poison be removed just by repeating those words?

Tantric mantras – bija mantras

There are mantras pertaining to the third body, the unconscious body or the causal body, also known as bija mantras. We call them bija or potential mantras, because they contain dormant, potential energy of different forces. As many powers or forces as there are in the world, each one is having its own bija mantras, just like *Aim* for Saraswati, *Shreem* for Lakshmi, *Kleem*, *Hreem*, and so on. All the short, seemingly meaningless mantras you might have heard are bija mantras.

There is much criticism of Hinduism, the objection being that it has a pantheon of gods and goddesses. But I will tell you in the words of a scientist that Shakti or energy is not only of one type. It has innumerable forms, but the prime shakti, the root shakti, is one. Its manifestations are endless that is why we worship the Devi (Goddess Shakti) in as many different forms. The same thing is in science; see the electricity is flowing, and from it the amplifier, the tape recorder, all of your big factories are working. The same energy which gives heat from the heater, gives coolness from the fan, these are the varied manifestation of one energy. The truth is that shakti is not just one kind. Intellect is one shakti, memory is one shakti, speech, prana or force, knowledge are all shaktis, without which we cannot exist.

That is why, for the awakening of these different powers, there are different bija mantras. For example, the *vidya shakti*, power of knowledge, is in the form of Saraswati. Now I am not talking of goddess Saraswati whose idol is worshipped

in the temple, but I mean that energy, that shakti which is within us in the form of *vidya* or Saraswati. What is the way to awaken this energy? Of all the methods given, the best is to take the bija mantra of that shakti, and to awaken its sleeping potential.

The bija mantras are like little bombs, like time bombs that explode just at the right moment. Just as you plant a seed in the earth and from that a giant tree grows up to give thousands of fruits, the bija mantras contain similar power. With the practice of prolonged mantra repetition for a fixed period of time and a specific number of malas, and regular sadhana, the power of the mantra is awakened. When that power is awakened, the consciousness takes the form of the mantra. That's when the real work of the mantra begins.

Vedic mantras

Vedic mantras are intended for worship of the divine and for self-realization. They change the nature of a person and make him more devotional. The chanting of vedic mantras is a yoga in itself, and there is a magical quality in it. Every mantra, whether Mahamrityunjaya mantra or Gayatri mantra, has a specific chanting notation. There are seven notes in the musical scale. Vedic chanting is done with three notes or *matras*: udatta, anudatta and swarita. *Udatta* is the low matra, *swarita* the middle and *anudatta* the high matra. The entire Vedas, the *Rig Veda*, *Sama Veda*, *Yajur Veda* and *Atharva Veda*, are sung within these three notes, and all are sung differently.

Not only the grammatical articulation, but also the psychic articulation must be correct. In the Vedas there are two types of articulation which I am going to explain in a nutshell. In grammatical articulation, it is the accent which is important, and in psychic articulation, it is the pitch in relation to the chakra. So far as mantra is concerned, the psychic articulation should be perfect. If only the grammatical articulation is correct, and the psychic articulation is not correct, they say the mantra will not produce the desired form and effect within.

In the vedic tradition, one, two and sometimes even three mantras can be used at the same time. Here the aim of mantra is to uplift the mind. All the mantras are different names of the one God or higher Self, whether it is *panchakshara* mantra (mantra with five syllables), *shadakshara* mantra (mantra with six syllables) or *jugal* mantra (mantra with the names of two gods). In the vedic tradition, when sadhana is performed, the mantra is recited and its purity is awakened. That is why in the vedic tradition one or more mantras can be chanted together and there is no harm done.

When a vedic yajna is conducted, there are four priests present. The first represents the *Rig Veda*, the second the *Yajur Veda*, the third the *Sama Veda* and the fourth the *Atharva Veda*. During a yajna the method of chanting the mantra is not like reading poetry. These sannyasins have to practise for many years to reach this stage of perfection. Moreover, each Veda has a different grammar for pronunciation. The *Rig Veda* is different from the *Yajur Veda*. The ascensions of the Vedas in North India and South India also have a different style.

UNIVERSAL MANTRAS

Om – the source mantra

The mantra *Om* is the king of mantras. Experience of the meaning of *Om* leads automatically to the fullest understanding of all other mantras, which are generally limited in that they are intended for specific purposes or for particular types of people. *Om* on the other hand is totally non-specific. It can be practised by everyone.

Om is the womb of all mantras in a similar manner to which the mother is the womb of all children. The first mantra which was produced from *Om* was the Gayatri. It is a mantra of twenty-four syllables intended for those who have underdeveloped consciousness. Most of us belong to that category. Then of course there are many more mantras that came later.



In the mantra shastras, *Om* is regarded as the *setu* or bridge. Whenever any mantra is to be repeated it has to be preceded by *Om* and ended with *Om*. Then only the chanting of the mantra is said to be complete. Therefore, *Om* is regarded as the dam which holds the power of the mantra. It is claimed that the mantra will be *chaitanya* or alive, and reveal its potency only if it is recited in this way.

Time, space and object is the basis of creation, appearance and reality. The mantra *Om* has a sound principle of the curves in its structure.

These three curves in *Om* are known as symbols. In the *Rig Veda* it is said that the *Om* has a crescent moon and a star. So besides the three curves, there is the crescent moon and a star. So *Om* is not a holy name or a God, it is just a symbol representing three types of waves and the fourth is invisible awareness.

The *Mandukya Upanishad* says that the first stage of consciousness is objective, the second stage subjective, and the third stage unconscious. These three states are known as *jagrat*, *swapna* and *sushupti* – waking, dreaming and sleeping. While chanting *Om*, you pass from one stage of consciousness into another, because the letter ‘A’ represents the conscious mind, ‘U’ the subconscious mind and ‘M’ the unconscious mind. The mind undergoes transformation in the states of waking, dreaming and sleeping.

Awareness of the external objects through the medium of the mind and senses is known as the waking state. When the mind is devoid of the association of the senses, but is aware of the objects already perceived, that is known as the dream state. In the dream state you can perceive the objects subjectively, because you have already perceived them in your waking experience. But when the mind is not cognizing subjectively or objectively, it enters the causal state, which is called deep sleep.

These three states of the mind represent your veritable existence. The whole universe is classified into these three planes of existence. So *Om* represents the total existence. It is not just a sound, which has been picked up at random, nor is it a holy word that represents any particular religion. The mantra *Om* is a formula, an equation. The letter 'A' represents the objective, perceptible world, 'U' the subjective, mental world, and 'M' the unmanifest world.

You can meditate on the mantra *Om* mentally or you can repeat the sound aloud. You can chant *Om* in many ways: with a short *A* – transiting through *Uuu* and long *Mmmmmm*; or with a long *Aaaaa* and a short *Mmm*; or by intoning all the three sounds equally. These are the three important ways of producing the *Om* sound. When you want to manifest a sound, you have to open your mouth. And when you want to stop the sound, you have to close your mouth. When you open your mouth it is *Aaaa*. When you close your mouth the sound produced is *Mmmmmm*. So, from the production of sound to the cessation of sound, there is a third process called *Uuuu*, the in-between. If you produce the sound *A* and want to close it – with *M*, the sound *U* comes in-between only partially, for a short time.

We clearly see that when you chant the mantra *Om* you are experiencing the three states of your consciousness and your consciousness includes time, space and experience. If the mantra *Om* is used properly in connection with your own mantra, then meditation can be influenced positively.

Gayatri mantra

Gayatri is referred to as the Mother of the Vedas and this mantra occurs in the *Rig Veda*, the oldest written literature in the library of mankind. So human beings have been chanting the Gayatri mantra for a long time.

Gayatri mantra represents what we call the cosmic, total or original prana. *Bhuh*, *Bhuvah*, *Suvaha* represent the waking, dreaming and sleeping states of the individual self. But in the later stage of Gayatri, not three but seven states are mentioned. These are the seven planes of individual consciousness, starting from the gross and culminating with the subtlest. The practice of this mantra invokes the seven stages of individual consciousness in this life, and in the afterlife. This means that the individual self can go on ascending from the lowest possible rung of manifestation to the highest possible rung, which is the seventh or absolute state. *Om Bhuh*, that is the first body, *bhuh loka* or the material plane; *Om Bhuvaha*, the second body, the intermediate or astral plane; *Om Suvaha*, the third body, the heavenly or divine plane. After this the following mantras come in the fourth body – *Maha loka*, *Jana loka*, *Tapa loka* and *Satya loka*. I do not mean material worlds, but rather the planes of consciousness.

There is no restriction for this mantra, because its effects are benign. Children are initiated into the Gayatri mantra at the age of eight. The Gayatri mantra is an important aspect of surya upasana. Those who suffer from mental retardation and want to brighten their intellect, for them Gayatri japa is best. The times for doing this japa are at dawn, at dusk and at noon, three times a day.

Some believe that Gayatri is directed towards the sun, but ultimately it has been found that this mantra is directed towards the inner brilliance, the inner sun. The inner brilliance must shine and one's consciousness must be enlightened.

There are two Gayatri mantras which can be used for two different practices. One version of Gayatri is used for mantra sadhana, while the other is used for pranayama. The Gayatri for mantra or japa yoga is:

*Om bhuh bhuvah suvah
Tatsaviturvarenyam
Bhargo devasya dheemahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayaat*

The Gayatri mantra intended for pranayama is:

*Om bhuh, Om bhuvaha, Om suvaha, Om mahaha,
Om janaha, Om tapaha, Om satyam
Om tatsaviturvarenyam
Bhargo devasya dheemahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayaat*

The second Gayatri represents one inhalation and, thus, the vitality of a yoga student. One inhalation should span the duration of the mental recitation of this Gayatri. Then, while the breath is being retained during the practice, the mantra should be repeated twice. Again, during exhalation, the mantra should be repeated twice. This is elementary pranayama to the ratio of 1:2:2.

Gayatri is an important mantra and you have different Gayatris for different deities, for different symbols. There are Gayatri mantras for Ganesha, Brahma, Narasimha, Garuda, Rudra, Nandikeshwar, Shanmukha, Surya, Durga, Rama, Hanuman, Krishna, Gopal, Parasurama, Dakshina-murti, Guru, Hamsa, Hayagriva, Tantrika Brahma, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Shakti, Annapurna, Kalika. Brahma Gayatri has got its parallel in every religion. There is also Surya Gayatri. It is good for skin diseases, allergic dermatitis, leukodermal patches. Then there is Rudra Gayatri. Then also Vishnu Gayatri. You invoke the Gods through these mantras. They are objective experiences. The mantra serves the purpose of attracting powers, the guardian deities. All this is explained in the *Mahanarayana Upanishad*.

Om and Gayatri

Gayatri is not just a formula or a combination of words. All throughout the Vedas and Upanishads, time and again, it is said, “*Om* is nada; Gayatri is prana”.

Om is a bija, seed mantra, the universal mantra. This mantra is very powerful. When one practises the mantra *Om*, one comes suddenly face to face with certain experiences, because the effect of *Om* is very rapid. This should not happen. Therefore, the Gayatri mantra was revealed to the wise men so that the people who are less prepared can practise Gayatri in place of *Om* and thereby, avoid drastic or rapid results. Gayatri is in fact the developed state of the mantra *Om*. Gayatri represents the cosmic total of the original prana.

Thus, from *Om*, Gayatri is created, and this Gayatri manifests itself in two stages. In the first stage, the mantra only mentions three states of individual self: bhuh, bhuvah, suvah which represent, respectively, the waking, sleeping and dreaming states of the individual self.

Yet, in Gayatri's second stage of manifestation, the mantra mentions, not three, but seven lokas, or planes of existence: bhuh, bhuvah, suvaha, mahah, janah, tapah, satyam. Satyam means absolute and represents sahasrara chakra. Tapaha represents ajna chakra, and moving down until bhuh represents mooladhara chakra. These seven planes thus represent the seven realms or dimensions of individual consciousness of which one becomes aware when the sun in the inner mind rises. They begin from the gross and terminate with the most subtle, indicating that the individual self can go on ascending from the lowest possible rung of manifestation to the highest – the seventh state of satyam.

Mahamrityunjaya mantra

Mahamrityunjaya is the great healing mantra that gives protection from all negative forces and can change one's destiny. The Sanskrit word *maha* means 'great', *mritu* means 'death', *jaya* means 'victory' and mantra is a word of great power. The Mahamrityunjaya mantra consists of 34 sound syllables, as follows:

*Om Tryambakam Yajamahe
Sugandhim Pushtivardhanam;
Urvaarukamiva Bandhanaat
Mrityormuksheeya Maamritaata.*

We worship the three-eyed one (Lord Shiva) who is fragrant (in a state of supreme bliss), and who sustains all living beings. May he liberate us from (the eternal cycle of birth and) death. May he lead us to immortality, just as the cucumber is released from its bondage (the vine to which it is attached).

The Mahamrityunjaya mantra is a potent combination of sounds that, if repeated with faith, dedication and perseverance over a period of time, leads to victory over the fear of death, and eventually to victory over death itself or *moksha*, realization of the immortal aspect of the Self. It is therefore known as a *moksha mantra*. It is stimulating and heating, bestows longevity and cures illness. It wards off illness, evil forces, accidents and death, by creating a protective psychic shield around the practitioner. It is said to destroy sorrow and poverty, and to fulfil all of one's desires. Anyone who wishes to remove obstacles in life and overcome difficult situations should repeat this mantra regularly. If chanted a minimum of eleven times, the last thing before sleeping at night, it will ensure a better sleep and positive dreams.

The devata of the Mahamrityunjaya mantra is Rudra, who represents Lord Shiva in his fierce and destructive aspect. This mantra was revealed to the Rishi Vasishtha, while he was in a state of deep meditation. The mantra itself is actually comprised from mantras, which are found in the three Vedas: The *Rig Veda* (7th mandal, 59th chapter, 12th mantra), the *Yajur Veda* (3rd chapter, 60th mantra), and the *Atharva Veda* (14th mandal, 1st chapter, 17th mantra).

The Mahamrityunjaya mantra is also to be found in the ayurvedic scriptures. In the *Prakriti Khanda* of the *Brahma Vaivarta Purana*, it has been said that Lord Krishna gave the

knowledge of Mrityunjaya to the wife of Sage Angira. In the *Sati Khanda* of the *Shiva Purana*, Shukracharya has called it *Mrita Sanjeevani Vidya*, the knowledge which leads to eternal life. Shukracharya expounded it to Sage Dadhichi.

The Mahamrityunjaya mantra can be chanted individually or in small groups. The chanting can be conducted by the family and friends at home, or in any other place where you wish to create a positive, protective and high-energy field. The mantra is also chanted during auspicious occasions, such as initiation ceremonies and havans. The mantra is chanted 108 times in a constant, fixed rhythm.

Conclusion

The tantra and mantra shastras say that all mantras, with the exception of *Om*, are classified into twelve main groups with five subdivisions. The discovery of sound depends upon one's quality of elements and you can realize the quality of your elements by your astrological sign. According to the astrological sign, one has a sound for oneself. Only *Om* can be repeated by anyone at any time, without restriction. By means of mantra the *tattwas* or elements in Nature are influenced.

Some mantras are utilized for removing physical suffering. Some mantras are utilized for the fulfilment of human desires. Some mantras are utilized for developing the higher consciousness. Some mantras are utilized for remembering God all the time. There are also special mantras which can be utilized for specific purposes such as influencing your destiny, or to overcome a specific problem. These mantras are discontinued as soon as they have fulfilled their purpose, and are then classified along with the general mantras.

Another kind of mantra is the guru mantra. When people become spiritual and want to follow the path of yoga in India, they go to a guru and get a mantra. Therefore, there is a complete science of mantra. This science was known to people in the ancient days at many places, but in India this science has been preserved very well.

5

General Guidelines and Precautions



During the practice of mantra, you have to employ different methods, like practising the mantra with the natural breath, with the ujjayi breath, in the different parts of the body, in the mind, in the forehead or in the psychic centres, that is, the chakras of kundalini. There are many more ways in which the mantra can be practised, and by the practice of mantra, the mind transforms itself. Out of all the techniques, the technique of japa yoga is considered to be the easiest and best.

Methods of japa

Japa is probably the most widespread and universal meditative system. It is an integral part of yoga and tantra as well as Hinduism in general. Many traditional scriptures describe the practices and merits of japa, especially tantric texts. Japa yoga can be practised by anyone at any time and under any conditions. Mantra is a grouping of sound vibrations which have an effect on the mental and psychic consciousness of the individual. Japa yoga actually means 'union with the highest existence through rotation of consciousness'. Japa is a wonderful system of maintaining individual awareness. Furthermore, it prevents the practitioner from becoming lost either in the outer world or in the inner world of thoughts. It also helps to prevent sleep or drowsiness.

Many of the ancient yogis are pictured practising japa. According to tradition, Brahma, the creator of the universe, caused everything to be created by continual japa of the mantra *Om*. Such is the importance of japa in spiritual life.

There are five methods for the practice of japa:

1. *Vaikhari* – audible
2. *Upanshu* – in a whisper
3. *Manasika* – mental
4. *Likhit* – written
5. *Ajapa* – with breath and without a mala.

Vaikhari japa

Vaikhari japa (also called *vachika*) is audible japa. It is the recitation of a mantra in a clear, sharp tone at one's natural pitch level. It should be chanted in a loud voice producing clear sound waves in order to have some effect on the brain. After doing this for a certain period of time, the mind becomes quiet and sublime.

The mantra can be chanted as loudly as you wish. This is the most suitable form of japa for beginners and those people who have a disturbed mind. When one feels depressed, tense, angry or unhappy, this is one of the most effective methods of making the mind peaceful and harmonized. It is the practice



for those who are dull, of wavering tendencies or of a restless nature. It is a very powerful practice, particularly when a large group of people chant together. The whole atmosphere is charged with positive vibrations.

Audible japa should be practised for a few months by all beginners, and those who practise more advanced techniques will benefit by doing a little vaikhari before their other japa. This will charge the brain with the powerful vibrations of the mantra. If you practise vaikhari japa for hours together your mind attains a particular psychic level, a suggestive state of mind. Vaikhari japa can be practised with the eyes open.

Incidentally, vaikhari japa is widely practised in groups throughout the world. It is very powerful. If the reader has been to an ashram and heard fifty people chanting early in the morning in a meditation hall, he will understand the power of collective chanting. The whole atmosphere is charged with positive vibrations. In the Sivananda Ashram, home of the Divine Life Society, the Mahamantra *Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare, Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare* has been going unceasingly since 1943. I recall, even now, the unbroken recitation of japa when I first joined Swami Sivananda's ashram. I went to

meet Swamiji for the first time and happened to step into the large hall where the mantra was going on. I was at once impressed and felt myself being transformed into something else. The experience is something like a man who has been put into an air-conditioned chamber after toiling for long hours in the sun. I think that it was the communion with the magnetic atmosphere and a sensitive personality. As you can see, vaikhari is a powerful way of practising japa, as it releases a certain magnetism.

Upanshu japa

Upanshu japa is whispering japa. In this form the lips are moved, but they create no loud or external sound. You also should barely hear it. The mantra is repeated through the movement of the lips and the contraction and expansion of the vocal cords, although no sound is produced. In this practice a little more attention is required than in the previous one, vaikhari, and the mental energies are more easily harnessed as a result.

It is also useful in situations where environmental factors prevent one from practising vaikhari. Whispering japa is the best form for those who want to practise hours of japa at a time. It should also be used by those who are practising japa with a special mantra for a specific purpose. There is a whole science of mantra, and throughout the world, even to this day, people repeat specific mantras for the purpose of endowing themselves with added strength to face a particularly difficult situation or to change the course of their destiny. The practice of upanshu japa can be done with the eyes half closed.

Manasika japa

Manasika is mental japa, there is no movement of any muscles or tissues, except movement of the mind waves. No sound is uttered and the lips do not move. In this practice one has merely to repeat the mantra mentally. Manasika should not be practised unless vaikhari and upanshu have

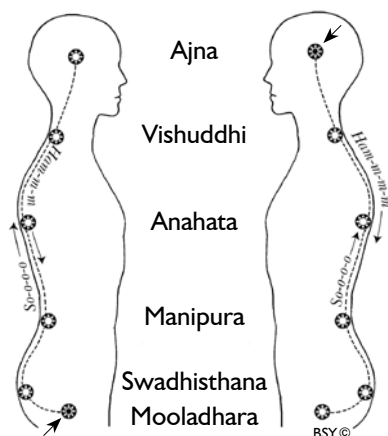
Ajapa japa

Ajapa japa is the next stage which should not be practised unless the previous methods are mastered. Ajapa requires no mala, pen, pencil or paper. You only have to become aware of your breathing cycle and repeat the mantra mentally along with your breath. In the physical and psychic body there is a sound. Ajapa japa is the sound or mantra. Some hear it as *So Ham* or *Om*, others hear it as a different mantra.

The distinct sound of the breath which has been discovered and revealed by the wise men is *So Ham*. *So Ham* means 'I am That'. This is what the breath is trying to remind us of, to teach us, all the twenty-four hours of the day. It is making us repeat, 'I am That'; I am that infinite Consciousness, that transcendental Consciousness. I am that Consciousness – that Consciousness is me. This is the knowledge that must dawn at the end of meditation.

So Ham does not merely mean 'I am That'. *So* is the introspective sound of the ingoing breath, while the vibrations that are created on the outgoing breath are like *Ham*. At any rate, *So Ham* merely indicates the complete circuit of introspection upon the two breaths. You need not think at all of the literal meaning of the word *So Ham*. In ajapa, first there will be concentration on the two streams

of breath followed by the synchronizing of *So Ham*. While you are inhaling through sushumna from mooladhara to ajna and exhaling from ajna to mooladhara, be aware of the movement of the breath combined with the movement of the powerful sound – *So Ham*. This practice purifies the nadis, the pranic channels in the body. When ajapa japa is



perfected and fully realized, the samskaras are totally exhausted and the mind becomes one-pointed. In this way *dhyana yoga*, meditation, blossoms forth.

Sequence of japa

When ajapa japa is done after vaikhari, upanshu, manasika and likhit japa it is very powerful. According to Swami Sivananda, ajapa japa has supreme effects on the human mind. Vaikhari is done while keeping the eyes open. Upanshu can be done in the same way, but it is better to do it with eyes half closed. Manasika japa can be done with half closed eyes, but it is better to do it with closed eyes. In vaikhari, trataka can be done; do not gaze intensely, just look. In upanshu the object remains half visible. In manasika japa the eyes are closed and the reflection is drawn inside. It is better to do japa with an object to concentrate on, rather than having no object. If you already have a mantra and you know how to practise it, then do three parts vaikhari, two parts upanshu and one part manasika. Japa yoga must be followed or accompanied by antar mouna, the process of witnessing your thoughts.

