

PART IV: TEACHINGS OF OTHER KRIYA TRADITIONS

CHAPTER 14

KRIYA YOGA AS TAUGHT BY SWAMI HARIHARANANDA

Upon starting to practice Swami Hariharananda's fascinating teachings, I realized that this Master would never give me the complete instruction on his specific Kriya Yoga form. In time, I was able to receive this instruction from other individuals who had studied under him. I intend to share these teachings with those who are unable to learn them elsewhere.

In the second section of the book, I discussed the essence of Lahiri Mahasaya's *Kriya Yoga*, but now I will describe the teachings of *Swami Hariharananda*.

I have been following this path for a considerable amount of time, and I have had wonderful experiences. I finally committed myself to practicing *Kriya Yoga* by Lahiri Mahasaya for the reasons I explain in the last part of this chapter. But I still maintain the essence of what *Swami Hariharananda* transmitted to me.

After meeting him, I was confident that he was teaching the *Original Kriya* of Lahiri Mahasaya, which had been slightly modified by PY, the founder of the organization I had been following for many years - indeed, this is what was promoted.

The truth is that his teachings of *Kriya Yoga* were completely influenced by the *Radhasoami* thought I discussed in chapter 12. I am encouraging the reader to reconsider that Chapter as it is fully embodied here from the first steps to its highest levels.

There is little left of the *original First Kriya* of Lahiri Mahasaya here. In fact, there is no procedure for obtaining *Kechari Mudra*. From this *First Kriya* onward, almost nothing remains of Lahiri Mahasaya's teachings.

However, one indisputable fact remains: these teachings are precious because the *Radhasoami* teaching is precious. It greatly enriches the practice of *Kriya* and brings every seeker very close to the direct experience of the spiritual dimension of existence.

Note

Various Kriya schools were created after *Swami Hariharananda's* passing to disseminate his teachings. There are slight differences in their definition of the

teachings. Some schools refer to what I call *Third Kriya* as *Third* and *Fourth Kriya*, while others refer to what I call *Fourth Kriya* as *Fifth* and *Sixth Kriya*.

When approaching these practices, it's important to keep in mind one basic concept:

The technique of *Kriya Pranayama* guides the practitioner to perceive the Divine in the *pituitary* gland and the *Fontanel*. When one focuses solely on these points, they feel a certain amount of pressure. Each breath increases and facilitates contact with the Divine. It is important to focus all attention on natural breathing and realize that it is nothing but the Divine itself. Meditation is reduced to a process that constantly focuses on the breath and is intended to achieve this. Meditation is aimed at transforming human consciousness into Divine Consciousness. ¹

FIRST KRIYA

The daily repetition of this practice teaches a *kriyaban* to become familiar with the reality of *Omkar*. It has the ability to recognize the three major aspects of the Divine within each *Chakra*: internal sound, spiritual light, and movement sensation. The *Bows* and *Maha Mudra* are highly valued. The *Kechari Mudra* suggested here is a simple one: the tongue is turned inward. Patiently, it touches the soft palate and slowly makes its way towards the uvula, staying in contact with it.

In *Kriya Pranayama*, the movement of *Prana* always oscillates from *Muladhara* to *Sahasrara*, not from *Muladhara* to *Medulla*, as taught by Lahiri Mahasaya. By adding the procedure '*Kriya Meditation*' to this technique, contact with the *Omkar* dimension is easily achieved.

The bows

In this technique and the following ones, the tongue is in the position we have previously discussed and which we refer to as '*baby Kechari Mudra*.'

Lie down on the ground in a half lotus position or on your heels. Exhale. Focus on the *pituitary* gland located at the center of the head. By taking a deep breath (not too long), visualize the breath rising from *Muladhara* up the spine and reaching the *pituitary* gland. Hold your breath. Bend forward above your waist and, if possible, touch the floor with your head. The head is placed between the knees. The hands can be used as naturally as possible to comfortably reach this position.

¹ If anything in this chapter refers to the *Fontanel*, you can replace it with "*Hypophysis*" and vice versa. I've often heard *Swami Hariharananda* use one or both terms as though they were interchangeable. He obviously knew that it was not the same center, but he knew that the same instructions were valid for both centers. My impression was that.

Move your head to the right, placing your right ear closer to your knee. Your face is facing your left knee to detect pressure on the right side of your head. Hold this position for a moment while holding your breath.

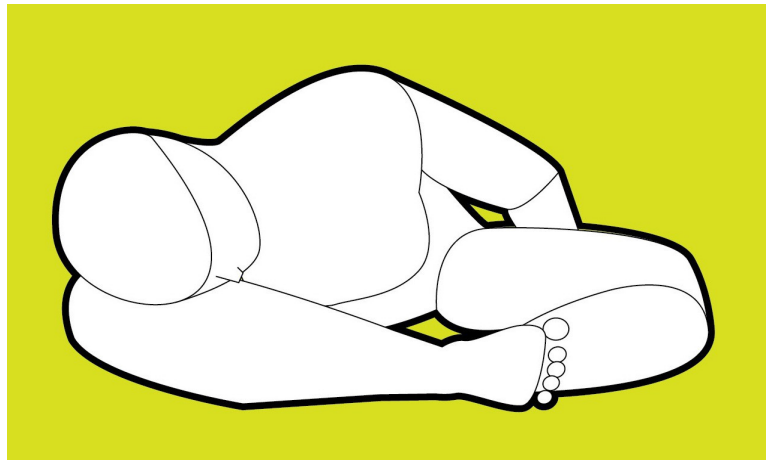


Fig.13 A bow. First position
[Sitting on heels is also OK!]

Repeat the exercise with the other side of the body, exchanging perceptions. The head approaches the left knee, while the face turns towards the right knee, causing pressure on the left side of the head. Keep this position for a few seconds while keeping your breath held. Move the head to the center until the forehead touches the ground. Pressure can be sensed on the forehead. Then rise with your back straight and make a deep exhalation, guiding the energy down from the pituitary gland to the *Muladhara*.

Imagine the breath coming from the physical seat of *Swadhisthana* up the spine and reaching the *pituitary* gland by inhaling deeply. Perform the same steps again as you did when starting from *Muladhara*. Finally, with a deep exhalation, lead your energy from the pituitary gland to *Swadhisthana*. Repeat the procedure for *Manipura*, *Anahata*, *Vishuddha*, and *Medulla*. In this way, you will practice six bows.

When you bow your body to the right, your left nostril will open. A bow to the left causes your right nostril to open. Forward bowing and keeping your forehead close to the floor will result in an equal exchange of air in your nostrils.

The lunar channel of *Ida* is on the left and the solar channel of *Pingala* is on the right. Both of these channels are stuck to the *Sushumna* channel and are blocking its entry. The procedure described results in the separation of the two lateral channels and the opening of a passage between them. The opening of the passage marks the start of meditation

practice. The perception of *Omkar's* reality becomes tangible through this procedure.

Note

The act of holding your breath is a powerful way to stimulate *Kundalini*. If you're not ready to sustain the strength generated by this procedure, if you feel overwhelmed after meditation, or if you're feeling too agitated, don't hold your breath.

Maha Mudra

Bring your left leg under your body so that your left heel is near your perineum. Place your right knee against your body to make your thigh as close to your chest as possible. The interlocked fingers are placed just below the knee, which helps to apply pressure to your internal organs. Take 5 to 6 deep breaths while applying moderate pressure to the knee. Take a deep breath and hold it, stretch your right leg, bend forward, breathe normally, and massage the right leg from the foot to the thigh and buttock. Use the right hand to grasp the toes of the right foot and the left hand to grasp the inside of the right foot (the arch of the foot). The face is facing to the left.

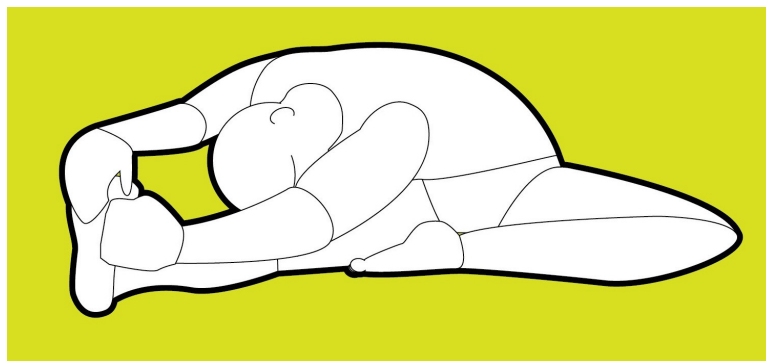


Fig.14 Here the face is turned to the left

Feel an internal pressure on the right side of the head. This contrasts with the feeling of open space on the left side of the brain. At the area between your eyebrows, mentally chant *Om* six times. Then inhale and hold, sit again on your left foot with the right knee bent and drawn towards the chest, then exhale in a normal breath.

Practice the entire procedure by exchanging perceptions, positions of the legs, and use of hands. I don't repeat everything - do not forget to chant *Om* six times at the point between your eyebrows.

Now, bring both knees towards your body. Straighten both legs, bend forward, breathe normally, and rub both legs from feet to thighs and hips. Then grab both feet: the right hand for the toes of the right foot, and the left hand for the toes of the left foot.

Breathe normally, flex the feet 4 or 5 times, then relax them with the head down as close to the knees as possible. Feel pressure on the forehead of the head. Space is felt in the occipital region. Chant *Om* six times in the area between your eyebrows. Then inhale and hold, sit up straight, massage the toes, then bring the bent legs back to the chest and exhale. The exercise is repeated three times.

Kriya Pranayama

There is a particular way of practicing *Kriya Pranayama* that this school teaches. Actually, it includes traditional *Pranayama* practice, which is coupled with a particular practice called *Kriya Meditation*, which is truly sweet and provides profound spiritual experiences. In addition to these two practices, there is a third one that can only be used when you have at least three hours available. The last practice involves a more subtle and brief breath. Its purpose is to gain a profound experience of the *Omkar* reality.

[I] Basic Kriya Pranayama

This *Pranayama* is similar to the classic one explained by Lahiri Mahasaya, but it has one difference that we will explain shortly.

Move the tip of the tongue towards the *pituitary* gland in the central area of the head. Start with *Ujjayi Pranayama*. By slightly lowering and pulling back the chin, the glottis and throat are partially closed, creating resistance to the breath passage. In this way, the head, body, and neck are in a straight line.

Inhale through the nose slowly, producing a long, deep breath with force. Inhale and exhale in the same way for the same length. The point of drawing in or pushing out the breath is not the nose, but the throat. The resistance against the breath reduces the speed of this, and a hissing sound is produced. This sound is automatic and will be audible. It will last throughout the process of inhalation and exhalation.

While doing this breath, move the attention up and down within the spine. When the breath enters, the practitioner moves the attention from the base of the spine up to the *Fontanel*. Similarly, by exhaling, the practitioner moves their attention from the *Fontanel* to the base of the spine. Reaching the *Fontanel* and not limiting oneself to reaching the *Medulla Oblongata* is a great innovation introduced by the school of *Swami Hariharananda*. This school explains that to reach the *Fontanel*, it is appropriate to keep the eyebrows raised (horizontal wrinkles form on the forehead).

Then there is another difference in relation to *Lahiri's*. It is taught to start the practice by inhaling along the back of the spine and exhaling

through the frontal part of the spine. This teaching is abandoned when the *Prana* is sensed within the spine.

It is explained that 12 or 24 or 36 breaths are sufficient for practicing. When time is available, it is recommended to dedicate oneself to the following practice.

The main characteristic of this *Kriya Pranayama* is the ability to perceive the *Omkar* reality within the head. According to this teaching, the practice of *Pranayama* is considered wrong if the practitioner does not obtain the perception of the internal sound of *Om* after an appropriate number of breaths – obviously, without the need to close the ears. The entire practice of *Kriya* is a progressive process of tuning into the *Omkar* reality. The *Omkar* perception needs to traverse all the different phases of *Kriya*, just like a string on which pearls are strung. The *Omkar* reality must be perceived not only in the aspect of internal sound and spiritual light, but also as a sensation of oscillation, movement, or internal pressure. Keeping this teaching in mind is a fantastic way to deepen the practice.

[III] Kriya Meditation Technique

Assume the position of the tongue that we previously described. Keep a part of your consciousness always fixed in the *Fontanel*.

With the eyes closed, inhale, intensifying the concentration in the *Fontanel*. Then exhale and descend to the *Medulla*. Hold the breath for a few seconds (2-3), then inhale again to raise the consciousness again to the *Fontanel*. The breath pattern could be 5 seconds of exhalation, 2-3 seconds of holding, and 5 seconds of inhalation.

Here in the *Fontanel*, you can take a short pause. Then exhale going down to the fifth *Chakra*, hold for a few seconds, then inhale from the fifth *Chakra* to the *Fontanel*. The times are the same as we indicated before.

Now exhale to the fourth *Chakra*, then inhale to the *Fontanel*, and so on. If you keep going in this direction, you will eventually reach the *Muladhara*. Hold your breath for a few seconds. Then inhale and go to the *Fontanel*. The times remain the same, regardless of the *Chakra* you have reached.

Reverse the order of everything. Exhale at the *Fontanel* and then move to the *Muladhara*. Hold your breath for a brief moment. Then inhale from the *Muladhara* to the *Fontanel* and hold your breath. Exhale to the second *Chakra*, pause, inhale... and repeat until you reach the *Medulla*. This is a cycle of 12 breaths. During these breathing movements, there is no need to produce a sound in the throat as in the *Pranayama* explained before. Gradually increase the number of cycles until you reach an ecstatic state where you can experience the *Omkar* dimension.

The end of the practice is very beautiful. During the last ascent, start from the first *Chakra*, then from the second, and so on until you reach the *Medulla* and reach the *Sahasrara*. When you reach the *Sahasrara*, inhale strongly through the *Fontanel* and do not descend. Exhale slowly entering a state of deep meditation without concentrating on anything specific. The name of this state is *Paravastha*.

Subtle manifestations of light, sound and vibration

After a period of practice of *Kriya Pranayama* and *Kriya Meditation*, one perceives the movements of *Prana* within the spine.

At the start, there may be a sense of heaviness or rigidity at the location of the *Chakras*. Then the practitioner perceives *Prana* as a magnetic force of attraction, as if the area were pressed or crushed due to the energetic attraction. It is possible to perceive the vibrations of each *Chakra*. Feeling these sensations occurs initially in the *Kutastha* or *Medulla*, then in the fourth *Chakra*. The sensation of sound and inner light can also be experienced.

[III] Variation of the Kriya meditation technique with very short breath

This practice is quite similar to the procedure '[II] Kriya Meditation', except that now an increasingly subtle and short breath will be used until it almost disappears. In this technique, consciousness always remains in the *pituitary* gland in the center of the head, so it does not rise to the *Fontanel* (*Sahasrara*).

Observe how a natural inhalation arises and, with a part of your consciousness, visualize that it arises from the first *Chakra* and rises gently towards the *pituitary*. This is followed by an exhalation that seems to descend and return to the first *Chakra*. Observe the process of the next breath ascending from the second *Chakra* to the *pituitary* and then returning, with the exhalation, to the second *Chakra*. Observe this for each *Chakra*, including the *Medulla*. During this process of observing the breath, most of the awareness has not moved from the *pituitary*.

Now continue this process in reverse. Observe how the breath rises from the *Medulla* to the *pituitary* and then returns to the *Medulla*. Then observe how a similar event involves the fifth *Chakra*, then the fourth, and so on until it returns to the first. The twelve subtle and short breaths that you have observed constitute a cycle, and this takes a minute or so. Practice various cycles, immersing yourself more and more in the *Omkar* dimension.

When there is no rhythm of breathing and any pauses in it occur naturally, the practice is correct.

The ideal outcome of this practice is to become aware of 1728 breaths in one day. Since this requires about three hours (the breath becomes shorter and shorter), try to practice at least once a week or on special occasions. You can count the breaths on a 108-bead *Mala*. Make an effort to finish 16 *Mala* ($108 \times 16 = 1728$) in one day.

Jyoti Mudra

This procedure has a distinct structure from that of Lahiri Mahasaya.

Close your ears with your thumbs while lightly pressing the corners of your eyes with your index fingers. Concentrate in *Kutastha*. Let some of your attention be directed towards the *Muladhara*. Then, ideally, raise this *Chakra* by inhaling to the point between the eyebrows. Hold your breath for as long as it is easy for you (about 10-15 seconds) while trying to perceive the particular light of the *Muladhara* in *Kutastha*. Exhale and ideally move the *Muladhara Chakra* to its original location. Part of the attention now shifts to the second *Chakra*. Execute the same action as you did with the *Muladhara Chakra*. Thanks to a short exhalation, this *Chakra* ideally returns to its place.

The same is repeated for *Chakras* 3, 4, 5, and *Medulla*. Always try to perceive the light at the point between the eyebrows. Be aware that you are offering each center the light of the spiritual eye. At the end of the procedure, place the palms of your hands on your eyelids and remain there for 2-3 minutes to see the light. When the light disappears, lower your hands.

Paravastha

Paravastha is the state that comes after a good practice of *Kriya*. Stay in meditation for extended periods, hearing the divine sound, experiencing a vibration sensation, and savoring the divine light. Feel the center of your concentration slowly rising from *Kutastha* to *Fontanel* and above *Fontanel* beyond the body. Stay thoughtless by perceiving this inner sky that begins at the top of your head. Open your eyes when you've reached the end of your meditation routine. Gaze at what is in front of you but do not focus on anything in particular. See without seeing. Keep 99% of your attention focused on the *Fontanel*. After a while, you will become aware of a thin line of soft white light, like a mist, around all objects. Gradually, the Light will expand. Avoid any thoughts. Maintain a steady gaze. After 5 minutes, close your eyes and remain like that for a while before standing up.

SECOND KRIYA

The central part of this teaching is called "*Second Kriya formal part*." It is very similar to the technique that we called "*Omkar Technique*" in the eighth chapter. The '*Second Kriya informal part*' is introduced and is an exciting new procedure.

In general, this *Second Kriya* is an extremely efficient way to direct *Prana* from the body towards the spinal column. An ecstatic state is achieved by the sucking of *Prana* into the upper part of the head. By doing this, you prepare yourself for the final stage of *Kriya* that takes place in the upper part of the brain.

The first thing you should do when practicing the *Second Kriya* is to start with the *Bends*, then *Maha Mudra*, and finally *Kriya Pranayama*.

Then begin the *Second Kriya* by practicing the formal part, which is immediately followed by the informal part. Then you can immediately move on to the practice of *Jyoti Mudra* in a more intense form than that described in the *First Kriya*, and finally conclude your routine with *Paravastha*.

[I] Second Kriya formal part

Hold your hands with your fingers interlaced on your abdominal area. The inhalation and exhalation process is divided into 6 + 6 parts. Starting from the position with your chin resting on your chest, inhale while simultaneously raising your chin slowly as if to accompany and push the energy upwards.

Kriya Pranayama requires breathing that is both strong and prolonged, but this technique demands a more subtle breathing pattern to evenly distribute *Prana* throughout the spine.

The syllables of the *Vasudeva Mantra* (*Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*) are mentally placed in the seat of each *Chakra*, taking a short pause in each center. During the first "sip" of the inhalation, the concentration is on the *Muladhara*, where the syllable *Om* is ideally placed. During the second 'sip', the focus is on the second *Chakra*, where the syllable '*Na*' is ideally placed. *Mo* is in the third, *Bha* in the fourth, *Ga* in the fifth, and *Ba* is placed in the *Medulla*. Now the inhalation is complete and the chin is horizontal.

By using this breathing technique, pressure is created in each *Chakra* that is effective but not too strong. In order to achieve the best results, it's best to imagine that the breath/*mantra* is like a scalpel that slightly penetrates each *Chakra*.

Hold the breath. Do your best to practice *Kechari Mudra*. Move the head forward towards the throat cavity. The divine light flows down from

above into the occipital region of the brain, and an internal pressure is felt in the front part of the heart *Chakra*.

The head returns to its original position and then bends slightly towards the left shoulder without turning the face. The previous experience occurs again: divine light flows from above through the right part of the head, and an internal pressure is felt in the left part of the heart *Chakra*.

The head resumes its normal position and immediately bends back. The same experience of Divine Light occurs descending through the front of the head, and a certain internal pressure is felt in the back part of the heart *Chakra*.

The head returns to its normal position and slightly tilts towards the right shoulder. The experience of the Divine Light occurs through the left part of the head, and a certain internal pressure is felt in the right part of the heart *Chakra*. The head regains its normal position.

During these movements, while holding the breath, there is no need for any *mantra*. By exhaling, awareness is guided through the *Chakras* towards the *Muladhara*. Slowly lowering the chin to the chest, awareness descends along the spinal column. The exhalation is split into six parts as well. The syllable *Te* (usually the final "e" is lengthened: *Teee*) is placed in the *Medulla*. *Va* in the fifth *Chakra*, and so on... *Su... De... Va*, until *Ya* (lengthened: *Yaaa*) is mentally chanted in the *Muladhara*.

The total time taken for a breath depends on the individual. It usually lasts about 45 seconds, but from a certain point onward, the speed of each repetition will decrease. The breath is sucked in and appears to be dissolving. From that point onward, there is only a hint of head movement.

You have probably read somewhere that in deep *Pranayama*, the energy passes through the *Chakras* like the thread of a necklace passes through pearls. It may also happen that the thread of energy wraps around each pearl. The descent path in this instance is like a helix that encircles and creates pressure around every *Chakra*. As one continues with this practice, they notice that a state of tranquility is spread throughout the entire spine. The *Om* sound comes out spontaneously and draws the mind's attention. Initially, the sound seems like that of mad bees, but eventually it becomes a melody reminiscent of a flute, a harp, a gong, or thunder. When the sound reaches its maximum subtlety, the practitioner is overcome by an inexpressible bliss.

[III]Second Kriya informal part

Let your breath flow freely. Repeat the syllable associated with each *Chakra* mentally several times. For that reason in the *Muladhara*, repeat *Om, Om Om, Om Om...* many times, at least 36 times. Do not count with the *Mala* - remain still. The speed with which you chant the syllables is approximately two per second. Think of this *Chakra* as a horizontal disc

with a diameter of approximately three centimeters. Observe the syllables moving counterclockwise within the *Chakra* near the circumference.

Then concentrate on the second *Chakra*, where you do exactly the same action, using the second syllable of the *mantra*, which is *Na, Na, Na, Na, Na...* approximately 36 times. Then you will concentrate on the third *Chakra*, repeating *Mo, Mo, Mo, Mo, Mo...* approximately 36 times. Then you will concentrate on the fourth *Chakra*, repeating *Bha, Bha, Bha, Bha, Bha...* Then, you will focus on the fifth *Chakra* (*Ga, Ga, Ga, Ga, Ga...*), then in the *Medulla* (*Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba...*).

Now practice the head movements that we explained before but in a slower way. The head bends forward towards the throat cavity. The divine Light descends from the region above the head (seat of Eternal Tranquility) into the occipital region of the brain. Internal pressure can be felt on the frontal part of the *heart Chakra*.

After feeling this for 10-20 seconds, return to the normal position of your head and bend it slightly towards your left shoulder. The previous experience occurs again: divine light flows from above through the right part of the head, and an internal pressure is felt in the left part of the heart *Chakra*.

Once you feel this for 10-20 seconds, return to the normal position of your head. Now the head bends back: the same experience of the Divine Light occurs by descending through the front part of the head and some inner pressure is felt in the back part of the heart *Chakra*. Remain in this position for about 10-20 seconds, then return to your original position.

Move the head towards the right shoulder. The experience of the Divine Light occurs through the left part of the head, and some inner pressure is felt in the right part of the heart *Chakra*. To complete the circle, the head returns to its usual position. You have felt the Divine Light and blessings in each of the four parts of the brain, and a pressure around the heart *Chakra*.

Now concentrate on the *Medulla* and repeat *Te Te Te Te Te Te...* The state of absorption is really strong. Then you will move on to concentrate on the fifth *Chakra* using *Va, Va, Va...* then the fourth... third... second... *Muladhara*.

You have completed the first circle: the time required is approximately 4-6 minutes. Perform 3-4 repetitions and then go into a meditative state.

Effects

As you move from one *Chakra* to the next, you will start noticing the change in the light vibration in the region between the eyebrows. In the future, you will experience a distinct sound coming from each center. By remaining absorbed in listening to the astral sounds, one can create inner

bliss while putting aside the ego consciousness, at least temporarily. This is when the reality of *Omkar* becomes apparent.

After many repetitions of this procedure, the upper part of the brain will remain ideal in space, separated from the physical body. According to *Swami Hariharananda*, this procedure is meant to separate the upper and lower parts of the head. He compared the head to a coconut and said that this procedure opens the coconut by hitting it from all four sides. Obviously, a lot of effort is required to achieve this result. One has to really invite the divine energy to descend into each part of the head and make an effort to feel the pressure on the heart *Chakra* as well.

Throughout the day, attempt to remain in this state as much as possible. When you can retreat for a short meditation, tune into the Sound, the Light, the formless power of the Divine that revolves within the skull.

Jyoti Mudra Second Kriya

During this practice you contract and relax the muscles near the physical location of each *Chakra*. In the *First Kriya*, we used the same *Jyoti Mudra*: the ears are closed by the thumbs and the eyes are covered by the index fingers.

