



Upcoming Events

Nov. 11 - Opening the Third Eye
Singapore

Nov. 12-13 - Kriya Yoga I
Singapore

Nov. 15 - Kriya Yoga I
Malaysia

Nov. 16 - Shakti Healing I
Malaysia

Nov. 17 - Chakra Healing I
Malaysia

Time for Tea

Our minds become preoccupied with problems and accumulate stress without awareness of it even happening. I find that most people are suffering from a stress that slowly saps their will and their ability to live happily.

Stress is caused by worries of all sorts, such as about the future, the unknown, one's finances, one's relationships, one's job security and a myriad of other things. Each of these emotional and mental stressors causes physical tension in one's body which, if not released quickly, accumulates and becomes chronic. This chronic tension leads to fatigue and inability to sleep or relax that in turn leads to greater stress in a vicious cycle.

We can release the physical tension through exercise or relaxation techniques but it recurs because the underlying stress is still present. One needs to break the pattern of stress formation, and this can be done through meditation and breathing techniques. However, paradoxically, those who are under the greatest stress "do not have time"

Continued on Page 3

Overcoming Obstacles

All spiritual seekers have tried meditation and encountered the usual obstructions to maintaining a steady practice such as boredom, daydreaming, increased emotional reactions and even depression. There may appear external obstacles such as health issues, job loss or relationship problems. The stronger the practice the more obstacles appear because a true spiritual path will speed up the karma of a life-time and even access the latent karma from previous life-times.

Of course, one should be aware that not all meditation techniques or systems are best suited to everyone and one of the first solutions is to try different techniques. This however is the most undesirable solution because it is

better to make a change when nothing is happening then to make a change because undesirable things are happening. You may consider this absurd because why would we prefer a practice that is obviously causing problems! However, if our goal is to rise to higher consciousness in a short period of time, one should not shy away from growing pains. We will need to work out our karmic ledger in a shorter period of time. Most of it will be taken care of through our practice which should burn away our stored karma. However, there is karma that we have taken into this life and that is now in motion and we can only mitigate, hasten and shorten the effects of their appearance.

The primary solution is to purify the

Continued on Page 2

The Power Of Mantra

It is said that a mantra possesses power to transform, manifest, destroy or protect depending on its purpose. Where does this power come from?

A mantra is dormant or in seed form until it is first born from being drawn into the universe by the power or shakti of a rishi (a yogi who is also a "seer" of a mantra.) The seers of vedic mantras are usually known and should be invoked before the repetition of the mantras. These would include the famous mantras such as the Gayatri from Vishvamitra and the Mahamrutyunjaya from Markandeya. The rishi has instilled his own shakti energy into the

mantra in order to give it life and so the power of the mantra initially derives from the seer. This model is distinct from that in which the mantra has always existed and the seer in a raised consciousness plays a passive role of "seeing the mantra." There are also mantras in the puranas and some of them are attributed to a rishi also, such as the puranic mrutanjaya mantra from Kalkubhandh. It is instructive to know that some of the major vedic or puranic mantras have some story associated with their genesis as well.

Tantric mantras are shrouded in mystery and there is generally less infor-

Continued on Page 2

Overcoming Obstacles

(Continued from Page 1)

mind by cultivating an indifference to happiness and misery, to pain and pleasure, to all transient opposites. Even what are considered vice or virtue by society are but effervescent plays of the mind and lead to suffering through criticism, gossip, and judgementalism – to be avoided. The true virtues are attitudes of love, compassion, friendliness, joy, gratitude and forgiveness.

Frequently, we are beset by a lack of energy through overwork, family issues, lack of sleep, excessive talking or over-indulgence in the sensory pleasures. It is necessary in such a situation to cultivate the holding of vital energy or prana. A spiritual practice requires a lot of prana to fuel it and if the system doesn't have an inherent technique to increase or acquire more prana, then the student must supplement it by cultivating such pranayama. However, even in a system that has techniques for increasing the vital energy, if the student wastes it on material activi-

ties, then progress can be blocked – in such a case, it is necessary to decrease the those activities to a level that does not interfere with the effectiveness of reaching higher consciousness.

When the problem appears to be an unstable or troublesome mind, steadiness of mind needs to be cultivated by focusing on subtle sounds, as well as on the light within. The mere concentration of an external object or even an internal visualization may not be enough to still the mind sufficiently in order to achieve the withdrawal of the senses and in such cases, the meditation on the internal sound of Om can be an effective solution. Also, focusing on light at the third eye center with the appropriate methodology will not only bring about the internalization of the senses and stilling of the mind but can lead to even higher states of consciousness up to and beyond the highest Samadhi that can be described.

Sometimes, it is useful to focus on

those sages who are free from attachment – this can also help you acquire a steady mind, especially if you have some past life connection with the sage or can form an effective bridge to the sage in this present life. This can work whether the sage is in the body or working on a higher plane, but is very dependent on the individual seeker's karmic connection and so what works for one may not work for another.

A less common solution but one that may work better for very advanced practitioners is to have the mind be guided from the knowledge derived during the non-waking states. However, this is fraught with danger as more often than not, the ego is involved and the guidance may be faulty and cannot be relied on. Unless the practitioner has already passed through certain tests and been blessed by a Master to have such guidance, then it is necessary to cultivate common sense and discrimination before utilizing the internal guidance to overcome obstacles to higher consciousness.

The Power of Mantra

(Continued from Page 1)

mation about their antecedents, since until recent times they were transmitted secretly from Master to disciple only, but the principle still holds that the Master who created the mantra in the first place must have breathed his awakened kundalini life-force into the mantra itself.