Acquiring your mantra

There are three ways in which a mantra can be obtained. The mantra can reveal itself to some psychic people. It can manifest in a dream or it can be given by a guru. There is a specific science for determining mantras but not all gurus use it. Some are able to know the correct mantra intuitively. However, to give mantra is a great responsibility for a guru. Unless he has a thorough knowledge of the science and can see deep into the unconscious of the disciple, to give a mantra can be more of a danger than a benevolence.

A guru decides the mantra on the basis of your zodiac sign and the element which is pervading and dominating your personality. However, if there is an imbalance in your personality, he can give another mantra in order to combat the imbalance. When the mantra is heard from the guru, it is registered by your atman. Then it becomes the seed

which grows as you practise your sadhana. Up to the point of initiation, you can practise any general mantra, but once you have been initiated into a mantra, this becomes your personal mantra and it should not be changed.

So many techniques are being taught these days, it is very difficult for an individual to select a path for himself. There are different systems of meditation for the tamasic, rajasic and sattwic temperaments, so first of all you must determine to which of these categories you belong.

People who have a rajasic temperament will always be restless. They cannot still the mind even for a second. Sometimes when they practise *Om* chanting, for the whole five minutes their mind will be thinking about horrible things from the past, whereas on other days it will be very good. Nevertheless, they should continue to practise and try to develop the ability to remain a witness of their thoughts.

People with a sattwic temperament do not have so many problems with the mind and rarely experience restlessness. These people should practise concentration in the mid-eyebrow centre, trying to visualize a symbol of their own choice, such as a yantra, mandala or their ishta devata.

People who are tamasic in nature start dozing or dreaming whenever they sit for concentration. They should not try to withdraw the mind, because the moment they close their eyes to practise japa, they start to see visions and many other things. For them, loud chanting of mantra or kirtan is best. You must choose the practice according to your state of evolution. Whenever you practise your sadhana, you should begin and end by chanting *Om* aloud.

Generally, we give a mantra to the spiritual aspirant and tell him to practise it for a specific period. If his mind becomes very quiet while practising japa, he should understand that he belongs to the sattwic temperament. If his mind is restless throughout the practice, he belongs to the rajasic temperament. And if during japa, he just sleeps and the mala falls from his hand, then he belongs to the tamasic temperament.

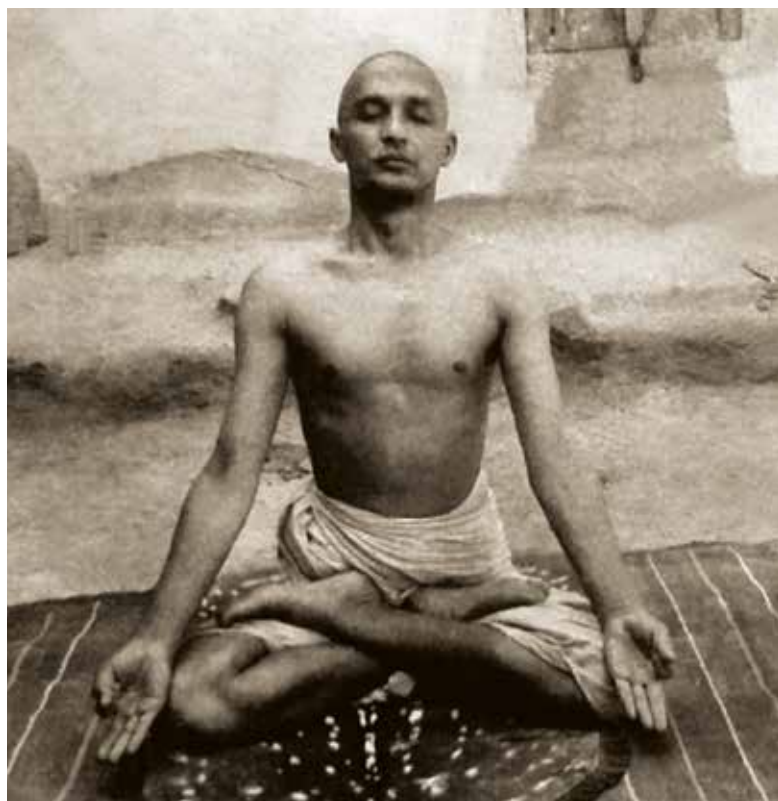
Necessity of the guru

A book cannot determine the correct mantra for you. Just as a cartridge needs to be struck by the hammer of the gun in order to fire, so the mantra needs to be struck by the hammer of the guru in order to explode the consciousness. The relationship between the guru and disciple is only the mantra. When guru gives mantra to the aspirant, he becomes a disciple. One who is working with and developing the mantra is a disciple. With the help of the mantra, he is trying to fix the samskaras, the different formations of the mind.

The guru has to decide the mantra for you on the basis of your zodiac sign, temperament, illness, or spiritual path. After receiving the mantra from your guru, you must practise it every day for five to ten minutes. No matter how powerful your mantra is, unless you practise it, you will gain nothing.

According to the tantric tradition, initiation into mantra is given either by the guru, one's mother or revelation. A mantra received in a deep dream or through intuitive inspiration which you constantly feel a strong attraction for may also be taken as your mantra. At the time of initiation several important points are explained to the aspirant: firstly, the necessity of keeping the mantra secret; secondly, the importance and practical implication of the mantra; thirdly, the nature of the mantra and how it forms the basis of the relationship between guru and disciple, and finally, the purpose of the mantra.

Your mantra is absolutely personal and must be kept secret. When you keep the mantra secret, it becomes more powerful. This is true with everything. A seed will grow in the earth – covered, in secret – but it will never grow on this table – uncovered, exposed. When the guru gives you a mantra, you have to practise it at a particular time with absolute regularity. The practice of mantra can be done with the help of the natural breath, by concentrating on one of the chakras, with the help of a mala, or by concentrating in between the two eyebrows and feeling the subtle rhythms and pulsation there.



The mantra should never be changed for the sake of avoiding confusion that can hardly be corrected. The structure of the unconscious should be allowed to develop along one pattern or track and then, and only then, can the mantra become powerful and release energy.

Sri Swamiji's personal experience of mantra

In 1943 my guru, Swami Sivananda, gave me a mantra and told me to practise five malas every day. At that early stage I was not aware of the importance of malas and mantras, but I began and the practice took no longer than three minutes. Meanwhile I started reading books

on different philosophies and I began to think that God did not exist and that everything in this life was false. Then I started to wonder about the mantra, whether it was also only humbug and I wanted to renounce it in favour of atheism. These were five very critical years when my mind was always at boiling point. I had to fight between my intellectualism, emotions, passions, spirit, guru, god, culture and tradition.

However, with my guru's guidance I continued to practise five malas regularly every day and during this period the most important link in my life was formed in those three minutes. Had I renounced my link with the mantra, I would never have achieved what I have achieved. These five malas saved me so that today I stand firmly as a swami, holding the torch of a spiritual culture.

Preparatory stages

How should one begin practising japa? The normal requirements are that one should sit in a comfortable posture in a quiet place with a serene mind. The practice of japa should either be done in padmasana, siddhasana or sukhasana. One should sit comfortably in any of these postures at least for one hour.

Laziness or lethargy, yawning, mental agitation, drowsiness or any sensation of hunger or thirst should be avoided. There should be no bodily movement, eyes should be closed and no part of the body below the waist should be touched. Since mantra japa is treated as a yoga practice, mere repetition of the mantra without inner sanctity, or with diffused consciousness, will not be of any avail. The technique of japa is calculated to release the latent power within us, and it is because of this that in yoga, japa is treated as a part of kriya yoga. It is said that mere mental or verbal repetition of the name without following the prescribed method bears no fruit. The whole effect drains away like water from a broken vessel.

In other words, before a spiritual aspirant sits for japa he should necessarily create within himself an atmosphere of purity. Japa should then follow. The mantra has to be repeated neither too slowly nor too fast, for here again the practitioner is cautioned that too lethargic a repetition of the mantra will lead to physical ailments and too rapid a repetition to a loss of all benefit. We request you to proceed with a conviction that in japa yoga the mantra which is recited is very powerful, and that it confers powers.

Time for japa

Japa can be practised at any time in any place, although it is best to practise at a regular time every day, either early in the morning or before sleep at night. If you want to practise while travelling to and from work, or in a place where there are other people, do not use your mala. Never practise for show; your spiritual practices should not be revealed to anyone or they will lose their power. Also, try to remember the mantra and repeat it mentally throughout the day, when you are at work or just sitting.

Mantra is so powerful that it can change your destiny, economic situation, physical structure, etc. If you want the mantra to change the whole structure of your life, you must practise it regularly, every morning and evening.

Pronunciation and speed

In order for a mantra to be effective, it must produce the intended sound waves through correct pronunciation. This will produce the corresponding colours and in turn will create the intended geometrical forms and figures. If you make a mistake in pronouncing the vedic mantras there is no harm.

I have found that anyone who listens with awareness can produce the correct sound of the mantra. At first you may not be able to repeat the correct sound aloud, but you can perceive it. After hearing a melody several times, you can think it in your mind, even though you may not be able to sing it. In the same way, if you listen to the pronunciation

of the mantra, even if you do not repeat it aloud, you will conceive the correct sound in your mind, and this is enough.

This procedure should be intensified and accompanied by proper thought waves. Besides the correct pronunciation, the proper intonation, pitch, mental concentration and application of the creative mind or imagination, is most essential. The mantra should be chanted rhythmically and with clear pronunciation. It should be chanted with feeling and intensity. It should be synchronized with the rotation of the mala. This applies whether the mantra is whispered, aloud or mental. Chant quickly if the mind is disturbed, slowly if the mind is more relaxed.

The practice of mantra in the beginning should be done at an average speed, but gradually the speed should be made slower. You should never practise the mantra fast. You are not promising that you will complete one round of the mala every day. Your promise is only that you will practise the mantra every day, even if it is for ten minutes, three minutes or one minute.

Regularity is your commitment. Fulfilment of a quota is not your commitment. You have no quota. Sincerity, aspiration, love, devotion, dedication have no quota. As you go on practising your mantra, after weeks or months you should make it slower and slower. As you slow down the speed of the mantra, the mind also becomes slower and slower, and the frequency is increased. Velocity is reduced, but frequency is increased. The frequency of your inner awareness is increased.

Integrating breath and mantra

When you have been able to establish and maintain concentration on the breathing process, then you integrate your mantra. If it is *So Ham*, repeat *So* with the ingoing breath and *Ham* with the outgoing breath. If the mantra is *Om*, repeat *Om* with the ingoing breath and *Om* with the outgoing breath. If the mantra is *Ram*, repeat *Ram* with the ingoing breath and *Ram* with the outgoing breath. You have

to synchronize the mantra with the breath awareness and go on practising it.

The most important part is continual awareness of the breath and the mantra while in a relaxed mood – normal, spontaneous breathing, awareness of the breath and the mantra with the breath. When you are aware of breath consciousness, that is pranic consciousness. You become unconscious of your body. You are conscious only of the flow of prana. Now to that pranic consciousness add the mantra *Om* or *So Ham* and become conscious of the mantra. Then you feel *So* with the ingoing breath and *Ham* with outgoing breath. After some time you will become unaware of the two streams of breath; simple *So Ham* will remain in your awareness. When this becomes intense you will have visions.

There are some people who are unable to concentrate their minds on any one of the centres along with japa and these people should do japa a different way. In this method we closely watch the breathing process with the eyes closed. We all breathe, but we are not usually aware of our breathing and when you become aware of every breath it is a form of concentration in itself. We breathe about fifteen times every minute and about 900 times in an hour. So, if you sit quietly for one hour and chant the mantra with the breath, you will chant 900 times, but it is very important that the breath is natural, normal and effortless. In this practice you constantly have to think, “I am breathing in and I am breathing out.” Even when you first begin this awareness, you will find your awareness of life to be greatly increased and you will assimilate experiences with greater detail and understanding.

Awareness of mantra

All throughout the practice of mantra, when you are trying to keep your consciousness on the mantra, simultaneously and side by side you have to practise awareness of everything that is happening in your subconscious mind, in your mind and in your spirit. Sometimes, people feel that it is only the mantra or the object which is important, and the mind should be

fused to that, and you must forget everything and become totally unconscious. But I tell you that in the light of yoga, the consciousness must remain all throughout and constant and it does not matter in which form it is. In fact, you are trying to become aware of your consciousness in a process of unfoldment that is taking place and you are trying to know, 'Who am I'.

If you are practising a mantra, side by side, the mental awareness, the emotional awareness and the awareness of the subconscious dominion will manifest and you have to come to know yourself as all these things, you cannot escape. If you take a mantra, and you practise that mantra, you have got to be aware all throughout, you have to remain conscious of the mantra no doubt, but at the same time, you have to know what is happening to yourself, what is happening on the plane of your inner consciousness has to be discovered, has to be explored and has to be known. Therefore, it is said that when you concentrate on the body, or when you concentrate on the mind, on thoughts, on the breath, or anything else, not one impulse, not one thought, not one experience should be missed.

The sound energy gets transformed according to the states of mind and even if you do not concentrate your mind on an image or an idea, even if your mind is dissipated and distracted and you are thinking of a hundred and one things during the japa, it does not matter. When I say that during the practice of mantra you have to surrender, I mean that you should let your thoughts move on, without any interference. When the thoughts are allowed to move, you are surrendering! The natural thought process should be allowed to flow, unhindered, unobstructed. At the same time, the smooth and spontaneous flow of your mantra should also be continued. In the course of time, your thoughts will transform into psychic feelings, psychic experiences.

As you keep practising mantra, your mind will find its own centre automatically. When this happens, when the mind attains balance and composure, there will be a release

of energy. Then various experiences will begin to happen. However, the experiences which take place with the release of this energy can become obstacles to your further progress. Despite them and during them, you must maintain a constant awareness of your mantra. Otherwise these experiences of light, forms, sounds, music and objects will become an obstacle to your path.

Placing the mantra

Mantra can be practised at any part of the body, not only the nose tip. You can practise mantra awareness at the navel, the centre of the heart, the eyebrow centre, the centre of the brain or even sahasrara chakra – the crown lotus on top of the head, on the breath or wherever you like, but the point of focus should remain the same throughout the practice. There are many other psychic centres in the body on which you can concentrate and chant the mantra or think about the mantra, but the centre in the heart is considered to be a very powerful centre for those people who are predominantly emotional.

After fixing your mind at one of those centres, start thinking about the mantra mentally. Try to feel it, just like you feel the rhythm of the pulse. Just as you feel the palpitation of the heart, tuk, tuk, tuk, you can also feel the mantra there in exactly the same way.

There are other ways of practising mantra. If you have deeper concentration, you can concentrate on one of the chakras or psychic centres. There you can practise your mantra for one hundred or two hundred rounds. In this way, every month you can practise your mantra by concentrating on one of the psychic centres from the root of the spine to the top.

Psychic symbol

A psychic symbol is also necessary to have by your side when the mind drops in mantra japa. When you continue the rotation of your consciousness with the help of a mantra for many hundred times, consequently the mind will go in.

Where will the mind rest when it goes inside? The psychic symbol will provide a resting place for it.

If you practise only for spiritual attainment, then there are certain rules. However, if you practise with a particular end in view, there are different rules. Each ishta mantra has a corresponding devata and yantra, and you have to proceed accordingly. But if you are practising the mantra for spiritual evolution and the development of your inner awareness, then the mantra can be one and the ishta devata can be another. Both do not have to correspond. In practices for spiritual attainment, emotions come into the picture. Let us say that I have a very strong feeling for Rama; I like his lifestyle, his divinity. However, my mantra is not the Rama mantra; it is the Shiva mantra. Here the mantra does not correspond to the ishta devata. It does not matter since I am not doing it for any particular purpose, but for the purification of the inner awareness, to have a vision of the divine. So first, you have to decide whether you wish to practise for spiritual or worldly attainment.

Use of a mala

The human psychic system is such that it does not remain steady for too long. Therefore, it becomes necessary to choose a medium or base through which you may know where you have blinked and where your fingers have missed the japa mantra. Even as milestones serve to know the distance covered, malas also play an important role in building up the psychic or spiritual road. It is a psychic requirement to keep the wavering psychic system under check and observation. The mala serves as a system of checking or detecting the moments when the mind is absent. A mala also helps to know one's progress.

The 108 beads of a mala represent Supreme Consciousness and the creation. The 8 beads represent the eightfold aspect of physical nature. The round stretch symbolizing 0 represents the cosmos, the entire galaxy of creation. The 100 beads represent various other elements of creation.



There is also another interpretation of the figure 108. The 1 represents the one Universal Consciousness, the 0 is the Universe of Creation and the 8 represents the eightfold aspect of creation. Some people think that 108 denotes 108 incarnations. In different religions, different figures are accepted as significant and psychic, for example, 5, 7, 9, 13. Similarly, in India, 108 is spiritually significant. It is considered holy, auspicious and a good omen.

One bead topping the 108 is known as meru which is not rotated. Meru is the bindu or point of consciousness, which the fingers should never cross, but should instead take a turn back. You must be careful not to repeat the mala in a circular form. The circle is to be broken at meru and the mala is to be rotated in the reverse direction at this point. Meru is meant for the revival of consciousness, as it is the reminder to the consciousness, to prevent you from losing awareness of your task.

Japa yoga is repetition of any mantra with or without a mala, but it is better to practise with a mala. The four types of malas used for japa are *tulsi* (sacred basil), rudraksha, *sphatik* (crystal) and sandalwood. The appropriate mala must be selected according to the mantra.

According to the views of the mantra shastra, there are very strict rules for the performance of mantra japa and the use of different kinds of malas. Certain mantras require tulsi beads, others rudraksha or sphatik. One mala must be used for one mantra only. A mala that is used for japa must not be worn by the aspirant and a second mala must be obtained. A mala that has a broken bead must be replaced with a new mala. Old malas must be disposed of in the Ganga. A mala can be restrung with silk thread only, not gold, silver or copper.

The rudraksha mala is strong and durable and has occult significance as well. *Rudra* means Shiva and *aksha* means eye. Rudraksha means the eye of Shiva, the eye of intuition, the inner eye or the pineal gland. It is probable that there is some connection between rudraksha and the inner eye. Possibly it may have some effect on ajna chakra, the mystic eye. It is a subject for study, research and experiment.

The sphatik mala is equally good for those who repeat Devi mantras. The tulsi mala is available everywhere. It is a very sensitive type of mala. If you handle it with purity, then it acts marvellously. Much esoteric significance and many mysteries surround the tulsi plant and tulsi mala. Much importance has been attached to tulsi by scientists also. It is always good and helpful to have a tulsi mala.

When you turn the beads, you should keep your awareness alert and mindful. Concentration is not suspension of mind nor even one-pointedness of mind nor total attention, but it implies awareness. During japa the tendency towards mental hypnosis and mechanical repetition is checked. The mind is very cunning; it knows many tricks. If you go to an expert for analysis, you will find your conscious mind thinking of hell whereas your subconscious mind is thinking

of heaven. The conscious mind is thinking of impurity and the subconscious mind is thinking of purity. Japa with a mala is very helpful in getting a grip over all the dimensions of consciousness.

Seating

During concentration and meditation, stimulation of the dormant electrical energy in our system becomes too frequent and, therefore, if you practise meditation on a bare floor, there is every danger that the energy which is produced by meditation may be neutralized or conducted towards the earth. Our body has energy in it and during deep meditation you will find that every part of the body becomes electrified. The principle is the same as in normal electricity. If you connect a wire directly to the earth, you will lose that energy. Likewise, in meditation the dormant, electric cosmic energy in the human system becomes concentrated in the spinal column and it is like a live wire. At present this energy is in a dormant condition. Therefore, beginners do not need a deerskin. A woollen blanket covered with a piece of cotton cloth will be sufficient for them.

Japa and women

There is nothing unhealthy about the menstrual period. Rather, if you understand it correctly and scientifically, then you will realize that it is a most important time for a woman when she can experience psychic awakening. During the menstrual period the hormones that flow in the woman's body stimulate her emotional personality, and this can be used very easily and effectively for psychic development. Therefore, women should particularly practise mantra during their menstrual period, even if they don't do it at any other time. Start your mantra practice two or three days before the period begins and continue up to three days after it ends. In my opinion, a woman can also use a mala during the menstrual cycle. But if this goes against her belief or creates conflict, then she shouldn't do it. If the concept of impurity

has embedded itself so deeply in her mind, it will be difficult to extricate it.

Summary of japa yoga

The practice of mantra represents a very important stage in the unfolding of higher awareness. In the practice of mantra, concentration is not important. Some people are unable to control their minds; their minds tend to waver. If these people try hard to concentrate, they will become very tense. All you have to do with mantra is to keep practising it. If the mind is wandering, start repeating a little bit loudly, *Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namah Shivaya*. Automatically the mind is going somewhere and you are here practising *Om Namah Shivaya, Om Namah Shivaya*. Suddenly you realize you have gone away and you come back, *Om Namah Shivaya*, one time, two times, third time, again the mind slips. This is how the sadhana should be practised, with great patience, so you have a greater understanding of yourself. Mantras for spiritual evolution must be practised for a set amount of time every day.

What is important is that you are continuing your practice. You keep your mind moving. Don't worry about the mind, because the mind and the self are not the same. Mind is a different reality and the self, the *atma*, is a different reality. How can spiritual practice work upon you? It is a matter of time, it takes time. If you want to saw wood, it takes half a minute, but if you want to saw steel, it takes a little longer. In the same way, spiritual experiences depend upon clarity of mind, purity of consciousness, *chitta shuddhi*, and how much sadhana you have done earlier. Everything is a matter of time, but more than time, it is a matter of conviction and self-confidence. If a particular mantra comes to you, you can make it powerful and influential by your conviction and faith.

The mantra has to be repeated thousands of times. In the beginning you repeat it on the audible plane. The vibrations are external and the effects are gross. But gradually, as your mind becomes quieter and quieter, the vibrations

grow more powerful. The mantra then goes deeper into the consciousness, pierces through the conscious mind and the subconscious mind and penetrates into the unconscious mind. Once the mantra enters into the unconscious mind, it destroys all samskaras and mental formations.