Feel the place where the *Muladhara Chakra* is located. Contract the muscles near the *Muladhara*, which is located at the back of the perineum. In order to raise this *Chakra*, inhale it all the way up to *Kutastha*. Hold the breath for as long as possible, as long as it does not cause discomfort (about 10-15 seconds) while trying to perceive the particular light of the *Muladhara* in the *Kutastha*. Relax the physical tension and exhale.

Move your awareness to the second *Chakra Swadhisthana* and tighten the muscles of the sexual area and sacrum. *Vajroli Mudra* can be utilized to contract and relax the urethral sphincter and back muscles near the sacral center, and then do the exact same thing as you did with the *Muladhara Chakra*...

Once *Swadhisthana* returns to its initial position, focus on the third *Chakra Manipura*. Contract the abdominal muscles at the level of the navel: quickly contract and relax the navel, abdominal muscles, and the lumbar area of the spine. Repeat what you did with the two previous *Chakras*...

Repeat the same pattern for the *Anahata Chakra*. Expand the chest region. Bring the shoulder blades together and focus on the spine, which lies near the heart. Sense the contraction of the muscles situated near the dorsal center. Perform the same action as you did with the three previous *Chakras*.

Focus your attention on *Vishuddha*, the fifth *Chakra*. Move the head quickly right-left (without turning the face) a couple of times, perceiving a

sound in the cervical vertebrae as if something was ground. The purpose of this is to locate the cervical center. A different method is required to locate the *Vishuddha Chakra* astrally. Inhale this *Chakra* at the point between the eyebrows without any specific movement. Now, while holding your breath, practice the following five head inclinations:

Turn your head to the left (the hands follow; the pressure on your ears and eyes does not change). The right elbow should approach the right side of your chest.

Turn the head to the right, and the left elbow approaches the left side of the chest. Return to the center position and bend your head forward.

Bend your head back and then back in front. Return to the usual position. Go from *Kutastha* to *Vishuddha Chakra* by exhaling.

For the *Medulla*, we have the following procedure: inhale very slowly from the base of the spine. As you breathe in, contract the muscles at the bottom of your spine, then those near your sexual organ, and finally those near your navel and *Manipura Chakra*. Then contract the muscles near the dorsal center and the throat region, and finally, clench your teeth and create wrinkles on your forehead. Observe the light located in the area between your eyebrows. Feel that your sixth center is being offered to God. Release the contraction by exhaling.

For the *Sahasrara Chakra*, we have the following procedure. Inhale and contract all the centers in the same way we did for the *Medulla*. Then, with clenched teeth, push the portion of your head that is above your eyebrows (the skull) up into the high heavens and offer it to the Divine. Release the contraction by exhaling.

To finish the procedure, position your hands on your eyelids and stay there while observing a milky white Light for 2-3 minutes. When the light disappears, fold your hands and bow your forehead, and pray to the form of God of your choice. Open your eyes, but remain focused internally in the pituitary gland, and observe the divine light in all things. Enjoy the *Paravastha* as you did during the *First Kriya*.

THIRD KRIYA

In this level the concentration is mainly on the crown of the head. In chapter 12, we learned that the *Radhasoami* movement teaches that in addition to the 6 *Chakras* in the spine, there are also as many *Chakras* in the brain. To be precise, there are six in the gray matter of the brain, as well as another six in the white matter. By rotating *Prana* in circles in the brain, it is possible to gradually reveal the location of these 12 'higher' *Chakras*. We also said that after completing a large number of these rotations, the soul is able to penetrate the eighth '*Portal*'. It's not clear what it is, but it's located in the white part of the brain. Through this *Portal*, one can reach the final goal of meditation practices.

When you decide to practice the *Third Kriya*, always start with the *Forward bends*, then the *Maha Mudra*, and finally the *Kriya Pranayama*.

You can either practice the *Second Kriya* or skip it and move straight to the practice of the *Third Kriya*. Finally, always practice *Jyoti Mudra* and *Paravastha*.

First part: special form of Pranayama

In this part, only three chakras are stimulated: *Anahata*, *Vishuddha*, and *Medulla*. This *Pranayama* is practiced 12 times in the following way: during inhalation, focus only on *Anahata*, *Vishuddha*, and *Medulla*, mentally chanting the syllables *Bha*, *Ga*, and *Ba* in them. The inhalation is continuous, not fragmented. The exhalation is also continuous: during it, you concentrate on *Kutastha*, the frontal part of *Vishuddha*, and the frontal part of *Anahata*, mentally chanting the syllables *Tee*, *Va*, and *Su*.

Second part: circulation of energy within the brain

Forget about the breath. Practice *Kechari Mudra* as best you can. Bring your head forward.

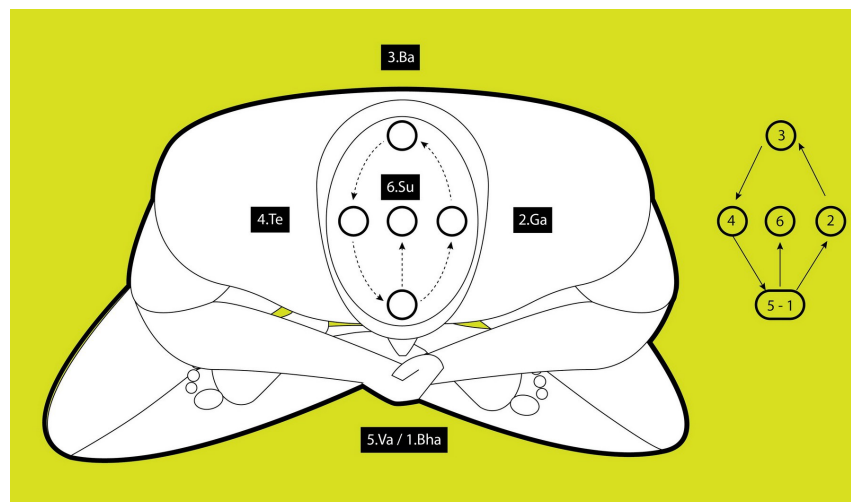


Fig.15 Circulation of calm Prana in the upper part of the brain

Sense the energy in the frontal part of your head and mentally vibrate *Bha* in that region. Without returning your head to the normal position, slowly guide your head into a bent position towards your left shoulder - as if you were trying to touch the left shoulder with your left ear. Having reached this position, feel the energy present on the left side of the brain, above the left ear, and mentally vibrate *Ga* in that place.

From this position, bend your head back and slowly direct the flow of energy towards the occipital area of the brain. When you reach this position, mentally vibrate *Ba* in that area. Then slowly guide your head into the next position, bent towards the right shoulder - as if you were

trying to touch the right shoulder with your right ear. Having reached this position, feel the energy present on the right side of the brain, above the right ear, and mentally vibrate *Tee* in that place.

Slowly return to the initial position with your head bent forward. The flow of energy is directed towards the frontal region of the brain.

Once you have reached this position, mentally vibrate *Va* in that area. Slowly straighten your head to bring your chin parallel to the ground while directing your attention to the central part of the brain below the *Fontanel*. Mentally chant *Su* in that center. The first round is done. Repeat this process 12 times.

It is explained that the slow movement of energy through the brain's substance causes a *psychic pressure*. It is explained that this internal pressure, friction, favors the manifestation of the Divine Light.

Third part: circulation of energy in stillness

After completing the required number of rotations, it is not difficult to add this part where energy movement occurs in stillness.

Without moving your head, mentally repeat the syllables *Bha, Ga, Ba, Te, Ba, Su* without haste, trying to perceive the same energetic movement that was induced before by the movements of your head. The sensation is of a sphere of Light moving in a circle inside the brain, ending the circle at the point below the *Fontanel*. Try to perform at least 36 rotations.

Note

These last two practices have a very strong effect on the field of awareness. In a mercilessly clear way, you become aware of the many tricks of the ego that guide your actions. For example, the reason for making wrong decisions appears with definitive clarity, free from veils and dissimulation. The ego is a complex mental structure that cannot be destroyed, but can be made more transparent. There is a price to pay: inexplicable waves of fear may occur hours after the practice, and you may feel like you're not knowing who you are and where you're going. The subtle layers of the brain that you have touched are the source of this natural reaction.

These last two practices can make you less focused during the day. You feel as if you're experiencing a drug-induced state of detachment from the world. In this situation, every time you practice this technique, follow it with some repetitions of the *Second Kriya*, both the formal part (6 repetitions) and the informal part (3 repetitions).

Fourth optional part: involvement of the various Chakras

This practice is the culmination of the efforts made with the two previous techniques. The cosmic sound of *Om* is produced in a natural way by it. This is the only thing you will hear. Therefore, the mental chanting of *Bha Ga Ba Te Va Su* is not necessary. Concentrating on the *Omkar* sound is enough and you won't have to recite any *mantra*.

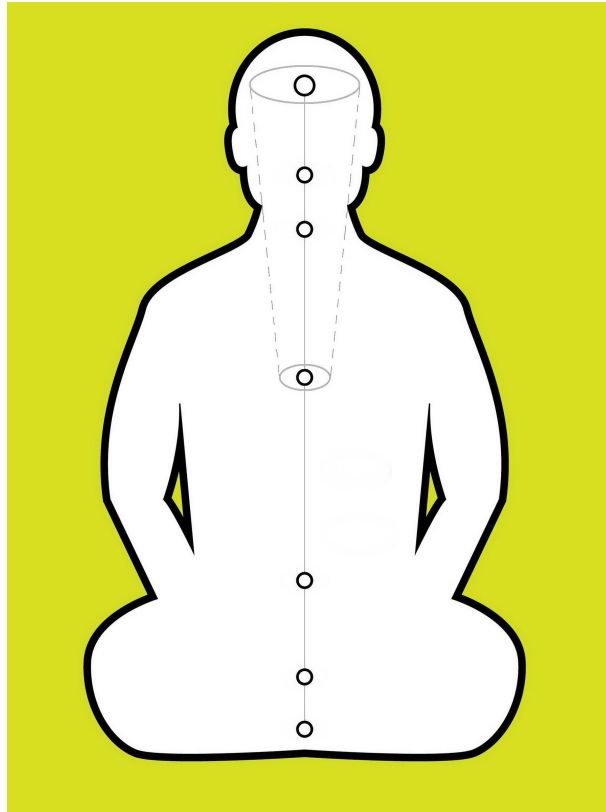


Fig.16 Here we are acting upon the heart Chakra

Focus on the center of the *Muladhara*. Inhale deeply and aim to raise the *Muladhara Chakra* in the central part of the brain, under the *Fontanel*, above the *pituitary gland*. Imagine this *Chakra* as a disk that is as big as the energy circuit you created earlier.

So two rotations of energy happen at the same time: it seems difficult but it will become natural. During this practice listen to the sound of *Omkar*.

The ideal number of rotations associated with each *Chakra* is 36, but beginners may be satisfied with a smaller number. Usually, the need to breathe disappears. Exhale immediately when you feel the need to do so and direct the *Muladhara Chakra* to its location at the base of the spine. Now inhale, lift the second *Chakra*, and repeat the procedure...

Repeat the procedure for each *Chakra*, including *Medulla*. Repeat the process for *Medulla* and all the other *Chakras* until *Muladhara*. The

practice concludes with free breathing. All the attention is focused on the *Fontanel*. Peace, inner joy, listening to the inner sounds, Divine Light... this is what you will experience. Your *Kriya* practice will transform into a romance with the reality of Beauty.

After a certain period of time, the experience of *Kundalini* rising will occur. You will receive it and overcome your resistances. You will be transported from a sweet state of calm to a truly heavenly state; you will return to your daily life with tears on your face, tears born of infinite devotion.

When you can perform this procedure well, that is, when an effortless *Kumbhaka* manifests, then you will perceive the entire universe filled with resplendent Divine Light. During the day, you will be surprised by a state of mental clarity that you have never experienced before. The foundation of your consciousness will be perceived as a continuous joy that is independent of external factors.

Note

It is perfectly natural to begin this practice by gently moving your head to aid yourself. If this helps, you can also think of six syllables of the *mantra*. This isn't mandatory, but it could be helpful for beginners. If this happens, try to gradually reach physical immobility while listening to the true *Omkar* Sound.

FOURTH KRIYA

The concept of the eighth *Chakra* located above the *Sahasrara* is introduced. As soon as this *Chakra* is perceived, the *kriyaban* is instructed on how to reach the state of perfect breathlessness. Once this state is reached, consciousness descends from the eighth *Chakra* to the *cerebellum*, lingers there, and then moves to the *pineal gland* where the *spiritual Light* has its seat.

When you decide to practice the *Fourth Kriya*, always begin with the *Bends*, then the *Maha Mudra*, and finally the *Kriya Pranayama*.

You have the option to practice the *Third Kriya* briefly or skip it and proceed to the practice of the *Fourth Kriya* immediately. Finally, always practice *Jyoti Mudra* and *Paravastha*.

Preliminary practice: dissolving the breath in Brahmalo

The eighth *Chakra* is the gateway that allows you to get in touch with the astral body.

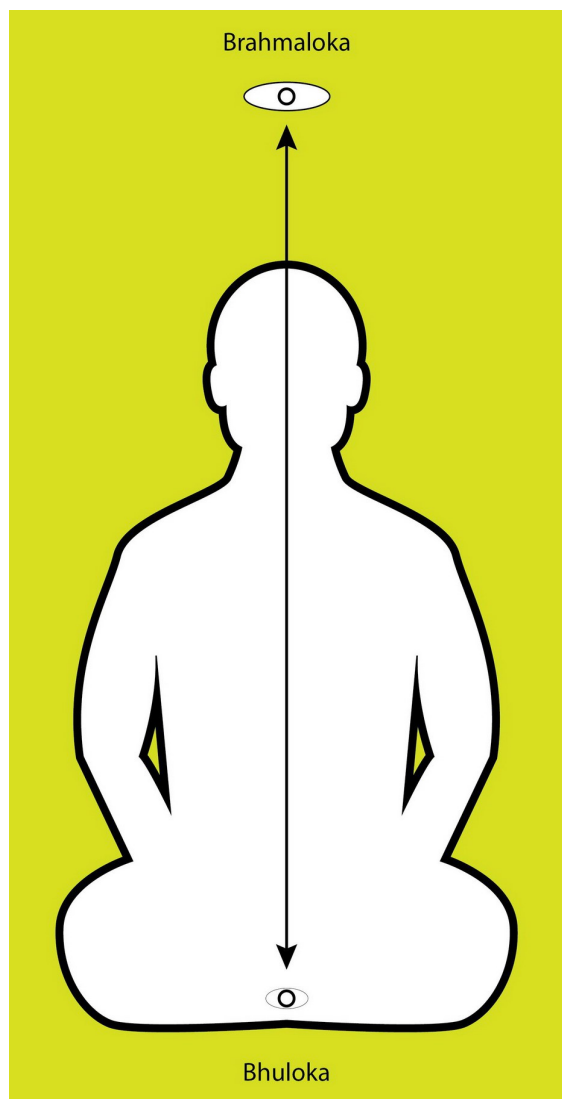


Fig.17 The breath moves between Bhuloka and Brahmalo

Cleaning up what holds us to the system of reincarnation, which is our worn-out psychological patterns, is part of opening it. Spiritual compassion and self-denial are centered here. A *kriyaban* who realizes the essence of this *Chakra* develops the quality of altruism and lives in the dimension of compassion rather than judgment. According to certain *Kriya* or *Kundalini Yoga* instructors, this *Chakra* is situated 5-6 centimeters above the *Fontanel*. Others say: 8 cm, 30 cm, and 60 cm. It's important to trust your perception.

Swing your trunk and head to the right and left while keeping the center of your attention above your head until you feel this *Chakra*. This is the correct location!

Inhale and slowly raise *Prana* and awareness from *Muladhara* to the eighth *Chakra*. During this action, do not focus on any other *Chakras* in the spine. Move upwards, feeling the energy that passes through the *Fontanel* and reaches the eighth *Chakra*.

Focus on that and enjoy the balance between inhalation and exhalation. Slowly exhale, allowing the *Prana* to descend from the eighth *Chakra* to the *Muladhara*. Feel the energy flow as it descends and passes through the *Fontanel*. Repeat the procedure when you feel the need to inhale. Continue repeating until your state of consciousness has completely changed and the breath becomes subtle and almost non-existent.

Now inhale gently from the *Muladhara* to the eighth *Chakra*, raising your breath and *Prana*. Exhale slowly from the eighth *Chakra* down the spine, but avoid intentionally going down to the *Muladhara*. Observe how the current related to exhalation spontaneously reaches a point in the spine.

This point may not correspond to any particular *Chakra*. The starting point for the next inhalation is determined by the location of this point. Inhale from it until you reach the eighth *Chakra*.

The path's length has obviously decreased. Concentrate again on the balance between inhalation and exhalation. Exhale gently down the spine: it's likely that the current linked to exhalation will take a shorter path than the previous one. There is a new starting point now. Inhale from this new point and move up to the eighth *Chakra*...

By repeating this procedure, you will achieve a mental and physical state where you will be breathless while concentrating completely on the eighth *Chakra*. If, after a long pause, the breath appears again, repeat the entire process from the beginning, (inhaling from the *Muladhara*). Continue in a patient and unhurried manner. The aim is to stop breathing by entering a dimension where it is no longer required.

Fourth Kriya proper: meditation on the Cerebellum

Rotate consciousness around the eighth *Chakra*. Observe a light sphere that moves around the eighth *Chakra* and then touch it at its center.

Keep repeating this perception without mentally chanting any *mantra*. Then let the sphere of light (after tracing a circle around the *Eighth Chakra*) not come inside it but come down obliquely, crossing the *Fontanel*. As the ray descends, raise your chin and feel that it reaches the *cerebellum*. Allow yourself to remain still for a short moment, completely immersed in the intense white and dazzling Light that emanates from there throughout the brain.

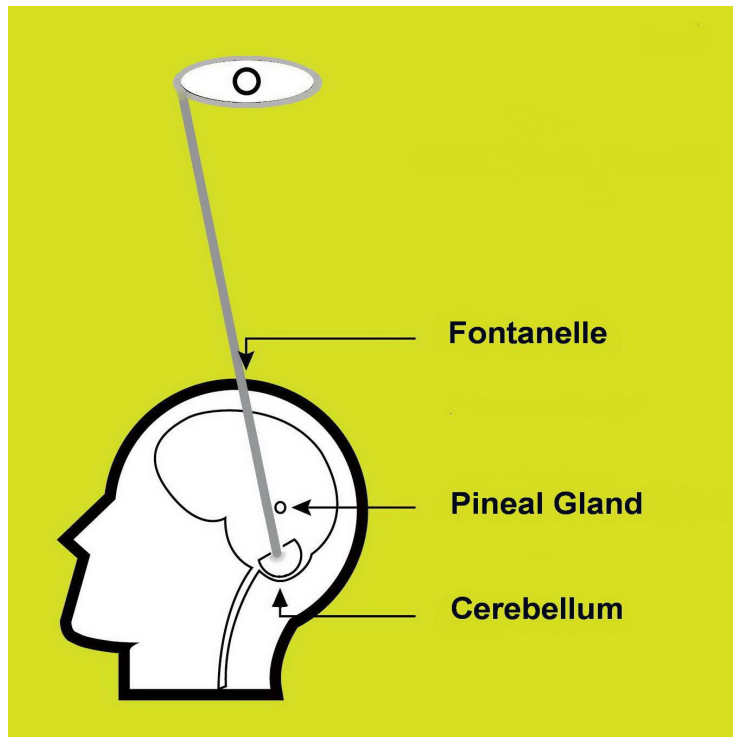


Fig.18 The Light moves from the 8th Chakra to Cerebellum

Become aware of the *cerebellum* and locate it. Lower your chin without losing sight of the Light. At a moderate speed, rotate all of your awareness counterclockwise around the *cerebellum*.

Dive deeper and deeper. Avoid going too fast or too slow. Do it repeatedly and intensely until you notice a shift in your state of consciousness and mood. Do this for a short period of time, perhaps 2-3 minutes, but not more. After that, remain in this state for a brief moment and then open your eyes. Wait for a moment and then repeat the same procedure. Gradually, over the next few days, you can repeat the experience a few times.

Pineal Gland Meditation

Gradually raise your chin (just a few millimeters) until you feel a tenseness in the back of your neck. Condense the Light you are experiencing in your mind and direct it towards the *Pineal Gland*. Perhaps this center is the "Portal" we read about in the *Radhasoami* path, but I am not sure.

This gland is very close to the *cerebellum*, but slightly forward and above, along a line that forms an angle of 60° with the floor. The movement should be only slight, without any muscular tension. There is a kind of inner tension that guides you intuitively towards the *Pineal Gland*.

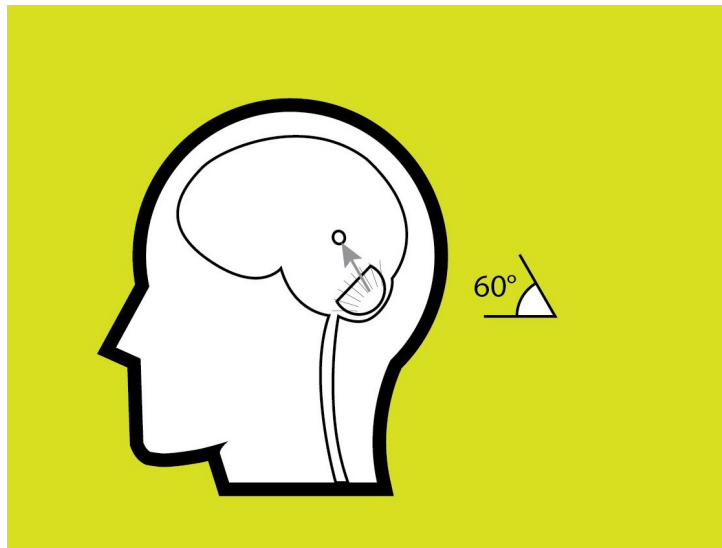


Fig.19 The Light moves from the Cerebellum to the Pineal gland

Move your awareness in a counterclockwise direction around the *Pineal Gland* at a moderate speed. A change in your state of consciousness will occur. Stay in this state for as long as your intuition advises. Keep trying this method until you are able to enter the *Pineal Gland*. This is where the union with the Divine happens. The TAT TVAM ASI state is manifested. In this supreme state of union, one is without physical consciousness and unaware of their surroundings.

Dopo che il suono di Omkar cessa di esistere
 appare la Forma Rifulgente.
 Nulla esiste eccetto il Sole dell'Anima.
 Io, Shama Churn, sono quel Sole. (Lahiri Mahasaya)²

² *Shama Churn* is *Lahiri Mahasaya*. This phrase is included in his diaries. *Purana Purusha*, Ashok Chatterjee's book, contains many inspirational phrases

My perspective on Swami Hariharananda's vision of Kriya

Having known and talked at length with *Swami Hariharananda*, also taking into account that almost every year he made changes to his *Kriya*, I formed an idea of him as an intelligent autodidact. He had learned the various aspects of *Kriya* from various sources, including the *Radhasoami* movement, and had experienced and realized them in his personal practice.

The points that I intend to discuss about his vision of *Kriya Yoga* are mainly three. His particular teaching within the *First Kriya* is called *Kriya Meditation*. He eliminated both the practice of *Navi Kriya* and *Thokar*.

Finally, he always put a great emphasis on the concentration on the *Fontanel* and not on the heart.

[1] *Swami Hariharananda's first Kriya* is wonderful. With the commitment of a few days of application of his *Kriya Pranayama* and *Kriya Meditation* technique, one can reach a dimension of unspeakable beauty. Contacting the *Omkar* dimension is therefore within reach even for beginners.

[2] By eliminating *Navi Kriya* and *Thokar*, *Swami Hariharananda* has deviated greatly from *Lahiri Mahasaya's* method. I heard *Swamiji* criticize *Thokar* one day, stating that it can damage the cervical vertebrae.

A teacher at his school told me: '*Thokar* is not necessary and can even be disturbing. Repetition of a *mantra* on a *Chakra* is sufficient to awaken it. The process of holding breath used in certain forms of *Thokar* is also extremely stressful. Instead, repetition of a *mantra* helps to raise consciousness towards higher regions. One quietly sits with their eyes closed, observing the center of darkness before them, and perceives the inner light. The breath is unrestrained and flows freely.' Before leaving me, he emphasized once again that there is no other means of spiritual liberation except through the *Omkar* experience.

Well, to this way of considering *Thokar's* practice, I feel the need to oppose the experience of the *Dhikr* of the *Sufis*. I am confident that this practice is highly effective. It is efficient and envisions numerous developments and potential applications.

[3] Let's take a look at the last point. In *Swami Hariharananda's Kriya*, we tend to transcend the spine with its *Chakras* and find refuge in the upper part of the head. In other words, we develop a tendency to avoid what *Lahiri's Kriya* considers a duty: to address the primary need of our being, which is to live more in the heart and less in the brain. The two paths, *Lahiri's* and *Radhasoami's*, are not compatible here.

I think that reaching the region located in the highest part of the brain allows us to experience an indescribable state of ecstasy. But this experience, if not supported by work on the heart, can become alienating.

