



# Sanatana Mitra

MAY 2008



RUDRASHIVANANDA.COM

## Upcoming Events

**June 7, 8 - Kriya Yoga First Level**  
Marin County, CA

**June 14, 15 - Kriya Yoga First Level**  
Union City, CA

**June 19th - Free Satsang (7 p.m.)**  
Union City, CA

**July 12-13**  
**Second Level Kriya Initiation**  
Union City, CA

**July 19 - Shakti Healing Workshop**  
Union City, CA

**July 26, 27 - Kriya Yoga First Level**  
Santa Cruz, CA

## Accomplishing One's Goal Without Attachment

As I've been watching the Democratic Party Primaries to determine their candidate for the presidency, it is quite apparent that the politicians have great attachment to winning the elections at all cost. To many people this may even be an admirable trait – in fact, it has become very “American” to focus on the goal and forget the process – never mind lying and comprising every principle of decency.

But is this really the only way to accomplish one's goals? The wise who have accomplished much would say that it is not necessary to be so attached to one's goals that one must betray one's divinity. Without attachment to the results, one can focus on accomplishing the goal with even greater determination and less stress and fear.

I'm reminded of something said by Gandhi, the great soul who helped to

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## Faith, Reason And Experience

Faith is a very much misunderstood word both by those who champion or invoke it and by those who oppose it.

The word has become associated with religion and in fact people popularly say, “Christian Faith,” or ask “what is your faith?”

It is ridiculed by rational people who associate it with belief in something or someone against all reason and therefore it is “blind faith.”

Voltaire satirized both faith and religion when he defined faith as believing in the irrational and a Christian as one who continues to subscribe to such faith in the face of all contrary facts and experience.

Why then do we wish to say something positive about faith? It is because the right kind of faith is essential on the spiritual path. Let us not forget that everyday, our experience and reason give us the faith that when we go to sleep

we will wake up alive and essentially the same person in the morning. We need to step back and re-examine the negative opinions piled on the concept, so that we can understand its rightful place as taught by the spiritual Masters and Yogis who called it shraddha.

We may have a belief such as the premise that ‘the sun revolves around the earth,’ or that, ‘there are other life-forms in the Universe.’ The first is supported by experience, since we do not feel that the earth moves but the sun appears to move in the sky everyday. Reason would suggest that if the earth was moving, we would feel the movement. Faith in the experience and reason expect that the movements of the planets could be accurately predicted by using the earth-centric model. However, when the model failed to provide the results required, while a sun-centric

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## A Helping Heart - Healing Circle

Due the recent catastrophes in Burma and China, as well as the on-going calamities in Africa and Middle East, I would very much encourage everyone to help by sending healing energy to our brothers and sisters in the affected areas.

In Burma, storms have ravaged the country with tens of thousands dead and hundreds of thousands in dire straits. The earthquakes in China have caused fifty thousand deaths and misery for millions. In both places, the survivors urgently need help. Besides the physical humanitarian aid, ener-

getic, emotional and mental healing is needed.

We can all pray for the well-being of the survivors. Those who are familiar with healing modalities can make use of their abilities and send distance healing to the sufferers. There is a very effective healing method called Earth Peace Healing Meditation that has been given by the Himalayan Master Yogiraj Siddhanath and I've placed an instructional video on my website for those who would wish to learn it:

<http://www.rudrashivananda.com/earthpeace.htm>

# Faith, Reason And Experience

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model did, then experience from the failed model should lead to the reasoning that the belief in an earth-centric model was flawed. Therefore faith should be placed on the sun-centric model.

This example would lead one to analogize that a belief is like a scientific hypothesis and needs to be tested by experience and reason, that is, experiment. Scientists spend many years in experiments to test their hypothesis and when the experiments are positive, then the hypothesis is upgraded to a theory, just as a supported belief becomes faith. When a theory withstands all experiment and attempts to disprove it, as well as has demonstrated the capability to predict events, it becomes a law. Here, the analogy should not be taken too far, but is still somewhat applicable, as a law is a provable scientific statement of reality, while if a person of faith performs certain spiritual experiments on herself, she should be able to demonstrate her attainment in her life.

Let us examine the second example of a belief, that, 'there is life in the Universe, other than on Earth.' Now, reason would dictate that if there were other forms of life we would have met them by now and since we haven't they don't exist. The belief in extraterrestrial life persisted in scientific circles in spite of the lack of experiential or rational support. Now, they have started to discover extrasolar planets, which gives rational support to the reasoning that if there are other planets (and there may be very many of them), surely some of them would support life-forms. It is interesting to note that the belief for life-forms remained throughout the period when science could not detect any extrasolar planets, but there was this belief that they must exist. It took many years and a lot of effort to prove that there were

other planets. Has the belief that life exist on other planets now become a faith that can drive further activity? It would seem so.