For those of us who are educated or literate, one form of mantra repetition is very difficult. Maybe some of you can do it. Say your mantra is *Om Namah Shivaya*. Naturally when you are repeating it, you are simultaneously aware of the written form of the syllables. That is a limiting adjunct. O-m N-a-m-a-h S-h-i-v-a-y-a is not the form of the mantra. That may be how you understand it, but that is a limitation. You cannot hear it as a pure sound, because of your intellectual block. However, an illiterate person has no intellectual conditioning. He does not know the form of *Om*. I know it, but he does not. Therefore, he hears the pure sound. Once an illiterate man asked me for diksha and I gave him the mantra *Om Namah Shivaya* and asked him to meditate on that. He returned after a month and told me of his experiences. I immediately understood him. I realized that an illiterate person does not know how to read or write. Naturally, when he was meditating on the mantra he was not thinking through the letters, so there was no interference, no hindrance from the medium of script. The script form relates with intellect and it becomes a block, an obstacle in the case of an educated person.

So remember these important points about japa. First, japa has devata, a divine form. Do not doubt or try to reason. You have no authority to deny this unless you can logically prove that it is not so. Second, the mantra can be awakened. Third, by awakening the mantra we can fulfil our desires.

Now, this much about japa yoga. You must keep your mantra personal. You must keep it properly in your mind. Once a year, you must retire for one day. Go to a secluded place, practise the mantra from morning till evening, with a few breaks for lunch, rest and dinner. On that day you must observe silence. Practise it with mala, two hours, three hours,

four hours, five hours, six, seven, eight, nine, ten hours; only one day in a year. This will give you a push in your spiritual life.

PRECAUTIONS

Stick to one mantra

Tradition holds that a disciple should have one guru and one mantra. People change so many things; they change their sect, their community, their religion, but they do not know what they are changing. One can change a husband or a wife, but never a guru or a mantra. Sometimes, sentiments interfere with your devotion and you think another mantra might be more powerful than your own. This is the most important point of error in japa and many people have been committing it. They are changing the entire structure of the unconscious mind and thereby creating a lot of confusion in their psyche, not only in this life, but hereafter also.

So the mantra should not be changed. The first decision should be the last decision. Whatever mantra you have, whether it is a Sanskrit mantra, a Latin mantra or any mantra, with or without meaning, please go on with it. If at all you want to understand a bit more about it or if you want something to be added to your practice, then you should go to that person who will help you to unfold your knowledge without changing the mantra.

Do not fight with the mind

Everyone who has a mantra should remember this important point. During mantra repetition, do not fight with the mind. You should think of the mind as your best friend. If you misbehave with the mind, it will give you many problems. The mind is a magician. In one minute it can create neurosis, in another minute hallucinations, nervous breakdown, phobia, and the desire to commit suicide. In the *Bhagavad Gita* it says the mind is your friend and also your enemy (6:6):

*Bandhuraatmaa'tmanastasya yenaatmaivaatmanaa jitah;
Anaatmanastu shatrutwe vartetaatmaiva shatruvat.*

The self is the friend of the self for him who has conquered himself by the Self, but to the unconquered self, this self stands in the position of an enemy like the (external) foe.

If you learn to observe and control the mind, it will become your best friend, but if you have no understanding or control over the mind, it will be your worst enemy. Unless your mind is steady and one-pointed, mental repetition of mantra can bring more dissipation.

Do not overdo it

The third error which many people make is overdoing the practice. They are so enthusiastic about it and they think that it is the easiest and best method for achieving self-realization, so they do thousands and thousands of repetitions daily till their mind ultimately breaks or becomes introverted and dull. Therefore, it is very important not to overdo the practice. You know very well that any medicine which is powerful should not be taken over the prescribed dose. In the same way, if you think that your mantra is powerful, you should not practise it indiscriminately. That is why on the day the guru gives initiation, he prescribes the maximum limit.

Do not try to meditate or concentrate at any time of the day. Do not assume the posture of padmasana at whim! If you have a guru mantra, then the first thing to do is to start japa regularly and one-pointedly. Enjoy yourself the whole day long, do whatever you wish to, but resolve in your head that from today you will find five minutes at night for japa, no matter how much work you have or the troubles you are in.

Conclusion

When you are practising mantra, you should be happy when your mind is developing the areas concerning the past,

present and future. When evil and criminal thoughts are awakened in your mind, or when you have thoughts of God and compassion – it is all the same. If you want to crush the evil idea, you must crush the good idea as well. This is a very important point, and it is here that the whole process of life, of evolution, is stuck. Those people who have been able to transcend the barriers of life, have done it only after realizing this.

You expect the mind to be calm like a moonlit night, free from clouds and thunder. That's expecting something which is possible. When you practise your mantra, please remember that you are not practising it to stop this eternal process, to crush the basis of your faculties, your knowledge, your enlightenment. To crush the mind is to kill life. To suppress an emotion is to destroy the very base of your ambition and desire. Man cannot be anything unless he has the whole mind to work from.

The greatest discoveries in history, the greatest victories, the greatest paintings, compositions and realizations – what are they, but products of the mind. Therefore, when you practise mantra, please be aware of whatever comes to your mind. Do not put things into categories and compartments: 'Very nice thoughts I had today, thank God.' Or, 'Today my meditation was very bad; throughout the practice I have been having horrible thoughts'. No, this is where we are making a great mistake. When you fix your mind on the nose tip, on the breath, and on the mantra – the deeper you go the greater will be the manifestation of the whole mind.

6

Applications of Mantra



Mantra and hatha yoga

The main aim of hatha yoga is to bring about a balanced flow of prana in ida and pingala nadis. The word hatha is comprised of two bija mantras: *Ham*, representing the sun or solar force, and *Tham*, representing the moon or lunar force.

When you are feeling restless, it means your mental energy is high and your pranic energy is low. There is an imbalance; your sense organs are very active and your motor organs are less active. In hatha yoga language, we call this an imbalance between ida and pingala nadis. The best method is repetition of a mantra. The mantra can be repeated mentally, either with or without the use of a mala. It can also be practised in synchronization with the breath. Of course there are many other ways of practising the mantra, but these are the best methods for checking the outflow of mental energy.

Pranayama

Japa done with pranayama becomes very effective within a short period and works as a medium of introversion more effectively than the mala. The inhalation, retention and exhalation should be done with the mantra. Of course you can practise with the mantra that has been given to you by your guru, or you can use any mantra. But the mantra which is used for measuring the duration of the breath is Gayatri mantra. Gayatri is a mantra of twenty-four syllables, and when it is repeated mentally, the practitioner completes one vital circle of the breath. Gayatri mantra is equal in length to the ideal vital capacity. Everybody has a different vital capacity.

Even according to the knowledge which has been gained through the modern sciences, the vital capacity of a normal human being is that much. You must inhale according to your vital capacity and not beyond that. There are some sadhakas who split their mantra in two and set them with the inhalation and exhalation. You can adjust the number of repetitions of the mantra with inhalation, retention, exhalation and external retention.

According to hatha yoga texts, the Gayatri mantra is not a personal mantra, but it is intended for pranayama. It is said that Gayatri is the pranic force, the life force. So, in order to use one's prana for concentration and meditation, practise Gayatri mantra with pranayama.

Surya namaskara

Surya namaskara consists of twelve physical postures which correspond to the signs of the zodiac. During the sun's apparent journey through the heavens it passes through each of these celestial houses in turn. Each position in surya namaskara corresponds to one of these signs of the zodiac. The whole movement of surya namaskara from start to finish is synchronized with breathing.

There are specific mantras associated with each of the twelve positions of surya namaskara. They are evocative sounds and through their power of vibration, have subtle, yet powerful and penetrating effects on the mind and body. While doing surya namaskara, a particular mantra is repeated either silently or uttered aloud with each position. When surya namaskara is combined with correct breathing and these bija mantras, the entire mind and intellect are energized. These bija mantras create a vibration and it is this which creates the energy.

Mantras may or may not have specific meanings, but the vibrations which they create should reach every fibre of one's being. The mantras of surya namaskara are energized sound. When repeated loudly, clearly and with devotion, these mantras give the greatest possible benefits to those who utter them, either in hastening the curing of an ailment, acquiring stability of mind and self-control, or dissolving tensions caused by modern living.

Mantra and bhakti yoga

The path of bhakti yoga can be developed by everyone. In this, the most important item is japa; saying the name by the practices of mantra yoga. The practice of japa develops spiritual vision in the aspirant. This means that japa is something like a drug, the effects of which are spread throughout the personality and not only restricted or limited to the body. The effects of japa are unlimited. They are widespread from the body right up to the psychic level. The emotional energy should be sublimated and properly

channelled for constructive work. Bhakti is the best method for sublimation. Japa is the easiest and safest way by which a person can elevate the state of consciousness, by reciting the name in a particular manner, either alone or in a group. Japa is practised in all faiths, but maybe without understanding its psychological importance.

Japa yoga is a method of spiritual communion through the repetition of mantra. By continued repetition you create certain vibrations in your system. The recitation of the mantra purifies the physical organism and fills the mind with spiritual vitality. When a bhakti yogi performs japa of a mantra, in the first stage, he remains aware of the mantra. He tries his best to maintain awareness of the sound produced by the mantra. After getting used to this practice or after having developed a deeper and greater awareness of the sound of the mantra, he stops producing an audible sound vibration and tries to intensify his awareness on the basis of mantra chanted in whispered tones.

In the second stage, he tries to merge or fuse his awareness on whispered mantras. When this task is accomplished satisfactorily, he stops whispering also and tries to chant the same mantra mentally. He tries to hear the mental and subtle notes which, though inaudible, can be visualized through a deeper form of awareness. Sometimes at this stage, there is a possibility of actual experience of hearing the same mantra. The bhakti yogi will have the feeling as if he had really chanted the mantra in an audible tone.

When the awareness of mental chanting of mantra is absorbing and the mind is completely fused in a deep realm of awareness, mantra or nada is transformed into a constant inaudible repetition which will appear to the aspirant on the plane of consciousness as audible, but it will be imperceptible and inaudible to others. This is the way to practise mantra and nada yoga by bhakti yogis. Because music is an integral part of it, bhakti yoga has a soothing effect on the bottled up and fevered mind. Chanting the mantra verbally or mentally harmonizes the whole mind.

Constant repetition alters the consciousness. The aspirant is less influenced by the ups and downs of the tumultuous world and becomes more aware. The whole mind becomes concentrated and powerful. Continual remembrance will break down the ego and identification with the body and mind, and lead to knowledge and fulfilment.

By repeating the mantra and the sankalpa every day, the feeling of bhakti will arise from deep within and grow day by day. Bhakti can become a major support in the perfection of surrender. Like the saints and sages who sang and wrote about the glory of the Supreme in their devotional songs and poetry, the devotee will experience bhakti in every sphere of existence and know the exquisite feeling of unity.

Mantra and raja yoga

If, by the practice of yama and niyama, tensions are caused, then what will happen in pratyahara, not to mention meditation? Therefore, along with yama and niyama, one should practise mantra yoga. A mantra is a word, a vibration, which liberates the mind from samskaras just as energy is liberated from matter. This is the etymology of mantra. It is purely defined in terms of mental and spiritual freedom or *moksha*.

In addition to these practices, Sage Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* gave five traditional ways of awakening. If you want to perfect your consciousness, to raise your energies and to improve the quality of your awareness, then these five ways are suggested: birth, mantra, austerity, herbs and concentration.

Patanjali has mentioned a scheme for going from the state of knowledge to the state of perception or experience. He says *Om* is the word which indicates Ishwara; Ishwara is described by *Om*. We have seen that supreme consciousness, or Ishwara, is formless, it has no form, but there should be some vehicle which expresses it. This is described by yantra, mantra and mandala. Just as a scientist gives an expression to the principle of energy which he sees or experiences through intuition, similarly Patanjali has given an expression, a designation of the supreme consciousness of Ishwara.

Mantra means designation in the form of sound. Supreme consciousness is designated by a sound formula. *Om* is a mantra. It has a sound and a form. The form is visible to the eyes, and at the same time it has a sound. So, *Om* as a mantra is subject to perception and hearing. *Om* is both mantra and yantra. It is not mandala, because mandala must have a human symbol. Patanjali recommends that the mantra *Om* must be repeated and its meaning should be contemplated upon. Instead of asking you to meditate directly on a formless thing, he has provided a support in the form of *Om*.

Mantra and dhyana yoga

Mantra is most important in dhyana yoga. You cannot grow a vegetable without a seed. In the same manner, meditation cannot succeed without a mantra and everyone has their own mantra. You have to discover your mantra.

In the practice of dhyana yoga, first of all you have to decrease the frequency of the mind waves which are responsible for brain waves. In order to do this, you have first to withdraw the senses. When the brain is isolated and the senses cannot feed it with the necessary sensorial impulses, the frequencies decrease.

Now, decreasing the frequencies of the mind is a process which should not be done all at once. It should take time because when the mind undergoes a change in the rate of frequencies, many corresponding changes take place in the body. Many of the changes take place in the physical body. Therefore, in order to give the body time to adapt, you must allow ample time for the process of decreasing the frequencies of the mind.

Many systems of meditation utilize mantra or movement of the breath. Others use yantras and mandalas, psychic symbols or an ishta devata. We call these devices 'tools of meditation', and even though they may vary according to tradition, culture or system, they all serve the same purpose and are therefore equivalent to each other. One cannot progress very far into meditation without them for they are

the means of establishing one-pointed concentration. They allow us to break away from involvement in the play of the mind. These devices are the base to which we continually return our attention.

Mantra, nyasa and development of yoga nidra

The characteristic feature of yoga nidra was the systematic rotation of consciousness in the body, which originated from the tantric practice of nyasa. Technically and according to the tantric texts the placing of the mind or awareness is called *nyasa*. To place the mind on the body is called *anganyasa*, where *anga* means organ. *Karanyasa* means placing the mind on different parts of the hand. *Mantranyasa* is placing the mind on the mantras, the sound. *Varnanyasa* is placing the mind on the forms of the sounds, on the colour of the sounds.

It is said that each and every part of the body has a sound. This sound vibration has a distinct, a definite, a particular place in your physical body: in the little finger, the middle finger, the index finger, thumb, and so on. When you evoke a sound at that particular part of the body, say, *Um* or *Kam*, or whatever the sound may be for that particular part of the body, it starts vibrating, and that is called the act of purification with the help of mantra. Each part of the body is systematically charged with the energy of the mantras. The whole body and mind are purified and prepared for meditation.

Like this there are sixty-four or more different centres in the body that are touched in the tantric system. This act of purification with the help of mantra is a very simple process. It is from this practice that I have developed the system of yoga nidra. Without pride, I must tell you that I was the first, not only in India, but abroad to reveal this type of yoga nidra in 1962. It was then that I came to understand that yoga nidra was one of the most powerful methods, not only of relaxation, but of reawakening the degenerated brain centres.



The yoga nidra that I first discovered in tantra is such a peculiar one that if I were to teach you that yoga nidra I would have to prepare you for some time with the science of sound, the science of mantra. When you practise yoga nidra on these sounds it is as good as practising yoga nidra on different centres of the brain of which you have no idea at all. In tantra, yoga nidra is such an elaborate system, it is something like surveying the whole body on the external physical plane, that is the external physical limbs, the internal plane such as the heart, the lungs, the respiratory and the circulatory system and not only that but even the thoughts, emotions, etc.

Of course, in yoga nidra I have made it look very simple: thumb, second finger, third finger, fourth finger, and so on. Yoga nidra begins with the external body and ultimately it goes to that point where you are made so sensitive that you perceive colours, emotions and many other things which is difficult in the beginning. The information is conducted to the conscious brain by the practices of yoga nidra, but if the information is conducted through the system of mantra it is very efficacious.

Mantra and antar mouna

When practising mantra, a lot of things come up in the mind which would not come up otherwise. When past incidents arise, what do we do? The usual response is to suppress these thoughts because we are more interested in our mantra. So when we are practising japa and a thought comes, we push it out; another one comes and we push it out. But this is incorrect. Thus japa yoga must be followed or accompanied by antar mouna, the process of witnessing our thoughts. When we are practising mantra and a thought comes into our mind, we must stop for a moment and see the thought, whatever it is. Then continue the mantra until another thought comes. During the practice of japa and antar mouna over a period of months, the significant and insignificant memories of the past flash into our mind. These memories should be seen very clearly if we want to purify our mind. Every experience which we have during mantra practice or meditation has an important bearing on our life.

Sometimes the awareness of thinking will become keen and at other times the awareness of the mantra will predominate. There is an alternate awareness of wavering and concentration, fluctuation and unification; this must happen. One should never wish to be completely free of thoughts in meditation. It is impossible to be totally aware of only the japa or the mantra. Along with the mantra and the actual practice of japa, thoughts will come; fluctuations must take place, memories must return. This is natural, and if it does not happen, you can be sure that you have a mental block somewhere and you must get rid of it. So, along with the mantra you can practise *antar mouna*, the art of witnessing the thought process.

In my opinion, those who have the same negative thoughts a thousand times should practise antar mouna with mantra. Other ways are dangerous. You suppress them one thousand times, then they will not come. You will be very happy, but they will come now in the form of repressions. When they come to you in the form of repressions, you will

never know about it; they come like thieves. They will come in the form of emotional breakdowns; they will come in the form of a strong suicidal complex.

Therefore, when practising mantra, do not discard or repress the experiences which arise. According to yoga and psychology, we must observe, analyze and respect whatever thoughts or experiences come into our mind while practising japa.

Mantra and ajapa japa

The constant repetition of a mantra is known as *japa*. Japa becomes *ajapa* or spontaneous japa when the mantra automatically repeats itself without conscious effort. It is said that ajapa japa comes from the heart, whereas japa comes from the mouth.

The breath is a continual reminder that you must be aware of yourself in relation to the outer and inner world. The whole aim of yoga is to find this balance between ida and pingala. One of the simplest yet most effective ways is ajapa. Continuous practice of ajapa puts you in tune with the breath and the associated mantra.

Any short mantra will do for ajapa japa, some people practise ajapa japa with *Om*, others with *Rama*. Any mantra which can be fitted into the span of the breath can be used for ajapa japa, though traditionally the mantra *So Ham* is utilized since it corresponds with the natural sounds of inhalation and exhalation. *So Ham* is widely called the *ajapa gayatri* – the spontaneous song of the breath. It is a mantra that arises automatically with each and every breath. It is the sound that corresponds with the natural rhythm of breathing. It is the mantra that every person chants continuously, whether knowingly or unknowingly. This practice of ajapa japa is so absorbing and so perfect that it constitutes a yoga on its own.

When you practise the mantra, the psychic word, on the psychic passage, then the psychic path arises. This condition must be reached and eventually becomes the basis of healing. When you have created this path, you will discover that you

can direct the liberated energy to every part of the body. Different bodily ailments can be healed by means of this. That is why the development of this psychic energy is of utmost importance.

Its practice, if undertaken gradually and with full awareness, will eventually bring all the hidden desires, fears and complexes of the mind to the mental surface. When this occurs, little by little over a period of months, the practitioner should view these previously hidden *samskaras* and *vasanas* with the attitude of an unconcerned witness. Through this process, *ajapa japa* relieves the mind of all tensions, which in turn removes the root cause of most physical and mental ailments. *Ajapa japa* is a complete *sadhana* through which one can have direct experience of *samadhi*.

Japa sahita dhyana

The Sanskrit word *sahita* means ‘together with’, or ‘combined with’. The word *dhyana* means ‘meditation’. This practice is a combination of *japa* and awareness of an inner symbol or *antar trataka*.

If you chant the mantra *Om*, then you can use the corresponding symbol as a focus of attention. If you have a personal mantra and you know its symbol then you should use this, otherwise you can choose any other symbol in association with your mantra. If you have an *ishta devata*, then you can use this for *trataka*. If you are not too sure on this point contact a qualified teacher.

In this method basically you must visualize your chosen symbol in front of your closed eyes. If so inclined, you can feel devotion or reflect on the meaning of the symbol and mantra. Each mantra is inseparably associated with a definite symbol or form. Therefore, if your mind attains a deep state of relaxation and one-pointedness and receptivity, and if the whole mind is filled with the sound of the mantra, then the specific psychic symbol will spontaneously arise to conscious perception. In this way, you will find out the exact form or symbol of your mantra.

If your mind is not one-pointed it is quite difficult to visualize a clear picture. Therefore, we recommend that you first of all calm down your mind and remove distracting thoughts. When the mind becomes concentrated, then you can start to practise japa sahita dhyana. Your awareness must flow towards the mantra, the symbol and the japa rotation.

Mantra and nada yoga

Nada yoga is a distinct path of yoga. It is closely related to mantra yoga, japa yoga, music and any other path that is concerned with sound. In fact, nada yoga is often used as a collective term to describe all yogic practices which utilize sound. However, in our definition nada yoga is regarded as having one characteristic feature. In the other paths a specific sound is created as a vehicle of awareness. That is, one chants a particular mantra in mantra yoga and japa yoga, and makes a fixed pattern of sound in music and singing.

The word *nada* means ‘flow of sound vibrations’. In nada yoga, as we teach it, one does not create a specific sound as such, but listens to internal sounds allowing the perceived sound to arise spontaneously. This is an obvious though fine difference. In later stages these paths join with each other, for they are all concerned with merging with the reservoir of sound – the underlying substratum.

According to nada yoga, the structure of matter is comprised of millions of sounds, both familiar and unknown. Every object is a dense composition of sound particles, and the aggregation of these particles is conceived by the yogis in the form of a sound or mantra. When you recite the mantra, you are actually working out the problems of your awareness and your mind. This is a most powerful practice.

For example, the mantra *Om* can be repeated in four ways. First, aloud, allowing the sound to be registered by the brain, which in turn alters its waves so that peace of mind and pratyahara occur spontaneously. After a few months, it should be chanted in a whisper, then mentally, and finally in conjunction with the breath. Finally, it becomes a part of

your consciousness. As the canvas on which an artist paints a beautiful picture ceases to exist, in the same manner, the mantra is embedded into the general structure of the mind.

By practising it at these four levels, kundalini awakens methodically and systematically. You can also use the mantra by repeating it mentally in coordination with the breath, or you can sing it aloud in the form of kirtan. This creates a great potential in mooladhara and awakening takes place.