Ultimately, I am convinced that we cannot identify the *Sahasrara* and the spiritual centers of the head (pituitary gland and pineal gland) as our ultimate goal. This idea is delusional and relies on following a refined illusion.

I am of the opinion that our genuine destination is the 'Uncreated Light' (according to the Hesychasts) located in the heart region. Staying in *Sahasrara* region all the time can lead to people who are ego-driven and disconnected from reality. They become enamored with behaviors and theories that portray the spiritual path as a caricature.

I am sorry to say this, but it is my duty to be truthful. Despite the difficulty of the teachings of Lahiri Mahasaya, I have chosen to accept them in my life. Practically speaking, I attempt to focus on the 'spiritual heart' during the final phase of each practical session, which is the *Paravastha* phase. This 'spiritual heart' holds the key to our most intimate essence.

CHAPTER 15

A VERY SIMPLE FORM OF KRIYA YOGA

A method for practicing Kriya Yoga that is both easy and gentle has been given to me. The results I have achieved through practicing it have been excellent. I have full confidence that it can be beneficial for specific individuals. I am sharing this method in its entirety here.

Years ago, I heard from a *Kriya* teacher who claimed that the common way of practicing *Kriya Pranayama* is *deeply incorrect*. I got in touch with him. He was very helpful, kind, and clear in his explanations. He informed me that the school he attended was founded by *Swami Pranabananda*, a disciple of Lahiri Mahasaya and well-known as '*The Saint with Two Bodies*'.

He reminded me that the purpose of *Kriya Pranayama* is to enter consciousness into *Sushumna*. But to achieve this feat, it is necessary first of all to make the breath extremely subtle. In fact, to enter *Sushumna*, it is necessary to behave with extreme delicacy!

The majority of *Kriya* schools instruct the use of force to raise the energy into *Sushumna* in a gross manner. From the beginning, a sound is generated in the throat and energy is seen rising and falling in the spine. This is not a good thing!

By practicing in this way, *Kundalini* does not move upwards but disperses in the body and is burned there, which creates physical disorders. These disorders are caused by the *Nadis* being partially blocked at first. These schools are fully aware of these disorders and that is why they recommend practicing only 14 *Kriya* breaths for a few months and then gradually increasing this number. Nervous attacks are the primary disorders. This indicates that this method is not beneficial.

This school advises against teaching beginners to immediately perceive the energy that penetrates each *Chakra*, as it is a significant mistake that often prevents progress in the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*.

Instead, we should start in a very simple way and without expecting surprising results. Progressing in this manner will result in something profound and significant happening without any effort.

To correctly practice *Kriya Pranayama*, the inner gaze should stay fixed at the central point between the eyebrows (we refer to it as the spiritual eye or *Kutastha*), not anywhere else. The practitioner shouldn't attempt to move through the *Chakras* from bottom to top during inhalation and from top to bottom during exhalation. On the contrary, the focus should be solely on *Kutastha*. The eyes should be relaxed and everything should be natural. *Baby Kechari Mudra* is enough for beginners, as far as

Kechari Mudra is concerned. I remember that *Baby Kechari* means keeping the tip of the tongue up and touching the soft part of the palate.

This *Kriya* is easy to perform, even if it is challenging, as it requires 108 breaths to be practiced. One may be perplexed when reading these instructions because they require one to ignore the physical location of the *Chakras*. To overcome this perplexity, it's possible to believe that the *Second Kriya* will complete this task. The *First Kriya's* purpose is to impart a subtlety to the breath that cannot be achieved elsewhere.

Technique of Kriya Pranayama as taught by this school

By keeping both shoulders in a natural position, expanding the chest a little, bringing the back into a straight position, gently lowering the chin, and mentally gazing between the two eyebrows, the position can be maintained stable without effort. Do not cross your eyes; simply place yourself at the point between your eyebrows as if this were a quiet region where you take refuge.

Relax your eyes, close them, and look internally in a relaxed manner. Eyes and eyebrows are made to 'stick' to each other. Allow something to appear on its own without trying to see it. Do not try to keep *Kutastha* in mind, but try to be there, inside *Kutastha*. Make an effort to see the light of *Kutastha* solely through the mind's eye.

Deeply inhale and mentally recite the word *Om* six times in *Kutastha*. Then exhale deeply and mentally repeat the word *Om* six times in *Kutastha*. If you want to follow this school, this is the way to go.³

In the spiritual eye, you place various *Oms*. The act of mentally chanting *Om* is similar to tapping. The *mantra* is repeated mentally while attempting to imagine it with the lowest possible tone. The minimum amount of breaths needed for *Kriya* is 108.

Therefore, unlike other forms of *Kriya*, *Om* is not placed in the physical seat of each *Chakra* during this practice. Furthermore, the breath should not require effort. Currently, there is no sound being produced in the throat. If your breath is very short, accept this situation without trying, with discomfort, to lengthen your breath. As time passes, a longer breath will appear spontaneously. It's important to stay centered on the *Kutastha* and mentally chant *Om* 6+6 times. Since the recommended number of breaths is 108, by the end you will have mentally chanted the syllable '*Om*' 12 times 108 times = 1296 times in *Kutastha*.

³ What matters is that the breath is as deep as is needed to mentally chant with ease: 6 *Om* inhaling; another 6 *Om* exhaling.

It is explained that if you carry out this subtle action, it reverberates in each *Chakra* automatically, even if you are not aware of it. By "knocking", you will have the ability to mentally touch the central point of each *Chakra*. This fact happens spontaneously, so don't try to predict it using complicated visualizations. Everything is governed by the sixth *Chakra* (you always remain in it), which is why this event occurs. It directs you towards aligning yourself with each *Chakra*. Going forward, the exercise will become more and more enjoyable.

Over time, you will feel that the spine exists and that it is possible to perceive it throughout its length. If it does not happen today, it will happen tomorrow. You must be patient and encourage the right attitude. There is nothing special to do. Do not try to achieve this by lowering consciousness. I reiterate: everything happens without effort.

In the meantime, you will notice that your breathing is slower and the mental chanting of the various *Oms* is calmer and more pleasant. At some point, you will feel that the six *Chakras* exist. It's not certain that the inner vision will show the spinal column with the six *Chakras* as described by tradition. Accept your way of perceiving the *Chakras*, as there are many ways to perceive them.

At some point, you'll realize that the breath is accompanied by a subtle sound in the throat. The sound is caused by the friction of the air in the throat. In this way, the breath slows down and becomes more subtle. As time goes on, the exhalation sound will be akin to the one produced by a small flute through which very little air passes. For now, don't worry about the sound's quality.

If everything goes well as expected, if calm is maintained, the breath passes through the *Chakras* from the first to the sixth, and from the sixth to the first, and the syllable *Om* will vibrate in each *Chakra*. This is a wonderful situation. Usually, this occurs at the end of the 108 breaths. The entire being is located in a luminous sphere located between the *Kutastha* and the center of the head.

It's not important what you see, what matters is that you feel completely at ease and absorbed in the beauty of the procedure. It's probable that you'll experience light in *Kutastha* when you come to the end of the 108 breaths. *Yoni Mudra* is going to intensify this. After completing *Yoni Mudra* and *Maha Mudra*, you will return to *Kutastha* to collect your consciousness without doing anything. This means not chanting *Om* and not paying attention to your breathing.

Let's add a "finesse" that is discovered over time. Keep your chin down and inward so that *Kutastha* and *Medulla* are at the same level. Well, you will

realize that you exist in *Medulla* while only the visual force is focused in the point between the eyebrows. Not only that, realize that every manifestation (not visualization), every luminous revelation of the *Chakras* occurs about four centimeters inside the point between the eyebrows: this is the seat of *Ajna*. Maybe all this seems complicated, but with practice, it will become clearer.

Questions and answers about the Kriya Pranayama technique

Kriyabans may have difficulty learning this form of *Kriya Pranayama*. Unexpected questions often arise.

I am interested in learning more about the process of knocking with Om in Kutastha. When we mentally chant Om, we don't have Kutastha in mind at that moment.

The mind is quiet, the thought process is not stressed by worry. 'I must have *Kutastha* in mind, otherwise my practice is wrong.' No, none of that. You are engaged in two activities: (1) breathing and (2) repeatedly placing *Om* in the center point of *Kutastha*. That's all. Doing this for a few minutes can lead to a truly heavenly state. With patience, you will reach a divine state of contemplation.

Some people speculate about the duration of each *Om*. They inquire whether there is a small pause following each *Om* and inquire about its duration in tenths of a second. I think that in this case, such people should be left free to be sage-like and build their own failures with their own strength. While *Kriya* may seem like a chemical recipe, it is actually an art form that is based on intuition, intelligence, and common sense.

Is it possible for the breaths to proceed without our control, like in the Hong So technique?

During the *Hong So* technique, we observe the spontaneous process of breathing without caring whether it is long or short. In fact, during the *Hong So* technique, our breathing lasts only a couple of seconds, and going forward, the breath tends to disappear. Now, how could '*Hong So Breathing*' support the procedure of *Kriya Yoga*? *Kriya* practice gradually leads to a lengthening of the breath and the movement of the current that accompanies it up and down the spine.

In the teachings of Lahiri Mahasaya, it is stated that in the long run one becomes capable of practicing a very advanced form of *Pranayama*: the inhalation and exhalation are extended up to 22 + 22 seconds.

In other words, in this *Kriya Pranayama*, we use a natural breath. But this breath must be slow so that we can mentally chant *Om* six times while inhaling and six times while exhaling. This mental action requires

our breathing to be able to support it. Breathing should be effortless, but it must exist! It's crucial to have a natural breath, but we also need to collaborate to gradually lengthen it.

If you have a very short breath and therefore are not able to mentally pronounce all these *Oms*, then chant them more quickly. Your breath will become longer after a certain number of breaths. Therefore, the *Hong So* technique is unrelated to the *Kriya Pranayama* technique.

What is the best routine?

108 *Kriya* breaths are required. [40 to 50 minutes] After that, you practice the *Yoni Mudra* once in 24 hours, 3 *Maha Mudras*, and then remain calm and concentrated on *Kutastha*.

Even beginners are advised to begin immediately with 108 repetitions as explained. There is no lower number to start with, and there is no recommended progression. Of course, if one is ill, they do not practice at all. And if circumstances beyond one's control prevent one from practicing a larger number, well, this may happen, but it should not become the norm. It is important to understand that the other numbers found in Lahiri's letters to his disciples are very personal instructions. Here we are considering a general advice given to serious *kriyabans* who are in good health. *Yoni Mudra* and *Maha Mudra* are two of Lahiri Mahasaya's most well-known techniques.

As for *Maha Mudra*, there is a variation recommended for those who find *Maha Mudra* too difficult. Lie on your back. Inhale. Raise your legs while keeping your pelvis on the floor. Put your hands under your knees. Maintain your balance on the lower pelvic bones and keep your forehead close to your knees. Exhale. Return to the initial position.

An alternative practice exists for concluding the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*. When the breath is internalized in *Sushumna*, keep your attention on *Kutastha*. With a natural breath, inhale into *Sushumna* with a single mental chant of *Om*, and exhale with another *Om*. Practice this way until you forget yourself and reach the stage of *Samadhi*.

How can I know when it is the right time to produce throat sounds?

It is typical of *Kriya* schools to teach you how to produce strong sounds in the throat from the very beginning of the practice. Their explanation is that loud sounds at the start are beneficial because they create cool and warm sensations in the spine. *Ida* and *Pingala* create these sensations. Being in *Sushumna* does not have anything to do with these currents. If you insist too much on these sounds from the very beginning of *Pranayama*, you may cause problems and lose the magic of the practice.

Allow the throat sounds to occur at a later time. They will be more enjoyable, will capture your concentration, and will help with the procedure. Their appearance will be spontaneous once the breath is long enough. Only the intuition that comes from meditation can help you understand when it is good for you to try to increase the strength of your breath and therefore produce sounds.

Why is it stated: "After entering Sushumna, you will have to use force in Pranayama"?

This is a hint about the *Second level* of *Kriya*. It may happen that before completing the 108 *Kriya* breaths, you are in *Sushumna*. At certain moments, you may feel that the veil of darkness has vanished and you see the splendor of the Divine Light in the center of which is the point of entry for the *Sushumna*. In such a wonderful situation, you will be able to perceive the color of each *Chakra*.

The *Second Kriya* is within this realm. Well, if you find yourself in this situation, it is not necessary for you to abide by the injunction not to exceed the prescribed number of 108. In this case, you can try to apply the instructions regarding this *Second Kriya*.

SOME NOTES ON THE HIGHER KRIYAS

This school claims that the *Kriya* path has 4 levels. There is no higher *Kriya* that is intrinsically different from the *First Kriya* and therefore requires tortuous explanations.

The *Second Kriya* is not another technique to be added to the previous ones, but rather the result of deep practice of the *First Kriya*. The higher levels of *Kriya* are all potentially contained in the *Kriya Pranayama* that you have learned. They are the full revelation of *Kriya Pranayama*. They result from a good execution of it.

According to this school, as a novice, you cannot immediately perceive *Kriya Pranayama*'s majesty. Don't assume that there are secrets that are deliberately concealed from you.

If you take the instructions given to you seriously, you will be guided to discover the deepest aspects of *Kriya Pranayama* without fail.

What is expected to take place during *Kriya Pranayama*? The process of allowing the breath to be natural should be made subtle by constant awareness.

The gaze is internally fixed on the spiritual eye, and the breath is inhaled and exhaled through both nostrils, becoming increasingly subtle until it is almost non-existent. The practice of *Kriya* results in the cessation of breath.

The *First Kriya* begins with normal breathing and then develops into a subtle form of breathing, which is pure *Prana*. The *Second Kriya* involves using a breath that is extremely subtle, which is the life force itself.

Second Kriya

To achieve the dimensions of the *Second Kriya*, the practice of the *First Kriya* must be established at exactly 108 *Kriya Pranayama* twice a day. If you don't have time for both sessions, a daily routine of one session is a must.

If the practitioner succeeds in entering *Sushumna* (which is when they can see the light) and can bring their attention to any part or *Chakra* of the body, it can be concluded that they have entered the second level of *Kriya Yoga*.

This is the time when you will have to exert force in Pranayama to enter Sushumna.

The explanation below will be clear to those who have already entered *Sushumna*, but it will also serve as a reference for those who haven't yet entered.

The *Second Kriya* involves using a subtle breath to pierce the *Chakras* one after the other. Through the power of concentration, you can feel the energy moving and piercing each *Chakra*.

If you can understand the instructions that you will find here, you will be able to fully experience all the majesty of *Kriya Pranayama*, which as a beginner, you were not allowed to understand.

Practical instructions

The *Second Kriya* is called *Kathor Pranayama*, which is only performed after the breath has become almost non-existent.

Allow this almost imperceptible breath to continue on its own while you draw the *Prana* into the *Sushumna* by focusing along this channel. Approach the *Muladhara* and slowly climb up through the spine, millimeter by millimeter. Experience the slow movement of energy from the *Muladhara* towards the second *Chakra*. This happens thanks to the power of concentration and visualization, which have the power to guide *Prana*. This method involves drawing the first *Chakra* into the second *Chakra*, and then the second *Chakra* into the third, and so on. You will experience a great sense of joy as *Prana's* force opens the knots and penetrates each *Chakra*. When you reach the sixth *Chakra*, you will feel a state of calm *Prana* in the upper part of your head. The energy will descend from here with great spontaneity, millimeter after millimeter, returning to the basic *Chakra*.

It takes either a minute or a few seconds to completely go up and down through the *Chakras*. In the beginning, it may take longer to complete a complete round. In a few months, a *Second Kriya* round will have a duration of one minute.

The second *Kriya* is done 10 times, increasing by 10 every 10 days, until we reach a maximum of 200 times.

Other considerations

The *Second Kriya* is, in essence, the *Kriya* of strength. You exert a certain amount of pressure on *Prana*. Bringing *Prana* and breath up requires mental strength. You'll easily obtain the pressure you need.

The *Chakras* will start to show their true nature. The specific energy of each of them will initiate awakening. The *Chakras'* light will begin to appear in *Kutastha*. In the vicinity of *Kutastha* and the center of the head, they are seen as spheres of light.

It is explained that the area from *Muladhara* to *Manipura* is very unstable. Therefore, you will have to apply a lot of force during *Pranayama* to pass through this stage. Practice in this intense way until you reach the third *Chakra*. After reaching the *Manipura Chakra*, the mind will become calm, removing the need for *Prana* force.

The sixth *Chakra's* attractive force will cause *Mind* and *Prana* to start moving upwards automatically. A constant divine white light will be felt by you. As the mind moves towards the sixth *Chakra*, there will be a significant increase in calmness.

We know that Lahiri Mahasaya taught the technique of *Thokar* to help those who practice *Kriya* raise the energy from the first three *Chakras* up to the Heart *Chakra*.

The school we are discussing in this chapter is familiar with the *Thokar* technique, but doesn't think it's necessary.

In the *Kriya* tradition of this school, we are taught that opening a knot (not just the heart knot) requires no physical movement. The knots are bundles of *Nadis* that are untied by the process of the *Second Kriya*, as we have just described. The breath becomes like an arrow that unties the knots and pierces the center of each *Chakra* in the *Sushumna*, making the *Thokar* procedure unnecessary.

The teaching at this school is particularly high. It essentially says: after practicing *Kriya Pranayama*, you have the freedom to choose how to proceed. For instance, you can practice *Thokar* and observe its effects. You can continue with the *Second Kriya* as we have instructed and evaluate its

effectiveness. At the end of this, you could try *Thokar* again and see if it will reveal all the power that Lahiri Mahasaya promised, that is, finally opening the door of *Sushumna*. The same goes for the *Third* and *Fourth Kriya* that we will describe shortly. To summarize, it is up to you to decide when and if you attempt to approach these procedures.

Let's talk about an important topic. Once you have reached the state of the *Second Kriya*, you can pass through the innermost channel of *Sushumna* (*Brahma Nadi*). You can meditate on each *Chakra* for an increasing period of time, from 5 to 30 minutes. The intuition to remain at each *Chakra* for a longer duration to comprehend its meaning and tune into its *Tattwa* develops. The *Tattwas* are the five elements: earth, water, fire, air, and ether.

The path from *Muladhara* to the spiritual eye is where various aspects of divinity are revealed. These aspects are called *Tattwas*. What a *kriyaban* seeks is the "realization" of the meaning of each of them. Each *Tattwa* will provide you with a specific blessing or 'power'. The mind that has completely renounced association with the five *Chakras* settles into a state of perfect concentration, abiding in its natural state. The downward force of attraction is no longer effective, and *Prana* gathers at the point between the eyebrows. Discipline has enabled the incoming and outgoing breath to move from the *Muladhara Chakra* in successive steps towards the sixth *Chakra*. The door of *Kutastha* can be seen. When this happens, a person is prepared for the *Third Kriya*.

Third Kriya

While the *First* and *Second Kriya* are practiced below *Kutastha*, the *Third Kriya* is practiced in *Kutastha*. Above *Manipura*, the mind becomes attracted to a mesmerizing light perceived in *Kutastha*. The eyes and mind become fixed on *Kutastha* with hypnotic attraction. At this moment, one has only one job to do: knocking on the door of *Kutastha*.

The *Third Kriya* involves a deep concentration in *Kutastha* and an intense *Japa* of *Om*.

Practical Instructions

Place 432 *Oms* in *Kutastha* (or at the point in the central part of the head) after completing 200 times of the *Second Kriya Pranayama*. Place these *Oms* in that center "during one single breath." Instead of "place", you can say: "Transform your being into an arrow and enter *Kutastha* 432 times during one single breath." As you proceed, use awareness to make the arrow thinner and thinner.

What does the phrase 'during one single breath' imply? The teacher I was conversing with was incapable of explaining it to me. He simply told

me that we would comprehend it when we were ready to implement it. I started thinking about connecting this number with the *Pratichakra Omkar Kriya* technique I talked about in chapter 8.

432 could represent 36x12, and therefore mentally chanting 36 *Oms* in the *Kutastha* and simultaneously in each *Chakra* going up and down the spine. This is solely an assumption.

During this practice, when your mind and inner vision are firmly fixed in *Kutastha*, you will witness a tunnel at the right moment. Here you will exert a continuous force. The entrance to this tunnel is deep black and is surrounded by divine light, which is guarded by two types of power. The first veil blocks the ability to see the divine Light. The second veil is a deflecting force that makes the mind slip out of the entrance of the tunnel. The tunnel is entered when the mind and inner vision are fixed in the center of this Light. As the entrance expands, the inner world will become ten thousand times more brilliant.

In the center of *Kutastha*, there is a roundness called *Chittakash*. Everything is reflected in this area, making it clear like a mirror. The subtle life force (*Prana*) can be used very intensely to decrease the veil and see this area clearly. A reflection can be seen in the form of an egg, which is black and surrounded by a brilliant light. It also has the appearance of an eye. When you are immersed in this vision, you continue with the perception described in the *Fourth Kriya*.

Fourth Kriya

This practice is known as the *Kriya of the West*. In the previous *Kriyas*, the observer is in the *Medulla*, while the center of attention is in the *Kutastha*. In this *Fourth Kriya*, the position is reversed. The observer is in the *Kutastha* and the center of attention is at the back of the head. For this reason, it is said that while the previous *Kriyas* are *Kriyas of the East*, this last one is a *Kriya of the West*. This marks the start of the *Fourth Kriya*. In this *Kriya*, you are beyond the *Chakras* and beyond the mind. There is no need to work on *Prana*.

Practical instructions

Observe an equilateral triangle enclosed in a circle and meditate on it while entering the *Kutastha*. Repeat 432 *Om*, but forget the *Chakras* in the spine. In this triangle, at its center point, you will find a star called '*Sri Bindu*'. There are also three stars at the corners of the triangle. You will have to pierce the three stars and then focus on the *Mula Chakra*. *Mula* means "Root". In this book, it is the center that I refer to as *Bindu* (see Chapter 6).

Piercing the *Mula Chakra* will allow you to cross the borderline between life and death, leading to the manifestation of divine intoxication.

Immerse yourself in the lake of *Bindu*. The "moment of moments" of life will occur where all veils will be destroyed, resulting in the cessation of all perceptions. You won't be affected by the pain of death or any relationship with the world.

It should be noted that this *Kriya* can be performed without being aware of the triangle and all the described details. Refining awareness and being aware of awareness are enough, in fact. By being aware of awareness, awareness refines and becomes eternal and absolute awareness. In the *Fourth Kriya*, the practitioner immerses themselves in the pure perception of the divine *Sound* and *Light*. The state of *Eternal Tranquility* can be achieved through this practice.

The supreme knowledge will be acquired through this profound meditation. At this moment, you will forget your identity and experience total bliss. At this level, mind and intellect are lost and the individual soul immerses itself in the universal Soul.

These are the explanations I got from this school. The global vision of it is a source of great fascination for me. There is certainly a lot to ponder regarding the *First* and *Second Kriya*. It is a fact that when you begin to familiarize yourself with *Kriya Pranayama*, you tend to operate a kind of 'violence' on the body. You make an effort to imagine a current that rises and then descends inside the spine. This is a reality that perhaps we do not pay attention to but that should always be avoided. For this reason, I believe that the guidelines provided by this school are essential for everyone. If you've already been practicing *Kriya Pranayama* in the traditional way we described in chapter 6, but you're not satisfied with your practice, I suggest conducting a simple experiment. Make an effort to start again by following the prudent and correct method taught by the school mentioned in this chapter. After some weeks or months, it will obviously be possible to resume the practice of *Kriya Pranayama* as previously practiced, but finally with an extremely subtle breath.

Difference between Lahiri Mahasaya's Kriya Yoga (see chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9) and that attributed to the school described in this chapter	
First K. = Kriya Pranayama which takes place in the spine, using the strength of the will	First K. = Kriya Pranayama which takes place in Kutastha, without forcing the energy into the spine.
Second K. = Thokar	Exercises that involve physical movements or breath retention are not taken into consideration. This school is concerned only with reaching the state of calm breath
Third K. = Thokar with long breath retention	
Fourth K. = Raise each Chakra in Kutastha with long breath retention	
Fifth K. = The energy is guided to move along the Tribhangamurari path leaving the breath free	Second K. = The energy is guided to move along the spine in the state of calm breath
Sixth K. = Micro movement	---
Seventh K. Micro movement in Kutastha	Third K. = 432 Om in Kutastha
---	Fourth K. = Reaching the Mula center (Bindu)

CHAPTER 16

HOW I CONCEIVED MY KRIYA ROUTINE

For the past three years, I have put in a lot of effort to complete this chapter. I am sharing the particulars of my current routine, which is intended to induce a state of breathlessness. Several factors caused me to lose this ability in previous years.

I introduced the concept of *Paravastha* in chapter 7. I conveyed that a deeper calming of the breath is necessary to fully enjoy *Paravastha*. To accomplish this, I suggest applying a simple method known as *Mental Pranayama*. When it is used, the *Chakras* appear to be melting.

For several years, I practiced in this manner and, by adding *Japa*, I effortlessly reached a state of breathlessness.

At the ripe old age of 70, I realized that I couldn't experience the state of breathlessness during the final phase of every routine anymore.

Regrettably, what I had described in chapter 3 no longer occurred. I was uncertain if it was the result of the numerous distractions I faced while searching for the *original Kriya* or the physical changes that occur with advancing age.