When we venture into the spiritual realm and seek to discover our own place in the Universe or answers to questions such as 'why are we here?', we are entering into a realm where science stops and goes no further.

This discussion on faith now becomes relevant because without faith we cannot attain to the answers we seek, just as their faith sustained the scientists looking for planets in other solar systems. We need to have faith in ourselves, that we are capable of much more than we are displaying right now.

We must have faith in the path we are following. In order to develop this faith, we must test the path with reason and experience. There is no place for 'blind faith' on the spiritual path of yoga.

A spiritual path is a series of experiments performed over time subjectively which will lead to a realization of both the subjective and objective worlds. There is generally one or more founders of this path and we need to test them with reason and experience. If they are still alive, we need to "check them out." If they have passed away,

check out their representatives – have they attained to the goals of the path?

What about the person who is transmitting the path to you? Not everyone transmitting the path may have attained to the goal. Does she pass the test? Are there others in the present or past who can testify to the path? Only after a thorough investigation should one place one's faith on the prospective path. After all, before one would drive a particular route from one place to another, one may ask those who have driven by different ways for their recommendations, and/or check the authorized maps given by the experts etc. before proceeding.

Once we have faith on the path, then we can persevere in our efforts to attain to the requisite realization. Without faith, we would give up after some time, before realization can occur. This would be like taking a stop and letting our doubts make us turn back on our drive to our destination.

Sometimes, despite our best efforts, we may be in error on our faith, and we must not abandon all reason and experience, should this be the case. A misplaced faith should be discarded when there is overwhelming evidence and an effort made to discover a new path.

Have faith and persevere. Discard doubt, but not experience and reason until the path is won. This is shraddha.

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## Accomplishing One's Goal Without Attachment

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bring about the independence of India by the principles of non-violence and truth:

He who is ever brooding over the result, often loses nerve in the performance of duty. He becomes impatient and then gives vent to anger and begins to do unworthy things; he jumps from action to action, never remaining faithful to any. He who broods over results is like a man given to the objects of the senses; he is ever distracted, he says

good-bye to all scruples, everything is right in his estimation and he therefore resorts to means fair and foul to attain his end.

Gandhi never brooded over the results – he learned to be detached from them as he was detached even from the sufferings of his body, as he was beaten and imprisoned time and again. Let us accomplish our goals with dedication and keeping the integrity of our values.

# Focus on Pranayama – Prana Mudra

(excerpted from *Breathe Like Your Life Depends On It*)

A tonic to awaken and distribute healing energy throughout the body and for releasing physical, emotional and mental blockages. It establishes equanimity and connectedness to the universal source of all energy. This technique is best practiced at sunrise, preferably, facing the sun.

1. Sit in one of the recommended postures, preferably siddhasana. Place the right palm on top of the left palm. Close the eyes and relax the whole body, yet maintaining a straight back.

2. Utilizing the abdominal breathing, inhale and exhale deeply, expelling the maximum amount of air from the lungs, by contracting the abdominal muscles. While the breath is held out for a moment, contract the perineum and the anal sphincter.

3. While maintaining the contraction of the perineum, begin inhaling slowly, expanding the abdomen fully to draw in the maximum air into the lungs. At the same time, raise the hands to the level of the navel center. The hands are not touching, with fingers pointing towards each other and the palms facing inwards. There should be no tension in the arms. During the inhalation, feel and visualize the prana or life-force be-

ing drawn from the first energy center or chakra to the navel chakra along the spinal column.

4. Continue with thoracic breathing, expanding the chest and simultaneously raising the hands to the heart center. Feel the prana rising from the navel to the heart along the spine.

5. Complete the inhalation with clavicular breathing, raising the shoulders slightly and drawing some more air into the lungs. Feel the life-force energy being drawn from the heart center to the throat center, as you raise your hands to the front of the throat.

6. Retain the breath for a moment, as you spread the arms to the sides, palm facing upwards and out-stretched near

ear level. Feel the life force rising from the throat up the head to the crown center, and spreading out from the top of the head and emanating all around you. Release the contraction at the perineum.

7. Begin exhalation, by lowering the shoulders and returning the hands to its position in front of the throat, feeling the life-force descending to the throat center. Contract the chest muscles, and lowering the hands to the heart center, as the prana descends. Complete the exhalation by contracting the abdomen, lowering the hands to the navel, as the prana descends to the navel center. At the end of the exhalation, the hands are resting on top of the thighs, as at the beginning of the cycle.

8. Repeat twice more and then completely relax.



## Non-Attachment

It is taught by the wise that attachment causes unhappiness in life and that the practice of non-attachment is necessary for spiritual development.