In nada yoga, vishuddhi and mooladhara are considered to be the two basic centres of vibration. In nada yoga, the ascent of consciousness through the chakras is integrated with the musical scale. Each note of the scale corresponds to the vibratory level of consciousness of one of the chakras. This scale, often chanted in the form of mantras, bhajans and kirtans, is a very powerful means of awakening kundalini in the different chakras. Kirtan is a part of nada yoga, the yoga of sound. While singing kirtan, if you close your eyes, the rhythm starts and gradually the vibrational frequencies rise. The higher the velocity, the lower the frequency, and the higher the frequency, the lower the velocity. The mind must lose its velocity and attain frequency. When the mind attains frequency, then many minds become one mind. This is possible through kirtan. When the mind becomes one with the nada, the sound and the mantra, there is no difference between the mind and the mantra.

The various types of sound that are heard during nada yoga relate to the level of one's spiritual and psychic attainment. Of course, the biological structure also has a part to play, as the physical and mental bodies interact with each other up to a certain stage. Initially the nada or sound that is heard is the result of communication between the biological and psychological systems. However, once the awakening of kundalini takes place the sounds have no biological or even psychological basis, they are purely transcendental.

Therefore, the best way of awakening this kundalini according to us, is through the practices of mantra and taking

recourse to the science of music. The system of japa yoga, that is the yoga of mantra, and the system of awakening the kundalini with the help of music is a very important system. One is known as japa yoga and the other one is known as nada yoga.

Mantra and kriya yoga

The other method of inducing awakening is kriya yoga. It is the most simple and practical way for the modern-day individual as it does not require confrontation with the mind. Kriya yoga offers a smooth and relatively risk-free means of expanding your awareness and awakening the dormant areas of the brain. This system of kriya yoga also provides a means whereby you do not have to tackle the mind directly.

Each individual kriya is comprised of a number of subsidiary techniques. These are the basic tools of kriya yoga. Many of these subsidiary techniques are widely known and practised individually. They can be classified into the following groups:

1. *Asana* (physical pose)
2. *Mudra* (external expression of an inner attitude)
3. *Bandha* (physio-psychic locks)
4. *Mantra* (special sound pattern which can produce subtle impact and change)
5. *Pranayama* (manipulation of breath to control prana)
6. Psychic passage awareness

These six groups of techniques are the building blocks of the kriyas. They are combined together in a scientific and specific manner in order to bring about changes in one's being. Individual practice of these subsidiary techniques can have powerful influences on the physical-psychic-mental body. It was discovered by ancient yogis that integration, synchronization and the blending of specific techniques can lead to a vast increase in the power of the techniques as compared to when done individually.

Mantra and kundalini

Mantra will also become a very important and effective tool for the awakening of that energy which is in constant motion and which, in the process of evolution, is called kundalini. When we talk about mantra, yoga and tantra, we are also concerned with kundalini, which has been trying to manifest itself in various forms. It has expressed itself in the past when the spirit passed through various incarnations, mineral, vegetable, animal and subhuman. They were manifestations of energy, and now this energy which relates to your further evolution is called kundalini energy.

To awaken kundalini you must prepare yourself through yogic techniques. When you are able to direct your prana into the seat of kundalini, the energy wakes up and makes its way through sushumna nadi, to the brain. As kundalini ascends, it passes through each of the chakras which are interconnected with the different silent areas of the brain. With the awakening of kundalini there is an explosion in the brain as the dormant or sleeping areas start blossoming like flowers. Therefore, kundalini can be equated with the awakening of the silent areas of the brain.

One method of awakening kundalini is through steady regular practice of mantra. According to tantra, everything is a manifestation of *shabda*, subtle sound vibration. This is really another way of defining the kundalini. Sound in the form of mantras can also be used to raise the kundalini. It should therefore not be surprising to know that the cosmic sound *Om* symbolizes and is kundalini. *Om* arises in the realm of the sahasrara and then descends through the various chakra levels, until it manifests as gross matter, organic life, including man. In the *Yoga Chudamani Upanishad* it says (verse 73): “*Om* resides in all created things (i.e. it is the kundalini). Generally, it remains downwards enjoying the material world.” In man, *Om* or kundalini resides in mooladhara.

The letters of *Om* represent many things, but they notably indicate tamas, rajas and sattwa. That is: A – sattwa, U – rajas and M – tamas. Tamas predominates in the lower chakras,



rajas in the middle chakras and sattwa in the higher chakras. Therefore, *Om* symbolizes the progressive ascent of kundalini through the chakras. The symbol *Om* as a whole symbolizes the sahasrara. But *Om* is not only a symbol, it can also be used as a mantra to raise the kundalini when utilized under the right circumstances.

This is a very powerful, smooth and risk-free method, but of course it is a sadhana which requires time and a lot of patience. First you need to obtain a suitable mantra from a guru who knows yoga and tantra, and who can guide you through your sadhana. When you practise the mantra incessantly, it develops in you the vision of a higher force

and enables you to live amidst the sensualities of life with indifference to them. Therefore, the best way of awakening this kundalini according to us is through the practice of mantra and taking recourse to the science of music.

Each chakra, each centre has different modes of consciousness that is represented by the various sounds on the petals, that is the four syllables or the four sounds (mooladhara), then six syllables or sounds (swadhisthana), then ten syllables or sounds (manipura), then twelve sounds (anahata) then sixteen sounds (vishuddhi), then two sounds (ajna). Every sound that is produced by your mouth or is heard has a counterpart in that centre. At the same time, the brain or the sahasrara chakra has all the sounds and the centres corresponding to all the sounds in all the other chakras. As such a sound is produced, its influx is received by the corresponding chakra in the body and the influence is carried through ida or pingala to the particular centre in the brain which corresponds to that particular sound.

Bija mantras are very powerful and are used mainly for spiritual purposes to awaken the kundalini or a chakra, for psychic communication or averting some kind of trouble in life.

Mantra and chakra

The major chakras are seven in number and are located along the pathway of sushumna, an energy channel which flows through the centre of the spinal cord. Sushumna originates at the perineum and terminates at the top of the head. The chakras are connected to a network of psychic channels called nadis, which correspond to the nerves, but are more subtle in nature. Ida and pingala nadis represent mental and pranic energies and these energies are distributed throughout the body. The chakras are depicted symbolically as lotus flowers, each having a particular number of petals and a characteristic colour.

The mooladhara chakra is the distribution centre for the reproductive, excretory and urinary systems. In the same way,

from swadhisthana chakra onwards, the various chakras are distribution centres to different organs of the body, like the digestive system, liver, pancreas. They feed various organs in your body with impulses. Therefore, the petals in these lotuses indicate the distributing channels. The petals of the lotus, inscribed with the bija mantras represent the different manifestations of psychic energy connected with the chakras, and the nadis or psychic channels leading into and out of them.

Concentration on the chakras while performing yogic practices stimulates the flow of energy through the chakras and helps to activate them. This in turn awakens the dormant areas in the brain and the corresponding faculties in the psychic and mental bodies, allowing one to experience planes of consciousness which are normally inaccessible.

Now, the centres can be awakened by mantra, by any mantra. If your mantra is *Om Namah Shivaya*, you can practise the mantra in mooladhara in the first week, in the second week in swadhisthana, in the third week in manipura, in the fourth week in anahata, in the fifth week in vishuddhi and then onwards between the eyebrows and then bindu and sahasrara. Chakra concentration may be combined with mental repetition of the mantras, by feeling that the mantra is being repeated in or on the chakra. This method of practising the mantra is very powerful. It can result in putting you in touch with your higher consciousness. When the practitioner's concentration develops to a higher degree the vibrations of the mantras may be felt to be issuing forth from the psychic centres, a most wonderful and intense experience.

Mantra as a means of worship

The method of worship by means of pooja is unique to the tantric and vedic cultures. It does not exist in any other religion. You can find detailed literature on it in the tantras and Vedas. Pooja is done to focus the mind for the attainment of samadhi. The meaning of samadhi is to stop the mind and

enter the void. This state is not possible for all to achieve directly. So, as a rule, daily worship of whatever deity one chooses should be performed. This worship can be done in many ways. There are specific poojas for Shakti, Kali, Durga, Vishnu, Shiva, even pooja for the cosmos, for creation is described and there are definite procedures for each one. This pooja can be of half an hour's duration, or as a special ritual it can go on for a few hours or even the whole day.

In the shastras there is a complete and detailed description of which mantra is to be chanted, where a specific procedure is to be undertaken, which kriyas that ritual involves, and which method of pranayama is performed with specific mantras. This method involves mantras and kriyas, the pronunciation of the mantras should be exact, a little difference in resonance changes the pulse. If you understand physics, you will acknowledge that this indeed does happen. Likewise, a small mispronunciation can bring destruction instead of protection. So one must learn the science of mantra before attempting tantric worship. Everybody is free to choose a form and method of worship. In *Shakta Tantra* there are the ten *Mahavidyas*; Shaivites and Vaishnavites have their own forms. Each has different specifications about what colour flowers will be used, whether tulsi leaves or bel leaves are required and so on.

Tantra is a system which tries to make the individual more aware of every action and every thought. Every ritual requires attention, whether it is a set ceremonial ritual of worship, or an everyday chore or duty. Each ritual has to be done with attention. They cannot be done mechanically or unconsciously. They have to be done with awareness, which eventually leads to meditation. In tantra worship is not confined to the temple. It is done from the moment one gets out of bed in the morning to the moment one returns to bed in the night. Its purpose is to intensify awareness. It leads the aspirant to a continuous stream of meditation throughout the day.

7

Benefits of Mantra



Mantra is a sound formula and it has waves, it has a frequency, it influences the body, mind and atmosphere.

If it is properly practised, it can create a great force. A mantra can attain any frequency and when you produce it, it creates waves. These waves calm down your senses. When the senses are calmed, you can concentrate. Therefore, the purpose of mantra is to help you achieve concentration. When you practise mantra, the waves are generated in the form of energy and force. This force can purify your own self and it can also be transmitted. It has healing properties. Mantra is a science in which the mind is converted into force and force into effect.

When you repeat the mantra, the sound frequencies are created within you, like the incessant waves of the ocean, one after the other. They keep on going deeper and deeper, and as they do, they replace your obsessions, your attachments, your false notions and *avidya*, ignorance. That is the literal meaning of the mantra, by repetition and reflection of which, the mind becomes free from dross. If a person is tied up with a rope and you take a knife and cut it, he is free. In the same way, the sound waves of the mantra cut and destroy the mass of *avidya* and all those forces through which your mind is conditioned. You will agree that everybody's mind is conditioned, and what is this conditioning? Desires, frustrations, greed, delusion, ego, and so on.

What can be accomplished by the use of mantra? Through mantra one can remove disease, sorrow and restlessness. Mantra can heal a person who is close to you. Mantra can calm the mind; it is a force by itself. You can use it in any way you like. Mantra is so powerful that within a moment it can change bad habits. It is important for people to study and understand this science in the correct way. The mantra is a purifying force, mantra can purify the environment. Nothing in the world can pollute the mantra; nothing can make it impure. Mantra can purify all corruption. It is such a great purifier that no matter what you eat, how you live, what you think, or which religion you belong to, it will dominate and destroy all the *samskaras*. When the *samskaras* are destroyed and the veil is split asunder, you will see the divinity shining like the sun before you. What you have been searching for is

not far away. There is only a veil between you and me, which has to be destroyed by the mantra shakti.

Releasing the locks

We are human beings, social human beings; we belong to a society and a religion and a culture, we cannot behave completely freely. We have to have certain disciplines: national discipline, social discipline, religious discipline, family discipline, and in order to discipline ourselves we have to suppress ourselves. If we do not suppress ourselves there will be chaos in society. If we do suppress ourselves, we accumulate impressions which create problems within our personality. You must understand this very well – we are all suppressed souls. Throughout your life from your childhood you are accumulating unexpressed symptoms. Sometimes it is too much so we fall ill, sometimes it is very little, but that also affects our personality. So, the way is timely clearance through mantra. Every morning you must practise the mantra, let the depressions come out. Every night practise mantra, let the depressions come out. It is like cleaning your apartment every morning and every night. Just as you clean your kitchen, your house, do you clean your mind? How do you clean the mind? In yoga the most powerful method is called mantra, but still people do not practise it methodically.

For five minutes, repeat the same mantra, that's all. When you achieve this one-pointedness, then you will find the way to go in. And when you find the way to go in, your capacity to work and your responses will improve, whether in studies or elsewhere. There have been many great musicians and artists in the world. Michelangelo, for example. What an incredible work he did at the Vatican! He would climb up in the morning with a bottle of water, lie flat on the scaffolding, and go on painting the ceiling till evening. This is not normal, it is exceptional. Not only the spiritual path, but every path requires dedication. But spirituality is such a path that if you walk it, you can become a very good musician, sportsperson, yogi, ruler, poet, writer, politician, and a crook too.

Hammering the unconscious

The word japa in Sanskrit means repetition of the name of God. In all the religions of the world the practice of the repetition of the name of the Divine has been prescribed as a daily ritual. Japa has been recognized to be the most powerful expedient enabling an aspirant to reach those regions of final beatitude and bliss which all human beings aspire for at one stage or other. Therefore, in this modern age where human beings have lost all their sense of values and are going the wrong way, one of the most potent and affecting redeemers from the sorrows of this world is japa, the repetition of God's name. Japa is thus regarded and recognized as one of the easiest methods for liberation from bondage.

In japa there is a continued rotation of consciousness centred on the mantra and the mind becomes concentrated and relaxed, which tends to bring all the physical and mental faculties of man to their most efficient working state. Japa brings about *chitta shuddhi* or mental purification in which *samskaras*, past impressions, and *vasanas*, future desires, are naturally eliminated. This *chitta shuddhi* is very important in the preliminary stages of spiritual life because if the *samskaras* and *vasanas* are not removed early, they will become great obstructions later.

The effects of japa and the mantra can be felt within a few weeks. A person who is suddenly overwhelmed by anxiety, restlessness and doubt can be helped by japa even if he has no faith.

Mantra for insomnia and anxiety

The practice of ujjayi pranayama with the mantra *Om*, although it is so simple, has subtle influences on the whole body as well as the psychic plane. It calms the nervous system and removes all worries and troubles from the mind. People who suffer from insomnia should have a quiet, deep sleep if they practise this technique in bed at night. They should lie in shavasana without any pillow. When the head is elevated by a pillow, it obstructs the breath from passing through the

already contracted glottis. This practice is also useful for people with high blood pressure as it reduces the heartbeat.

When we treat a mental patient, suffering from psychosis, neurosis or a nervous breakdown, we take him as a personality, a human being, an individual who can think and feel. We take him deeper into his own mind through the practices of concentration and meditation, bringing him to the root of his illness. If a person is suffering from high anxiety, we do not prescribe practices to induce an immediate state of tranquillity. Rather, we try to explode his personality, to express what remains dormant in the back of his mind. This is possible with the practice of concentration, such as mantra japa. As a scientific principle, mantra is a powerful instrument. Through the practice of mantra, we try to explode the deeper phases of the consciousness. When the inner states of mind are exposed, one comes face to face with the thoughts, distractions, passions and repressions deep within.

If I have a problem and am unable to sleep for three days, I don't care that my mind is agitated. I believe that the mind must face truth honestly. If I am up against the agony of death, I must face it and experience it. If I am feeling the turbulence of passion, I must face it and experience it.

If someone is suffering from hypertension, sit him down quietly in an easy chair. Let him close his eyes and chant *Om* for a short time. After fifteen to twenty minutes, when you take his blood pressure, you will be surprised to see that *Om* has certainly done the job.

Mantra and karma

When a person realizes that he has done many bad acts in the past and his karmas are crude, he must take steps to nullify them. Some karmas can be eradicated by *purushartha*, human effort, but there are others which cannot. *Sanchita*, the accumulated karmas, are difficult to control and cannot be nullified, but there are ways to balance them, such as penance, simple living, abstinence from sensual enjoyments from time to time, meditation and a lot of mantra.

Concentration, meditation and samadhi are not merely a psychological practice, I do not believe that mind can emancipate the mind; if you want to emancipate the mind you have to retire the mind. You will have to introduce some influence from outside and therefore the tantras, the yantras and mantras will help you in this respect. Everybody is sincere, everybody is working hard but still success does not seem to be in view. Where is the block? That is what we have never thought about. You light a candle here, open all the windows and if there is a hurricane outside, if there is a storm outside, if you run a few fans here, what would happen to the light – can you imagine? The flame will never remain steady. Do what you want it will never remain steady and no wonder it blows out. That is what is happening to all of us. The light is there, it is flickering, but there are so many storms in our life that the light does not become steady. What will the wise man do then? He will put off the fans and close all the windows and then there will be the steadiness of light. The block is very easy to understand, it is our own personality, the personality which is an effect of the samskaras and the samskaras are effects of our karma or actions.

Once you let your mind free, the expressions are unlimited, and then the mind becomes effulgent. The mind becomes awareness, and then the mantra becomes dynamic, the yantra becomes powerful and the mandala becomes real. You can project your thought force, you can transmit your thought waves. The mind can produce waves which can travel thousands of miles instantaneously. With this mind we can also enter into samadhi or the spiritual state. With this mind we can love our children, husband, wife and neighbours. The karmas which have already been performed, but have not yet matured, can be harmonized by leading a spiritual life.

Mantra to remove karma

When the awakening of sushumna takes place with the help of mantra shakti, the elimination of karma takes place symbolically. This results in the arising of inner sounds and

fantastic experiences. Whatever you experience is rising from your deeper consciousness. It is mental shankhaprakshalana, part of the purging process. Therefore, it is necessary to observe each thought and let it pass of its own accord. We do not want to avoid karma but eliminate it.

Every action is born of a deep karma. Every thought, movement, success, failure is a re-enactment of one of our previous experiences. Simple childhood experiences can cause so many problems. Many good people suffer unnecessarily because they are unaware of their karmas and how they fructify. I know of many people who have changed completely through the practice of japa and antar mouna, and they were amazed as to how it happened.

One French gentleman had a hernia and hydrocele. He left his job and went to his sister in the country. He told her that he was completely broken and could no longer work. There was no point in prolonging his life, he said, as he felt only pain everywhere. His sister, a staunch devotee of yoga, told him to put some cream on his eyebrow centre and concentrate on that point. One day while the French gentleman was practising this, a terrific sound exploded somewhere in his brain. Surprisingly his hernia was cured and his problem of hydrocele was completely resolved – for him it was a miracle. When I met him I asked what had happened when he was concentrating on his *bhrumadhya*, eyebrow centre. He said that when he was a schoolboy he went to the fish shop and while eating, a fish bone got stuck in his teeth which later had to be removed by the dentist. When he was practising concentration on his *bhrumadhya*, he saw a fish coming out of his mouth. After that, he too became a great devotee of yoga.

Mantra and sleep

As all daily duties are properly attended to and are given due importance, similarly the act of sleeping should be treated in the same way. The mind should be given this training. A machine which works throughout the whole day

without interruption gets heated. Sleep is a cooling device. It recharges the battery of our body which gets discharged while functioning during daytime. Energy that we spend through toils during the day is recouped. Before lying for sleep, at first sit for a while on the bed calmly and quietly, say for two to four minutes. Shake off all your thoughts concerning the activities of the day. A simple way of doing this is to start mental japa of ishta mantra. Any disturbing thoughts of the day will automatically go away. Then meditate on your ishta for some time and lie down in bed in this state.

By doing mental japa and concentrating the mind on bhrumadhya, we get deep sleep. What is required is that you should select one method according to your own choice and practise it continuously for some days or months. Too much sleep indicates tamoguna and sleeplessness is the result of mental tensions. Both are undesirable. It is good to avoid sleeping carelessly and with diffused thoughts. After doing relaxation of body for a few minutes, bring your mind to the breath. Look mentally at the breath only. Add *Om* or *So Ham* to the breath. While breathing in, chant mentally the mantra *Om* or *So Ham* and repeat this mantra while breathing out. With every breath, in or out, go on chanting *Om* or *So Ham* mentally.

Japa can also be done in four mantras or *chaturtha pranayama*. This mantra should be chanted four times with every breath, both in and out separately. By doing japa in this way, the mind is fully concentrated and we get sleep soon.

Revitalizing the nervous system

Generally, restlessness is due to excessive thinking and desiring, and it indicates that the mind is not under control. There are two ways to approach the problem. Either check the quantum of mental energy or increase the quantum of pranic energy. The purpose of hatha yoga, raja yoga, or in fact, any form of yoga, is to create this harmonious situation.

One cannot meditate because the mind is in the clutches of the senses. Gayatri is the sound which makes the mind

free from the senses. The greatest disturbing factor in meditation is the senses. Like a postman, every now and then, these senses bring the news and when they bring the news, they disturb the mind. The mind has to be rendered free from the clutches of the senses, and that is the role of Gayatri mantra.

I have myself found that when you are practising the mantra, when you are practising one particular sound, at that time the behaviour of the heart is cordial and healthy. When worry overpowers you, when your mind is burdened with problems, or when you face a state of confusion in life, then immediately retire to inner silence with the help of your mantra. Withdraw yourself from all forms of thought practices. Withdraw yourself from all forms of what is called confused thinking, and gradually enter into the void. The mantra will help you step into the void.

What is this void? When you are getting no experience or movement of the mental process, that is the void. When the mental process of the mind stops, that is the void. It does not happen for a long time. No, not for a minute. Not even thirty seconds; not even ten seconds. One, two, three seconds void, and everything is accomplished. When mantra permeates the whole consciousness, then all thoughts cease. For a moment there is unconsciousness. Time, space and object do not exist in that moment. Name and form do not exist at that moment. It is at this moment that tensions come down and an answer is discovered, and you find a way out of the situation. Everybody has problems. Everybody, therefore, must have a solution.

Through mantra you create *shoonya*, void. In *shoonya* you see the solution and in that solution you will find peace of mind. In peace of mind there is no tension. A man who has tension has no peace of mind. So, this is a very clear analysis of tension and peace of mind. If you practise mantra as many times as you can, it will be wonderful for coming out of an acute nervous condition.



Mantras for children

I have found that children are great admirers of music. Of course, all of us admire music, but children become one with music. You know that music has different effects on the human mind and body. It can excite, relax or completely disturb the brain and it can completely disorder your emotions. In the system of mantra chanting, a sound is chanted in a proper rhythm. It need not be many sounds. It can just be one sound which children can repeat.

Group chanting is a very powerful way of inducing meditation and focusing group energies. The best mantra is *Om*, chanted aloud, together, long and harmoniously. There are also many kirtans and songs which can be chanted together. Whenever a group of children creates a

unified vibration through sound, a tremendous uplifting effect results. The sound may not even have an ordinary meaning or significance, but when it is chanted with rhythm and melody, then it can help children to overcome their emotional conflicts which they don't really know about.