This awareness led me to start experiments to explore the potential of achieving that state. It was a challenging task. It was a matter of approximately three years until some results were achieved. At the end, I came up with a simple recipe that I am sharing here. It is extremely effective for me and for my body's structure! This routine makes it possible for me to reach the breathless state in excellent conditions and enter the state of *Paravastha*.

I begin by balancing the *Ida* and *Pingala* currents, then I apply my way of realizing the teaching of *Navi Kriya*. Following that, I practice a method to stimulate the *Chakras*. I begin with these short techniques that take a short time, and then move on to the three final techniques.

Here are the phases of my current routine:

[Basic Preparation] *Japa, Bends and Maha Mudra*

[I] *Nadi Sodhana Pranayama*

[II] *Tummo*

[III] *Practice with double breath*

[IV] *Achieving a calm state of breath*

[V] *Uttam Kriya*

[VI] *Micro movements up until the point of breathlessness*

[BASIC PREPARATION] JAPA, BOWS AND MAHA MUDRA

To start my routine, I practice *Japa*. I repeat my *mantra* 108 times in a whispered voice. After this exercise is completed, I let the *mantra* flow mentally and automatically while focusing on other endeavors.

Japa practice is an essential part of my life! As I have already mentioned, I think that when we practice *Kriya Pranayama*, if we have been living our day normally without calming the mind, it is too late to obtain the main result of *Kriya*, that is, the condition of '*calm breath*'.

To me, the only feasible solution is to start calming the mind with *Japa* several hours before starting the routine. If it's not viable, I start *Japa* immediately before *Kriya Pranayama* and try to maintain the state that the *mantra* has established in my mind to the best of my ability.

Japa practice requires at least 20 minutes. To do *Swami Hariharananda's Bows and Maha Mudra*, you need to spend 10 minutes. The remaining tasks, which I will now explain, require at least 50 minutes for a total of 80 minutes - varying a little bit.

[I] NADI SODHANA PRANAYAMA

This practice is very effective for balancing the *Nadis* that flow on the sides of *Sushumna*. This technique is explained in chapter 6. It allows to prepare the ground suitable for the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*. I find it useful, when I practice this technique, at the end of each inhalation, with both the left and right nostril, to practice the three classic *Bandhas*. After this technique I practice *Tummo*.

[III] TUMMO

Inhalation is broken up into three distinct parts. The *Prana* that is entering the body through my nostrils is drawn and directed towards the fifth *Chakra*. It takes approximately 2 seconds to complete the first part of the inhalation. I take a short pause to practice a light *Mula Bandha* and take a short break.

I continue to draw *Prana* from the fifth *Chakra* to the fourth while inhaling. I take a short break and increase the intensity of the *Mula*

Bandha. Following that, I finish the inhalation process, pulling *Prana* from the fourth *Chakra* to the *Dantian*.

The *Dantian* is the size of a ball whose diameter is approximately two-and-a-half inches long. To locate its position one must concentrate on the navel, coming approximately one and a half inches back and below for the same extent.

I maintain my breath in the *Dantian*, increase the power of the *Mula Bandha*, and incorporate *Uddiyana Bandha* and *Jalandhara Bandha*. To put it simply, I contract the muscles of my perineum, pull my abdomen forcefully, and bring my chin down to my chest. I intensify the action of the three *Bandhas* after verifying their correct practice and holding my breath. I will extend the hold for as long as I can.

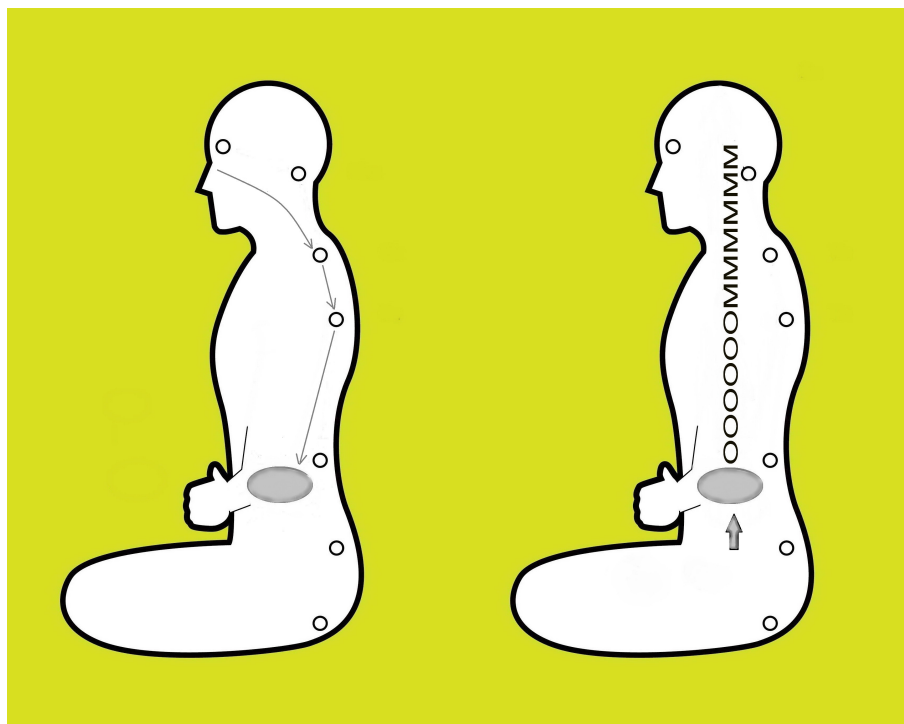


Fig.20 Technique of Tummo

I use a vigorous contraction and compression of the diaphragm from both above and below during the holding. I experience a growing heat in the *Dantian*. When the breath holding is over, the three *Bandhas* are stopped, which results in a prolonged exhalation, which results in the *Prana* entering the *Central Channel* and beginning to rise.

The *Central Channel* is depicted as a tube with a diameter of roughly two centimeters. It originates from the *Dantian* and rises vertically through the body, reaching the top of head ⁴, and comes out at the top,

⁴ Therefore, it is distinct from the spinal canal, which is known as *Sushumna* in *Kriya Yoga*. It is positioned in front of it and flows inside the body.

releasing energy that radiates into the vast space. When the *Prana* rises, it is accompanied by a mental chant of OOO MMM...

Usually, I repeat this practice six times. Appendix n.1 provides an explanation of my high regard for this procedure.

[III] PRACTICE WITH DOUBLE BREATH

Through the nose, a quick inhalation takes place, broken up into two parts: the first part is brief and the second is longer. Following this inhalation, there is a brief breath hold of two seconds, then the breath is exhaled with an open mouth in two distinct parts and produces the sounds 'huh' - 'huhhh'.⁵

The purpose of this action is to stimulate the first *Chakra*, *Muladhara*, by redirecting the energy released during exhalation towards it. The duration of this breath, which entails a double inhalation, a brief pause, and a double exhalation, is five or six seconds.

The same action (double inhalation, pause, double exhalation) is repeated while the focus is on the second *Chakra*. The third *Chakra* is stimulated using the same technique, and once it's done, the fourth, fifth, and *Medulla* are stimulated as well.

The process of descending is slightly more fluid than ascending. The fifth *Chakra* is the beginning, followed by the other *Chakras* below, all the way up to the *Muladhara*. All of these are given a boost again..

When practicing with concentration and a state of inner calm, what has been mentioned may suffice. At the end, it is important to feel a sense of serenity. If there is no perception of this, it is better to perform another cycle. The aim of this practice is to effectively calm the psychological and physical systems while also lengthening the breath.

[IV] ACHIEVING A CALM STATE OF BREATH

This method is very subtle and resembles the *Kriya in loops* introduced in chapter 6, it is fundamentally different in nature.

The primary focus is on the first *Chakra*. A subtle inhalation occurs from the first *Chakra* to the second. Here one tries to perceive once the *Tribhangamurari Micro Movement* (the explanation is found in chapter 9). Then one exhales from the second *Chakra* to the first. Subtle inhalation is taken from the first *Chakra* to the third. A *Micro Movement* is perceived here. A breath is exhaled from the third *Chakra* to the first. One progresses in a similar way with the remaining *Chakras*. That is, one repeats the same process from the first *Chakra* to the fourth. Then from the first to the fifth. And finally from the first to the *Medulla*. A *Micro Movement* is always observed after every inhalation. One repeats the procedure that connects

⁵ Fogging up a pane involves making the specific sound [hΛh] [hΛhhh]

the first *Chakra* with the fifth, then the first *Chakra* with the fourth, with the third, and finally, with the second. The *Micro Movement* is observed after each inhalation, just like before.

The difference with the *Kriya in loops* described in the sixth chapter is in the subtlety, the brevity of these breaths. While in the sixth chapter, I described strong breaths like those of *Kriya Pranayama*, now I describe almost non-existent breaths that tend to disappear. These breaths are like luminous threads that penetrate deeply into the spinal tissue. The *Micro Movement's* various perceptions greatly enhance the depth of this procedure.

Technique [III] combined with [IV] is the best option because it increases oxygen levels in the blood and favors technique [IV]. Due to the fact that both practices require only 4 minutes or a little more, I think it's a good idea to practice cycle [III] + [IV] two more times for a total of 12-13 minutes. This combination has great potential for making the breath more subtle and preparing oneself for an advanced practice of *Kriya Pranayama*.

[V] UTTAM KRIYA

The previous technique is so gentle that I can approach *Kriya Pranayama* in the most subtle way possible. Lahiri Mahasaya talked about *Uttam Pranayama*, which means "*High Pranayama*." I am committed to realizing this *Kriya* by practicing 48 to 60 *Kriya* breaths in a very subtle way, like I have never experienced before! The two previous techniques make this possible for me due to the state of grace they produce. After that, I calmly move on to the final practice.

[VI] MICRO MOVEMENTS UP UNTIL THE POINT OF BREATHLESSNESS

The breath, which was already subtle, is now completely forgotten. The method is to go up and down inside the spinal canal, stopping at each *Chakra* to perceive a subtle micro movements inside it. I keep going up and down in this manner until my breath stops.

During this procedure, one can find themselves in difficulty because one observes the tendency to get distracted. Often one '*touches*' the state of sleep and gets lost in some daydream, returning after a few minutes to the practice that had been interrupted. It's important to stay calm and keep trying to complete the practice.

The last breaths can be compared to a spiritual experience. Often, one experiences the light of each *Chakra*. The consciousness settles into a state of deep calm. This calm is a feeling that cannot be expressed through words. The experience deepens with each passing day. The blissful state becomes more intense!

" No me pidàis que lo explique. Tengo el fuego en las manos " ⁶
(Garcia Lorca)

At the end of this last practice, it is possible to attain the ultimate goal of *Jnana Yoga*, which is to reside in the state where Awareness observes itself. It becomes clear that this consciousness is itself the Divine. In other words *Tat Tvam Asi* – "You are that." *Tat*, the immense, the unpronounceable, the Divine. *Tvam Asi*, "that is you." We are therefore one with the Divine.

Final consideration

To achieve a successful outcome, I had to practice a lot and learn from my mistakes to determine the most appropriate attitude. I think that focusing on the beauty of the practice and developing a positive outlook is the best attitude.

My worship is of a very strange kind. Holy water is not required. No special utensils are necessary. Even flowers are redundant. In this worship, all gods have disappeared, and emptiness has merged with euphoria. (Lahiri Mahasaya)

ALTERNATIVE ROUTINES

Through years of practice, I have determined that it is not appropriate to keep repeating the same routine every day forever. A superficial and hasty approach can be a result of such a choice, which is caused by a desire to complete the meditation routine quickly. Occasionally, I find it advantageous to perform alternative procedures. The routines I am going to describe are intended to improve both the fundamental techniques listed above and other techniques.

I discussed the significance of combining techniques [III] and [IV] in the previous section. In my opinion, a brief practice of them can be an effective way to prepare for the upcoming routines.

⁶ "Don't ask me to explain it to you. I have a fire in my hands."

ROUTINE N.1 IMPLEMENTING THE TUMMO TECHNIQUE

We'll begin by going over part [II] of our schedule. *Tummo* is a component that yields exceptional outcomes. Repeating it will result in a significant impact. The quote I obtained from literature and shared below pertains to the results of increasing the number of repetitions of the *Tummo* breath. Routine n.1 is intended to achieve this purpose

By performing **ten** breathing cycles of *Tummo*, one is able to feel the heat of the flame of a candle in the navel. With the next **ten** breathing cycles, the navel and its surrounding area will be filled with heat. The next **ten** breathing cycles cause the lower body to experience heat. Another **ten** breathing cycles move the heat upward towards the heart region. With these 40 *Tummo* breaths the knot of the heart (*Granti*) melts.

Another **ten** breaths and the flame is moved upward to the Throat *Chakra*. The next **ten** breathing cycles raise the flame towards the *Ajna Chakra*. The last **ten** breathing cycles lead it to the seventh *Chakra*.

40 + 30 breaths is a great result. From now on there is no more practice using the breath. The *Paravastha* state (the real *Paravastha*) totally absorbs the awareness of the person who has reached this elevated state of consciousness. It is explained that this is the way to untie the knot of *Rudra Granti* (or *Shiva Granti*) found in the *Ajna Chakra*.

My opinion is that starting your routine with the techniques [III] and [IV] is a smart move and then focusing solely on *Tummo* practice. An incremental routine is the ideal formula that ensures you maintain a pleasant rhythm and does not require excessive effort. It's advisable to stop as soon as the procedure becomes irritating, of course.

ROUTINE N. 2 DEEPENING OF KRIYA PRANAYAMA

After a short practice of techniques [III] e [IV], we should attempt to practice *Kriya Pranayama* 108 times. Let's give our full attention to the following two points.

1) *Adding Aswini Mudra*

Aswini Mudra is commonly described as contracting the muscles at the base of the spine (anal sphincter) continuously at a rate of roughly two contractions per second. When first learning this technique, it's common to contract the buttocks, perineum, or even the entire pelvic region, but eventually, you'll learn to only contract the sphincter muscles. *Aswini Mudra* is not the same as *Mula Bandha*. *Mula Bandha* is characterized by a

prolonged contraction, not a series of rapid contractions and relaxations like *Aswini Mudra*.

Well, continuous *Aswini Mudra* can be practiced during *Kriya Pranayama* while gradually decreasing the intensity of *Aswini* during both inhalation and exhalation, so that it becomes like a slight internal contraction of the lower part of the spine – It's evident that there's no way to contract the spine, it's just a sensation.

Even though this procedure may seem annoying and disturbing, I assure you that you will quickly become accustomed to it and the results will be quite noticeable. The amount of physical activity is minimal, but enough to form a habit. There comes a point where you have complete confidence that something positive is occurring. The spine's perception is made tangible as it is seen as a silver thread. When this sensation arises, *Pranayama* seems to have its own life. The entire being is filled with an ecstatic sensation and inner luminosity.

2) *Bring Prana and Apana together in the navel region*

This point is a form of internalizing *Navi Kriya*. To bring together the currents of *Prana* and *Apana* in the region of the third *Chakra*, all it takes is a small contraction in the navel area that is almost imperceptible.

When these two points are respected, it is possible to begin thinking about the *Chakras* and chanting *Om* in them. Once we have practiced 36/48 *Kriya* breaths, we proceed to the third stage of *Kriya*. To put it simply, we elevate our center of being to the top of our head and revel in this marvelous experience that embodies perfection itself.

ROUTINE N.3 EXPLORATION OF THE THOKAR PROCEDURE

After a short practice of techniques [III] e [IV], it is possible to choose to practice the *Thokar* technique for a long time, attempting to move at a very slow pace. The goal of our endeavor is to create a feeling of intoxication in the heart *Chakra*. After completing the *Thokar* technique, we move onto the practice known as the *Consummation of Thokar*. It makes use of *Bhramari Pranayama*.

To perform this *Pranayama*, it's important to exhale slowly through your nose while producing a sound similar to that of a bumblebee. There are multiple videos available online that demonstrate this technique. The reverberations of this sound can easily be heard in your head.

Here is how I follow the procedure: I inhale and initiate a long *Bhramari* exhalation by slowly bowing my head forward and directing the vibration towards my heart center. It is important that this exhalation lasts at least 20 seconds.

The *Bhramari* sound amplifies when I lower my chin and strike my sternum (this action is a *Thokar*). The sound at this moment is so loud that it almost appears to be explosive. Repeating the practice different times can increase its impact on the heart.

At some point, one concentrates solely on their heart, realizing that it is not possible to elaborate one single thought. This lesson is highly valuable. This state is said to pierce the knot of the heart and reveal the door to *Sushumna*.

ROUTINE N. 4 MEETING WITH THE MICRO MOVEMENT TRIBHANGAMURARI

The *Micro Movement* requires being detected three times in each of the twelve centers of the *Macro Tribhangamurari* path. As a result, one cycle entails experiencing the *Micro Movement* 36 times. The duration of each *Micro Movement* is approximately 10 seconds, and the duration of a cycle is six minutes. It's quite lovely to have the opportunity to practice three cycles. At the conclusion, one is engulfed in a state of bliss, completely submerged in the depths of the soul.

Once you've practiced the alternative routines for a few days, it's advisable to practice the complete routine, that started this chapter, again. The alternative routines are a great way to learn a lot.

CHAPTER 17

THE KRIYA OF THE CELLS

In this chapter, I go deeper into what I discussed in the previous one about my practice of Paravastha. I describe how I carried out this practice almost unconsciously, using what I call 'Kriya of the Cells'.

The concept of *Paravastha* was introduced by me in chapter 7. The final part of my routine, as described in the previous chapter, namely the practice of procedure [VI] *Micro Movements up until the point of breathlessness*, represents the way in which I now live this *Paravastha*. In fact, *Micro Movement* represents how today I approach the Divine in terms of the sensation of movement. In chapter 14, I discussed how one can get closer to the Divine by using either internal sound (the cosmic sound of *Om*) or light (the internal light perceived in *Kutastha*).

It is now my understanding that one can approach the Divine in a different way, perhaps more difficult to comprehend. I am specifically referring to experiencing *Kutastha Chaitanya* (*Christ consciousness*) or the universal consciousness present in all the atoms of the Universe.

In the past, I had a particular experience with *Kriya Pranayama*, which I called *Kriya of the cells*. Well, I have a strong belief that this experience is related to *Kutastha Chaitanya's* experience. Therefore, I believe it is appropriate to discuss it here.

Two sources sparked my interest in trying the *Kriya of the cells*. The initial task was to study the writings of The Mother and Satprem. It is known that The Mother was a main disciple of Sri Aurobindo and, after his death, in 1951, she continued his research. Well what she calls the "Yoga of the cells" gave me the first inspiration.

Besides it, the study of Taoist *Internal Alchemy* was undertaken.⁷ In this discipline we consider the *Microcosmic Orbit*, where the sexual energy can be transformed into pure love, which in turn leads to spiritual realization. When this practice is mastered, there is a spontaneous occurrence of energetic circulation in the body. The *Macrocosmic Orbit* is the name given to this circulation and it represents the ultimate goal of *Internal*

⁷ I have given a brief description of this mystical path in the chapter 12

Alchemy. The body is said to receive a great amount of energy, which descends like a golden liquid into all its cells.

Time ago, I came across a *Kriya* school that instructed on increasing the energy at the base of the spine while inhaling, move it to the top of your head and allow it to descend slowly into your entire body during an exhalation that took twice as long as the inhalation.

At that school, it is necessary to constantly focus on the sound of breathing and observe the energy rising in the spinal canal during inhalation. Exhalation results in descending not only in the spine but also throughout the entire body.

I quickly realized that once I had finished the recommended number of breaths, it was the perfect time to mentally maintain the same intensity of intention that was present during *Pranayama*.

Of course, it was a question of giving up the precious help provided by breathing and leaving it free. Nevertheless, I wished to implement this plan. For several months, I was involved in that experience and it repeated itself in the years to come. After describing the experience, I will share some important reflections that occurred during that time.

I make it clear that the practice I describe happened primarily while I was outdoors meditating with open eyes and a strong desire to become one with each of the elements of the landscape that was before me. Strangely, I am unable to explain why I did not find *Kechari Mudra* practice useful. It's possible that this method would have isolated me from the surrounding environment, while I aspired to feel one with it. I recount my experience below, highlighting two distinct moments within it.

Introduction

This practice replaces the traditional way of getting air into the lungs with a new method where breath and energy enter through the skin pores. Our objective is to overcome the physical breathing mechanism to reach the cells with consciousness, as there is no air coming out of the nose. The sensation is akin to experiencing fresh air on the body. It is not only a state of well-being, it feels like being in a state of crystallized immobility, perceiving a sense of unlimited security. This process gives a different energy than what we experience during classical *Kriya Pranayama*. It does not move from one point to another. A *static* energy is generated.

[I] The descent into the cells of the body occurs through a long and deep breath

To accomplish this practice, one must whisper a *mantra* for at least 20 minutes to calm the mind. Once this is finished, the practice commences

with a simple *Ujjayi Pranayama*, ignoring the existence of various *Chakras* and paying close attention to the sound of the breath.

During inhalation, the abdomen swells and the navel moves towards the spine when you exhale. The abdominal region experiences an increase in energy as a result of this.

The goal of each exhalation is to discover (or open) an inner path that reaches the cells of the body. The purpose of each exhalation is to infuse the divine into the body. The cells are under a lot of mental pressure. The tiniest particles of vitality in the air should not come out of the nose, but should be directed towards the body - as if countless hypodermic needles were injecting energy and light into the cells. It's a natural occurrence for this exhalation to be long, as long as possible.

It's beautiful to imagine that the subtle sound of exhalation can act as a *mantra*. *Sri Aurobindo* mentioned the power of the *Bija mantra*, the 'sacred sound of the *Rishi*,' and stated that it's 'the cry that breaks the hardest rock.'

...the treasure of heaven
hidden in the secret cave
like the baby of the bird,
inside the infinite rock
(*Rig-Veda*, I.130.3)

A special brightness of joy radiates from this form of breathing! You have the impression that energy can be directed to any part of your body. The second phase begins after 24 breaths done in this way, and it's not easy to describe.

[III] The breath becomes increasingly subtle

During this second phase, you practice various subtle breaths, attempting to make the effort a mental one.

You move up the spinal column and down through the front of the body, feeling a sense of bliss.

When inhaling, you feel the energy reaching the top of your head. As you exhale, the energy is released into the various frontal parts of your body, which you can visualize gradually reaching.

By moving the energy in this way, up the spine and down the body, the bliss becomes stronger and stronger. It takes over and makes breathing unnecessary.

Continue this procedure, making it more subtle and gentle, until you reach complete immobility: everything stops! It will be possible to sustain the life of cells without the need for oxygen. Everything occurs in perfect stillness.

Avoid repeatedly asking yourself whether you are in a state of breathlessness or whether your breath is still present. It's important to comprehend that "*thought*" and "*breathless state*" cannot coexist, meaning they cannot occur simultaneously. It is crucial to give up all thoughts and avoid disturbing the state of great absorption we are in. A beautiful spiritual experience that could arise during our practice could be blocked or prevented by thoughts.

Let us carry in our hearts the poetry of *The Mother's* words when she described the value of descending into the body through various layers of consciousness, until reaching the *Consciousness of the Cells*. This yearning was present in her during her last years on earth. The words she used to describe it had a powerful impact on us.

When you end this practice and realize it's time to return to regular life, you feel completely relaxed. It's a struggle to get up from your meditation mat or seat. However, normal life must resume and continue.

What I can recall about this Kriya form

The simple act of bringing awareness to the exhalation phase of *Pranayama* by visualizing the breath descending to every cell of the body has unexpected outcomes. I noticed that the days following my practice, even when I couldn't go outside because the weather had deteriorated, I had the mental state of a clear Spring day. The beauty of life, like precious wine from a full cup, seemed to overflow from every atom and fill my heart. I felt like for years I had hoped in vain that the Divine would become a part of my life, but never saw any results... and suddenly, I discovered that the Divine had always been present.

Heaven's fire is lit in the breast of the earth
and the undying suns here burn.

(*Sri Aurobindo, "A God's labor"*)

The feeling of beauty and fulfillment was overwhelming, as if an impressionist painter had finally transformed his visionary conception into reality, conveying the impression that the inert substance of the matter he depicted was a mixture of multi-colored light particles, like countless suns radiating in brilliant transparency.

It seemed that this process was capable of destroying every mental prison I had created by myself. The problems that had arisen in my mind, particularly those related to complicated and contradictory plans for the future, became an illusion from which I emerged definitively. Life, which

until then had been full of hardships, now seemed to be moving peacefully towards the future, where I perceived no insurmountable obstacles.

Kriya was practiced in this way multiple times, and each time, after a few days of practice, I noticed a strange effect that I didn't expect.

In reality, I experienced the sensation of being without skin. I'll clarify. Imagine an anthill that has been disturbed: countless ants are moving chaotically. The entire environment in which I lived seemed to be more agitated and sometimes even aggressive.

Occasionally, after a prolonged absence, some friends came to visit me to discuss various issues that they have not been able to resolve. The topics we discussed prompted me to make significant modifications to my attitude. I found myself having trouble facing what appeared to be difficult challenges that I had skillfully avoided until that point. Due to this, I had to abandon my calm state and put my rational abilities to the test. I put in a lot of work to take into account the challenging issues that those individuals brought to my attention.