We do not frequently examine our attachments nor consider them in a negative light for it is taken for granted that a major goal of life must be to experience pleasure and we are therefore attracted to activities that may satisfy the craving for pleasure. It is through the five senses that we derive most of our pleasures and so we are attached to the sensations from the five senses. The

senses depend on the body and mind because the sensory organs are in the body and the mind processes the sensory input to give the experience of pleasure – we are therefore also attached to the body and mind.

When we see someone or something that we are attracted to we form an attachment to it and would like to repeat that experience and so a desire appears in our minds. Desires multiply without limit as we become immersed in the senses. Memories of pleasurable experiences become attached to the desires

and our thoughts gravitate towards the gratification of the desires. As we give our desires more and more importance, our thoughts, words and actions rotate around our desires as our earth rotates around the sun.

We can form an attraction to any sensory input from any one or combination of sense organs. We can therefore form a desire from something seen, heard, smelled, touched or tasted. The attraction to a particular type of food might involve the visual aspect, the taste and smell, as well as the texture (touch).

When we are unable to satisfy a de-

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# Non-Attachment

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sire or our attempts to satisfy a desire is thwarted, the emotion of anger arises. We become angry and strike out at everyone around us. We also become angry with ourselves for the failure to gratify ourselves. Anger becomes an automatic reaction to the inability to satisfy a desire and so we oscillate between desire, satisfaction or pleasure and anger, sometimes spending much more time and energy in the desire and anger phases than in the actual enjoyment phase.

In fact, sometimes, even during the enjoyment phase, the desire for a repetition of the pleasure might arise already and then the emotion of fear rears its uninvited head. There is fear that the pleasure will not come again and therefore this might be the last time the desire is satisfied, or fear that the pleasure will be less next time around. This forms a complex emotional / mental reaction or habit pattern of desire, pleasure, fear and anger.

The reaction pattern of desire, pleasure, fear and anger causes stress and unhappiness. The physical, energetic, emotional and mental health of a person suffers from the stress induced by the attraction and attachment. A person becomes free from tension when there are no desires. Stress and tension leads to the tendency towards ill-health as the body and mind are more susceptible to

physical, emotion and mental disease agents.

Desires impact not only ourselves but can have significant effect on others and may even alter the fortunes of countries and the whole world. Many stories have illustrated the impact of desires. A notable Indian epic, the Ramayana is replete with examples – the desire of Rama's step-mother to usurp the kingdom for her own offspring led to the untimely death of her husband and untold hardship for the people of the country. The desire of Sita, Rama's wife for the golden deer led her to send her brother-in-law and protector away, resulting in her being kidnapped by Ravana, the demon-king of Lanka. The desire of Ravana to possess Sita, led to a great war, resulting in his own death and the death of countless heroes. Another epic, the Greek Iliad, recounts how the desires of Paris and Helen for each other, lead to the great Trojan War that lasted for ten years.

On a smaller scale, the attachment to form has led to girls starving themselves or developing eating disorders. The attachment to relationships has led to the suicides of discarded partners. The attachment to one's ideologies has led to terror bombings and other heinous acts.

Desires are a fact of life. What can you do with them? There are at least three ways of dealing with them – one can satisfy them, one can repress them or one can detach from them. Trying

to satisfy our desires is like trying to chop off the head of the mythical monster with many heads – whenever you cut one head off, several appear to take its place. There is not enough time in a lifetime to satisfy all our desires. Repressing our desires only deepen their hold on us – we spend all our time thinking about them, even fantasizing about them, and sooner or later, they will burst forth uncontrollably, causing all sorts of damage. The method recommended by those who have wisdom is to detach from them, to let them pass by without focusing your energy on them. The practice of detachment is extremely difficult but the only one of the three that can lead to happiness, and extrication from the cycle of desire, pleasure, fear and anger.

The practice of detachment is essential for those on the path of spiritual evolution as well as for those who wish to be happy in this life and enjoy good health and long life. One way of detachment is to offer the fruits or results of one's actions to the greater good of humanity, or to the Divine Principle of the Universe etc., something greater than our ego-selves. In this way, we are not attached to the results whether pleasurable or painful and yet be able to enjoy them.

Please do give a little thought to how our attachments are affecting our lives – this will increase our awareness in all our thoughts, words and deeds.

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# Happiness

Clear skies, sunny day  
I'm happy, sunlight and life.  
Clouds roll in, pouring rain  
I'm happy, cooling breeze.

Job well-done, praise comes  
I'm happy, Divine work fun.  
Blame comes, results disappoint  
I'm happy, best effort done.

Best friend, enjoyed the company  
I'm happy, positive relationship.  
Former friend, slander and lies  
I'm happy, space to forgive.

Profit payment, useful tool  
I'm happy, purpose fulfilled.  
Sudden loss, painful lesson  
I'm happy, learn detachment.

Body weak, life draws to close  
I'm happy, new beginning.  
Spirit soars, now winged delight  
I'm happy, Divine light bring.