To further balance these natural energies, the children of former times were also initiated into Gayatri mantra which they repeated daily with breath awareness at sunrise and sunset for about five minutes. Gayatri mantra is a concrete and effective influence which will alter both brain and mind, in the same way that penicillin or streptomycin will exert an antibiotic effect on anyone who takes it. This mantra has a tremendous effect on the different centres of the brain – centres of memory, reproduction, genius, understanding, interpretation and many others. It also helps overcome many fears, limitations and inadequacies.

The last part of Gayatri mantra contains the word *dhiyo* which means intelligences, plural number. Not one intelligence, but many separate intelligent faculties like memory, quick grasping, recall, intuitive insight and communicative ability. There are hundreds and thousands of innate intelligences in us. When you chant the Gayatri mantra you are creating a possibility of change in the structure of the brain, opening up areas such as nervous pathways and nerve secretions. The brainwaves undergo a change in formation, a change in pattern.

When your brainwaves are adjusted and properly functioning, then your intelligences function miraculously. This lack of adjustment is exactly the reason why, although you have previously understood and learned everything, at the time of examination it cannot be reproduced. At this time, you are overcome by a fear psychosis and on account of this state the alpha waves diminish. When you are suffering from fear psychosis there is associated high anxiety and the brainwaves undergo a state of delirium and derangement. This is the problem with many school children. It is the cause of poor mental efficiency and the reason for bad results in

examinations. They want to become first class firsts but they end up last class lasts. This is not a joke.

Memory is another great problem for children – the problem of encoding, storage and retrieval. All these processes combined are known as memory. Once you solve the problem of memory you solve the greatest problem in education. If you can find a method to improve the child's memory, you will be introducing something truly revolutionary into the educational system. People have tried different methods, but I have found that in order to develop memory, children have to be guided through the path of mantra. The mantra works immediately on the subconscious and unconscious planes. With the help of mantra, antar mouna and yoga nidra a very clear memory can be developed in children.

Mantra as therapy

Mantra japa has an effect not only on the mind, but inevitably on the body too. Some time ago, doctors at the Hypertension Department of Beth Israel Hospital, in the US, carried out joint research on japa and meditation. They found that japa and meditation have a beneficial effect on the human mind and body. When a person is frightened, hormonal secretions from the endocrinal glands have a harmful effect on the body, but regular practice of japa and meditation immunizes the aspirant against harmful glandular secretions due to emotional states like anger and fear.

Modern science has researched the muscular system of the body. The emotions cause the secretion of chemicals in the brain which can lead to the spread of toxins and also elixir. The brain specialists testify that in the muscular functions not only the magnetic waves of the brain but also the chemical secretions are responsible. In that case it is essential to have emotional balance.

Emotions create turbulence in the mind which is otherwise quiet and unruffled like the ocean. Like thoughts, emotions too have vibrations and they spread into the mental field. Their range extends not only up to the physical and mental

bodies, but even into causal bodies. Just as the thought vibrations have a rhythmic pattern, the emotional vibrations too have a rhythm. Mostly the mind becomes entangled in the emotional quagmire and cannot free itself. Observations have shown that through mantra japa the vibrations in the brain bring about special transformation that gradually results in emotional balance.

Mantra eliminates sickness and madness, not by controlling the mind but by letting the mind open itself. The more you practise mantra, the more you see on the beautiful television before you. You will have endless thoughts, dreams and visions. The practice of mantra lets all the wild animals out of the cage. You may think this is not at all necessary, but I have found that before you can get peace of mind, before you can transcend the mind, you must be able to face all the disturbances of the mind.

The audible repetition of a mantra can be used for therapeutic purposes in order to charge the brain. This is not only my own experience, but also the experience of those who are expert in therapeutic hypnotism. If you ask a person to repeat a particular mantra for hours together, the mind will enter a particular psychic dimension where it becomes very receptive. In this state of mind, whatever you suggest to him will penetrate deep into the consciousness and become a powerful influence on the total personality. Those who are addicted to bad habits or suffering from various diseases can get rid of them by this type of therapy.

When mantras are practised, the radiation which continuously affects the aura of a person or a place is changed, improved and brightened. Even as the body is affected by the mantra, so is a place. Life and body, if saturated with a mantra, begin to radiate. This is a good reason to practise a mantra in a community for one month, one year or longer. Anyone who is slightly sensitive can immediately feel the vibration of a holy place of pilgrimage.

Mantra gives the same benefits as all other meditative practices. It calms the turbulent mind and helps to expel

complexes, neuroses, etc. It does this slowly without disrupting one's life. Mantra japa charges the mind with positive sound vibrations and this is wonderful therapy for even the most disturbed mind. It brings about one-pointedness of mind, without resorting to forced concentration. It helps to release the incredible dormant faculties and power that is the inheritance of us all. Finally, it leads to meditation.

If you continue this practice regularly you will treat your own mental problems, and correct your abnormal mental behaviour. You will be your own mental doctor. As well as this, you will develop an intimate friendship with the mind, and all of its fantastic faculties will open up to you. This mind is telepathic, clairvoyant, psycho-telekinetic. This mind has infinite qualities – it can create a poem and make you a Milton. It can decide your future and make you a warrior, a soldier, a statesman or a saint. But we must know how to make use of this mind.

Mantra and healing

Mantra is a very powerful method of healing. There are specific mantras for a wide range of ailments and complaints, but these must be given by someone well versed in the therapeutic use of sound and mantras. As well as these, there are bija mantras which anyone can self-prescribe for healing purposes. Each *chakra*, psychic centre in the body, has a bija mantra and if you have a physical complaint which is located in the region of one of the chakras, you can use its mantra to strengthen and heal. For example, *Ram* is the mantra for *manipura chakra*, navel centre, and if it is chanted in kirtan or repeated in japa, it will stimulate the abdominal area benefiting complaints such as peptic ulcer, constipation, diarrhoea and other digestive disorders.

Mantra and dhyana

In yoga it is said that there are three great obstacles to meditation: impurity, ignorance and a distracted state of mind. These three obstacles can most easily be removed through japa practice, by constant and unbroken awareness of the mantra.

When you practise mantra and try to concentrate your mind, what happens is that many pictures, many images, different scenes are witnessed by you. During the practice of concentration and meditation you have so many experiences, you see so many visions, what exactly are they? All you see during concentration and meditation are expressions and manifestations of your samskaras, the archetypes. Then you understand that each and every experience is imperishable, everything you cognize is registered in you. You register these impressions through the eyes, the nose, taste and touch. These things are registered in your subconscious mind just as whatever I am saying is registered in the tape recorder. Right from the day you incarnated inside your mother's womb up to this day, everything and every experience is registered by you in your subconscious mind. Mantra influences the subconscious mind and explodes the deeper recesses of karma, thereby bringing the symbols of your deeper consciousness up to the surface. It purifies the mental area, making you free from the psychic diversions in the higher stages of meditation.

The distractions and dissipations of the mind are due to the overflowing of emotions. The mental concentration is disturbed due to this emotional maladjustment. Whenever one sits for meditation or concentration, the mind does not stick to one point. Again and again it becomes extroverted, it becomes aware of the past, it becomes aware of the future, it becomes aware of the present. Emotion is the cause of this dissipated awareness. The word emotion here is not used in the ordinary sense of the word. Here the word emotion is used in terms of an energy in man. Chanting a mantra rhythmically will help to stop the mind running all over the place. So the practice of mantra has to be done.

Mantra for overall wellbeing

The best way to relieve tension of the body and mind is to practise repeating a mantra with breath awareness. Of course, it depends on what kind of tension the person has,

whether it is muscular, mental or emotional. Sometimes you are tense due to muscular factors, sometimes mental factors, sometimes emotional factors, so it is best to practise yoga for all three purposes. Even if you want to remove the conditionings of the mind directly, you cannot because there is nothing to replace them. However, mantra can be used. Repeat the mantra; with regular practice the sounds become powerful and resonant. Finally, the sound waves remain and the obsessions, the limitations of the mind are overshadowed.

Each mantra which is repeated has an immediate influence on human consciousness. As a result, a mantra awakens a certain power of consciousness, so that the individual begins to view the problems of his life from a different angle. You may have experienced in your life that during moments of difficulty and confusion, when your mind is flooded with the problems and confusion in your life, if you take to mantra, the mantra will definitely help you to transcend the consciousness from the gross plane to the subtle plane. When your consciousness transcends the gross plane and arrives at the subtle plane then it is able to contact the individuality, the subtler self, and it can give you a clue for solving the problem, for solving that confusion, and if you follow that guidance it will help.

Mantra can give contentment and influence your character and personality. Mantra can bring about communication between individuals on the astral plane. Mantra can influence the brain and the mental faculties of children. People have found that through the practices of mantra yoga, they can relax, control their brain waves and their blood pressure. Not only that, through the practices of mantra yoga, they can achieve a very high quality of concentration of mind. This has become so popular that now in the West, there are thousands of people practising mantra in the morning and at night. Through the practices of mantra, one can check the ever-developing and ever-consuming stress conditions of the physical body.

8

Scriptural References



The Vedas

Veda means ‘revelation’ and the revelations came in this way. First of all the mantras were revealed to a few rishis. Then the code of ethics or behaviour for the society was revealed. Then the code of conduct as a preliminary to spiritual life was revealed to a few people and to a very select few the ultimate nature of reality was revealed.

The seers of the Vedas clearly recognized the science of sound for they mention various mantras that can be used for the attainment of material goals as well as spiritual aims. These Vedas are four in number: *Rig Veda*, *Sama Veda*, *Yajur Veda* and *Atharva Veda*. Veda relates to a whole literature which is divided into four sections or four classifications. The first classification is called mantra. The mantras contained in this first section are used for ceremonies like birth ceremony, name giving ceremony, marriage ceremony, and death ceremony. They also talk about grammar, meter, astronomy, astrology, mathematics, archery, the science of defence. There are sixty-four sciences in all including the medical science, called *Ayurveda*. These form a part of the last Veda.

So, revelation of mantra is called *Samhita*. The mantra portion was intended to guide those who study, the students, the *brahmacharins*. The second is a part called *Brahmana*, revelation of the social code. The Brahmanas are texts which deal mainly with sacrificial and ritualistic practices, though there is a wealth of knowledge and historical information contained within its pages. They mention *japa*, meditative techniques involving chanting of mantras. The Brahmana portion of the literature is intended to guide those who are householders.

The third branch is known as *Aranyaka*, revelation of the spiritual way of life. The Aranyaka portion is intended to guide those who are trying to get out of the life of a householder and who are preparing for sannyasa. The fourth part, the Upanishads, was the revelation of the ultimate nature of reality. They were meant in the first instance for sannyasins, renunciates, those who were dedicated to enquiring into the nature of Supreme Experience, *Brahman*. The totality of the literature of the four branches is known as Veda.

It is in the *Rig Veda* that the first hymn commences with the word *Om*. According to both the Vedas and the Bible, the seed out of which the gross manifestation of the material universe is emerging is a matrix of eternal sound. The

combination of letters or sounds in the mantra *Om* seems to be the oldest known to mankind.

The Upanishads

Out of the one hundred and eight Upanishads, thirty are minor Upanishads, ten are major Upanishads. Various Upanishads, such as the *Prashna* and *Katha*, deal quite extensively with the mantra *Om*. In fact, the *Mandukya* devotes its entire commentary to this topic and nothing else. These texts again and again emphasize that meditation can be most easily induced by concentration on *Om*.

The *Mandukya Upanishad* states that *Om* has three akshara, sounds, A-U-M. These three sounds respectively represent the waking consciousness, the dream consciousness and the sleep consciousness. Further in the word *Om* made of the three letters, A should be understood in relation to the world of the senses, body, objective enjoyments and *vishva purusha*. The syllable U should be understood in relation to the subconscious mind, subjective enjoyments, or the *tejas* state of *purusha*. The syllable M should likewise be understood in relation to the unconscious, mindlessness, no enjoyment, or *prajna* state of *purusha*. In this way the student transcends the three states of manifested consciousness and ultimately reaches the fourth state, called the *turiya state*, which is the unmanifested, unheard and unexpressed state of *purusha*.

The syllables A, U, M are also said to represent Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the sustainer, and Shiva, the dissolver, as well as many other things. But actually the meaning of *Om* can only be known by personal realization. And then one cannot even speak about its meaning . . . one becomes speechless. It is impossible to explain the meaning of *Om* rationally. It is beyond intellectual concepts.

These three represent the totality of experience. Further it says: ‘The syllable *Om* is the universe. It is Brahman (the absolute). It is time – past, present and future. It is also that which transcends time’.



The *Mundaka Upanishad* considers *Om* as a bow, the individual self as an arrow and Brahman or the Self as the target. If the arrow is aimed with full concentration, then there is no doubt that it will pierce and merge with the target. So it is with *Om* that one can attain the highest states of meditation. Then it proceeds to assign meanings to the three different parts of the *Om* mantra and for *Om* as an indivisible whole. It is the cosmic mantra that unites the limited existence with the unlimited. It is *Om* that

merges the microcosm with the macrocosm, the individual with the universal. *Om* acts as the bridge. The text concludes by saying: “The fourth, the Self, is *Om*. It is unutterable and beyond the mind. In it, the universe is enveloped . . . whosoever really knows *Om*, the Self, becomes the Self.”

In the *Katha Upanishad* the discussion is of the nature of the atman, of the nature of the body, of the nature of concentration. Just like an archer aims his arrow at a point, and finally merges the arrow into that point, in the same way, the mind is the bow, the mantra *Om* is the arrow and the Supreme Reality is the target and you merge your arrow in the target. The mind is a medium between the unreality and the reality. This is the general theme of this Upanishad, and it is on this Upanishad that Somerset Maugham based his book, the *Razor's Edge*. There is a mantra in this Upanishad (1:3:14):

*Kshurasya dhara nishita duratyaya
Durgam pathastat kavayo vadanti*

Narrow as the razor's edge is that path,
Difficult to traverse and hard to tread, say the wise.

Meditation on the mantra *Om* is one of the most important vedic and Upanishadic upasanas. According to the vedic tradition, the mantra *Om* is reserved for sannyasins, and the Gayatri mantra is for householders. The mantra *Om* is very powerful, and if you practise it as a sadhana, your whole mind will be consumed without difficulty.

Hatha Yoga Pradipika

Four stages of progressive experience of nada yoga are outlined (4:69):

*Aarambhashcha ghatashchaiva tathaa parichayo'pi cha;
Nishpattih sarvayogeshu syaadavasthaachatushtayam.*

In all the yogic practices there are four stages: *arambha*, beginning; *ghata*, vessel; *parichaya*, increase; *nishpatti*, consummation.

The fourth stage verges on samadhi. These four stages are known as *bhava*, spontaneous unfoldment. Each stage is more subtle and refined than the preceding one. These stages are said to apply to all yogic practices, but the *Shiva Samhita* applies them particularly to pranayama.

During each stage, sound manifests in the inner ear. In the *Shiva Sutras* it is said that through nada anusandhana on the *anahata nada*, unstruck sound, which is represented by the mantra *Om*, nine stages of yoga or union unfold progressively.

As kundalini shakti rises through the chakras to centres of higher consciousness in the brain, there are four definite stages. These stages relate to the four realms of existence and the four *koshas*, bodies (anandamaya kosha is not in this list). *Para nada* exists in the cosmic body or *Ishwara tattwa*; *pashyanti nada* exists in the cosmic causal body, *hiranyagarbha*; *madhyama nada* or psychic sound is *sukshma*

kosha or *sharira*, the subtle body, and *vaikhari nada* is gross sound, words and letters in the *sthula sharira* or gross body.

Yogi Swatmarama asserts that once the *nada* is perceived, then sustained listening for fifteen days will pacify the mind and give the pleasure of perfect absorption. This is for the individual to verify. Sound exists in the form of vibrations which are of varying frequencies. In fact, the brain is constantly emitting hundreds of vibrations every second. The more powerful one's consciousness is, the greater the vibrations emanating from the brain will be. These vibrations are of varying intensity and frequency according to the individual. Just as there are spectra of electromagnetic and radio waves, similarly there is a whole range of subtle sound waves which travel beyond the brain and which can be realized within the brain itself.

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

In the *Raja Yoga Sutras*, Patanjali has indicated some steps. First he says you must become proficient in some yoga postures. Let us say lotus posture, or *siddhasana*, or *siddha yoni asana* or *vajrasana*. When you are seated in the *asana* you must be sure that your body is steady and you feel comfortable and you feel very pleasant. Then you repeat the mantra. He is suggesting the mantra *Om* (AUM) but I think it is not only the mantra *Om*. One has to practise a mantra which is according to one's nature or the quality of one's nature. That is the mantra one must practise.

Kaivalya Pada, Sutra 1: Sources of siddhis

Janmausadhimantratapahsamidhijah siddhayah

The *siddhis* are born of birth, herbs, mantras, austerities or *samadhi*.

Psychic powers can be obtained in five ways. The third way of obtaining *siddhis* is by mantra. This is a very great *siddhi* of the highest spiritual quality. It is a powerful means of developing spiritual powers. This method belongs to a high order. *Siddhis* obtained through birth or *ausadhi* are not in

one's hands or under one's control, but those developed by mantras are very important because they can be developed through will, with full conscious effort. Even though you may not have any psychic experience, even though the mantra may not be able to give you concentration, even though you may not like the mantra, this mantra which you practise every day with regularity, ultimately causes the energy to awaken, to explode. This is an important way because it can be utilized by all, no matter what their situation or status in life.

The Puranas

The Vedas were very difficult to understand. In the later ages people found that they were difficult, too enormous, too hard to understand, so what they did was to convert these Vedas into stories. These stories are known as Puranas which is translated into English as mythology but they are not mythological. They are symbolical, allegorical and figurative. The different views, and the functions and the methods, the processes, the statements and laws that were revealed in the Vedas for sannyasins, for brahmins, for householders, for kings, were put into the form of stories. There are eighteen Puranas. There are beautiful stories, but when you finish reading all of them then you know exactly what the Vedas intended to express.

In the *Srimad Bhagavat Purana*, there is the story of Prahlad who was the son of a demon king. Prahlad ought to have been like his father, but he was not. When Prahlad was in the womb, Rishi Narada gave his mother a mantra: *Om Namō Narayanaya*. For nine months his mother did japa, mental repetition of the mantra, and so the full effect of the mantra was felt by the child. In this way, his mother was giving him samskaras, conditioning him.

Other references

There are a vast number of other Indian scriptures which also mention the cosmic *Om*. They all speak of it in glowing terms. The following are a few selected quotations:

Dhyanabindu Upanishad

Those who want enlightenment should reflect on the sound and meaning of *Om*. *Om* is the indestructible Brahman. *Om* is the bow, the individual being is the arrow and Brahman is the target. When the arrow is released from the bow it goes straight towards and into the target. Like this, the sadhaka (spiritual aspirant) should reflect on *Om* and thereby merge with Brahman.

Shveteswatara Upanishad

Fire, though potentially present in firewood, is not seen until one stick is rubbed against another. The Self is like that fire; it is realized by constant awareness of the sacred syllable *Om*. Let your body be the stick that is rubbed and *Om* be the stick that is rubbed against it. Thus you will realize your real nature, which is hidden within, just as fire, in a sense, is hidden in wood.

Maitri Upanishad

Om is the holy sound of the universe. It is the sound form of the Self.

Katha Upanishad

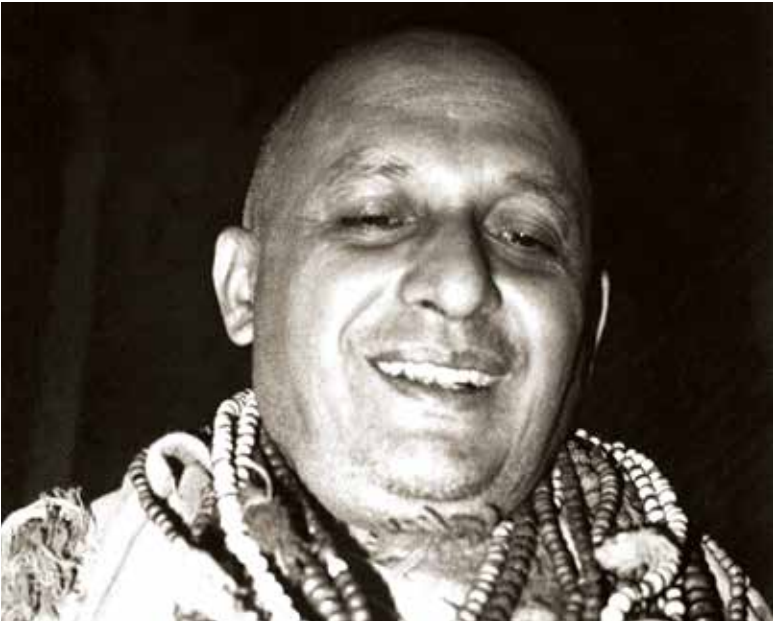
This word (*Om*) is verily Brahman. It is the highest. He who knows its meaning and worships it attains the supreme goal and knows everything.

Om is mentioned in numerous other traditional yogic scriptures: The *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Yoga Vasishtha* as well as many of the tantric texts.

Om is truly the universal mantra. It is far better to start chanting *Om* and reflect on its meaning yourself than to become deluded by verbal knowledge. In this manner you will be on the path to finding out the real meaning of *Om*.

9

Traditions of Mantra



Mantra worldwide

In every culture the importance of mantra is known to the people. Hindus know about mantra, the Jewish culture knows about mantra, Egyptians know about mantra. In every part of the world we hear that mantras are being used in different places. Japa or mantra yoga is not only confined to India.

The Buddhist path of Mahayana widely uses japa. The more orthodox systems of Christianity also widely use japa. Anyone who has been to a Roman Catholic monastery, nunnery or school will have seen the monks or nuns rotating their rosaries. Anyone who has been to Greece or other Balkan countries, where the Greek Orthodox Church is prevalent, will know that nearly all men carry a rosary with them.

For thousands of years, innumerable yogis have realized and received the divine sound or mantra which they have given to their disciples in succession. If you want evidence, you will find it said in all the holy scriptures of the world that the word was always revealed. For this reason, the mantras are not a creation of the human mind, they were not made by any man but rather they were received from higher sources. Whether Hindu, Christian, Muslim or Buddhist, mantras should be understood as symbolic representations of a state of being, of revelation or realization.