I was taken aback by a peculiar phenomenon. I had the impression that I was able to perceive, not only through my consciousness but also through my body, what was happening in the consciousness of these friends. I want to make it clear that I am not talking about telepathic perceptions. I am referring to experiencing a state of mind that I believed was not mine, that had no justification, that was totally unrelated to me.

At this point, I began to think that my *Kriya* practice might have had an effect on those people, and that is why they came to me with so many issues! How did this happen and what significance could it hold? It appeared unlikely to me, almost like a daydream. I couldn't determine if my impression was deceiving or if it was a true fact.

Is it possible for me to believe that my spiritual practices had an impact on the reality around me, leading to things happening that would have not happened or in a different way? I had never considered this as a possibility before, but now rationally believe it to be impossible. The thought I was having resembled a figment of my imagination.

It is widely known that the mind excels at clutching at straws, but since these events have occurred repeatedly, I couldn't ignore this phenomenon. I am cognizant of the fact that my writing provokes the most daring *New Age* manias. My determination to be completely sincere led me to describe this particular experience.

Fascinating hypothesis

After some time had passed, I started to ponder the following hypothesis. It's possible that all authentic spiritual paths have a step of 'ascent' and a

step of 'descent'. The 'ascent' phase is commonly understood as the 'mystical path'. The 'descent' phase, on the other hand, occurs when a mystic feels in their heart the suffering and problems of other people and agrees to do something to try to solve them. In the lives of mystics, this last phase is rarely seen as a necessary effect to complete their spiritual path.

It's not simple to accept the concept that one person's spiritual awakening has an impact on those around them.

What are the effects of the spiritual efforts of an individual on those who are in some way connected to him? I didn't think this fact was completely impossible. I began to contemplate the possibility that pursuing spiritual understanding could necessitate acting in ways that are beyond reason's grasp.

I have in mind a common phenomenon that reflects the opposite of what I am trying to describe. Think about the numerous individuals who declare their love for all humanity as their greatest self. They claim that they frequently transmit good vibrations or pious intentions to humanity. Certainly, I am not bothered by this abundance of silly words. I acknowledge that these words and statements are just words, uttered within a banal emotional state of mind that lacks any real meaning.

But when studying the biographies of mystics, we encounter examples of how they accepted to take on the burden of other people's suffering, in order to dissolve it. It brings back memories of *Padre Pio of Pietrelcina's* experience of dying multiple times while being a metaphysical connection to some wounded soldiers who were dying on the battlefield far from home.

Lahiri Mahasaya was also affected. Let us think of that famous episode when he felt like he was drowning in the bodies of people who had suffered a shipwreck in a distant sea. He didn't ask and didn't make an effort to attract this experience to himself. He fully accepted it, and we can hypothesize about the supreme comfort he brought to those unfortunate persons. It is possible to share the pain of others in your body with the aim of diminishing and eradicating it.

Now, Lahiri Mahasaya and other saints are mirrors for us who practice *Kriya Yoga*. It's possible that what happened to the mystics could happen to us someday. Surely, we are not close to the transcendent state of consciousness of Lahiri Mahasaya. Although we may not have the same spiritual realization, devotion, or surrender to the Divine as the saints, we can slowly direct our hearts towards this new dimension of the spiritual path.

Our spiritual journey will fall apart if we constantly and inexorably exclude ourselves from the pain of others. I genuinely believe this.

What we can do then is to try to perfect our *Kriya Pranayama* without any limits. Practicing *Pranayama* with a breath that reaches every cell of our body can bring us closer to the most fascinating dimension of the spiritual realm: that of the Divine that is present in both matter and the consciousness of all human beings.

My belief is that the cells in our body act as portals to this dimension. What will happen when this reality becomes a reality in our lives, not just as a theoretical concept, but as a practical experience that we can physically feel?

Lahiri Mahasaya asserted that the entire universe is contained within the body, and the final Self is the entire universe. It is my belief that it is time to begin comprehending and accepting the implications of this statement!

The Alternative

Sri Aurobindo wrote:

Seeking heaven's rest or the spirit's wordless peace,
Or in bodies motionless like statues, fixed
In tranced cessations of their sleepless thought
Sat sleeping souls, and this too was a dream.
(*Sri Aurobindo, Savitri; Book X - Canto IV*)

What does the expression '... and this too was a dream' imply? It is not possible to lead this life with a mind always focused on enjoying spiritual pleasures or refined emotions, with a heart that is fictitiously open to universal love, but is actually hard and resistant like a stone.

Our achievements may not be viewed as a state of enlightenment, but rather as a chronic state of drowsiness in this situation. Those who aspire to live in a heavenly dimension without any disturbance want to live in an illusion. It may be a golden illusion, but it is still an *illusion*.

Sharing part of the suffering of others may be a difficult experience in the last phase of our spiritual path, as per a universal law. The temporary loss of our spiritual realization may be a result of this event. The only way to conquer this challenging test is through true surrender to the divine.

Encouragement

There is a statement attributed to the mythical *Babaji* (who in turn quoted the *Bhagavad Gita*): 'Even a small practice of this inner religious rite will save you from great fears and colossal sufferings.'

In my view, the contact with the *Collective Unconscious* swamps leads to significant fears and colossal sufferings. The perfection of *Pranayama* with the energy that flows into the cells of the body will surely alleviate any potential suffering we may face.

Is it possible for us to overcome the various layers of darkness that are present within us and in the minds of our brothers? The alternative is to wait until life exerts a strong downward force on us, resulting in us having to accept some physical suffering that requires us to pay attention to our bodies. I believe that focusing intensely on the cells of our body is something that complements and enhances the work of *Pranayama*.

I find it inappropriate for some people who consider themselves spiritual to consider their bodies as unimportant. These individuals are likely to forget the world and get lost in their dreams. What is the explanation for their negative moods and depression? Sometimes they experience the darkest despair.

St. John of the Cross referred to this state as the '*Dark Night of the Soul*.' He stated that these souls feel as if God has abruptly left them; they even doubt the worthiness of their spiritual journey. Although their consciousness is completely turned towards the Divine, they continue to believe that they are sinners, without any possibility of salvation. The absence of light and hope for a long time, even if they feel the desire to express their faith externally, leads them to doubt the existence of God. As a result, they feel impure and lost forever.

It's true, but not as common, that there have been souls who remembered the world and had no other purpose than to alleviate the pain of their fellow human beings, however, they had knowledge of the '*Dark Night of the Soul*.'

It is my belief that learning to guide awareness in the cells of one's body without giving up can mitigate or resolve these sufferings. My belief is that our body is the best means of protecting ourselves from any kind of pain.

When it seems impossible to reconnect with that profound inspiration that once guided us towards the spiritual path, when innocence appears to be lost and we witness an enormous dark wall that blocks every small step towards total consecration to the divine, that is the moment to descend, using the method that is most comfortable for us, towards the cells of the body to encounter that dimension known to very few, which *Mother* evoked when speaking of "abysses of truth and oceans of smiles that lie behind the august peaks of truth."

By perfecting our *Pranayama*, we will approach an experience of incredible beauty: the divine immanence in matter. I believe that *Sri Aurobindo* was referring specifically to this possibility when he wrote:

Now the wasteland, now the silence;
A blank dark wall, and behind it heaven.
(*Sri Aurobindo, from: "Journey's End"*)

Final note: the concept of the Collective Unconscious

The *Collective Unconscious* represents a part of our unconscious that is common to all of humanity. Jung ⁸ introduced a terminology that allows us to explore an aspect of the mystical path that would otherwise be completely foreign, not only to our capacity for expression, but also to understand. Jung discovered that our human psyche consists of multiple layers, one of which is shared with humanity and is known as the *Collective Unconscious*.

Freud saw the Unconscious as a storehouse of repressed contents that we cannot recall to consciousness due to an almost automatic act of will. Jung discovered a deeper level: the *Collective Unconscious*, which connects all human beings through a deeper layer of their psyche. The influence that the collective unconscious has on our lives is, on occasion, vital! When we feel helpless when confronting difficult problems, the deepest layer of our unconscious mind is present and enables us to connect with the entirety of human experience, a massive repository of objective wisdom that contains all possible solutions. This can save us!

An innumerable number of '*Significant Coincidences*' is a typical outcome of contacting the *Collective Unconscious*. We cannot even imagine how many ways they happen. To give a simple explanation of what it is, let's compare it to causality – which acts in the direction of the progression of time and connects two phenomena that occur in the same space at different times – the existence of a principle is hypothesized (a-causal) which connects two phenomena that occur at the same time but in different spaces.

It's important to emphasize that they have a meaning, a sense that connects them and triggers a strong emotional response in the observer. If two events happen simultaneously but in different spaces, it is obvious that causality

⁸ In my view, Jung's discoveries are valuable for comprehending the mystical path - perhaps more than any other concept formulated during the 20th century. Even though he was cautious in his statements, the scientific community didn't forgive him for dealing with matters that weren't considered part of psychiatry – alchemy, which seemed an absurdity, the world of myths, which were considered a meaningless imagination, and above all, the great value he placed on the religious dimension which he considered something universal, fundamentally healthy, and not, as others would have preferred, a pathology. The enthusiasm for his writings persists today, particularly among those who deal with spiritual or esoteric subjects.

(the first causing the second or vice versa) is not possible. There would be nothing strange about these events in and of themselves, except one fact: the observer regards their occurrence as a significant coincidence, a near-miracle, something the universe wants to communicate to him. The observer is deeply touched by what is perceived as the mysterious side of life.

It's like the world is speaking to you when this happens. If it happens and you notice it, you must not lose your common sense and begin to believe that you are endowed with extraordinary powers. It is not about telepathy or clairvoyance... it is something much deeper. Your eyes are being opened to the wonders and subtle laws of this universe.

DISCUSSIONS WITH STUDENTS OF PY'S CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

The main topics I will address in this chapter will be the ones I talked about with individuals who adhere strictly to Master PY's teachings.

[I] INTRODUCTION

This chapter is intended for individuals who are committed to moving forward on the *Kriya* path by utilizing only the techniques that can be obtained from organizations that disseminate PY's teachings. These devotees do not think it's necessary to mix PY's techniques with other procedures, except for the *Kechari Mudra* teaching mentioned in PY's writings, which he certainly practiced.⁹ They view themselves as his followers and assume that adopting other teachings is equivalent to not demonstrating trust in his teaching.

During my pursuit of PY's teachings, our meditation counselor explained that disloyalty to the *Guru* and his organization was the ultimate evil. The term 'disloyalty' was used by her even when referring to reading what people who had left the main organization wrote about *Kriya Yoga*.

After my book was published online, I had an intense email exchange with various PY seekers. After making it clear that they did not approve of my decision to describe so explicitly the techniques of Lahiri Mahasaya's *Kriya Yoga*, they inquired about my ability to assert that PY had simplified or modified certain technical details of *Kriya Yoga*. This chapter contains the answer to their question.

I met some of them. I came to the realization that their concern was to find out if there was anything crucial in *Kriya Yoga* that was not mentioned in the correspondence course, if there was a technique that they were unaware of, but that PY only shared with certain disciples.

Those *kriyabans* were highly committed, sincere, and highly motivated. There was never any nonsense that came from their mouths. On the contrary, I listened to them very carefully when they challenged some of my imaginative interpretations of *Kriya Yoga*. Many, not for pure and simple demonstration, have the ability to quote certain sentences from PY's writings by heart. They had read and reread those texts multiple times, in an effort to decipher their profound meaning.

⁹ These techniques are slightly different from those taught by *Lahiri Mahasaya*. I don't give a detailed description here, but I can freely comment on them based on my personal experience – for what it's worth. It is my assumption that the reader has knowledge of them.

Their extraordinary dedication to the regular practice of *Kriya*, twice a day left me positively impressed. At times, they express dissatisfaction with their practice due to its lack of depth, but they have never neglected it. It became evident that their pursuit of the *Kriya* path was not motivated by esoteric curiosity or the need to find an alternative treatment for anxiety, depression, not for developing the potentials of the mind, but for one reason only: to walk the Spiritual Path so beautifully portrayed in PY's autobiography. It was evident to me that they approached *Kriya Yoga* with an attitude of genuine devotion or aspiration towards Spiritual Reality.

I have not met anyone who based their practice on the belief that the evolution of the person develops by one year for each *Kriya* breath. They did not deal with this "spiritual mathematics." Some proceeded in one way, some in another. They proceeded with a strong motivation that came from their hearts, not abstract mental reasoning, and even less from *New Age* fantasies.

We discussed a variety of topics. As time went on, many things began to become clear. I am trying to express my thoughts here after organizing them.

[III] PY'S PERSONALITY

These researchers gave me the chance to share my idea about Master PY with them. But let me introduce an important concept. In recent years, I have come to understand that the spiritual dimension cannot be reached through our human reasoning, which is guided by the study of sacred scriptures and religious texts. Spiritual reality is achieved by experiencing the ecstatic state through meditation or rare events.

Before talking about a person like PY, I think it is useless to report what I learned about any indications regarding PY's previous lives or possible future ideas of his possible reincarnations.

I don't care about the various revelations he made in this regard because they only serve to encourage fruitless mental activity.

I do not give thought to whether he was a perfect *Avatar* or a human with the common limitations of humans. With my friends, I only shared a general idea of his personality.

We are familiar with what is described in his Autobiography. In practice, there are three aspects of PY that are worth discussing. The first aspect was what characterized his childhood and youth in India. The second was that of the yogi lecturer who spread his teachings in the United States until his

return to India. And finally, the third aspect was that of the great Master who spent his last years in the United States after the death of his Master, Sri Yukteswar.

We had a general idea of **the first aspect**. His spiritual aspirations led him to the feet of many saints, both before and after meeting with his *Guru*. We also discovered his curiosity about esotericism and his various experiences with the possibilities of the human mind, even with regard to the possibility of contacting disembodied souls. We knew how PY completely renounced these last experiences. Nevertheless, every experience he had in his spiritual quest became the foundation of what he later taught in the United States through conferences, books, and correspondence-based material. Regrettably, his Autobiography lacks details on his encounter with the *Radhasoami* movement and the huge impact it had on him. I will discuss this fact shortly.

The second aspect of PY, as revealed by those who knew him personally or by researchers who carefully examined the accounts of what transpired during his lectures. It is the story of a *yogi* who introduced Westerners to the principles of ancient *Vedic* philosophy and *Hinduism*, which were integrated with *Christianity*.

We learned with amazement, combined with some perplexity, that he sometimes appeared in public accompanied by characters who had made a favorable impression on him and who displayed their seemingly miraculous powers. In his numerous lectures, he demonstrated his mastery of the mind's control over the body and addressed every aspect of using willpower in everyday life, including health and work... Throughout this period of intense activity, he worked to publish teaching materials that were mostly spiritual, but presented in science using language fitting for the present age.

We learned about **the third aspect** of PY through the stories told by his main disciples. This pertains to the period when he gradually distanced himself from the general public. He spent his day meditating and dictating his interpretations of significant spiritual texts, such as the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Gospels*, and *Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat*. In these years, he was the *Guru* who carried out a divine mission as a universal Master without a strong commitment to any particular religious faith. We were most impressed by the fact that he spent several hours conversing with the Divine, who appeared to him as the *Divine Mother*.

This aspect was the most precious and dearest to each and every one of us. We expressed our deep appreciation to this Master for providing us with his wonderful Autobiography and Correspondence Lessons.

His writings have given a decisive direction to our existence. Perhaps we could have found the spiritual path without this book, but how long would we have had to struggle to learn from various sources the most diverse methods of meditation before discovering anything that resembles the fantastic *Kriya Yoga* that he had so enthusiastically told us about!

I was aware of the changes in my life after reading and rereading this book and practicing its teachings for many years. Each of the friends who regularly practiced his teachings could express the same opinion. Our sharing led to our agreement on this.

[III] ESSENTIAL CLARIFICATION

A few decades ago, I had to deal with a difficult situation. A group of friends went to a couple of PY *Ashrams* in India and conversed with monks who resided in this organization. Some of them provided me with perturbing information. It is claimed by them that the *Higher Kriyas* practiced in these places are not the same as the techniques we practice based on the correspondence course! I found all of this to be very unlikely.

I am confident in what a friend told me. He had requested an Indian monk disciple of PY to review his *Kriya* in a formal manner. He mentioned that the monk was taken aback by the fact that the request included a review of the *Higher Kriyas*. This was something that happened rarely. During my friend's explanation of how he practiced the *Second Kriya*, the monk seemed to lack understanding of the procedure my friend was referring to. There was an immediate sense of embarrassment. The monk regained his composure and presented a general explanation on the energy flow in the spine and meditation in general.

The next day, the monk wanted to talk to my friend again. He expressed his apologies for displaying obvious perplexity when listening to my friend. He mentioned a fact that was very specific: it was a shock to the entire organization when PY left his body. There are still many things that need to be decided. The correspondence course was still in progress. Some parts of it may need to be reconsidered in the future. The monk suggested that he had received something that was slightly different from what my friend had received. However, he concluded that people who sincerely feel they are disciples of PY should always abide by the instructions received from his organization. The spiritual path will move towards dissolution if one does not have sincere trust in their *Guru*. He urged my friend to faithfully adhere to PY's teachings and put into practice what is written in the correspondence course.

Of course, the monk couldn't say anything else. From my perspective,

individuals who had been initiated into a *Higher Kriya* in the pure tradition of Lahiri Mahasaya lived in that *Ashram*. They didn't restrict themselves to studying only the lessons of the correspondence course. It's possible that the monk had received the original *Second Kriya* and had never studied the one taught in the correspondence course.

It's crucial to share a piece of information with the reader that answers the question that some ask: Is it true that PY altered *Kriya's* techniques? The answer is that PY brought to the West the essential core of Lahiri Mahasaya's *Kriya* and **added to it** the teachings of the *Radhasoami* path that I spoke about in chapter 12. The reason his organization teaches *Hong So, Om*, and a very particular form of *Second Kriya* is due to this reason.

The *Radhasoami* teaching was introduced to PY by Sri Charu Chandra Basu, who was the brother of his brother-in-law Sri Satish Chandra Basu and had a home very close to his own. Charu Baba shared with him the main aspect of the meditation techniques used in the *Radhasoami* movement. It is also known that his teacher, *Sri Yukteswar*, was initiated into the *Radhasoami* religious movement.

The **Sant Mat** path's meditation practice of **Surat Shabd Yoga** (*Meditation of Inner Light and Sound*) was introduced to Master PY. It is believed that this event took place sometime between 1900 and 1910.

The young PY devoted himself with absolute fervor to that discipline and within a short time, he was absorbed in the experience of listening in ecstasy to the *Divine Sound* and perceiving the *Divine Light*, and was overwhelmed by it.

Because the spiritual life of the young PY was deeply rooted in the altar of his heart, that *Light* remained unchanged throughout his life and the depth of that experience always remained in his awareness in both the easy and difficult situations of his existence.

It is true that PY has been a follower of Lahiri Mahasaya's teachings since he was a child. He made a commitment to practice the initial phases of *Kriya Yoga* that he had received from his father. He always thought that the experience of *Sound* and *Light* was an essential part of *Kriya Yoga*, so it wasn't just a preparatory activity. PY had such a passion for this practice that it appears in certain writings published in the United States that he considered it to be the primary aspect of his teaching. This was a very concrete fact, and those friends with whom I spoke about it accepted my conclusions without reservation.

[IV] DISCUSSION ON TECHNIQUES FROM RADHASOAMI

I'll attempt to summarize what we talked about with these friends briefly, beginning with the three techniques from *Radhasoami*.

Hong So Technique

With these researchers, I attempted to discuss whether PY's introduction of mantra *Hong So* instead of traditional *So Ham* was a mistake - to be precise, *Sa* is inhaled while *Ham* is exhaled. This is also included in the ancient *Yoga* texts. It is recommended that you listen to the breath sound and recognize that it is precisely *Sa Ham*. It has been observed that when the breath settles down, this sound is heard in the *Kutastha* and eventually transforms into the sound of *Om*.

It's evident that we couldn't find an answer to this question. Instead, we talked about the fact that after the *Kriya* proper (and possibly after *Jyoti Mudra*), it is possible to practice this technique on the spine.

I suggested two reflections on the fundamental technique:

a) The importance of not establishing a rhythm in *Hong So*'s mental chanting is something we should discuss first. Mentally chanting this *mantra* while following a rhythm will always keep the rhythm going. Your mind will never be capable of bringing you to the state of calm breathing. It's important to avoid the constant rhythm of the chant: "*Hong So, Hong So, Hong So, Hong So...*" that repeats like the repetitive clatter of steel train wheels!

If the body is in the physiological condition of not breathing for long periods, the rhythm must not allow the process of inhaling and exhaling to continue unimpeded. If you do not allow pauses to exist, they will NEVER exist and you will never realize that you are in the condition to live the liberating experience of being in the state of breathlessness.

So you must be fully aware of each pause. It's necessary for you to accept it, respect it, and immerse yourself in it, regardless of how short it lasts!

b) The pause that occurs after inhalation differs from the one that occurs after exhalation. When breathing normally, the tendency is to exhale immediately after inhalation. When inhaling, the rib cage expands, even if very slightly, and therefore, there is an elastic force, no matter how small, that tends to be released immediately at the end of inhalation. Practicing the *Hong So* technique well means not allowing the natural reflex of exhaling as soon as inhalation is completed, which can make a pause (even very brief) impossible. It is essential to wait gently and without forcing for the exhalation impulse to appear naturally after inhalation. Feeling this impulse is essential. Many people are unaware of this detail. They believe that waiting for this impulse means controlling the breath, which is contrary to the main command of the *Hong So* technique: to let the breath

be natural. We simply state that the pause must be capable of happening. Eliminating this possibility from the start is not the right thing to do. Exhaling occurs whenever you feel the urge to do so.

As for practicing this technique in the spine, we observe that you can visualize your breath rising and falling in the spine with *Hoooong* and *Soooo*. The breath is not under control - it is free.

You have the option to continue doing this for a few minutes. When the breath is so short that the procedure seems to disappear and become nothing, you can try to feel this short breath as if it were happening in each *Chakra*. A short, almost invisible breath occurs in the *Muladhara* and is combined with the sweet singing of *Hong* and *So*. The sound of this breath is similar to a peaceful vibration in a calm mind. Then you put your concentration on the second *Chakra*: another breath occurs here, then another breath occurs in the third *Chakra*, and so on up and down the spine, until there is no more breathing.

If you practice in this way, a 'virtuous circle' between inner calmness and reduced oxygen needs begins. This results in a remarkable outcome, even for those who believe they are just inexperienced beginners. Flying inside the spinal tunnel will lead you into a state of heavenly tranquility. In time, you will realize the truth echoing in the words of a great disciple of PY: "*I have learned to live by inner joy.*" (J.J. Lynn)

Om Meditation Technique

Despite some people's skepticism, the *Om* meditation technique is effective. If you practice it as instructed, you will succeed: in the recommended position, with elbow rest, closing your ears as directed, with no wicks to close your ears, and mentally chanting *Om, Om, Om...* maintain a complete commitment to internal listening for as long as possible, without ever being discouraged.

Often your hands go numb and you can't feel them anymore. That's the moment to proceed undaunted. Usually, you don't recognize the precise moment you start hearing the internal sounds. The experience is that you come to the realization that you've been listening to them for a while and don't know how you didn't notice. I believe that the reason for this is that the internal sounds do not appear when the mind continues to work with thought, but only when it is completely empty, even if it is empty of the consciousness of the ego, or even of the fact of performing a certain *Yoga* technique. When you reach total emptiness, it may seem like you have entered a state that resembles sleep, but the repetition of the *mantra* has resulted in a change, then you are surprised by the inner sounds and gradually become aware of them.

Great inner experiences are produced by this practice. Dedicating sufficient time to this technique is a must. I am of the opinion that there is no need to follow any other procedure after the *Om* technique.

Considerations on the Second Kriya of PY

Our conversations frequently focused on the *Second Kriya* of PY. It's simple to explain this. For many *kriyabans*, a moment of crisis occurred with their organization when their request to obtain a seminar on the *Higher Kriyas* was refused in an incomprehensible and anachronistic manner.

The meetings organized to review basic teachings (*Hong So*, *Om* technique, and *Kriya proper*) were always a source of inspiration. The disappointment stemmed from the lack of a similar opportunity in the *Higher Kriyas* field.¹⁰

The fact that this technique is not the same as the *Second Kriya* as handed down by tradition has caused confusion among some students. I have come across individuals who have abandoned the practice of this technique without fully investigating its potential. The introduction of an intermediary technique by their *Guru* between the *First* and the *authentic Second Kriya* led to a serious conflict.

Perhaps they came to talk to me because of this. It's possible that they hoped I could clarify a certain discomfort they had.

It was explained that the true *Second Kriya* is the *Third Kriya* of PY, while the *Second Kriya* of PY is a meditation technique that is not based on any form of *Pranayama*, but on focusing on the *Chakras*, try to pinpoint their physical and astral locations. This technique is a step forward from the *Om* meditation technique. It is possible to hear the internal sounds and sense the spiritual light that emanates from each *Chakra*. In my opinion, there is no doubt that PY learned it from the *Radhasoami* tradition.