Therefore the foundation power of the mantra depends on its originator.

As time goes by and more and more people repeat the mantra, it grows in power, just as a person acquires life-force in growing up while eating and breathing. However, the basic power is still dependent on the foundation power of the rishi just as a person is born with a certain amount of birth prana.

When someone is initiated into a mantra, the initiator must also infuse

his kundalini shakti into it for the disciple to benefit from it. The initiator himself must have access to the foundation power of the mantra through another Master and so on up the chain of transmission and has subsequently realized its true essence. The disciple in the beginning is drawing on the initiation power and slowly coming to realize the foundation power over a period of time. Only when the disciple has realized the foundation power of the mantra is he a master of it.

The initiation power helps to jumpstart the student's access to the mantra.

If the student uses up the initiation power and has not connected with the foundation power, then the mantra is dead within him and he will need to be re-initiated.

It is important to understand where a mantra comes from and its originator if possible. Mantras cannot be created by

just anyone. There is a misconception that someone in a heightened awareness can make up some syllables that appeal to him and it's a mantra – that is simply not true. Such "mantras" may have some feel-good effect just as any well-written jingle, popular song or poem can have, but cannot have the transformative power of a true mantra because it would lack the foundation power of the awakened kundalini.

Secondly, only one who has internalized and gained accessed to the foundation power as well as have his kundalini shakti awakened can initiate another person into the mantra. Being initiated into a mantra by a well-meaning teacher is not sufficient to ensure the promised benefit. It is a misconception that anyone can initiate into a mantra if they have learned it, can pronounce it or have repeated it a certain number of times.

Time for Tea

(Continued from Page 1)

or are “too tired” to perform the techniques that can save them from the actual cause of their fatigue and inability to focus.

A practical and effective solution is to take time for a cup of tea! Consider the merits of the Japanese tea ceremony – concentration on the moment and integrating body and mind. Although I’m not suggesting anything so ritualistic or complex, the key to breaking stress is to take the mind off the thoughts which tend to be repeating over and over again the same patterns of distress. Any activity that engages all five senses can work but I find that a fifteen minute tea break can produce much of the benefits

of hours of relaxation. Coffee does not provide the same result due to the higher caffeine content which induces hyperactivity and stimulation of the mind. The best is herbal tea, but even normal green or black tea can be used.

Choose tea that has a strong and pleasing aroma. Use tea leaves or even flower teas such as orange blossom rather than the tea bag. While the water is boiling, mentally repeat the following:

I am free from stress and worries
I am calm and contented
I am at peace in body and mind

Pour the hot water over the tea leaves and let it sit for two minutes. Watch the tea leaves settling and reacting to the

water. Strain the tea leaves and pour your tea into a cup. Inhale the tea deeply several times. Put your right hand about half an inch over the cup and feel the steamy heat while repeating aloud for a minute or two, “Om shanti”. When it is possible, try to sip the tea and feel the taste on your tongue and aroma when you inhale as you slowly drink, keeping awareness of your joy in the experience.

Take at least fifteen minutes. The best times are late afternoon and early evening. It is also good to try it in the morning when you have less stress and it is easier to perform this yogic tea ceremony for stress release.

Verses 4 and 5 of Advice on Sadhana

In the first verse, the acharya counseled the seeker on achieving a steady resolve towards the spiritual path, followed in the second verse with seeking the sage to hear his wisdom. In the third verse, the student needs to reflect on what has been transmitted and acquire his own discriminative awareness.

Practice moderation in food
Fasting can heal diseases
Live contentedly upon whatever
comes to you as a blessing from
the divine
Endure all the pairs of opposites:
heat and cold, and the like.
Avoid wasteful talks.
Practice equanimity
Desire not the kindness of others

In the fourth verse, the great teacher examines how the spiritual practitioner should live the material life. Obviously, one must support oneself or one’s family in a suitable manner but should not run after excessive requirements, living in contentment with what has been allotted by the universal grace. Practicing

moderation in food and fasting at least one day every week builds self-control as well as keeps the practitioner in good health. It is easy to become concerned about one’s comfort which can lead to igniting desires for what is liked and aversion to what is not liked. It is important to seek balance in life which can be upset by keeping company with those who are seeking material goals. If the practitioner seeks help from others, it puts her in debt to those who offer support and this must be repaid sooner or later, enmeshing her in the material cycle of action and reaction. Of course, if someone offers unsolicited help, it is not necessary to reject it. In all activities, the practitioner’s goal is to stay calm and centered.

In solitude live joyously.
Quieten your mind in the Supreme
Lord.
Realize and see the All-pervading
Self everywhere.
Recognize that the finite Universe
is a projection of the Self.
Conquer the effects of the deeds

done in earlier lives by the present right action.

Through wisdom become detached from future actions.

In the fifth and last verse, the practitioner’s spiritual progress is examined. The sage is now united and abides in his true Self, ever in bliss irrespective of the circumstances, and being ever mindful of the Divine. This is an internal state of super-consciousness which is attained during deep Samadhi meditation. The next step is to extend the internal realization to dealing with the apparently external world which is accomplished through first seeing that one’s true Self pervades everything and the apparent diversity is united in the Self – we are all One. In the next stage, the whole of the universe is seen as only a manifestation of the Self and without a separate existence. In this divine consciousness state, all past karma is wiped clean as if it never existed and the sage now acts only in the present without ego or karma.