It is said in the ancient Indian scriptures that *Om* is the first cause of the material universe, it is the power of Brahman (the absolute) through which the universe is created. It is the Shakti of tantra. In the Gospel according to St John, in the very first verse it says: “In the beginning was the word (*Om*) and the word was with God (Brahman) and the word was God . . .”

The Bible was originally a revelation. In the same way, the Koran was also revealed – Allah spoke to Mohammed. The Vedas were also revealed by hiranyagarbha. Rishis heard the verses and wrote them down. Many people can hear a mantra, a sound or music and some hear narratives. The deeper one goes, the more one comes in contact with the cosmic mind. What does it mean? The sound is heard in the depths of consciousness.

Christianity and Judaism

Christianity and Judaism are mainly bhakti religions, though there is much esoteric data hidden in the Bible and other texts, and in various sects, japa is widely practised by different

groups. A Christian will have faith in Christianity, and will repeat the name of Christ or Mary. Constant chanting, verbal or mental, with remembrance throughout the day and night, can lead to one-pointedness of mind and transcendence. Such is the power of mantra combined with devotion.

Islam

Hajrat Mohammed, the prophet of Islam, worked hard in the caravanserai, the roadside hotels, and after finishing his evening's work, he would go to the mountains to pray. One day he suddenly heard a sound. What he heard was the Koran. That is called revelation, that is mantra. Mohammed was illiterate and could not write a mantra, but still it came to him.

The most well-known mantra used in Islam is 'la ilaha illa'llah' which means 'there is no god but God'. This is repeated over and over again like japa. In Islam this process is called zikr and it is said that the zikr (remembrance), the zakir (person who remembers) and the mazkur (remembered one) become united through intense practice and devotion. This is exactly the same as in yoga and many other systems.

Eventually, with intense bhakti there arises an effortless flow of awareness to the object of devotion. This is called 'fana', and is comparable to *dhyana* or meditation. This eventually leads to 'baqua' which is called samadhi in yoga. Always there is emphasis on the ascent of devotion so that it can receive the descent of grace.

Sufism

Nearly all Sufic meditational techniques involve mantra, zikr or dhikr. Sometimes zikr is utilized with dance or music (sama), or in introspection, in techniques like japa and ajapa where a mala (tasbih) is used. Sufis, in their wandering, might never sit formally for meditation but, as they move, some kind of mantra will be going on, gradually permeating their entire being. Its use varies with the master and disciple involved but its power always remains. An illustration of the transforming power of zikr is given in the following story.

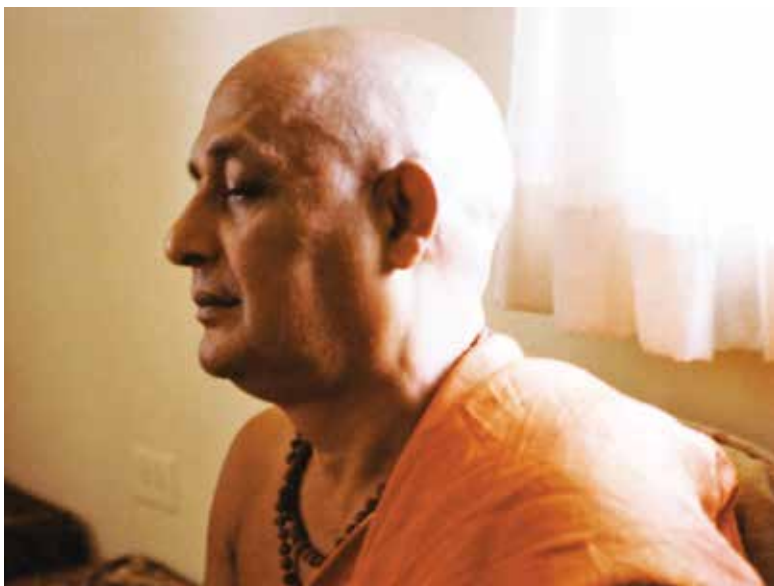
There was a great Sufi named al-Hallaj who was reputed to be established in God-realization for all he would say was 'Ana-l-haqq', which is a mantra meaning something like 'God is in me'. Although people respected his saintliness some could not endure him, for to say that God was in him was undoubtedly heresy. He was labelled an 'infidel', an unbeliever, and the proper authorities caught him and told him he would have to stop his heretical behaviour. He only replied 'Ana-l-haqq'. Eventually he was sentenced to death by tearing the skin off the body. However, he did not seem to be impressed. He only said, 'Ana-l-haqq'. As they pulled his skin off it went 'Ana-l-haqq'. His bones, as they tore, made the sound of 'Ana-l-haqq', and his blood as it flowed profusely all over the ground wrote the words 'Ana-l-haqq'. Such is the power of mantra.

Buddhism

There is a very popular Buddhist bhakti sect in Japan called Jodo – the Fair Land School. They worship 'Amida' (Amitabha, the infinite light) a personification of the source of all revelations and intuitions. Amida is associated with forty-eight vows, one of which is that he will not attain enlightenment until, by his enlightenment, all other beings will also gain enlightenment. The mantra 'amitabha' is repeated over and over again. This is the same method as other forms of bhakti yoga and is a form of japa yoga.

Jainism

It is obvious that Jainism has been influenced by tantra. In the *Tattvarthasarakāṅkī*, a Jain manual from the fifteenth century, there are various techniques for awakening kundalini and the pranic centres in the body. Aspirants are instructed to imagine lotus flowers where the chakras are situated and to visualize them with different numbers of petals, each inscribed with a letter or mystical syllable. These letters are mantras and the practitioner is instructed to repeat the mantra which corresponds to the lotus he is visualizing.



Tantra

Tantra embodies two Sanskrit words: *tanoti*, expansion, and *trayati*, liberation. Tantra awakens the psychic body, the kundalini shakti. It is the system by which you liberate or separate the two aspects of consciousness and matter, Purusha and Prakriti or Shiva and Shakti. Sometimes matter rules over consciousness and sometimes consciousness rules over matter. When consciousness rules over matter, there is spiritual vision. When matter rules over consciousness, there is creation.

These twin energies live and work together in total agreement with each other. As long as matter and consciousness are united, existence continues in a set pattern, but by the practice of tantra you can separate matter from consciousness, Prakriti from Purusha, or Shakti from Shiva. Then the awakening takes place. What we are aware of within us is a combination of the two. We are aware of matter – the material body, and the mind – the ‘I’, the senses and the objects of perception.

We are aware of all these sections at the same time. By the practice of tantra, the awareness is withdrawn from these sections and centred on one point – ‘I’. That is the separation of Prakriti or matter from Purusha or spirit, and that is tantra. How do you practise it? There are many ways. The most important part of tantra is mantra, and next comes kriya. With the help of mantra and kriya yoga you can awaken the dormant potential power known as kundalini shakti. This is the prime purpose, the ultimate reality, in tantra and in human evolution.

Tantra shastra has an elaborate scheme and a definite scheme of manifesting this transcendental existence in every individual by mantras, yantras, devata, kriyas, mudras. Those elaborate and definite schemes of tantra are employed to develop the deeper individual awareness on the outer plane so that supra-physical faculties can be brought into action.

Mantra is the vehicle of consciousness and mandala or yantra the form of consciousness. Within these three aspects is included everything in the material universe. Mantras are meant to create systematic vibrations, yantras are meant to consolidate the energy and kriyas are to awaken the psychic centres in man. Each one of us and our every thought forms a mandala. A man and woman in union form a closed unit or circle which can also be a perfect mandala for attaining higher states of consciousness. The guru is a most powerful mandala as he acts as a magnet to draw down cosmic consciousness. We can say that everything around us is composed of mantra and yantra. This includes each and every human being.

Tantric rites are utilized for involving or tuning in with the different levels of being which are beyond normal perception. They are concerned with worship, set actions, mantras, yantras, mudras and other actions, which make the mind calm, receptive and one-pointed. This is conducive to the experience of meditation which will transform one’s understanding and relationship with life, oneself, and other people.

Mantra as the pivot of Sanatana dharma

Sanatana dharma, the eternal system of the vedic civilization, is understood as having been revealed to mankind. As the rishis sat in meditation, they received higher levels of sounds known as mantra. For this reason, the mantras are not a creation of the human mind, they were not made by any man but rather they were received from higher sources. That sound has been recorded (and practised) for thousands and thousands of years in India by a particular clan called Brahmins. Even today every morning a Brahmin will sit down after taking his bath and chant a vedic mantra.

The mantra Gayatri, which is a part of the Vedas, is a very important and very powerful mantra. *Karmakanda* refers to the precise rituals for the chanting of mantras and the conduct of pooja. There is a correct method for doing pooja, just as there is a correct method for constructing a house, cooking a dish or stitching cloth and making a shirt. Everything we do in the world has a definite process and method.

It is said that a child should receive his first mantra when he is eight years old. He should repeat his mantra at sunrise and sunset along with breath awareness – five minutes in the morning and five minutes in the evening. This mantra practice will create a reorientation in his disturbed subconscious, contributed by his parents. He should receive his second mantra at marriage or when a great change in his life or a transition in his personality is taking place. This mantra should be an introduction to spiritual life, and also to responsibility and steady mindedness. When he becomes spiritual he should receive his third mantra. It will help him on the spiritual path and enable him to withdraw his mind and to switch off his consciousness from the external world to within. Hindus are given a fourth mantra at the time of death or just before. When a man's pranas and consciousness are being withdrawn, and all the lights are being extinguished, when his consciousness is functioning only a fraction, this is the ideal time to put the fourth mantra into his ears. This mantra leads his soul to the next birth.

10

Conclusion



The inner being of every individual is in continual contact with something much greater than the limitations of individuality. Most people are never aware of this; it is beyond normal levels of awareness. Mantras bring about a state of 'resonance' between the individual and the depths of the inner being. Psychologists would say that the individual tunes in with his collective unconscious. Mantras are the means to

harmonize with these inner cosmic forces. Specific mantras are used to contact particular realms of the inner being.

You are surrounded by radio waves but you are unable to see them. In order to materialize and to hear those waves, you need to have the right instrument, whether it is a radio or a transistor. You also need the ability to tune that instrument, because when the receiver is tuned, you can hear any station you wish. The same applies to the cosmic energy; it surrounds you, internally and externally, above and below, and it is the force responsible for creation, sustenance, transformation and change.

Mantra is one of the manifestations of primordial energy. Each letter and syllable of the mantra penetrates deep down into the various levels of your consciousness. Mantra is the science of sound vibration put into a particular pattern, and they are more subtle than the actual physical waves, more subtle than any kind of wave known to science today. Mantras are words of power, which create a specific vibration in the environment.

When people try to comprehend the truth with the intellect and do not become one with the inner self, the result is that one's actual life is in contradiction with the assertion, 'I am Brahman' or 'I am eternally liberated in Brahman'. Mantra is a psychic word. These mantras, when they are recited, influence the cosmic mind and the unconscious. The mantra is a vehicle for spiritual transcendence.

In our age, when we are progressing with spiritual discoveries with a great desire for realization and liberation, let us remember that tantra is a system which declares that this life to which we are committed and which we have to go through, is part of spiritual life. It is not something removed from spiritual life. Nothing is rejected, and whoever we are, wherever we are, with our properties and propensities, whether they are *tamas*, *rajas* or *sattwa*, we can start the spiritual pilgrimage, we can begin our spiritual evolution. In order to reach the highest point in spiritual life, you do not have to make a departure from your lifestyle.

A path for all

Spiritual unfoldment can be had by anybody. It is only the practices that are important and out of all the tantric systems I can assure you that one thing is really powerful and which you have to understand immediately and that is the mantra. Nothing else! You can do away with the asanas and pranayama, hatha yoga, kundalini yoga, kriya yoga, antar mouna, raja yoga; all the systems of yoga just keep them in your cupboard, but one thing you have to accept and that is the mantra. Everybody has his own temperament, his own creation, but if he includes the practice of mantra in his daily spiritual quest, he will find that he is able to accelerate the pace of his progress because mantra is something that works as a catalyst.

The experience is perfected there, you do not have to make the experience, you do not have to construct it, it is there in finished form, but you are not able to have it. There is something which you need which will bring it out of you, and the mantra is that catalyst. The time comes when mantra explodes psychic visions, creates dreams and dreams and dreams and throws out your neurosis and psychosis and brings you in contact with the psychic realities of your being.

It is important to realize that mantra is not only necessary, it is the foundation, the basis for making the mind one-pointed. To be able to make the mind one-pointed means acquiring the master key of life in your hands. If you want to control the destiny of your life, the only way is to learn the art of concentration. It does not matter whether one is a thief or a crook, a saint or a sage, young or old, pious, celibate or immoral. One whose mind enters the state of void acquires the key.

The ultimate purpose

Some people practise a mantra due to their faith. Some people do not have faith so they wonder why they should take a mantra. There are some things which work on faith and that is called religion. There are some things which do not work merely on faith; they work with faith and also

without faith, they work anyhow. That is called science. That is the fundamental difference between religion and science. Religions depend on faith, science does not. Therefore, the science of mantra does not depend on faith. Even if you do not have faith and you practise it, it works. I gave you the reference of Sir John Woodroffe, the British judge. He had no faith, but the mantras did have an effect on him. So, the mantra which you practise should have an effect on you. Even if you do not have faith, you must practise it.

The mantra which you practise has manifold purposes. It is true that the mantra is a method through which you can transmit the energies of your mind externally, but for one who is serious and sincere, mantra becomes a touchstone. In fact, the distractions and depressions of the mind can be completely overcome by the practice of mantra.

Mantra never fails. Maybe some people expect a little more than they should; they want very quick results, just like instant coffee. Mantra works slowly; its penetration is gradual, not sudden. You must continue with your personal mantra with conviction, application and sincerity, even if it does not succeed for some period of time. If your mantra does not bring results even in a year or two, don't be disheartened or discouraged. Even if it takes a few more years for the mantra to do its job, it's worth it. Do not change your mantra. This is my humble but firm advice to all of you.

When anybody can get into and out of your mind, it becomes a bungalow for loafers. Sometimes good people come there, but mostly it is full of devils. So let there be a proper occupant for the mind. Otherwise, keep the house locked. Actually, the real occupant is the *atman*, the spiritual force. Mantra is the housekeeper. Hatha yoga is the sweeper, pranayama is the vacuum cleaner and singing kirtan is the paint and polish. The mantra you have should be made a tool for the splitting and liberating process.

When you are trying to go in, you face a lot of difficulties, and these difficulties are related to your own mind. It is like crossing the East German wall: you can't! The mind will not

allow you because this mind is so gross. It is so dissipated. You try to concentrate and at once the concentration breaks. You want to fix your mind on one point and the mind will wander throughout. When you are practising the mantra you will find that the mind is thinking about something else.

In the science of yoga, they deal with the mind very systematically. When you are able to calm down the mind, then you have inner experiences, because beyond the conscious is the subconscious mind. Deeper than the subconscious mind is the unconscious mind. Therefore, you have to go deep into yourself. You have to transcend the external experience. When you are able to transcend the external experience, then inner experiences begin. The concept of mantra exists in many mystic traditions, which in the past have used mantras to aid the function of the elements, to control the elements, to harness them for the betterment of society, the planet and creation.

Nowadays, the mantras that we recognize are those that give control over the natural processes with the strength to manipulate events. Therefore, mantras may seem like magical spells, witchcraft and wizardry, but in reality they have a different function to perform; they focus the cosmic power. You can feel the strength and power that is created when the mantras are being chanted and everyone is participating. The vibrations become a cosmic power, which pervades the entire region, including your own body and self.

Establishing harmony

There are millions of people all over the world who now have their personal mantra. This mantra movement is not a new movement; it is the most ancient culture of mankind. The ancient people know the efficacy of mantra in their daily lives.

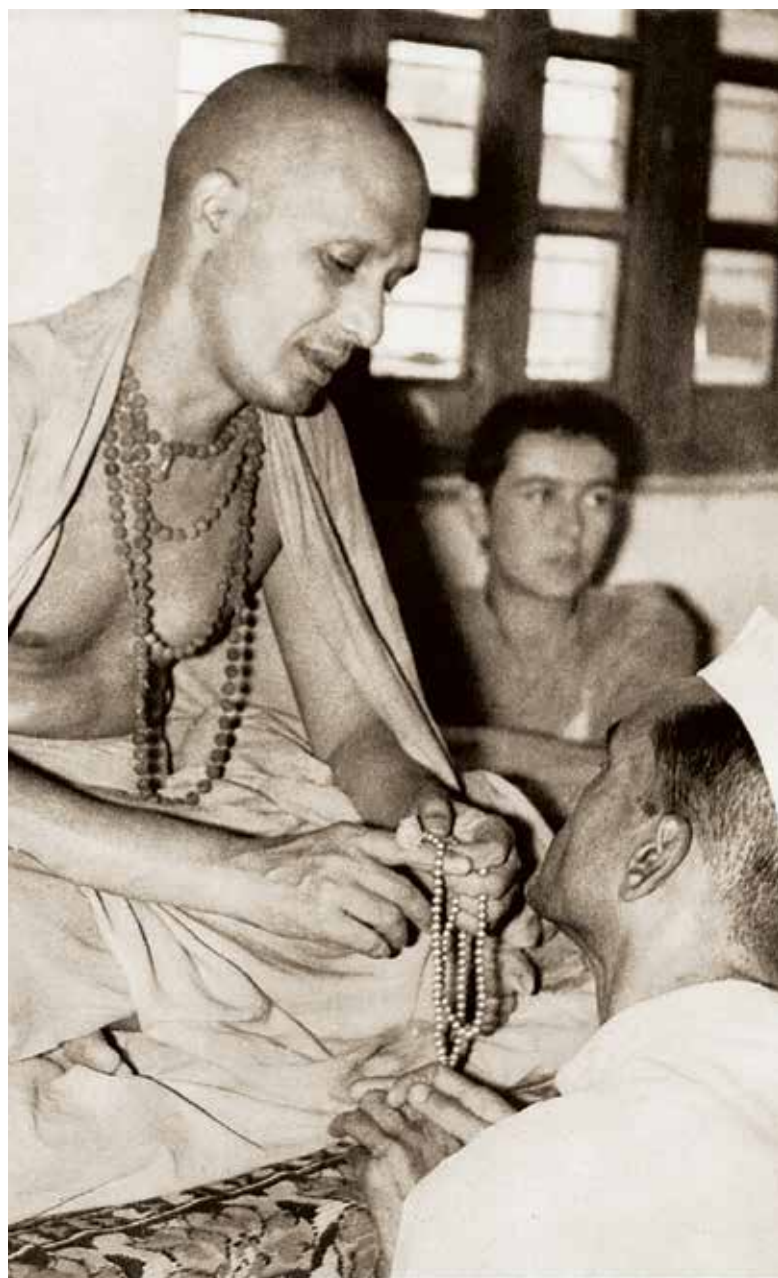
You must develop a harmonious relationship between your daily work, your emotional patterns, your feelings and your awareness by conscious practice of your daily activities, like karma yoga, your daily work, your relationships with people, and concentration of mind. Most important of all is

the practice of mantra. Whichever mantra you have, you must practise it every day with absolute regularity. This practice of mantra becomes the basis of progress, coordination or integration in the totality of your personality. You see, you are a body, you are a mind, you are a spirit. There has to be harmonious development, and when harmony is lost, then there are problems. The mantra is beneficial for the body, mind and soul, and by regular practice one's relationship with the guru can continue unabated to the end of life.

When you think a sound in your mind, it attains a high frequency and when you feel a sound in your mind it has very high frequency. If you imagine a sound that somebody is producing and that you can hear inside you, it attains the highest frequency and the sound can attain such a high frequency that it can become an objective force. The science of mantra is infinite and in India it is a special practice by itself: Hindus consider mantra greater than God. It is a very important aid in spiritual life.

The use of mantra is a science, a very wonderful science. In recent years it has been sadly neglected as people become more and more attached to gross and materialistic explanations of phenomena. But the science of mantras is being revived and will bring vast repercussions in the world of the future. This must happen, for it is the power of mantras that can unlock the secrets of nature and the universe. Mantras will be used as a scientific tool, in the same way that light and lasers, and electron microscopes are currently used to peer into the deeper realms of nature.

All over the world people are spending millions of dollars on yogic research into the mind and body because they know that it has the master key for mankind's evolution, to help man move out of his present state of limitation and misery. Ultimately, the practices of yoga must be accepted on an international level, or the people of today will stand as unevolved and ignorant in the eyes of history. Not you but your children will realize the ultimate knowledge and depth of experience that can be gained through the practices of yoga.



Part 2

11

Vedic Mantras

Shanti mantras

1. *Om saha na vavatu, saha nau bhunaktu
saha veeryam karava-vahai tejasvi navadheeita mastu,
maa vidvish-aavahai,
om shaantih shaantih shaantih*
2. *Asato maa sad-gamaya, tamaso maa jyotir gamaya,
mrityormaa amritam gamaya,
Sarveshaam swastir bhavatu, sarveshaam shaantir
bhavatu, Sarveshaam puurnam bhavatu,
sarveshaam mangalam bhavatu,
Lokaah samastaah sukhino bhavantu,
om shaantih shaantih shaantih, Hari om*

Vedic Gayatri mantra

The vedic Gayatri goes with the Gayatri *chhandas* or metre of Gayatri. A specific along with the arrangement of the *askharas* or syllables stimulates specific functions in the mind.

For general usage

*Om bhurbhuvah suvah
Tatsaviturvarenyam
Bhargo devasya dheemahi
dhiyo yo nah prachodayaat*

For pranayama

The Gayatri mantra intended for pranayama is:

*Om bhu, om bhuvaha, om suvaha, om mahaha,
Om janaha, om tapaha, om satyam
Om tatsaviturvarenyam
Bhargo devasya dheemahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayaat*

Mantras from the Upanishads

These are Mahavakyas of the Vedas used in the Upanishads which are related to its mother source (Veda).

1. *Om*
2. *Harih Om*
3. *Harih Om Tat Sat*
4. *Aham Brahmasmi*
5. *Tattvamasi*
6. *Ayamatma Brahma*
7. *Prajnanam Brahma*
8. *Sivoham*
9. *Sachchidananda Brahma*

Shiva mantras

1. *Om namah shivaya*
2. *Om tryambakam yajamahe sugandhim pustivardhanam
urvarukamiva bandhanat mrtymuktiya mamrtat*

Vaishnava mantras

1. *Om narayanaya namah*
2. *Om vishnave namah*
3. *Om vishnave parajyotye namah*
4. *Om paramatmane namah*

Sri Rama mantras

Ham so ramaya namah soham

Krishna mantras

Om namo bhagavate vasudevaya

Surya namaskara

In the Vedas there are numerous references of praising the Sun for the purpose of good health and prosperity. Some of these vedic hymns were incorporated into *nitya vidhi*, daily mandatory routines, for the wellbeing of an individual, through salutations to the Sun. These daily procedures were termed as *surya namaskara* which literally translates as ‘sun salutations’, physical prostration to the Sun.