It's possible for a practitioner to have difficulty seeing either the astral sounds of the *Chakras* or the colors of each of them on the *Kutastha* screen for a long time. One must prepare to do very hard work before obtaining tangible results. I've never encountered a *kriyaban* who has told me that he practices this technique regularly over the years.

¹⁰ I know that recently a couple of organizations that spread PY's teachings have shown that behaving in this way is not good, and therefore they regularly hold live classes on *higher Kriyas*.

Let's endeavor to comprehend the magnificence of PY's *Second Kriya*. This technique has a profound effect on you, even if it doesn't produce immediate effects. I am of the opinion that mastering *Kriya Pranayama* and facing PY's *Second Kriya* with unwavering patience is a project of considerable value.

What is the significance of 'unwavering patience?' In the past, I was informed that a monk from my organization who was considered to be highly experienced stated that the proper practice of *Second Kriya* usually necessitates concentration for around 20-30 minutes on each *Chakra*. Only in this way would these centers be perceived.

I was taken aback by this statement and dismissed it as nonsense. To face it with patience, it's important to practice correctly and avoid making the great mistake that the monk recommended.

The fundamental problem with this technique is that many do not understand that it does not consist of meditating on the *Chakras*. The *Radhasoami* movement disapproves of doing this.

The technique consists of simply feeling the position of each *Chakra* internally. Once the position is recognized, one moves on to the next *Chakra* and so on.

In my opinion, if you devote 15 to 30 minutes to this technique, it will lead to a profound inner transformation.

By moving the center of concentration from *Chakra* to *Chakra*, one gains the ability to move through the spinal tunnel. The experience will allow one to travel along the entire spine. The practice of *Kriya Pranayama* will be continuously refined through this method. As *Kriya Pranayama* improves, you will feel like you are flying through different regions of the inner sky. The sound of *Om* can be heard without closing one's ears during *Kriya Pranayama*. In each *Chakra*, the *Om* vibration will have a slightly different tone.

The *Second Kriya* of PY is the deepest procedure to be practiced in the last part of life after such an exceptionally enriching experience of *Kriya Pranayama*. When you fully dedicate yourself to this practice, you will experience a level of devotion that will surprise you.

[V] DISCUSSION ON TECHNIQUES OF LAHIRI ORIGIN

Our discussion should now focus on the techniques that are at the heart of Lahiri Mahasaya's *Kriya Yoga*.

Some reflections on PY's First Kriya

It's advisable to start the meditation routine with *Maha Mudra* followed by *Kriya proper*. From my experience, it is advised to practice the *Hong So* and *Om* techniques after practicing *Kriya proper*. The researchers I spoke with were quite clear about this fact, even if it seemed to contradict the advice given by the organization.

I found that *Kriya Pranayama* is effective, regardless of whether you practice it with your mouth open, half-closed, or closed. In order to begin the practice, one can open the mouth for a certain number of breaths and then close it for an equal or greater number of breaths.

It seems that PY had a very clear idea that a *kriyaban* should not continue breathing through their mouth forever but should progress towards *Kechari Mudra*.¹¹

As for *Kechari Mudra*, I know that some *kriyabans* had achieved it.¹² I am aware that a few individuals, even though they were able to practice this *Mudra*, abandoned it. It's possible that they wanted to avoid losing the strong spinal sensations that are felt when practicing *Pranayama* with your mouth open.

The fact is that by practicing with the mouth closed and the tongue in *Kechari Mudra* (even *baby Kechari*), the sound is bound to become clean and beautiful, like that of a flute. The sound of a flute is felt after prolonged practice when the spine is clean, like an empty tube.

Kriya proper has two variants, one taught in 1930 and later modified by PY, which is now widely used. In AOY, there is a description of *Kriya* that matches the first version perfectly: 'The *Kriya Yogi* mentally moves his vital energy up and down, around the six spinal centers'. This sentence does not match the currently given procedure. To conclude the discussion on *Kriya Pranayama*, there is no question that PY's instruction on this procedure is highly valid, even though it's natural to continuously perfect it.

¹¹ This belief is based on my practical experience. When I tried to increase the number of *Kriya Pranayamas* while keeping my mouth open, after 60 repetitions of *Kriya Pranayama*, I developed such nervousness that I could not sit anymore. I had to keep practicing standing. I comprehended at that moment that this practice couldn't continue in this manner.

¹² PY in his writings and talks has given the definition of *Kechari Mudra* without providing any practical exercises to achieve this *Mudra*. I know that in the new edition of the correspondence lessons there is much more on how to practice *Kechari Mudra*.

I am pondering why this Master didn't come up with a set of lessons to be studied at a certain time after the initiation to complete the explanation of the *First Kriya*. To enhance the practice of this vital technique, many details are required. I have no doubt that he had a thorough understanding of these details and consistently applied them. In my estimation, he had a plan to give these details, but he was unable to do so due to lack of time. The inclusion of an important piece of information in the new edition of the lessons made me extremely happy. Mentally chanting *Om* on each *Chakra* along the spine during *Kriya* practice is suggested as an optional practice.

Some reflections on PY's Third Kriya

I shared a really fascinating fact with my friends. The practice of PY's *Third Kriya* could be beneficial for *kriyabans* if they precede it with an incremental routine without head movements. Only later should they face the complete technique by practicing a second incremental routine of it.¹³

These researchers had no knowledge of the concept of incremental routine. I explained to them its importance in relation to any *Kriya Yoga* technique.

To practice the *Third Kriya*, you must learn how to experience a long and deep breath that passes through *Chakra* after *Chakra*, hence the reason for this advice.

From my perspective, it's beneficial to concentrate solely on the fact that one's consciousness learns to move along the spinal tunnel when dealing with this technique. The ability that is achieved after months or years of *Kriya proper* is good to use in guiding awareness in the first *Chakra*, then in the second *Chakra*, and so on... *Chakra* after *Chakra*, up to *Kutastha*, and then backwards to *Muladhara*. In order to achieve this, you must be in complete immobility while mentally repeating the 12 syllables of the typical *mantra* of the *higher Kriyas* of Lahiri Mahasaya. The breath is calm, very subtle, and almost imperceptible. If the breath seems too calm, almost imperceptible, this is not an indication of incorrect practice but of correct practice.

In my experience, it is very helpful to gradually increase the number of repetitions. I started with 25 repetitions once a day for two weeks. For another two weeks, perform 50 repetitions per day. Then I practiced 75 repetitions per day for two weeks, then 100 repetitions per day, and so on, increasing by 25 repetitions per day until I practiced 200 repetitions per day for two weeks. And then? After that, one is prepared for the actual

¹³ To clarify the concept of incremental routine, see chapter 13 in the third part of the book.

Third Kriya procedure. To clarify, one is now prepared to benefit the most from employing the *Third Kriya* procedure as described in the lessons.

At this point, you can just keep enjoying the 12 repetitions of the complete *Third Kriya* practice. But, why not try starting incremental practice with this last technique, using the exact same number of repetitions and pattern?

It's obvious that you can do it! Gentle head movements are essential to avoid stressing the cervical vertebrae.

The power that this plane can unleash is beyond words. If one doesn't have the courage to go beyond the 12 prescribed repetitions of *Third Kriya*, they won't be able to appreciate the power contained in this technique! It's a good idea to increase the number of repetitions, without fear. As you practice subtle *Pranayama* after each session, you will observe the spontaneous movement of the spine's energy.

These friends believed that once the *Third Kriya* was mastered, the *Fourth Kriya* would manifest itself with all its power, so I didn't discuss it with them. Although I am familiar with the teachings of the correspondence course, it is still not clear to me what was, according to PY, the best action to take or the attitude to cultivate after having completed the daily practice of these procedures.

[VI] REASONS FOR A CHOICE

I had to ask myself a burning question after meeting with these good and genuine people. I realized that, despite the painful hesitations, I had abandoned the idea of following PY's teachings to their full extent. The teachings of Lahiri Mahasaya were approached by me after a difficult search. Now I had to reflect a lot to have a clear vision of what had happened in the depths of my being and to understand the reasons for this choice of mine.

I believe that this detachment began to occur when I tried to review the lessons of the correspondence course. My way of thinking began to feel weighed down by much of those teachings, which I perceived as an unnecessary burden. This portion of the teachings did not assist me in achieving what I was seeking. In reality, I had to seek out other valuable teachings outside of the Lessons.

Understanding the value of *Japa*, a simple prayer repeated softly many times, was crucial to mastering *Kriya* practice and attaining a state of breathlessness. The importance of this practice was not communicated to me through the organization's material, but rather through the book *The Way of a Pilgrim*.

The book *Purana Purusha*, which I talked about in the first part of this book, led me to disconnect from PY's teachings. I was happily

shocked by the simple yet explosively illuminating vision of the spiritual path that Lahiri Mahasaya expressed. I comprehended the simplicity and clarity of the principles needed to tackle *Kriya Yoga* practice. Anything beyond that essential core of ideas was considered surplus by me.

I'll sum up what I understood in a few words:

[1] After reflecting on the concept of *Guru*, I came to the realization that it is not actually a particular human being, but rather the *inner Guru* that exists within each of us. Lahiri Mahasaya in fact said: 'I am not the *Guru*; the true *Guru* is God himself. I am nothing more than a mirror to demonstrate what you can achieve with *Kriya*. Once you have grasped this, discard the mirror.' This instruction does not align with what the organization I followed supported.

[2] I have made the decision to give up on some of PY's teachings that go beyond the scope of pure *Kriya Yoga* of Lahiri Mahasaya. I feel great nostalgia for the *Radhasoami* techniques that I learned from PY. Right now, I'm not feeling the urge to take them up again with the same intensity as I used to.

[3] Now to minor matters: in my opinion, it is not appropriate to dedicate ourselves to developing the power of will and concentration to achieve success in business and other fields that are important to us. To live a life filled with noble values, we must rely solely on the practice of *Kriya Yoga*.

[4] Among the many initiatives of PY that I look at with detachment and perplexity is the decision of PY to create a monastic order with very strict rules regarding chastity. It seems to me that this is distant from the teachings of Lahiri Mahasaya. According to his instruction, a *yogi* who takes on the responsibility of creating a family is the healthiest and safest way to fulfill their duties while also being capable of focusing on meditation through the valuable gem of *Kriya Yoga*.

It is true that many people view the ideal of monastic life as the best way to pursue spirituality, but it has also been seen that for many honest and sincere devotees, this ideal turned into a bitter disappointment.

To conclude, I want to highlight that the organization founded by PY carries out the important mission of spreading *Kriya Yoga* and this is a very valuable and noble action, and therefore this organization deserves all our respect. I want to reiterate that my spiritual path began with the teachings of PY, and for this reason I have an unshakeable sense of gratitude towards this Master.

APPENDIX

I will give some minor information about the practice of Kriya Yoga in this appendix. These topics may be interesting, but I didn't believe it was appropriate to discuss them in earlier chapters.

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APPENDIX N.1 THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TUMMO TECHNIQUE

For several years now, I have been able to blend the theoretical concept of *Kriya Yoga*, a practice from India, with that of *Nei Dan*, a practice from China. During numerous experiments, I observed which practices produced concrete results and was able to achieve this blending. After understanding this dynamic, I became convinced that a vision that aligns with human reality must recognize the significance and effectiveness of these practices.

Sushumna, Chakras, the value of Pranayama and Thokar, and Navi Kriya have all become fundamental concepts in my *Kriya Yoga* practice. My preference is to live *Navi Kriya* in a more genuine manner, enriching it with *Nei Dan*'s teachings. As for *Nei Dan*, I am completely in agreement with the significance of the *Microcosmic Orbit*, the reality of the *Dantian*, and the concepts of the '*Control channel*' and '*Function channel*'. It is tangible and perceptible that these practices are effective. I don't believe it would be possible for me to ignore their reality.

My routine involves regularly practicing *Tummo*, which I consider as if it were *Kriya*. I think that this practice is better than *Navi Kriya*, and no one can change my mind. In chapter 16, I give a comprehensive description of this technique. I think that *Kriya* and *Nei Dan*, two great paths, may have been influenced in some way by local traditions throughout history. Direct practice allows us to correct things and reject unjustified changes. Earlier, I questioned if my decision was correct. Today, I have no longer doubted it.

An American researcher explained the technique of *Tummo* to me. He mentioned having studied a technique known as '*Third Level*' or '*Third Cobra Breath*' at a *Kriya* school. Although he had practiced the First and Second Levels of this school without great results – the first level was *Kriya Pranayama*, the second level was a simple form of *Thokar* – he could never have imagined the impact that the *Third Level* would have on him.

He began to practice it enthusiastically, resulting in exceptional results. The technique he shared with me instantly made me realize that it was *Tummo*, a practice I already knew but had not fully grasped its importance. He informed me that in the beginning, the teacher advised him to limit the number of repetitions per day. As his skill level increased, however, he began to increase the number of repetitions he practiced to even one hundred in one session. His life was dramatically changed by this technique.

There were indeed significant events that took place: daily ecstasies, profound joy, and an expansion of his emotional range. Gradually, the practice started to interfere with his daily obligations and eventually faded away from his life. For approximately five years, the ecstasies and other effects that had become part of his daily life completely vanished.

After hearing his testimony, I made the choice to practice this technique on a daily basis.

Some remarks

Kriya Yoga books contain this sentence: 'The navel is where *Samadhi* comes into being.' The *Kriya* vision entails intensifying the *Samana* current in the belt zone to direct consciousness towards the *Sushumna* channel, resulting in an ecstatic state. The *Dantian* region is where the *Samana* current originates.

In chapter 12, we mentioned that the *Hesychasts*, with their heads bowed and their eyes directed towards the abdomen, concentrate on the navel, trying to locate the 'place of the heart.' The same event is hinted at by various spiritual traditions!

APPENDIX N.2 A PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE VARIATION OF NAVI KRIYA

When I decided to start an incremental routine of *Navi Kriya*, I opted to utilize a variation of it that was derived from the tradition of ancient *China*.

Effective work on the *Dantian* is what this technique involves. The *Tummo* technique description (chapter 16) already explains how to locate the *Dantian*.

A profound value lies in entering the *Dantian* with awareness. The

intensity of the attention in *Dantian* is significantly higher than that produced by the classic *Navi Kriya*.

How to practice

Inhale deeply and experience the rising energy sensation. Move your head slightly forward. Perform a prolonged exhalation to observe the energy that descends from the forehead along a path outside the body, moves towards the navel, crosses it, and reaches the *Dantian*. As you exhale, *Om* is mentally chanted 10 to 15 times quickly, with concentration, to participate in the descent of energy along the way.

After a short stop in the *Dantian*, a short inhalation raises the energy in the head once more. At the same time, the chin is raised. Everything now repeats itself, but the energy descends on a different path. The head bends, not forward, but on the left shoulder. The face is not turned; you always look forward. A long exhalation (accompanied by the chanting of *Om, Om, Om...*) accompanies the downward movement of the energy that descends from the left side of the brain, moves along a path outside the body to its left - as if shoulder and arm are not present. The energy descends towards the *Dantian* by passing through the left side of the belt.

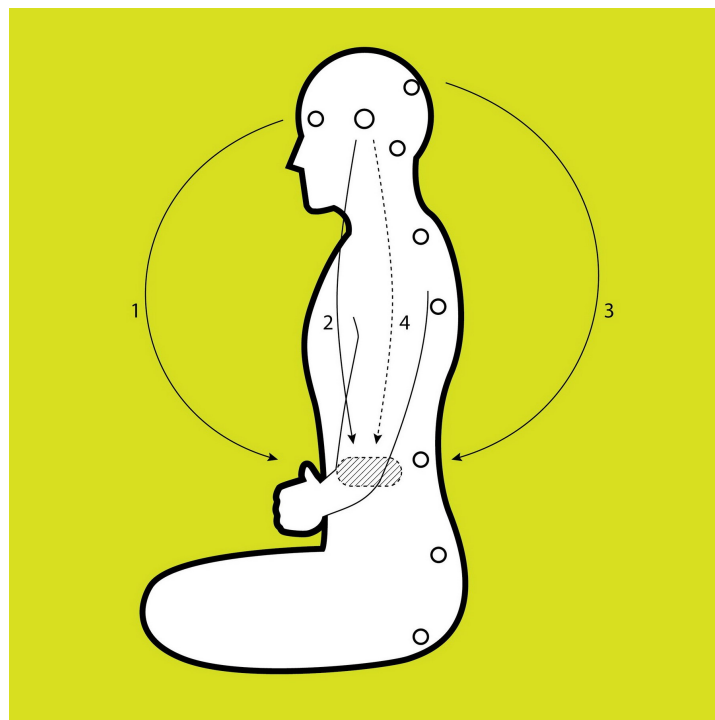


Fig.21 The energy enters the *Dantian* along four directions

A short inhalation after a brief stop in the *Dantian* raises the energy in the head once more. At the same time, the chin rises. The head is now tilted back. Along with the *Om, Om, Om...* chant, a long exhalation is required to accompany the downward movement of energy that originates from the occipital area and moves (outside the body) down towards the belt where it

bends, passes through the third *Chakra Manipura*, and moves towards the *Dantian*. Following a brief pause in the *Dantian*, the same procedure is repeated on the *right* side.

This last exhalation closes the small cycle consisting of four exhalations accompanied by four descents of energy towards the belt and, crossing it, towards the *Dantian* region. In this cycle, you have come up with a vision of four spirals that shrink from the outside and enter the *Dantian*. The mini cycle is repeated 9 times. In summary, there are a total of $4 \times 9 = 36$ energy descents. What we have described can last from 8 to 10 minutes and is equivalent to 4 repetitions of the basic form of *Navi Kriya*.

For those who practice an incremental routine of this Navi Kriya variant, please take note

As you practice energy descents over 36×4 , the head movements become less pronounced and are barely noticeable. To put it differently, the chin's movement is limited to just a few millimeters forward, backward, and sideways. As the practice becomes internalized, this occurs spontaneously.

The effect of repeated repetitions on your breath is a noteworthy phenomenon! This technique actually enhances the quality of your breath.

Let's try to describe this experience: while you formulate the will to exhale, you will feel as if your lungs are unable to move. It seems like they were impeded, as if there was opposition to moving and contracting.

A few moments later, you will become aware of a subtle substance beginning to enter the body. You will experience a new way of exhaling, which resembles a mental act and a pressure that spreads throughout your body. A particular sense of well-being, harmony, and freedom will be achieved with this. You will have the impression that you can remain in this state for an eternity. Despite logic suggesting that the breath still comes out of the nose, you might swear otherwise.

This technique has the ability to untangle things that, from an emotional and sentimental point of view, are an unsolvable mystery for you. It feels like a much stronger and determined personality has emerged from your depths.

APPENDIX N.3 HOW I APPROACHED THE TRIBHANGAMURARI TECHNIQUES

I had been wondering for a long time if there was a *Thokar* that could also affect the first three *Chakras*, particularly the *Muladhara*.

The meditation counselor who helped us master PY's teachings told us that PY taught an undefined procedure that affected this *Chakra*, but this technique was only made available to six advanced disciples because it was not meant for widespread dissemination. She added that other

researchers who had learned about this procedure from other sources had found it difficult to take and metabolize its effects.

Many years later, I was conversing with a French researcher who had independently tried the experiment of applying *Thokar* to *Muladhara* and seemed very happy with the results. With great emotion, he told me about his practice.

I made the decision to attempt the same experiment. There was nothing complicated about the practice. After inhaling, the breath was held and with the *Thokar*, not only the fourth *Chakra* but also each of the *Chakras* located below it were hit. You exhaled and proceeded to a new cycle.

I quickly realized that after completing multiple cycles of this procedure, it was crucial to raise consciousness with a lengthy inhalation. In case I couldn't feel the energy reaching my head, I would have to repeat this inhalation multiple times, always striving to achieve this result.

The most significant event occurred when I realized that replacing *Thokar* with *Thokar Tribhangamurari* was the best way to stimulate *Muladhara* – this procedure in the tradition of *Panchanan Bhattacharya*, is called *Fifth Kriya*. This wonderful technique requires a long preparation and intense practice, but it gives an experience so beautiful that it cannot be expressed in words. Chapter 9 provides the explanation of this technique.

I would like to make one final reflection. My first experience listening to the sound of *Om* was described in the first part of the book. The procedure explained in PY led to this happening.

The *Omkar* dimension was introduced to me through *Swami Hariharananda's* teachings, and his explanations helped me gain more knowledge. It was explained to me that sound is only a part of the three qualities of the Divine. In addition to sound, there is also light and then the sensation of movement. The last concept was not easy to comprehend. In practice, you should perceive something that oscillates, like a pendulum, and let this perception continue in your being until it takes you to the spiritual dimension, thus having a genuine mystical experience. It's not worth trying to explain the third quality of the Divine by giving material examples, such as thinking of something that vibrates or induce a sense of pressure. It is clear that this gives an idea that is very far from reality!

When I first learned about the *Tribhangamurari Movement*, I didn't associate this concept with the third quality of the Divine. I took a long time to comprehend that the *Tribhangamurari Movement*, in both its *Macro* and *Micro* form, is exactly this third aspect of the Divine.

I was confused about this experience because it was so different from what

I had experienced up until now and I couldn't connect it to anything that was familiar to me.

Regrettably, when I learned the *Thokar Tribhangamurari*, I concentrated on the power of the five strokes that were expected. I was taken aback by the intensity of the joy generated by this action, which brought tears to my eyes. But, the reason for this, the meaning of it, remained unclear to me.

The *Micro Tribhangamurari*, to me, seemed to help me to transcend the awareness of my physical body and lead me into a dimension of perfect fulfillment where I lost myself. I am now aware that this *micro movement* is simply the manifestation of the most profound quality of the Divine and cannot be described using examples from physical reality.

Everyone can understand what a sound is, as well as what a light is. But it is impossible to comprehend a movement sensation that is caused by nothing and has no goal to achieve.

APPENDIX N.4 SOME PRACTICES THAT MAY BE USEFUL

[1] Practice to increase the length of your breath

Many of those who undertake the practice of *Kriya* find that they have great difficulty producing a long breath that is approximately 30 seconds long (inhalation followed by exhalation). I am now describing an intriguing routine that is aimed at promoting this result.

Two different forms of breathing are alternated in this routine. Our first step is to practice 9 deep but quick breaths, attempting to sense the energy current that rises and falls in the spinal canal. The duration of each breath is approximately 4-6 seconds. These breaths flow smoothly. It's easy to sense the energy moving from below to above the heart *Chakra*. It feels like the area behind this *Chakra* is being cleansed forcefully.

Once these breaths have been completed, one makes an effort to practice 3 very slow and deep breaths with strong concentration in each *Chakra*, just as it is explained in Lahiri Mahasaya's *Kriya*. These last three *Kriya* breaths are really slow, deep, and subtle.

The two breathing forms are repeated as many times as the time permits. Each phase of the practice makes the next one deeper. The problem of having very short breath and being unable to lengthen it has been happily solved by practicing this routine from time to time for several months.

[How I learned this procedure

I was suggested by a *kriyaban* friend that a principle he discovered almost by chance, relating to the practice of a small Buddhist group in the late 19th century, would be intriguing for me. This group performed *Kriya Yoga* or

something very similar by switching between several faster *Pranayamas* and a few much slower ones, which were repeated for several minutes. The friend realized that by practicing fast breaths before slow ones, it was very easy to lengthen the breath and practice a very deep form of *Kriya Pranayama*. Since my friend was not able to determine the exact composition of the *Pranayamas* for each sequence, I proposed this formula: 9 faster breaths followed by 3 slower *Kriya Pranayamas*.]

[2] *Kapalabhati*

Preparing for *Kriya Pranayama* with this exercise is advantageous.

Quickly inhale and exhale; the exhalation should be done by contracting the abdominal muscles strongly and rapidly, which results in a push-back. Breathing is done through the nose. The most important thing to remember is that inhalation is passive: as soon as the air is pushed out, the abdominal muscles relax and the inhalation occurs automatically.

The length of exhalation and inhalation is the same and they occur approximately twice per second. The navel functions as a pump, similar to how the abdomen acts as a bellows. The sound is reminiscent of blowing your nose after cleaning it. The *Prana* is directed towards the navel during every expulsion. The breathing resumes its normal rhythm after 10-15 short exhalations. After that, practice two more cycles of 15-20 short breaths.

[3] *Technique that utilizes a very long exhalation*

I discovered a technique in an esoteric text that relies on a prolonged exhalation made up of many 's': s-s-s-s-s-s... It seems that this method is meant to immediately lift you out of negative thoughts.

Let's consider a series of long, fragmented exhalations that consist of numerous 's': s-s-s-s-s-s... The breath is exhaled from lips that are partially closed and then divided into multiple dashes that are similar to the letter 's.'

When the lips meet in the center, air is released from the corners. These exhalations cause a heat sensation to be felt between the lips. This sensation is sent mentally to the base of the spine. The heat rises and can be sensed in the first three *Chakras*. Repeating these exhalations multiple times results in the sensation of heat also reaching the fourth *Chakra*. [As for the inhalations, they happen automatically and quickly and are not even noticed.] When I tried to intensify the sensation of heat in the heart by applying *Thokar*, I obtained a remarkable result.