Every year the sun passes through twelve different phases, known as the signs of the zodiac in western astrology, and as the *rashis* in Hindu astrology. According to Hindu astrology, each rashi has specific attributes or moods, and in each of these twelve moods the sun is given a different name. These twelve names comprise the twelve sun mantras, which are to be mentally repeated in their respective order in conjunction with the twelve movements of *surya namaskara*.

These sun mantras are not merely names of the sun, every sound syllable contained within them is the vehicle of a basic eternal energy or *shakti* represented by the sun itself. By repetition and concentration on these mantras, the whole mental structure will be benefited and uplifted. Although these mantras do not require intellectual understanding, a translation of their meaning is given below for those with an enquiring mind, as well as for the more spiritually inclined who wish to use the mantras as a form of attunement with the source of spiritual illumination symbolized by the sun.

1. *Om mitraya namaha* (salutations to the friend of all)

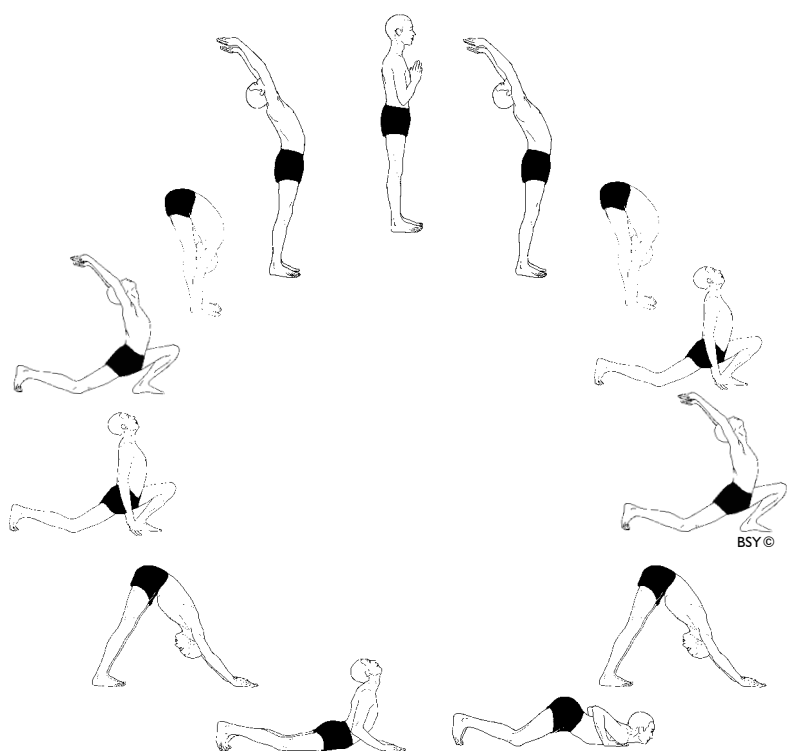
The sun is regarded as the universal friend, endlessly giving light, heat and energy to support this and all the other planets. In the scriptures, *Mitra* is described as calling man to activity, sustaining earth and sky and beholding all creatures without discrimination, just as the early morning sun signals the beginning of the day’s activities and sheds its light on all life.

2. *Om ravaye namaha* (salutations to the shining one)

Ravaye means one who shines and offers divine blessings upon all life. In the second position, hasta utthanasana,

we are stretching our whole being upwards towards the source of light to receive these blessings.

3. *Om suryaya namaha* (salutations to he who induces activity)
Here the deity Surya is saluted who represents the sun's dynamic aspect. In ancient vedic mythology Surya was worshipped as the Lord of the Heavens, pictured crossing the sky in his fiery chariot, drawn by seven horses. This is a beautiful analogy and needs a correct interpretation. The seven horses actually represent the seven rays or emanations of the supreme consciousness, which manifest as the seven planes of existence: bhuh (earthly, material), bhuvar (intermediate, astral), suvar (subtle, heavenly), mahar (the abode of the devas), janah (the abode of divine souls who have transcended ego), tapah (the abode of enlightened siddhas) and satyam (the ultimate truth of reality). Surya symbolizes the supreme consciousness itself, which controls all these different planes of manifestation. Surya is regarded as the most concrete of the solar gods, one of the original vedic triad – his place being in the sky – while Agni (fire) is his representative on earth.
4. *Om bhanave namaha* (salutations to he who illumines)
The sun is the physical representation of the guru or teacher who removes the darkness of our delusions, just as the darkness of the night is removed with every dawn. In the fourth position, ashwa sanchalanasana, we turn our face towards this illumination and pray for an end to the dark night of ignorance.
5. *Om khagaya namaha* (salutations to he who moves quickly in the sky)
It is the sun's daily movement through the sky which is the basis of our measurement of time, from the earliest use of a sun dial to the sophisticated devices used today. In parvatasana, we offer obeisances to the one by whom time is measured and pray for progress in life.
6. *Om pushne namaha* (salutations to the giver of strength and nourishment)



The sun is the source of all strength. Like the father, he nourishes us with energy, light and life. We offer respects in ashtanga namaskara by touching all the eight corners of our body to the ground. In essence, we are offering our whole being in the hope that he may bestow mental, physical and spiritual strength and nourishment upon us.

7. *Om hiranyagarbhaya namaha* (salutations to the golden cosmic Self)

Hiranyagarbha is also known as the golden egg, resplendent as the sun, in which Brahma was born as the manifestation of Self-existence. *Hiranyagarbha* is the seed of causality, thus the whole universe is contained within *Hiranyagarbha* in the potential state prior to manifestation. In the same way, all life is potential in the

sun, which represents the great cosmic principle. We offer respects to the sun in bhujangasana, the seventh position, praying for the awakening of creativity.

8. *Om marichaye namaha* (salutations to the Lord of the Dawn)

Maricha is one of Brahma's sons, just as the rays of light are produced from the sun, but his name also means mirage. For our whole life we seek a true meaning or purpose, like the thirsty person who seeks water in a desert but is fooled by mirages dancing on the horizon, produced by the sun's rays. In the eighth position, parvatasana, we pray for true illumination and discrimination in order to be able to distinguish between the real and the unreal.

9. *Om adityaya namaha* (salutations to the son of Aditi, the cosmic Mother)

Aditi is one of the many names given to the cosmic Mother, Mahashakti. She is the mother of all the gods, boundless and inexhaustible, the creative power from which all divisions of power proceed. The sun is one of her children or manifestations. In the ninth position, ashwa sanchalanasana, we salute Aditi, the infinite cosmic mother.

10. *Om savitre namaha* (salutations to the stimulating power of the sun)

Savitre is known as the stimulator, the arouser, and is often associated with Surya who also represents the same posture, padahasthasana. *Savitre* is said to represent the sun before rising, stimulating and arousing man into waking activity, and *Surya* is said to represent the sun after sunrise, when activity begins. Therefore, in the tenth position, padahasthasana, we salute *Savitre* to obtain the vivifying power of the sun.

11. *Om arkaya namaha* (salutations to he who is fit to be praised)

Arka means 'energy'. The sun is the source of most of the energy in the world we know. In the eleventh position, hasta utthanasana, we are offering respects to this source of life and energy.



12. *Om bhaskaraya namaha* (salutations to he who leads to enlightenment)

In this final salutation we offer respects to the sun as a symbol of the great revealer of all transcendental and spiritual truth. He lights up the pathway leading to our ultimate goal of liberation. In the twelfth position, pranamasana, we pray that this pathway may be revealed to us.

12

Tantric Mantras



Ganesha mantras

1. *Om shreem hreem kreem glaum gam ganapataye vara varada sarvajanam me vasamanaya swaha*
2. *Hreem gam hreem ganapataye swaha*
3. *Om gam om*
4. *Om gam ganapataye namah*
5. *Om namo bhagavate gajananaya*
6. *Om vakratundya hum*

Shiva mantras

1. *Hraum*
2. *Hraum hreem thah*
3. *Ram ksham mam yam om um*

Vaishnava mantras

1. *Om kleem hrisikesaya namah*

Sri Rama mantras

1. *Hraum ramaya namah hraum*
2. *Aim ramaya namah*
3. *Kleem ramaya namah*

Krishna mantras

1. *Om sri krishnanaya govindaya gopijana-vallabhaya namah*
2. *Kleem*
3. *Kleem krishnaya*
4. *Kleem krishnaya govindaya kleem*

SHAKTI MANTRAS

Kali

1. *Hreem shreem kreem paramesvaryai swaha*
2. *Hreem shreem kreem paramesvari kalike hreem shreem kreem swaha*
3. *Om sri kalikayai namah*
4. *Om hreem me swaha (Kali Hridaya)*
5. *Kreem kreem kreem hum hum hreem hreem dakshine kalike
kreem kreem kreem hum hum hreem hreem swaha*
6. *Kreem hreem shreem*

Durga

1. *Om sri durgayai namah*
2. *Om hreem dum durgayai namah*
3. *Durgadvatrimshannamamala*
Durgaa, durgartishamani, durgapadvinivaarini
Durgamachedini, durgasaadhini, durganaashini,
Durgatoddhaarini, durganihantri, durgamaapahaa

*Durgamajnaanadaa, durga daityalokadavaanalaa
Durgamaa, durgamaalokaa, durgamaatmasvaroopini
Durgamargapradaa, durgamavidyaa, durgamaashritaa
Durgamajnaanasamsthaanaa, durgamadhyaanabhaasini
Durgamohaa durgamagaa, durgamaarthasvaroopini
Durgamaasurasamhantree, durgamaayudhadhaarini
Durgamaangee, durgamataa, durgamyaa, durgameshwari
Durgabheemaa, durgabhaamaa, durgabhaa, durgadaarini*

Saraswati

Om hreem aim hreem om sarasvatyai namah

Mahalakshmi

1. *Hreem Shreem kreem mahalaksmiyai namah*
2. *Om shreem hreem kamale kamale kamalalaye prasida prasida
shreem hreem shreem mahalaksmiyai namah*

Radha

Om hreem radhikayai namah

Annapurna

Hreem namo bhagavati maheshvari annapurne swaha

Indrakshi

Om shreem hreem aim indrakshyai namah

Chamunda

Om aim hreem kleem chamundayai vichche

Siddha mantras of Hanuman

The following siddha mantras are used for power and siddhis.

1. *Om hanumate rudratmakaya hum phat*
2. *Om namo bhagavate anjaneyaya amukasya srinkhala trotaya
trotaya bandha moksam kuru kuru swaha*
3. *Purvapakimukhaya panchamukha hanumate tam tam tam tam
tam sakala satru sanhranaya swaha*
4. *Om paschimamukhaya garudananaya panchamukha
hanumate mam mam mam mam mam sakala visahara swaha*

Bija mantras

Bija mantras of the Devatas represent certain *shaktis*, energies, which are used for a specific purpose. Each bija mantra has a specific functional affect:

Aim – has to do with intelligence and sharpness of mind and memory

Hreem – Maya bija effective in strengthening memory, concentration

<i>Om</i>	This is the symbolic sound of the Cosmic Being.
<i>Hraum</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Cosmic Shiva.
<i>Dum</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Durga.
<i>Kreem</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Kali
<i>Hreem</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Mahamaya
<i>Shreem</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Lakshmi
<i>Aim</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Saraswati
<i>Kleem</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Krishna
<i>Hoom</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Bhairava
<i>Gam</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Ganesha
<i>Glaum</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Ganesha also
<i>Kshraum</i>	This is the symbolic sound of Narasimha

It has always been said that the use of mantra without bija mantra will not be effective. Suppose you are using Ganesha mantra, so along with that mantra you add the bija mantra *Om Gam*. Or you are using the mantra for Shiva, so you will have to add *Om Hraum*. Practising mantra without a bija mantra is like shooting a rifle without a bullet. The bija mantra must be heard directly from the guru, this is the tradition.

Surya namaskara bija mantras

As an alternative to the twelve names of the sun, there is a series of bija mantras. The bija mantras are evocative sounds that have no literal meaning in themselves, but set up very powerful vibrations of energy within the mind and body.

The six bija mantras are repeated four times during one complete round of surya namaskara. Either the bija mantras or the sun mantras can be recited aloud or mentally depending mainly on the inclination of the practitioner and the speed of practice.

These mantras are not merely names of the sun, every sound syllable contained within them is the vehicle of a basic eternal energy represented by the sun itself. By repetition and concentration on these mantras, the whole mental structure is benefited and uplifted. An alternative to the twelve names of the sun is repetition of a series of bija mantras.

The bija mantras are:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. <i>Om Hraam</i> | 2. <i>Om Hreem</i> |
| 3. <i>Om Hroom</i> | 4. <i>Om Hraim</i> |
| 5. <i>Om Hraum</i> | 6. <i>Om Hrah</i> |

OTHER GAYATRIS

Guru Gayatri

*Om gurudevaya vidmahe parabrahmane dhimahi tanno
guruh prachodayat*

Hamsa Gayatri

1. *Om hamsa hamsaaya vidmahe paramahamsaaya dhimahi
tanno hamsah prachodayat*
2. *Om paramahamsaaya vidmahe mahattattvaya dhimahi tanno
hamsah prachodayat*

Sivananda Gayatri

*Om tat purushaya vidmahe sivanandaya dhimahi tanno
brahma prachodayat*

TANTRIC MANTRAS TO WARD OFF DISTURBANCES

These mantras are used for fulfilment of desires, curing diseases, achieving sound health, removing difficulties, etc., in day-to-day life.

To keep safe from snakes

1. *Om narmadayai vicharana*
2. *Anantam vasukim sesam padmanabham cha kambalam
sankhapalam dhrtarastram taksakam kaliyam tatha
munirajam astikam namah*
3. *Om plah sarpakulaya swaha asehakula sarva kulaya swaha*

For removing the venom of snakes

1. *Nama prabhau jana siva niko kalakuta phalu dinha amiko*
2. *Garudadhvajanusmaranat visaviryam vyapohati*

For removing the poison of scorpions

Chhapa swaha

For removing any disease

1. *Om hreem hamsah*
2. *Om shreem hreem kleem aim indrakasyai namah*
3. *Om sam sam sum sim sum su sem saim sam saha vam vam
vim vim vum vum vem vaim vom vaum vam vam saha amrta
varech swaha*

Curing fever

1. *Om namo bhagavate rudraya namah krodhesvaraya namah
jyoti patangaya namo namah siddhi rudra ajapayati swaha*
2. *Om vindhya vanana hum phat swaha*
3. *Om namo bhagavate chhandi chhandi amukasya jvarasya sara
prajjvalita parasupanaye parasaya phat*
4. *Om namo maha uchchhista yogini prakirna danstra khadati
tharvati nasyati bhaksyati om thah thah thah thah*

For sound health

1. *Mam bhayat sarvato raksa sriyam vardhaya sarvada
sharirarogyam me dehi deva deva namostute*
2. *Om aim hreem shreem namah sarvadaraya bhagavate asya
mama sarva roga vinasaya jvala jvala enam dirghayusam
kuru kuru swaha*
3. *Achyutam chamrtam chaiva japedaushadhiharmani*
4. *Om namo paramatmane para brahma mama sarire pahi pahi
kuru kuru swaha*

For wealth

1. *Om lakshmi vam sri kamaladharam swaha*
2. *Jimi sarita sagar mahu jahi jadyapi tahi kamana nahi*
3. *Visva bharana posana kara joi takara nama bharata asa hoi*
4. *Om shreem hreem shreem kamale kamalalaye mahyam prasida
prasida prasida swaha*
5. *Om shreem hreem mahalakshmyai namah*

For removing obstructions and difficulties

1. *Sakal vighna vyapahin nahin tehi rama sukripa bilokahin
jehin*
2. *Sarvabadhaprasamanam trailokyasyakhilesvari evameva
tvayakaryamasmad vairi vinasanam*
3. *Om ram ram ram ram ro ro ram kastam swaha*
4. *Om namah sante prasante gum hreem hreem sarva krodha
prasamani swaha*
5. *Rama raksa stotra (the whole chapter)*

Removal of the evil eye

*Syama gaura sundara dou jori nirakhahin chhabi janani
trina tori*

For sound sleep

Om agasti . . . sayinah

For peace and detachment

1. *Daihika daivika bhautika tapa rama raja nahin kahu byapa*

2. *Bharata charita kari prabhu tulasi ne sadar sunahin siya
rama pada prema vasi hoi bhava rasa birati*

For removing doubt

Rama katha sundar karatari sansaya bihaga udavana hari

For purification of thought

*Take juga pada kamala manavaun jasu kripa niramala mati
pavaun*

For children's diseases

*Avyadaajoangdhri manimanstava janvathoru, yajnoachyutah
kati tatam jatharam ka hayasya*

For piles

*Om chhai chhui chhalaka chhalai ahum ahum klam klam
kleem hum*

For pox

*Om shreem shreem srum sram sraum srah om kharastha
digambara vikata nayanam toyasthitam bhajami swaha
svangastham prachandarupam namamyatmabhibu taye*

For stimulating digestive fire

*Agastyam kumbhakaranam cha samincha vadavanalam
bhojanam pachanarthaya smaredabhyam cha panchakam*

To have a son

1. *Sarvabadhavinirmukto dhanadhanyasutanvitah manusyo
matprasaden bhavisyati na samsayah*
2. *Om hreem lajja jalyam thah thah lah om hreem swaha*

For marriage

1. *Taba janaka pai vasistha ayasu byaha saja savari kai mandavi
sruta kirati urmila kuvari lai hankari kai*
2. *Katyayani mahamaye mahayoginyadhisvari nandagopasutam
devi patim me kurute namah*

For safety of the child in the womb

*Om tham tham thim thim thum thum them thaim thom thaum
thah thah om*

For long life

1. *Hraum om jom sa om bhurbhuvah swaha om*
2. *Tryambakam yajamahe sugandhim pustivardhanam
urvarukamiva bandhanat mrtymuksamamrtat*

To keep safe from theft

1. *Om kaphall-kaphall-kaphall*
2. *Om karalini swaha om kapalini swaha hraum hreem hreem
hreem choram bandhaya thah thah thah*

For winning court cases

*Pavana tanaya bala pavana samana
Buddhi viveka bigyana nidhana*

For vision of Sitaji

*Janakasuta jagajanani janaki
Atisaya priya karunanidhana ki*

To please Hanuman

*Sumiri pavana suta pavana namu
Apane vasa kari rakhe ramu*

For devotion to God

*Bhagata kalpataru pranatahita kripasindhu sukhadhama
Soi nija bhagati mohi prabhu dehu daya kari rama*

For acquiring knowledge

*Chhiti Jala Pavaka Gagana Samira
Pancha rachita yaha adhama sarira*

For God's forgiveness

*Anuchita bahuta kaheun agyata
Ksamahun ksama mandira dou bhrata*

13

Yogic Mantras



The chakras

The word *chakra* literally means 'wheel' or 'circle', but in the yogic context a better translation is 'vortex' or 'whirlpool'. The chakras are vortices of pranic energy at specific areas in the body which control the circulation of prana permeating the entire human structure. Each chakra is a switch which turns on or opens up patterns of behaviour, thought or

emotional reactions which may have been unconscious in our everyday life.

The major chakras are seven in number and are located along the pathway of *sushumna*. Each chakra has a particular colour, mantra, situation and range of experiences. The chakras are depicted symbolically as lotus flowers, each having a particular number of petals and a characteristic colour. The lotus symbolizes the three stages the aspirant must pass through in spiritual life: ignorance, aspiration and illumination. It represents spiritual growth from the lowest state of awareness to the highest state of consciousness.

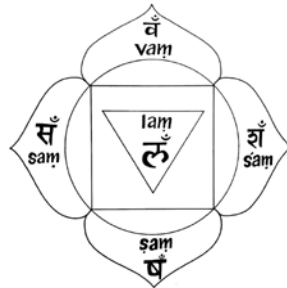
The petals of the lotus, inscribed with the bija mantras of the Sanskrit alphabet, represent the different manifestations of psychic energy connected with the chakras, and the nadis or psychic channels leading into and out of them. Within each chakra is a *yantra*, comprised of the geometrical symbol of its associated element and its bija mantra.

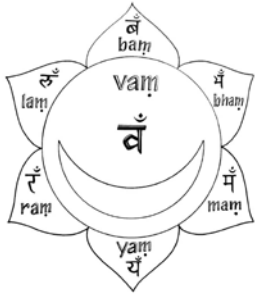
Description of the seven chakras

1. Mooladhara – four-petalled deep red lotus
2. Swadhisthana – six-petalled vermilion lotus
3. Manipura – ten-petalled bright yellow lotus
4. Anahata – twelve-petalled blue lotus
5. Vishuddhi – sixteen-petalled purple lotus
6. Ajna – two-petalled silver-grey lotus
7. Sahasrara – one thousand-petalled multicoloured or red lotus

Mooladhara chakra

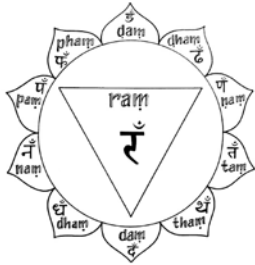
Mooladhara chakra is traditionally represented by a lotus flower with four deep crimson petals. On each petal is a letter: *vam* वं, *sham* शं, *sham* षं, *sam* सं. Resting on top of the inverted triangle is the bija mantra *lam* लं.





Swadhisthana chakra

Swadhisthana chakra is depicted as a six-petaled vermilion or orange-red lotus. On each petal there is a letter: *bam* बं, *bham* भं, *mam* मं, *yam* यं, *ram* रं, and *lam* लं. The bija mantra is *vam* वं.



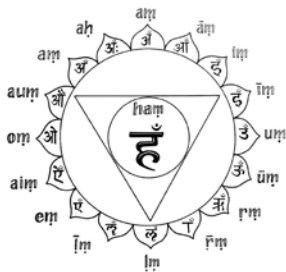
Manipura chakra

Manipura chakra is symbolized by a ten-petaled bright yellow lotus. On each petal one of the ten letters: *pham* फं, *dam* डं, *dham* ढं, *nam* नं, *tam* तं, *tham* ठं, *dam* दं, *dham* धं, *nam* णं, *pam* पं. The bija mantra of manipura is *ram* रं.