This is what takes place. I initiate a prolonged, fragmented exhalation as previously stated. The heart *Chakra* is filled with energy. At this point, I take a quick inhalation, lift my chin, and begin a long exhalation, producing the sound 's-s-s-...' between my half-open lips. During

exhalation, I move my chin down and direct the energy towards my heart. The final hit to the heart is achieved by exhaling with a powerful 's-s-s-s-t' from the lips. The heat entering the heart is clearly felt. The procedure is repeated numerous times. As time goes by, the heat becomes more and more intense.

I have a vivid memory of those days

I experienced days of pure intoxication, particularly when I followed this technique for a whole day until evening came. Intoxicating joy was always the defining factor of the powerful experiences that were born. I experienced a sweetness that was always with me, a constant joy in my heart that was like a burning brazier. The experience of being in the midst of life and having that great rapture at the same time was incredible. The contrast brought me unforgettable experiences. I was ecstatic when I saw the mountains from afar. I felt a deep sense of sweetness wherever I was. I observed the individuals around me, each of whom had their own world and were occupied with their own thoughts. The practice discussed is capable of transforming your life and leaving you feeling intoxicated.

[4] *Nauli*

This is a practice that involves physical exercise. It is part of the effort to awaken *Kundalini*.

Practice standing with your feet a little wider than shoulder-width apart, your knees slightly bent, and bend forward so that you can rest your hands on your knees. Breathe out all of the air in your lungs through your mouth. (*huh, huhhh.*)

Hold your breath but just pull your abdominal muscles back towards your back in the motion you would inhale. Keep your breath out as much as possible by pressing on your knees with both arms. The abdomen is still drawn towards the chest. After that, inhale and breathe freely. This is what you should do every day for three to four weeks.

Next, attempt to practice the second stage. Holding the breath with the abdomen drawn towards the chest, focus on an ideal point behind the navel, inside the body, visualizing it like a hand pushing the muscles outwards. Insist with your eyes closed until your abdominal muscles move forward. Exhale, relax, and repeat. For a few weeks, that's the only thing you should be doing.

During the third stage, when you breathe out and contract your abdomen, you only contract the right side of your abdomen. By increasing the pressure of the hand above the right knee, this can be done. Exhale, relax, and repeat by contracting the left side of the abdomen. Go ahead with this...

The last stage consists of contracting the right side of the abdominal muscles and then the left side without stopping in between, with the breath

out. You will experience rotational motion. The muscles will appear to move from side to side in a circular fashion to those who look at you. It will appear that you are turning your abdominal muscles while you are only contracting the right, center, left, center, and so on. Perform at least twenty rotations. Then pause, then take a couple of deep breaths, exhale again, and continue with the rotations. Thus, the practice of *Nauli* will be mastered by you. No stage of this practice is reached automatically, but only with the practice repeated many times.

APPENDIX N.5 USE OF THE 50 LETTERS OF THE SANSKRIT ALPHABET IN THE SECOND KRIYA OF SWAMI HARIHARANANDA

Swami Hariharananda made the choice to impart a common *Tantric Yoga* technique to enhance his *Second Kriya* practice prior to *Jyoti Mudra Nyasa*, also called placing or touching, is a *Tantric* ritual that involves touching specific points on the body. Different *mantras* are placed on different parts of the body. The belief is that this ritual enhances the divine state of the individual's body. At some point later, he changed his mind and never taught it again, at least in Europe. In my view, it is intriguing to describe this procedure.

In each Chakra

By visualizing the petals of each *Chakra*, you can mentally chant the 50 letters of the Sanskrit alphabet. There is no breath control.

It begins with *Hang Kshang* in *Ajna Chakra*: *Hang* in the left brain and *Kshang* in the right. Then mentally chant the 16 vowels in the cervical *Chakra* (*Ang Aang Ing Iing Ung Uung Ring Rring Lring Lring Eng Aing Ong Oung Aung Ah*) – chant each letter only once and this also applies to the following *Chakras*. During this practice, imagine each *Chakra* as a vertical disc that shines divine light through its petals. View the number of petals predicted by the *Yoga* tradition and observe them in clockwise directions. Then put the first 12 consonants in the heart *Chakra* (*Kong Khong Gong Ghong Wong Chong Chhong Jong Jhong Neong Tong Thong*), chant the following 10 in *Manipura* (*Dong Dhong Nong Tong Thong Dong Dhong Noing Pong Phong*), then the following 6 in *Swadhistan* (*Bong Bhong Mong Jong Rong Long*) and finally the last 4 in *Muladhara* (*Vong Shhong Shong Song*). In each *Chakra*, start from the upper left, then go down to the left and go up from the right. Three rounds are recommended. Close by repeating the two syllables *Hang Kshang* in *Ajna*.

In the crown of the head

The rotation of the 50 *Sanskrit* letters around the crown of the head triggers the *Omkar* sound, which is heard in the center of the brain - in the

so-called '*Cave of Brahma*', where the *pituitary* and *pineal* glands are located. We start with the vowels behind the crown, and then move on to the consonants until we come back to the starting point. Turn counterclockwise (when viewed from above) and then turn clockwise. It is recommended to do twelve sets of rotations (6 + 6).

This procedure is perceived as 'providential' due to its easily experienced positive effects.

In different parts of the body

The 50 letters of the *Sanskrit* alphabet are placed in the 50 parts of the body where the human body, according to the *Tantric* tradition, can be divided. There is no breath control. Place your hand on the following body areas while mentally chanting the appropriate letter.

1 ANG Forehead 2 AANG Mouth 3 ING Left eye 4 IING Right eye 5 UNG Left ear 6 UUNG Right ear 7 RING Left nostril 8 RRING Right nostril 9 LRING Left cheek 10 LLRING Right cheek 11 ENG inner part of the mouth (here you must not touch) 12 AING Chin 13 NGO Upper lip and upper teeth 14 OUNG Lower lip and lower teeth 15 AUNG Forehead & tops of head 16 AH Full face (touch with both hands) 17 KONG Left shoulder 18 KHONG Left elbow 19 GONG Left wrist 20 GHONG Left finger knuckles 21 WONG Left finger joints 22 CHONG right shoulder 23 CHHONG Right elbow 24 JONG Right wrist 25 JHONG Right finger knuckles 26 NEONG Right finger joints 27 TONG Left thigh joint 28 THONG Left knee 29 DONG Left ankle 30 DHONG Forefoot left 31 NONG Left toes 32 TONG Right thigh joint 33 THONG Right knee 34 DONG Right ankle 35 DHONG Right forefoot 36 NOING Right toes 37 PONG Left ribs 38 PHONG Right ribs 39 BONG Back (touch up and down) 40 BHONG Lower abdomen 41 MONG Upper abdomen 42 JONG Heart center 43 RONG Left shoulder 44 LONG Back of neck 45 VONG Right shoulder 46 SHHONG From left shoulder to right hand 47 SHONG From right shoulder to left hand 48 SONG From left shoulder to right foot 49 HAM Right shoulder to left foot 50 AKSHAM Moving down the front of the body

APPENDIX N.6 EXPERIENCE WITH A "NON VIOLENT" FORM OF KRIYA PRANAYAMA

This approach to *Kriya Pranayama* is connected to an experience I had after practicing *Kriya* for many years. I was ignorant about the Second and Third stages of *Kriya* practice during that time [I am referring to the insights in chapter 6, not the *Higher Kriyas*.] I did not give attention to the *Chakras* or the prospect of elevating consciousness to the upper part of the head, therefore my practice was incredibly simple.

Upon facing my daily routine, I felt uneasy, as if what I was about to do was an unbearable effort.

My choice was to sit and wait without doing anything. I had a vague hope that this process would take place without my intervention. That is, I wanted to try doing *Kriya Pranayama*, but... without performing it. It was expected to happen automatically while I was resting in the *Kutastha* cave. I was unwavering in my decision. I thought: 'No matter what happens, I won't change anything.' If nothing happens, I'll restrict my practice to *Thokar* and abandon *Kriya Pranayama* forever!

I imagined *Kutastha* to be a cave. I placed my body inside this cave, not in the area between my eyebrows, but in the middle of my brain. I was not familiar with *Kechari Mudra* at that time.

All I could see was a deep breath coming in and then going out. The breathing was reasonably deep. I let my focus be on the sound of breathing. The sound was both clear and clean. The act of paying attention to this sound was not considered work. Throughout the process, the attitude of resting and observing the breath was maintained. I didn't count the number of breaths - this was an effort to avoid.

I felt a sense of joy while concentrating on the sounds and experiencing the coolness and warmth that come with deep breathing.

As I remained in my "cave", I became aware of a sense of energy that was created and gradually intensified in my body. I didn't control it in any way, but I was able to stay neutral. I was only interested in observing, not doing anything.

There were several minutes that went by without my intervention. I never forced myself to pause at the end of the inhale, but I always allowed the body to decide when to exhale... the breath I wanted to enjoy just had to be deep, therefore long, beautiful, and characterized by wonderful sounds. Upon entering, it was cool and then lukewarm when it exited.

The energy I was starting to sense was not being influenced by me to rise and fall within the spine. However, I became aware that the inhalation was accompanied by an energetic sensation in my spinal column at the heart level. An energetic sensation was present in the front part of the body while exhaling.

As I went along, I noticed that the inhalation was shorter than the exhalation, and its sound became more softer, while the exhalation, which was longer, always had a clear and strong sound. At the end of each breath, I began to perceive something truly beautiful that was manifesting itself in my being during those brief moments.

While I was progressing, I came to the realization that the two

currents that were predicted in *Kriya Pranayama* were occurring with a greater degree of bliss. I never stopped thinking about doing nothing. I observed the beauty of what was happening. I was completely engrossed in this practice and let a lot of time pass by. I got up without doing anything else, feeling happy about my new *Kriya*, which I referred to as '*Kriya of non-violence*'.

To summarize the meaning of this way of practicing, I realize that there aren't many specifics to share. It's important to reiterate one crucial concept: preserving the freedom to do nothing and guaranteeing that *Kriya Pranayama* takes place freely in all its magnificence. This is highlighted because I faced a serious problem. I became aware of the tendency to lose myself in a state of tranquility that made me fall asleep. The solution was achieved by comprehending that not acting is not meant to allow the breath to become shorter and shorter until it nearly disappears. This is the case when the *Kriya* disappears and drowsiness approaches!

I can recall the benefits of practicing this way

I felt so good that it seemed like I had begun living differently. I felt like I was ideally located above mundane life or in another dimension. I resided in a state that resembled heaven.

The end of this beautiful period was due to my temperament forcing me to confront myself with the procedure of the *higher Kriyas*. Maintaining my non-violent attitude was not possible for me during these procedures. It was a long process for me to comprehend that I could fully relive it, but only after practicing *Thokar* – in the last part of my routine.

APPENDIX N.7 CHATURTHA PRANAYAMA

It is stated that a *kriyaban* recognizes the ideal time to depart from the body six months beforehand. One is instructed to do *Chaturtha Pranayama* during these months.

This practice encompasses both meditation and *Pranayama* (breathing). In truth, it brings together the awareness of the breath and the mantra OM. It is also called the *Pranayama* of the fourth state, meaning a transcendental state beyond words. A deeper understanding and awareness of the *Chakras* is a result of this.

There is no need to speak much about this mysterious level of the *Kriya* path as understanding it is beyond words and can only be comprehended through experience. *Turiya* is a state where the mind is deep asleep and not dreaming, but the consciousness is awake

According to the explanation, if one practices *Chaturtha Pranayama* for six months, the *kriyaban* will be able to leave their body by performing *Thokar Kriya*. The soul emerges while pronouncing *Om* by controlling all

nine gates of the body and concentrating the mind and *Prana* on the heart center. There is no return when this occurs. There is no greater destiny than this. *Kriya's* objective is to reach a point without any return.

Chaturtha Pranayama consists of six stages.

[1] Begin concentrating on the area between your eyebrows and observe your calm and deep breathing. Mentally repeat the mantra 'OM': during the inhalation pronounce 'O' and during the exhalation pronounce 'M-m-m' (do it mentally, your mouth should be closed). Perform this task for 5-12 minutes.

[2] Now focus solely on the *Sahasrara*. With inhaling and awareness of the sound 'O', concentrate on the chakras going down the spine. With an exhalation and the mental sound 'M-m-m', you are going up the same line in ascending order. Perform several of these steps. The process takes approximately 5-12 minutes.

[3] Put your focus on *Kutastha*. Focus on each *Chakra* in the order of *Ajna*, *Vishuddha*, *Anahata*, *Manipura*, *Swadhisthana*, *Muladhara*, and then ascend from *Muladhara* up to *Ajna*. Be careful! Pause for one breath in each of the described stages. Inhaling with a mental chant of 'O' in each center and exhaling in it with 'M-M-M-M' is the way to do it. Starting from *Ajna* and returning to *Ajna* is a cycle. Perform at least six repetitions.

[4] Put your focus on *Kutastha*. As you inhale and breathe 'O', experience the piercing of all *Chakras* in turn in the following order: *Ajna*, *Vishuddha*, *Anahata*, *Manipura*, *Swadhisthana*, *Muladhara*. Then the sound 'M-M-MM' is causing the *Chakras* to be pierced in turn from *Muladhara* to *Ajna* with the exhalation. Observe the breath and sound rising up the spine. This is a single round. Do more rounds as per the available time.

[5] Put your focus on *Kutastha*. Keep mentally chanting OM in a synchronized manner with your breath. Be mindful of just the *mantra* and *Kutastha*. Experience the 'O' (inhalation) and the 'M-M-M' (exhalation) vibrations within *Kutastha*. Keep going like this for as long as you can. At some point, there's no need to be conscious of one's breath

[6] Consciousness is always present in *Kutastha*. Chant the mantra 'OM' in your mind, but don't pay attention to your breath anymore. Perform this action for the longest possible time (5-15 minutes). This results in a profound meditation. Among the techniques used in *Chaturtha Pranayama*, this is the most important. Don't rush to finish this stage, take

your time and work towards success.

APPENDIX N.8 FINAL REFLECTIONS

Several people reached out to me following my reading of this book to express their gratitude and inquire about my availability for a discussion, either via email or in person. It is evident that I am willing to receive emails and respond promptly. When it comes to face-to-face meetings, I am cautious and try to take my time.

I wonder why someone would make a long journey to meet us only to discover they have no genuine interest in the spiritual path or there is an interest there, but it's so contaminated by various factors that I'm unsure if I can provide any useful advice? In reality, I am certain that I have something to say, but I am unsure if the person will grasp it.

So here, now that I find myself living the final part of my earthly existence, I attempt to summarize my primary beliefs about the spiritual dimension and provide an illustration of what could happen to those who diligently follow the path of *Kriya Yoga*.

[1] Thought is not able to reach the spiritual dimension

All of us have a place in the mental dimension. Our thoughts or reflections can be used in a way that can either be useful or useless and unproductive. An approach that enables us to deal with life's complexity, difficulty, and beauty is useful. The reasoning function can be used in various unproductive ways, and when I get lost in fantasies about the spiritual dimension, I end up spending a lot of time. This way of thinking is pointless because our thoughts are incapable of reaching or grasping the reality of the Spirit, and it cannot attempt to pass it on to others. I struggled to comprehend this fact. It wasn't immediate, but now it's clear to me.

This strong conviction has already been shared with the reader in both Chapter 10 of this book and the booklet on the spiritual path that can be downloaded from the same page on my website.

Try to count how many times people have expressed to you their point of view on what the spiritual dimension is with great impetus. What is the real, scientific significance of their opinions? None!

Direct experience (mystic experience) is the only way to experience this dimension. This experience only occurs when thought is eliminated. Such an experience cannot be achieved using thought.

When we experience spirituality, we are left with an indestructible awareness that there is something beyond our ordinary lives, but we are unable to add anything else. Our expressions, which are driven by deep

emotions, are not understood by others.

[2] *What are the means by which we can truly approach the spiritual dimension?*

From what I know, there are four approaches. There are no ones that require the use of thought or the ability to visualize.

a) A spontaneous event. There is no way to explain this fact. The process occurs when our body is physiologically prepared. This is likely to happen when there is a strong desire, whether conscious or unconscious, for this experience.

b) A near-death experience (NDE). Many examples of this experience were described by Dr. Moody in the book *Life After Life*.

c) It is highly discouraged to use unsafe means. I am addressing the usage of hallucinogenic drugs. I lack personal experience with this and I am skeptical about it. After embarking on this path, I witnessed friends being destroyed.

d) Finally, let's think about the mystics who employ techniques that are both practical and beneficial for their own well-being. While it's rare, it's possible to reach an effective path that leads to real contact with spiritual reality.

[3] *At what point are the mystic methods effective?*

Having a strong desire to reach spiritual reality is crucial to the success of any mystical method. Success cannot be achieved through any other means. It is not worth starting a practice solely on the basis of curiosity about esoteric themes or to address health problems (both physical and psychological) or to have as your sole motivation the desire for success in various fields of practical life! These cases are bound to result in failure.

Having the right attitude is necessary for working. Pure willpower alone cannot suffice. In order to practice correctly, it is necessary to be in a state of emotional calmness. It is important to act with good concentration, but limit yourself to observing the practice as if it were happening by itself.

[4] *What occurs in our daily lives when we have a genuine connection with the spiritual dimension?*

A transformation takes place within oneself. People often respond to genuine experiences by becoming excited and acting irresponsibly. Fortunately, the focus often shifts from the mind to the heart as time progresses. Complex reasoning is avoided and the term 'God' is dropped. It is substituted with the term 'Divine'. The bitterness that stems from excessive mental activity is eliminated from the heart.

[5] *What can I share about my experience with the spiritual dimension?*

I am of the opinion that I have encountered the spiritual dimension through two distinct experiences. The first experience began while I was lying on my back in a closed room where no one could disturb me.

I felt a powerful flow of energy that swiftly rose up my spine and penetrated my brain. My memory is limited to an indescribable joy. The second experience involved experiencing breathlessness after completing a *Kriya* routine.

The discovery of the great help that *Japa* (incessant repetition of a *mantra*) could provide led to this happening. At first, I thought that *Japa* was unnatural because it made me feel like an idiot when I repeated the same *mantra* over and over again. However, I had evidence that this practice was superior to all others. When I sat down to practice *Kriya* after *Japa*, my thoughts disappeared, but only pure awareness remained. I found myself in a state of absolute tranquility, feeling completely exempt from the necessity to breathe. I am limited to saying this and nothing more.

Further clarifications

[a] *The bond of dependency with a Guru is not always present*

According to the literature on these subjects, experts who qualify as Masters or *Gurus* are the only ones who can teach healthy methods for contacting the spiritual dimension.

Often, this occurs, so I attempted to acquire knowledge of these practices from various sources, such as an organization and individuals whom I considered experts.

Learning these methods can cause people to become emotionally attached to the sources from which they learn, resulting in a strong dependency. Some individuals avoid the state of dependence while acknowledging the benefits of these sources. Constitutionally, they are obligated to act as self-taught individuals, which means they are capable of standing on their own two feet. After experiencing uncertainty, they eventually begin to recognize guidance in their heart center. This guidance is referred to as '*Inner Guru*'.

[b] *Is it beneficial to connect with other spiritual seekers?*

The practice is always performed in solitude, in complete silence. The notion that practicing in a group is highly beneficial and crucial is complete and dangerous nonsense. It's common to discuss your thoughts on the mystical procedures you've chosen with a few friends, sharing any intriguing discoveries and any doubts or difficulties. It's not unusual to share the significance of your intuitions. It's natural to try to motivate each

other. The possibilities are unlimited: we can both give and receive. It is crucial to acknowledge that every practitioner, particularly when attempting to immerse themselves in the spiritual dimension, remains alone at some point.

Conclusion

In light of this, what might be the objective of the meeting and conversation? If we are in agreement, I can only encourage the person to put into practice what is mentioned in Chapter 6 and possibly also in the following chapters. I am not inclined to give lessons. I am someone who only shares his experience. The book aims to provide an introduction to *Kriya Yoga*, which I consider to be a good, indeed excellent, method.

GLOSSARY

This glossary is intended for individuals who already understand the meanings of the most common terms used in Kriya but want to avoid being uncertain about how to use them in this book.

Apana

Among the five forms of energy in the body, it is one of them. The lower abdominal region is where it is responsible for all the activities, including the elimination process. Kriya Pranayama, in its initial phase, is essentially the movement of Prana (the particular energy present in the upper part of the trunk - lungs and heart) into Apana, and Apana into Prana. Energy from outside the body is brought into the body through inhalation and meets Apana in the lower abdomen.

Asana

A body position that is conducive to meditation. Patanjali recommends that the Yogi maintain a stable and comfortable position. The Half-lotus [see] is a good option for kriyabans due to its ability to avoid physical problems. Siddhasana is considered the most superior Asana for the average kriyaban. It is not advisable to assume the perfect Padmasana position [see].

Aswini Mudra

To define it, it means to contract the muscles at the base of the spine (sphincter) repeatedly with a rhythm of around two contractions per second. Ashwa means mare; Aswini Mudra means 'Mudra of the Mare' because the anal contraction resembles the movement she makes with her sphincter immediately after bowel evacuation. The Mudra may have slightly different definitions and can be mistaken for the Mula Bandha [see]. The purpose of this Mudra is to directly touch the blocked and stagnant energy at the base of the spine and continuously push it upwards.

Bandha

The energy system of the body is affected by Bandhas, which are locks that act as energy valves. They keep the Prana from being dissipated and guide it toward the spine. The Bandhas are essential for the complete and correct practice of Pranayama. See Jalandhara Bandha, Uddiyana Bandha, and Mula Bandha.

Bhrumadhya

Between the eyebrows, it is a space that is connected to the Ajna Chakra. It can also be referred to as the 'third eye' or Kutastha.

Bindu

It is located at the back of the head, where the hairline forms a kind of vortex.

Hindus with shaved heads keep a lock of hair in this Sikha point, but it's not a Chakra in itself. The importance of it lies in its role as a door that brings awareness to Sahasrara, the seventh Chakra located at the top of the head.

Chakra

The word Chakras is derived from Sanskrit *cakra*, which can be translated as 'wheel' or 'circle'. Tantric texts describe the Chakras as the manifestations of the Spirit, which are the wheels of our spiritual life. Their essence expanded into increasingly grosser levels of manifestation, ultimately reaching the dimension of the base Chakra, the **Muladhara**, which symbolizes the physical world. The energy-consciousness that has fallen and is coiled and sleeping at the base of the spine is known as Kundalini, or the coiled one. We humans consider only the physical world as real. It is only when our Kundalini awakens that we regain full memory of the reality of the subtle dimension of the Universe.

Describing the Chakras is a challenge due to their inability to be brought to the laboratory table. The descriptions found in Yoga books are derived from translations of two Indian texts: *Sat-Cakra-Nirupana* and *Padaka-Pancaka*. Sir John Woodroffe, also known as Arturo Avalon, wrote *The Serpent Power*. The subject matter described there appears to be unnaturally complicated and nearly impossible to use.

Further contamination of these concepts has been caused by theosophy and similar esoteric literature. The book "The Chakras" written by the controversial author C. W. Leadbeater is largely the result of his mental elaboration of his experiences. Kriya Yoga eliminates these complications and only aims to locate their location.

Located above the anus at the very base of the spinal column, in the lowest part of the coccyx, we find the root Chakra **Muladhara**. **Swadhisthana** is situated within the spine, between the last lumbar vertebrae and the beginning of the sacrum. The third Chakra **Manipura** is located in the spine at the same level as the Navel, near the end of the dorsal vertebrae and the beginning of the lumbar vertebrae. **Anahata**, or the Heart Chakra, is found at the center of the dorsal vertebrae on the spine. Between the last cervical vertebra and the first dorsal vertebra can be found the sixth Chakra **Vishuddha**, which is also called Throat Chakra. The brain's central part contains the sixth Chakra **Ajna**. It is closely linked to the point between the eyebrows (*Kutastha*) and the *Medulla Oblongata*.

The **Sahasrara**, the seventh Chakra, is situated between the crown of the head and the Fontanel and above it. It cannot be considered of the same nature as the others, but it is a superior reality that can only be experienced in the breathless state.

Various Kriya masters impart teachings on the '**Front Chakras**'. The first region to be mentioned is the perineum, which is followed by the genital region, the navel region, and the central part of the sternum region. The Adam's apple is the fifth, and the point between the eyebrows can be considered the sixth. The underlying principle is that touching these points with concentration stimulates the energy around the corresponding Chakra in the spine.

Dharana

According to Patanjali, Dharana is concentration on a physical or abstract object. In Kriya, Dharana is achieved by paying attention to the internal sound of Omkar, light, or the sensation of movement. This occurs right after calming the breath.

Dhyana

Patanjali asserts that Dhyana comes from focusing on the essential nature of the chosen object, as a continuous and uninterrupted stream of consciousness. Kriya's awareness, which is centered on the Omkar reality, soon leads to a state of Samadhi.

Flute sound (during Kriya Pranayama)

A slight hissing sound is produced in the throat during Kriya Pranayama. If a kriyaban is able to assume the position of Kechari Mudra, the frequency of the exhalation sound will rise. The sound has been likened to Krishna's flute. According to Lahiri Mahasaya, it is like a person blowing through a keyhole. This sound is so enjoyable that it can keep the mind calm and transparent, and it makes Kriya Pranayama practice effortless.