Anahata chakra

Anahata chakra has twelve petals and on each petal a letter is inscribed in vermilion: *kam* कं, *kham* खं, *gam* गं, *gham* घं, *ngam* ङं, *cham* चं, *chham* छं, *jam* जं, *jham* झं, *nyam* न्यं, *tam* तं and *tham* ठं. The bija mantra is *yam* यं.



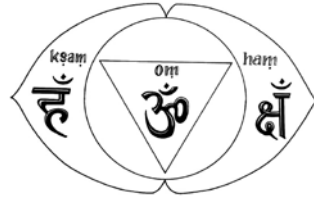
Vishuddhi chakra

Vishuddhi chakra is perceived as a purple lotus of sixteen petals. These sixteen petals correspond to the number of nadis associated with this centre. On each petal one of the Sanskrit vowels is inscribed in crimson: *am* अं, *aam* आं, *im* इं, *eem* ईं, *um* उं, *oom* ऊं, *rim* रिं, *reem* रीं, *brim* लं, *lreem* लं, *em* एं, *aim* ऐं, *om* ओं, *aum* ॐ, *am* अं, *ah* अः. The bija

mantra is *ham* हं, which is the seed sound or vibration of the etheric element.

Ajna chakra

Ajna is symbolized by a two-petalled lotus. On the left petal is the letter *ham* हं and on the right *ksham* क्षं. *Ham* and *Ksham* are inscribed in a silvery white colour and are the bija mantras for Shiva and Shakti. One represents the moon or ida nadi and the other the sun or pingala nadi. *Om*, ॐ is the bija mantra and symbol of ajna chakra.



Matrika mantras and bija mantras in the chakras

Chakra	Matrika mantra	Bija mantra	Tattwa
Mooladhara	<i>vam वं, sham शं, sham षं, sam सं</i>	<i>Lam लं</i>	Earth
Swadhisthana	<i>bam बं, bham भं, mam मं, yam यं, ram रं, lam लं</i>	<i>Vam वं</i>	Water
Manipura	<i>pham फं, dam डं, dham ढं, nam नं, tam तं, tham ठं, dam ङं, dham ढं, nam णं, pam पं.</i>	<i>Ram रं</i>	Fire
Anahata	<i>kam कं, kham खं, gam गं, gham घं, ngam ङं, cham चं, chham छं, jam जं, jham झं, nyam न्यं, tam तं, tham ठं</i>	<i>Yam यं</i>	Air
Vishuddhi	<i>am अं, aam आं, im इं, eem ईं, um उं, oom ऊं, rim रिं, reem रीं, lrim लं, lreem लृं, em एं, aim ऐं, om ॐ, aum ॐ, am अं, ah अ</i>	<i>Ham हं</i>	Ether
Ajna	<i>ham हं, ksham क्षं</i>	<i>Om ॐ</i>	Mind

14

Religious Mantras

GAYATRI MANTRAS FOR DIFFERENT DEITIES

Gayatri mantras for various deities are used as an application according to the vasanas of the sadhaka. This helps a sadhaka with a specific limited mind-set to achieve concentration towards his ishta devata or towards the limited form of the divine, before expanding his mind to see the form as a part of the whole formless Supreme.

Ganesha

1. *Om ekadantaya vidmahe vakratundaya dhimahi tanno dantih prachodayat*
2. *Om tatkarataya vidmahe hastimukhaya dhimahi tanno dantih prachodayat*
3. *Om tat purusaya vidmahe hastimukhaya dhimahi tanno dantih prachodayat*

Brahma

1. *Om vedatmane cha vidmahe hiranyagarbhaya dhimahi tanno brahma prachodayat*
2. *Om chaturmukhaya vidmahe kamandaludharaya dhimahi tanno brahma prachodayat*

Vishnu

1. *Om narayanaya vidmahe vasudevaya dhimahi tanno visnuh prachodayat*
2. *Om narayanaya vidmahe mahadevaya dhimahi tanno visnuh prachodayat*

Narasimha

1. *Om vajranakhaya vidmahe tiksnadanstraya dhimahi tanno narasimhah prachodayat*
2. *Om narasimhaya vidmahe vajranakhaya dhimahi tanno simhah prachodayat*

Garuda

Om tat puruhsaya vidmahe suvarna paksaya dhimahi tanno garudah prachodayat

Rudra/Shiva

1. *Om tat purushaya vidmahe mahadevaya dhimahi tanno rudraah prachodayat*
2. *Om tat purushaya vidmahe sahasraksasyamahadevasya dhimahi tanno rudrah prachodayat*

Nandikeshvara

Om tat purushaya vidmahe nandikesvaraya dhimahi tanno vrsabhah prachodayat

Shanmukha

1. *Om shanmukhaya vidmahe mahasenaya dhimahi tanno skandah prachodayat*
2. *Om shanmukhaya vidmahe mahasenaya dhimahi tanno sanamukhah sasthan prachodayat*

Surya

1. *Om bhaskaraya vidmahe mahadyutikaraya dhimahi tannah adityah prachodayat*
2. *Om adityaya vidmahe sahasra-kiranaya dhimahi tannah bhanuh prachodayat*

3. *Om prabhakaraya vidmahe divakaraya dhimahi tannah
suryah prachodayat*

Durga

1. *Om katyayanyai vidmahe kanyakumaryai dhimahi tanno
durga prachodayat*
2. *Om mahasulinyai vidmahe mahadurgayai dhimahi tanno
bhagavati prachodayat*

Saraswati

*Om aim vagdevyai cha vidmahe kamarajaya dhimahi tanno
devi prachodayat*

Rama

*Om dasarathaya vidmahe sita-vallabhaya dhimahi tanno
ramah prachodayat*

Hanuman

*Om anjaneyaya vidmahe vayu putraya dhimahi tanno
hanuman prachodayat*

Krishna

*Om devakinandanaya vidmahe vasudevaya dhimahi tanno
krisnah prachodayat*

Gopal

*Om gopalaya vidmahe gopijana-vallabhaya dhimahi tanno
gopalah prachodayat*

Parashuram

*Om jamadajnya vidmahe mahaviraya dhimahi tanno
parashuramah prachodayat*

Tantrika

*Om parameshvaraya vidmahe parama tattvaya dhimahi tanno
brahma prachodayat*

Lakshmi

*Om mahadevi cha vidmahe visnu-patni cha dhimahi tanno
laksmih prachodayat*

Shakti

*Om sarva-sammohinyai vidmahe visva-jananyai dhimahi
tannah shaktih prachodayat*

Annapurna

*Om bhagavatyai cha vidmahe maheshvaryai cha dhimahi
tanno annapurna prachodayat*

Kali

1. *Om kalikayai vidmahe smasanavasinyai dhimahi tanno
aghora prachodayat*
2. *Om adyayai vidmahe paramesvaryai dhimahi tanno kalih
prachodayat*

Dakshinamurti

*Om dakshinamurtaye vidmahe dhyanaasthaya dhimahi tanno
dhisah prachodayat*

Hayagriva

*Om vagisvaraya vidmahe hayagrivaya dhimahi tanno hamsah
prachodayat*

Ajapa

*Om hamsa hamsaya vidmahe soham hamsaya dhimahi tanno
hamsah prachodayat*

Ganesha	The Lord of good omens
Brahma	The Lord of creation
Vishnu	The Lord of protection
Narasimha	God in an anthropomorphic form
Garuda	God in the symbol of an eagle
Rudra	The Lord of destruction
Nandikeshwar	The Lord in form of a bull
Shanmukhi	The six-headed Lord
Surya	Lord Sun
Durga	Mother Goddess
Rama	One of the incarnations of Lord Vishnu
Hanuman	The Lord symbolizing intellect and dedication
Krishna	The Lord of love
Gopal	God as a child
Parashurama	God of energy
Dakshinamurti	Lord of the South Pole
Guru	The master
Hayagriva	God in form of a human and horse figure combined
Brahma and Saraswati	God and Goddess of learning
Lakshmi	Goddess of wealth
Shakti	The Mother power
Annapoorna	Deity of prosperity
Kalika	Deity of fear

OTHER RELIGIOUS MANTRAS

Ganesha mantras

1. *Om sri ganeshaya namah*
2. *Om sri mahaganapataye namah*

Shiva mantras

1. *Om haraye namah*
2. *Om namah nilkanthaya*

Vaishnava mantras

1. *Om anantaya namah*
2. *Om achyutaya namah*
3. *Om govindaya Namah*
4. *Om achyutananta Govindaya Namah*
5. *Om sri sridharaya namah*
6. *Om sri madhusudanaya namah*
7. *Om damodaraya namah*
8. *Om namo narayanaya*
9. *Om sriman narayana-charanau-sharanam prapadye*

Sri Rama mantras

1. *Om sri rama jaya rama jaya jaya rama*
2. *Om sri ramaya namah*
3. *Om sri sitaramachandrabyam namah*
4. *Om ramaya ramabhadraya ramachandraya vedhase
raghunathaya nathaya sitayah pataye namah*
5. *Om sri ramach saranam mama*
6. *Om sri sri sitaramah saranam*
7. *Om sri ramachandra-charanau-saranam prapadye*
8. *Ram ramaya namah*
9. *Hrim ramaya namah hrim*

Krishna mantras

1. *Om sri krishnaya namah*
2. *Om sri krishnah saranam mama*
3. *Krishnah*



Saraswati mantra

Om sri sarasvatyai namah

Radha mantra

Sri radhayai swaha

Siddha mantras of Hanuman

The following siddha mantras are used for power and siddhis.

1. *Om hanumate namah*
2. *Om namo bhagavate anjaneyaya mahabalaya swaha*
3. *Om hanumate rudratmakaya hum*
4. *Om pavana nandanaya swaha*

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Mantras from Different Religious Traditions

All religions make use of mantras, either knowingly or unknowingly, including the Christian religion and the Catholic faith in particular. We list hereunder for your interest and information a selection of mantras.

One does not need to be Hindu or Buddhist to make use of a particular mantra; a Christian may also make use of them with great benefit, the only provision being that it should have appeal for him or her.

Buddhist mantras

1. *Buddham saranam gachchhaami*
2. *Dhammam saranam gachchhaami*
3. *Sangham saranam gachchhaami*
4. *Om svabhavasuddhah sarvadharmah svabhavasuddhoham*
5. *Om sarvatathagatatmakoham*
6. *Om manipadme hum*
7. *Om ah hum vajra guru padmasiddhi hum*
8. *Ah dharmadhatu ah*
9. *Hri ma ma úakinijua mandara sarva-siddhi hum*
10. *Om padmo yogini jaya vara-hai hum*
11. *Om muni-muni mahamuni ye saha*
12. *Om ah ra pa cha na dhe saha*
13. *Om amrita prabhe amrita hum*
14. *Om amrita vajra pani hum phat*
15. *Om amrita vajra maha kala khrin tapi gha na binayak hum*

16. *Nam myoho rengai kyo (nicharin shoshu)*

Jain mantras

1. *Om*
2. *Siddha*
3. *Arhint*
4. *A-si-a-u-sa*
5. *Arhint siddha*
6. *Namo arihantanam nam namo siddhanam namo airiyanam*
7. *Namo uvajjhayanam namo loe sabvasahunam*

Islamic mantras

1. *Bismilla-hirrahaman-nir-rahim*
2. *La ilaha illallah muhammadur rasulullah*
3. *Allah hu allah hu (audible japa)*
4. *Allaho haziri, allaho naziri allaho shahidi, allaho mai
(whispering japa)*
5. *Kuliadauaallah aviadauaarrhman ayyamama tadaufhal hual
asmaualahusnaa*
6. . . . *Allah huval hakku*

Sikh mantras

1. *Sat nama*
2. *Vahe guru*
3. *Sat sri akala*
4. *Ek omkara sat nama karata purakhu nirabhau niravairu
akalamurati ajuni saibham guru prasadi adi sachu
jagadisachu hai bhai sachu nanaka hosi bhai sachu*

Zoroastrian mantras

1. *Asam vohu (secret root mantras of avesta)*
2. *Yatha ahu vairyo*
3. *Yatha ahu vairyo atha ratus asat chit hacha vangahaush dajda
mangho syothananamm anghaush mazdai kshathremacha
ahurai a yim driguvryo dadat vastarm*
4. *Fravarane mazda yasno jarthushtrish vidaevo ahura-takaeso
havanae*

5. *Asaone asahe rathave yasnaich vahmaich kshanaothraich
phrasastayaech*

Hebrew mantras

*Shema yisroel
Adonoi elohenu
Adonoi echod*

Hear O Israel
The Lord our god
The Lord is one.

*Boruchu es adonoi hamvorah
Boruch es ataw adonoi liyolam voed
Boruch ataw adonoi
Elohenu melech haolam
Boruch ataw adonoi
Vinatan lanues toraso
Boruch ataw adonoi
Hametz u'tairah*

Blessed art thou o Lord our god
Blessed art thou, who created the universe
Blessed art thou, who is our Lord
You are the king of the universe.
Blessed art thou our Lord
Who has created the law.
Blessed art thou our Lord
Who has given us the law.

Christian mantras

Kyrie eleison

Kyrie eleison (3 times)
Christe eleison (3 times)
Kyrie eleison (3 times)

Hail Mary

Hail Mary full of grace
The Lord be with thee.
Blessed art thou among women
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.
Holy Mary, mother of God
Pray for us sinners
Now, and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

The sign of the cross

In nomine patris, et filii et spiritus sancti. Amen.
In the name of the father, the son and the holy ghost.
Amen.

Agnus dei

Agnus dei
Qui tollis peccata mundi
Miserere nobis.
Agnus dei
Qui tollis peccata mundi
Miserere nobis.
Agnus dei
Qui tollis peccata mundi
Dona nobis pacem.

Lamb of God
Who takest away the sins of the world
Have mercy upon us.
Lamb of God
Who takest away the sins of the world
Have mercy upon us.
Lamb of God
Who takest away the sins of the world
Grant us thy peace.

Pater noster

Our father
Which art in heaven
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come
Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil
For thine is the kingdom
And the power and the glory
For ever
Amen.

God be in my heart

God be in my head
And in my understanding.
God be in my heart
And in my thinking.

Sanctus

Sanctus sanctus sanctus
Hosanna in excelsis.
Gloria in excelsis deo.

Holy holy holy
Hosanna in the highest.
All glory in the highest to God.

Glossary

- Agni** – fire element or tattwa
Ahamkara – ego
Aim – bija mantra for Saraswati
Ajapa – spontaneous japa with breath but without a mala
Ajna – The Guru chakra at the eyebrow centre
Akasha – ether element or tattwa
Akhanda swaroopa– the Eternal Self
Akshara – that which does not perish, sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet
Anahata – chakra, the psychic centre related to the region of the heart.
Anahata nada – unstruck sound, unheard sound
Ananda Lahiri – a tantric text of mantras and hymns by Sri Adi Shankaracharya
Anandamaya kosha – blissful transcendental dimension
Anga – organ or part of the body
Antar – internal
Antar trataka – awareness of inner symbol
Anubhava – direct intuitive experience
Anudatta – the high note in the musical scale
Anushthana – resolve to perform mantra sadhana for a particular period of time with absolute discipline.
Apas – water element or tattwa
Aranyaka – revelation of spiritual way of life in the Vedas
Asana – physical posture

Asmita – notion of ‘I’ or ‘I-ness’
Atharvashirsha – a tantric hymn
Atman – individual self, soul
Avidya – ignorance, lack of knowledge
Bahir – external
Bandha – physio-psychic locks
Bija – seed form, primal form
Bija mantra – seed sounds
Bhagavad Gita – scripture, part of the *Mahabharata*
Bhava – intense feeling devotion
Bhur loka – earth consciousness, sensual mind, waking state
Bhuvaha loka – intermediate, subtle plane of consciousness, dream state
Brahma Vaivarta Purana – one of the major Puranas
Brahman – Supreme consciousness
Brahmana – revelation of the social code in the Vedas; rules for the rituals
Buddhi – discriminative intellect
Chaitanya – alive, revealing its potency
Chit – individual consciousness, awareness
Chit shakti – the power of Cosmic Intelligence
Chitta – contents of the individual mind
Chitta shuddhi – mental purification
Devanagari – the Sanskrit script
Devata / Deva – illumined being
Devi Sukta – a tantric text of mantras, hymns, prayers
Dhyana – Meditation
Durga Shaptashati – a tantric text of mantras, hymns, prayers
Gayatri mantra – universal mantra of 24 syllables, born out of *Om*
Guna – temperament
Ham – seed sound of Vishuddhi chakra
Hanuman Chalisa – hymn in praise of Hanuman
Hiranyagarbha – the golden cosmic womb, unconscious body
Hreem – bija mantra of Mahalakshmi

Ishta – desired
Ishwara Tattwa – manifest energy of the jivatma
Jagrat – waking consciousness
Japa – to rotate, repetition of mantra
Jugal – together
Karana sharira – the causal body, the unconscious body
Karanyasa – placing the mantra on different parts of hand
Karmakanda – processes for the ritualistic aspects of the Veda
Katha Upanishad – the Upanishad deals with the nature of Atman
Katyayini mantra – a Durga mantra
Kleem – bija mantra for Krishna
Koshas – the five sheaths which cover the subtle body
Kreem – bija mantra for Kali
Krishna Namaha – mantra which exposes the form of Kleem
Kshama Yachana – tantric text of mantras, hymns, prayers
Lam – seed sound of mooladhara chakra
Likhit – written
Loka – plane of consciousness
Madhyama – the process between actualization becoming vaikhari
Mahamrityunjaya – Shiva mantra
Mahanarayana Upanishad – a Vaishnava Upanishad
Mahavidyas – ten forms of the Goddess
Mala – rosary
Mandala – an object with three dimensions
Mandukya Upanishad – an Upanishad
Manipura – chakra, psychic centre related to the abdominal region
Manasika – mental
Mantra – revealed sound
Mantra drashta – seer or perceiver of the mantra
Mantra shastra – knowledge of gross and subtle sounds
Mantra siddhi – inner knowledge of the mantras
Mantra yoga – the system of mantra for awakening
Mantranyasa – placing of the mantra at different parts of the body

Matrika nyasa – placing of the sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet different parts of the body
Maya – power of illusion
Moksha mantra – realization of the immortal aspect of the Self
Mooladhara – root chakra,
Mrita Sanjeevani Vidya – knowledge which leads to eternal life
Mudra – external expression of inner attitude
Mundaka Upanishad – an Upanishad
Murti – invisible materialization of the psychic forces
Nada – flow of sound vibrations
Nada anusandhana – a practice of kriya yoga which deals with sound
Nada yoga – the yoga of sound
Nadis – psychic channels
Narayana – form of Vishnu
Nishkama japa – mantras repeated for spiritual upliftment
Niyama – observances for self-refinement
Nyasa – to place
Om – root sound from which all other sounds emanate
Om Namah Shivaya – Salutations to Lord Shiva
Om Namo Narayana – Salutations to Lord Narayana
Om Shanti – mantra of peace
Pancha makara – five ingredients used in specific practice
 Tantra
Panchakshara – mantra with five syllables
Pancha tattwa – five elements of creation
Para anhad – heavenly sound
Para nada – highest of four levels of sound in the universe
Pashyanti nada – second stage of sound which has less frequency than Para nada
Phat – a bija mantra
Prahlad – a great bhakta of Lord Vishnu, a story from the Puranas
Prakriti Khanda – second part of the *Brahma Vaivarta Purana*
Pranayama – manipulation of breath to control prana

Prashna Upanishad – an Upanishad
Pratyahara – withdrawal of mind from sense objects
Prithvi – earth element or tattwa
Puranas – a vast genre of Indian literature about a wide range of topics, with the intricate layers of symbolism with regard to dharma.
Purushartha – human aspirations
Rajas – dynamism
Ram – seed sound of Manipura chakra
Ramcharitamanas – an epic poem on the life of Sri Rama composed by the bhakti poet Goswami Tulsidas, 16th CE
Richa – collection of ancient Sanskrit vedic hymns
Rishi – seer of the unconscious
Rishi Narada – a God-sage, a great devotee of Vishnu
Rudraksha – the ‘eye of Shiva’, seeds of a tree used for malas
Sahita – together with
Sakama japa – mantras for fulfilment of personal desires
Sama – repetition of a mantra with music or dance in Sufism
Samadhi – a state in which you stop the mind and enter the void
Samhita – a group of hymns in the Vedas
Samsara – sensory plane of consciousness
Sanchita – accumulated karmas
Sati Khanda – a part of the *Shiva Purana*
Sattwa – equilibrium
Setu – bridge
Shabda – spoken sound, word
Shabda Brahman – the source of all sound energy
Shadakshara – mantra with six syllables
Shaivas – followers of Shiva
Shakta tantra – tantra relating to the Mother Goddess
Shiva Purana – a Purana
Shoonya – the state of void
Shreem – bija mantra for Lakshmi
So Ham – mantra for ajapa japa meaning ‘I am that, sound of the breath
Sphatik – crystal

Srimad Bhagavad Purana – one of the major Puranas about Lord Vishnu

Sthula sharira – gross body

Sukshma sharira – subtle or astral body, subconscious body

Sushumna – energy channel through the centre of the spinal cord

Sushupti – deep sleep consciousness

Suvaha loka – the higher plane of consciousness, sleep state

Swadhisthana – chakra, psychic centre in the lumbar region

Swapna – dream consciousness

Swarita – the middle note in the musical scale

Tamas – inertia

Tanoti – expansion

Tapasya – voluntary hardship

Tattvarthasaradipika – a Jain manual from the 15th century

Tattwas – the primordial elements

Trayati – liberation

Tulsi – sacred basil

Turiya – the fourth level of consciousness

Udatta – the low note in the musical scale

Upanishad – fourth part of the Vedas dealing with revelation of the ultimate nature of reality

Upanshu – in a whisper

Vaikhari or **vachika** – audible japa

Vaishnavas – followers of Vishnu

Vak – the capacity of sound in man

Vam – seed sound of swadhisthana chakra

Varanyasa – placing the mind on colour

Varna – colour

Vayu – Air element or tattwa

Vidya – knowledge

Vidya shakti – power of knowledge

Vishuddhi – chakra, psychic centre in the throat region

Yajna – the core ritual of the Vedas

Yam – seed sound of Anahata chakra

Yama – ethical code for right living

Yantra – a geometrical pattern



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