Granthi

It means knot. Three knots are identified by the traditional definition of the Granthi, which includes the Brahma Granthi at the Muladhara Chakra, the Vishnu Granthi in the heart Chakra, and the Rudra Granthi point between the eyebrows. The Nadi Ida, Pingala, and Sushumna come together in these places.

Lahiri Mahasaya emphasizes the significance of overcoming two additional obstacles: tongue and navel, which are removed by Kechari Mudra and Navi Kriya, respectively. The knot on the tongue keeps us from accessing the energy reservoir in the Sahasrara region. The navel knot is caused by cutting the umbilical cord.

Guru

In many spiritual paths, finding a Guru (teacher) to supervise the spiritual training of disciples is considered essential. A Guru possesses the qualities of a teacher, a guide, and much more. The scriptures state that the Guru is equal to God and God is equal to the Guru. We are accustomed to describing Guru as a metaphorical interaction between darkness and light. The Guru is believed to be the one who gets rid of darkness: 'Gu' meaning darkness and 'Ru' meaning the one who gets rid of it. This etymology is not accepted by some scholars, who believe that 'Gu' means 'beyond qualities' and 'Ru' means 'formless'. The initiation process (Diksha) usually involves a Guru imparting esoteric knowledge to the disciple to help them progress towards self-realization.

It appears that the thought of Lahiri Mahasaya is leading us in a specific direction. He stated, 'I am not the Guru'. I do not create an obstacle between the true Guru (the Divine) and the disciple. He added that he wanted to be

considered a 'mirror'. In other words, each kriyaban should not view Him as an unattainable ideal, but as the embodiment of all the wisdom and spiritual realization that, in due time, the practice of Kriya will be able to bring forth.

The question arises: are the Kriya techniques applicable outside of the Guru-disciple relationship? It is clear that in this field, both faith and reason can be utilized. Numerous kriyabans hold the belief that if they cannot locate a true Guru, an expert in Kriya, they will take matters into their own hands and will proceed with the material that they have been able to locate so far. These kriyabans hold the belief that Kriya techniques are effective even without the Guru-disciple relationship.

Half-lotus

This Asana has been used for meditation since time immemorial because it is very comfortable. The left leg is bent and brought towards the body, and the sole of the left foot rests on the inner part of the right thigh. The left foot heel is pulled towards the body as closely as possible. Bending the right leg, the right foot is placed on the crease area of the left leg. The right knee is placed as close to the ground as possible. The hands are being supported by the knees. The secret is to keep the spine erect. This can only be achieved by sitting on a thick pillow with the buttocks resting on the front half of the pillow. By doing this, the buttocks are slightly raised and the knees are at the same height as the floor. When the legs get tired, the position can be prolonged by reversing the legs. In certain situations, it may be convenient to sit on a chair with no armrests and a wide enough seat for this Half-lotus. By doing this, one can bring one leg down to the floor and ease the knee joint! Some yoga teachers explain that the pressure of a tennis ball (or folded towel) on the perineum can provide the benefits of the Siddhasana position.

Ida [see Nadi]

Inner Alchemy [Taoist - Nei Dan]

In ancient China, this was the mystical tradition. It recalls the techniques of the First Level of Kriya Yoga with such precision that it provides all the reasons to believe that it is a part of the same process. This movement will be summed up in Chapter 12.

Jalandhara Bandha

Jalandhara Bandha involves a slight contraction of the neck and throat, while the chin is pressed against the chest.

Japa

Means Prayer. Prayer is an invocation that allows a person to offer his praises to the Divine. Prayer can consist of a fixed formula or a spontaneous expression of words. Prayer is a vast subject; I will confine myself to repetitive Prayer. Japa is the name given to the repetition of the Divine Name in India. This word is derived from the root Jap, which means 'to pronounce softly and repeat

internally'. Japa encompasses the act of repeating any mantra and is not limited to prayer. A mantra can be both a name for the Divine and a pure sound with no specific meaning. In ancient times, yogis recognized the power of certain sounds and employed them extensively. (Some believe that the repetition of a Mantra has the mysterious power to bring about the manifestation of Divinity, 'Just as the breaking of an atom manifests the tremendous forces latent in it.'

Our minds are protected by repeating the same healthy vibration over and over again, which is why the term mantra is derived from the words 'manas' (mind) and 'tra' (protection).

Usually a mantra is repeated aloud for a certain number of times, then whispered, and then mentally repeated for a while. Japa is typically accomplished by counting the Mantras with a string of beads called a Japa Mala. The number of such beads is usually 108 or 100. The Mala is utilized in a manner that allows the devotee to enjoy the practice without having to worry about counting repetitions. It's possible to practice it while sitting in a meditation position or while doing other activities, particularly walking.

Kechari Mudra One can obtain the Kechari Mudra tongue position through one of the following methods.

[a] By putting the tongue in contact with the uvula at the back of the soft palate.

[b] Inserting the tongue into the nasal pharynx and touching the nasal septum, if possible.

According to Lahiri Mahasaya, obtaining this Mudra necessitates using Talabya Kriya instead of cutting the frenulum of the tongue. The literal meaning of Kechari is 'the state of those who fly in the sky, ether, or inner space'. Kechari is considered to be a means of bypassing the energy system of the mind. It changes the path of the flow of Prana, causing the life force to be withdrawn from the thinking process. Instead of letting thoughts wander like frogs, let the mind be calm and concentrate on the objective of meditation. When we're lost in our thoughts or in our plans, we don't realize the amount of energy we lose. Kechari transforms this harmful way of consuming all of our vitality into its opposite. The mind begins to lose its despotic role: the inner activity no longer occurs through the thinking process but through the development of intuition. By combining it with Kriya, one can greatly improve the clarity of their complex psychological structures. One topic of debate is the experience of the elixir of life, Amrita, or Nectar. It is a sweet-tasting fluid that is perceived by the kriyaban when it touches the uvula or bony prominence on the roof of the palate, under the pituitary gland. The Yoga tradition explains that there is a Nadi flowing through the center of the tongue; when it touches that bony prominence, the energy radiates through its tip, triggering the Ajna Chakra in the center of the brain.

Kevala Kumbhaka - Breathlessness

This state has nothing to do with forcing yourself to hold your breath. The fact that the breath becomes more and more calm is not it, we are talking about the state where the breath is completely absent, and the mind is dissolving as a

result. Take a look at the entry: Kumbhaka

Kriya Yoga

Kriya is a mystical path that utilizes the most advanced tools used by mystics from all religions. The goal is to internalize the breath by making it long initially, then gradually more subtle and evanescent until it becomes almost unnoticed. When perfect calm is established, when all internal and external movements cease, the kriyaban perceives an irradiation of fresh energy that sustains every cell from within; then the breathless state becomes stable. When the physical breath is totally transcended and the circulation of this subtle form of energy occurs in the body, it is said that the breath is internalized. The sensation is like crossing a barrier and entering a vast space: Kriya Yoga is a wonder of beauty.

Kumbhaka

Kumbhaka means to hold your breath. The importance of this phase of Pranayama makes it difficult for some Yoga teachers to categorize a breathing exercise that doesn't include Kumbhaka as Pranayama. Observations have shown that when we are about to do something that demands our full attention or requires a lot of it, our breath is automatically held. This illustrates the naturalness of this. The inhalation in Pranayama is called Puraka or "the act of filling"; the exhalation is called Rechaka, or "the act of emptying." The act of holding one's breath is known as Kumbhaka ('holding'). Kumbha is a pitcher, and just like a pitcher holds water, Kumbhaka also holds the breath and Prana within its body. The classical literature on Yoga describes four types of Kumbhaka.

- I. Exhale deeply and hold the breath for a few seconds. The name for this is 'Bahir Kumbhaka' (External Kumbhaka).
- II. Holding your breath after taking a deep breath is what 'Antar Kumbhaka' (Inner Kumbhaka) involves. Usually, this type of Kumbhaka is accompanied by the performance of three Bandhas.
- III. Alternate breathing involves inhaling deeply through the left nostril, holding the breath, and exhaling through the right etc. It is believed to be the most effortless version of Kumbhaka.
- IV. The peak of Pranayama, which is the most important, is the fourth item on the list. Kevala Kumbhaka, also known as automatic suspension of breath, is a state of breathlessness in which there are no inhalations or exhalations, and even the slightest desire to breathe is absent.

In the practice of Kriya, the fundamental principle of (I) is present in all those procedures that involve a series of very long and calm exhalations that seem to end in a very sweet nothing.

The internal Kumbhaka (II) is found in different techniques of Kriya, especially in Yoni Mudra, Maha Mudra, and Thokar.

Maha Mudra, with its balancing action on the right and left side of the spine, also contains – in a broad sense – the principles of (III): Alternating breathing.

The attainment of (IV) Kevala Kumbhaka is a pivotal moment in Kriya.

Kundalini Kundalini, meaning 'coiled' in Sanskrit, is thought of as an energy that is wrapped like a snake in the Muladhara Chakra. Potential energy that is still intact can be implied by the image of being rolled up like a spring. It lies dormant in our bodies, beneath the layers of our consciousness, waiting to be awakened by either spiritual discipline or specific life experiences. According to the belief, it rises from Muladhara through the Sushumna spinal canal, activating each Chakra as it proceeds: once it reaches the Sahasrara Chakra at the top of the head, it provides endless bliss, mystical enlightenment, and so on.

It is only through repeated Kundalini awakenings that the yogi succeeds in achieving Self-realization.

The concept of Kundalini, specifically its awakening, makes it easy to express what happens on the spiritual path. While most spiritual traditions have some understanding of Kundalini, not all of them are open to discussing the practical details of this process.

Kundalini's awakening is not accompanied by pleasant sensations like a mild sense of energy flowing in the spine. Kundalini's movement is akin to an internal volcano eruption, a rocket shot through our spine! While its nature is beneficial, there are obvious reasons for perplexity when considering reports of Kundalini awakening accompanied by problems. These include evidently disturbed breathing patterns, distortion of thought processes, unusual or extreme emotional enhancements to be authentic. We are inclined to think that a hidden disease, which is revealed by the reckless practice of violent exercises or drugs, is the cause of those phenomena. Following the authentic experience, phenomena such as insomnia and hypersensitivity to the environment may occur. During a 'true awakening', the Kundalini force completely overshadows the ego and causes the individual to feel disoriented for a while. Later everything is absorbed without any problems. Regrettably, trying to repeat the episode can result in the disordered and imprudent usage of bizarre techniques, without ever setting a minimum foundation of mental stillness. The risk of premature Kundalini awakening is mentioned in each book and it is imperative that the body is prepared for it. The belief held by most yogis is that they can sustain this early awakening, and the warning of danger excites them more than ever. The problem is that many people do not have (or have lost) a genuine spiritual approach and harbor an egotistical one.

In Kriya, we consider Kundalini to be the same energy that exists everywhere in the body. In Kriya, we try to avoid using the term 'Kundalini awakening' because it can come across as alienating.

In conclusion, Kundalini is the energy that makes up our consciousness and is its purest layer.

Kutastha

The 'third eye' or 'spiritual eye' is the organ of inner vision (the unified astral component of the two physical eyes). It is the place in the body where spiritual Light manifests itself. Concentrating between the eyebrows, we first perceive a

shapeless darkness, then a small twilight, then other lights. Finally, we experience a golden ring surrounding a dark spot with a bright point inside it.

There is a connection between Kutastha and Muladhara. What we see in the space between the eyebrows is none other than the opening of the spinal door, which has its seat in the first Chakra. According to some teachers, to enter the supreme stage of Kriya, you must have a constant vision of the spiritual eye; others identify this state as the condition in which the energy is perfectly calm at the base of the spine. Both statements have the same meaning.

Maha Mudra

It is a particular position of lengthening (stretching) of the body. The importance of this technique becomes clear as soon as one considers that it incorporates the three main Bandhas of Hatha Yoga. There are actually hundreds of reasons why it's important to practice Maha Mudra firmly.

Mahasamadhi

It is the conscious exit from the body that occurs at the time of death. Occasionally, it occurs using the Second Kriya technique.

Swami Pranabananda, a renowned disciple of Lahiri Mahasaya, consciously gave up his body. The feat was not done with violence to the body; it was only successful at the precise moment determined by his Karma. What was the procedure he used?

a ... According to some, it was the basic form of Thokar. It's possible that he stopped the heart's movement, which allowed him to leave the body. If he practiced a single Thokar and stopped his heart, it implies that he put in so much mental effort that he blocked the energy that kept his heart moving.

b ... There are those who believe that the only way to still the heart is through a mental act of immersion in the point between the eyebrows and entering the light of Kutastha. According to them, his companions did not observe any head movements. Similarly, when other significant saints passed away, there was no evidence of movement.

c ... In my opinion, since Mahasamadhi is not a shrewd esoteric trick to master the mechanism of painless suicide, certainly each great teacher has already developed an ability to enter Samadhi. The natural tendency to regain union with the Infinite Source triggers a natural mechanism to calm the cardiac plexus by achieving total peace in his being.

Mantra [see Japa]

Mental Pranayama

In mental Pranayama, kriyaban manages the body's energy by overlooking the breathing process and concentrating solely on Prana in the Chakras and the body. He is aware of the internal and external components of each Chakra, as long as he feels energized by fresh energy that rejuvenates every part of his body and supports it from within. This action is distinguished by the conclusion of all physical movements, resulting in a perfect physical and mental stillness. At

times, the breath becomes so relaxed that the practitioner feels as if they are not breathing at all.

Mula Bandha

In Mula Bandha, the muscles of the perineum – between the anus and the genitals – are slightly contracted while mental pressure is exerted on the lower spine. Contrary to Aswini Mudra, there is no simple contraction of the sphincter muscles; in Mula Bandha, the perineum appears to close upward while the pelvic diaphragm is pulled upward by the movement of the pubic bone. By contracting this muscle group, the Apana current, which normally goes down, is raised up and eventually joins with the Prana at the navel. Mula Bandha's impact is to direct Prana toward the Sushumna channel rather than along Ida and Pingala.

Nada Yoga

It is the path where the union with the Divine can be achieved by listening to the inner sounds. Surat Shabda Yoga is a different term for this practice. Nada Yoga is a meditation technique that involves experience. It's based on the fact that anyone who follows the mystical path will always encounter this manifestation of the Spirit, regardless of their preparation and convictions. It is an extremely enjoyable form of meditation; anyone can be involved even without fully understanding it.

To plug both ears with fingers, you can use a specific body position, such as crouching with the elbows resting on the knees, just to give an example. Sitting quietly, attention is focused on the subtle sounds that come from within rather than on the audible sounds that come from outside. It is recommended to mentally repeat your favorite mantra incessantly. Eventually, you will become aware of inner sounds. Your listening abilities will improve and your sensitivity to sounds will increase. The experience of inner sounds can be progressed at different levels: when the mind is stilled, we can hear the astral sounds that are underneath the outer sounds. You will hear a hornet, a drum, the lute, the flute, the harp, the murmur of thunder, or the hum of an electrical transformer. Some of these sounds are simply the sounds of one's body, specifically the pumping of blood. Other sounds are actually sounds that are beyond the range of audible sounds. When you calm your mind and concentrate in a relaxed way, your awareness will be attracted in this deeper realm. After a few weeks of intense practice, one will be able to tune into a deeper sound than any of the astral sounds mentioned earlier. The cosmic sound of Om is this. The sound is perceived with different variations. Lahiri Mahasaya describes it as produced by many people who keep striking the disc of a bell. It is continuous, much like the flow of oil from a container.

Nadi

A subtle channel through which energy flows throughout the body. The most important are Ida which flows vertically along the left side of the spinal column (it is said to be female in nature) and Pingala (male in nature) that flows parallel to Ida on the right side; Sushumna flows in the middle and represents the

experience located beyond duality.

Nadi Sodhana

The alternating nostril breathing exercise is not actually part of Kriya Yoga. Due to its unparalleled ability to calm and clear the mind (especially when practiced in the morning), some kriyabans have made it a part of their daily routine.

Navi Kriya

Spiritual technique that is part of the procedures for the first level of Kriya Yoga. The essence of this technique is to dissolve inhalation and exhalation in the state of equilibrium in the navel, which is the seat of the Samana current. It has the ability to both prepare and finish the Pranayama.

New Age The New Age is defined by the statement that our solar system has entered the sign of Aquarius. The New Age sensitivity is characterized by the perception of something "planetary" that is manifesting in the present day.

A number of significant scientists have made contributions to this field. The essential fact is that people have understood that the discoveries of Physics, Alternative Medicine, and the developments of Depth Psychology all converge towards a single understanding: the essential interdependence between the universe, the body, the psyche, and the spiritual dimension of human beings. Human thought has made significant progress in an evolutionary direction during the twentieth century. There are many reasons to believe that in the future, this era will be studied with the same respect as the eras of Humanism, the Renaissance, or the Enlightenment.

When I mention some New Age manias in the book, I am referring to the excessive use of alternative remedies for any kind of real or imaginary problems and also to theories borrowed very superficially from various esoteric traditions.

Omkar

Omkar is Om. The universe is sustained by Om, the Divine Reality, whose vibration is made up of specific aspects of sound, light, and inner movement. The term 'Omkar' or 'Omkar Kriya' is also used to refer to any procedure that favors the experience of Om.

Padmasana

The Asana involves placing the right foot on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh with the sole facing upwards. The name means 'the position in which the lotus flowers (Chakras) can be seen'; it is explained that, along with Kechari and Shambhavi Mudra, this position creates an energetic condition in the body that is suitable for experiencing the internal light that comes from each Chakra.

Sadly, some yogis have had their knee cartilage removed because they had to endure this position for years. In Kriya Yoga, at least for those who live in the West and have not been used to it since childhood, it is very wise and comfortable to practice either the half lotus or the Siddhasana position.

Paravastha

This concept is related to that of "Sthir Tattwa (Tranquility)." Lahiri Mahasaya coined it to describe the state achieved by extending the effects following Kriya practice. It's not just joy and peace, but rather something more profound and vital for us as a healing process. Throughout the day, we witness moments of profound peace and harmony with the rest of the world as a result of our initial efforts to master the Kriya techniques. Once years of discipline have been spent, and the breathless state has become familiar, Paravastha is achieved. The state of tranquility lasts forever, so it no longer needs to be sought out with care. When faced with life's challenges, the mind is comforted by flashes of the final state of freedom.

Pingala [see Nadi]

Prana

The energy that permeates our psycho-physical system. The Prana is divided into Prana, Apana, Samana, Udana, and Vijana, which have their respective seats in the chest, in the lower abdomen, in the region of the girdle, in the head, and throughout the body – arms and legs. The fact that the term 'Prana' has two meanings does not create confusion, when one considers the context in which it is used. Prana, Apana, and Samana are our main focus during the initial stages of Kriya Pranayama. When we use Shambhavi Mudra and perform mental Pranayama, we connect with Udana. Through various techniques (such as Maha Mudra) and the experience of Kriya Pranayama with Internalized Breath, we can gain a fresh and revitalizing perspective on Vijana.

Pranayama

The term Pranayama has two roots: Prana and Ayama (expansion) or Yama (control). Pranayama is a term that encompasses both 'Expanding Prana' and 'Controlling Prana'. I would prefer the first meaning of the term, but I think the second meaning is correct. In other words, Pranayama is the control of energy in the entire psycho physical system through the process of breathing, with the aim of receiving a beneficial effect or preparing for meditation. The common exercises of Pranayama, although they do not involve the perception of any energetic currents in the spine, can produce extraordinary experiences of strong energetic flow along the spine. This is no small thing since such an experience can give the practitioner, who has been skeptical until now, contact with spiritual reality and push him to make this reality a permanent point of his existence.

The breathing process is synchronized with the attention that moves up and down the spine in Kriya Pranayama. As the breath slows and deepens, with the tongue either flat or turned backwards, consciousness is involved in the movement of energy around the six Chakras. As the process progresses, the current flows into the deepest channel in the spine, which is Sushumna. When a subtle form of energy is circulated within the body while the physical breath is completely still after years of practice, it is a sign that Pranayama has achieved

its purpose.

Samadhi

According to Patanjali's Ashtanga (eight steps) Yoga, Samadhi is the state of deep contemplation in which the object of meditation becomes inseparable from the meditator. It occurs naturally after the states of Dharana and Dhyana.

Samadhi is more than just a state of meditation's perfection. We come to the realization that it resembles a near-death experience, but without any accidents, making it beautiful. Samadhi and near-death experiences in literature follow the same pattern. Consciousness is allowed to enter a dimension beyond the mind; later, this elevated awareness is integrated with daily life, which is completely transformed. To those who ask whether it is correct to diminish the value of Samadhi by reducing it to a process of contacting the dimension beyond physical life for a certain time, we affirm that this genuine experience is unparalleled in promoting the ideals of a balanced spiritual life in a clean manner.

Siddhasana

The Sanskrit name means 'Perfect Pose'. In this Asana, the heel of the left foot is pressed against the perineum by the sole of the right foot. Placement of the right heel against the pubic bone is done. The pranic circuit is closed and Kriya Pranayama becomes easy and profitable when the legs are in this position and Kechari Mudra is used.

Sikhism

The Sikh religion, which is the fifth largest organized religion in the world, is based on Guru Nanak's teachings and the nine successive Gurus. Sikhism's uniqueness lies in its non-anthropomorphic concept of God, which allows for the interpretation of God as the Universe itself.

Sushumna [see Nadi]

Talabya Kriya

This exercise involves stretching the muscles of the tongue, particularly the frenulum, in order to achieve Kechari Mudra [see]. Even when Kechari Mudra is achieved, this practice remains important because it has a decisive calming effect on thoughts.

Thokar

This Kriya technique is centered around directing Prana towards the location of a Chakra through a specific head movement. Studying the Sufi practices reveals that Lahiri Mahasaya's Thokar is a variation on the Sufi Dhikr.

Tribhangamurari

This term refers to a variant of Thokar. The primary teaching focuses on guiding consciousness through a tri-curved path called Tribhangamurari (Tri-vanga-

murari = three-curve-shape). Some Kriya teachers explain that in the last part of His life, Lahiri Mahasaya drew with extreme precision the three-curve shape, which can be perceived by deepening meditation after Kriya Pranayama. The starting point of this path is Bindu, and it ascends slightly to the left before descending towards the right side of the body. When a particular point in the back is reached, it curves and moves to the left, cutting the knot of Vishnu, whose seat is in the heart Chakra. After reaching a point in the back to the left, it changes direction again and points towards the location of the Brahma node in the coccyx region.

Tummo

This is a truly effective technique that comes from the Tibetan tradition, and therefore not from the teachings of Lahiri Mahasaya. How I learned it is narrated in Appendix #1 of this book. The technique is illustrated in chapter 16. It is based on a strong consciousness action on the Dantian center. Inducing a strong state of calmness in the psycho physical system is the first effect that is evident. Over time, mastering this procedure can lead to the state of Samadhi.

Uddiyana Bandha

Abdominal lock is usually practiced with the breath out, but in Kriya it is also used with the breath in, especially during the practice of Mudra, typical of Kriya, such as Maha Mudra, Navi Mudra, and Yoni Mudra.

To practice it with the breath out, Jalandhara Bandha is moderately used. Perform a false inhalation by pulling your belly in as far as you can without actually allowing the air to enter your body. Keep your breath out. To practice it with the breath in, slightly contract the abdominal muscles until you intensify the perception of energy in the spinal column in the region of the Manipura Chakra.

Yama – Niyama

Yama is self-control: non-violence, avoiding lies, stealing, cravings, and lust, and non-attachment. Niyamas are religious observances: cleansing, contentment, discipline, study of the Self, and surrender to the Supreme God. In most Kriya schools, these rules are a prerequisite for receiving initiation, a discerning researcher comprehends that they should be viewed as the results of a judicious Yoga practice. A beginner cannot understand what 'Study of the Self' means. Some teachers repeat the need to observe those rules like a parrot, even after giving absurd explanations on some of the previous points, in particular, what mental trick should be used to avoid the greed of the flesh..., goes on to explain the techniques. What's the point of saying empty words? The mystical path, when followed honestly, cannot accept the compromise of rhetoric. A statement is merely what it says. Yama and Niyama are a good theme to study, an ideal to keep in mind, but not a solemn promise. Only through meditation practice can one understand their meaning and see them flourish in one's life.

Yoga Sutra (work of Patanjali)

The Yoga Sutras are a text that has greatly influenced the philosophy and

practice of yoga. More than fifty different English translations testify to its importance. Although we cannot be sure of the exact time in which their author Patanjali lived, we can place it between 200 BC. and 200 A.D. The Yoga Sutras consist of a collection of 195 aphorisms that deal with the philosophical aspects of mind and awareness, forming a solid theoretical basis for Raja Yoga, the yoga of self-discipline and meditation. Yoga is described as a path made up of eight steps (Ashtanga) which are Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, and Samadhi. The first five steps form the psycho-physical foundation for having a true spiritual experience; the last three involve disciplining the mind until its dissolution in the ecstatic experience. They also define some esoteric concepts, common to all traditions of Indian thought, such as Karma. Although Patanjali is sometimes called 'the father of Yoga', his work is actually a summary of pre-existing oral yoga traditions, revealing an indistinct and contradictory theoretical background. Its importance is unquestionable: he clarified what others had taught, how abstract it was, and made it practical! He was a brilliant thinker, not just a compiler of ideas. The balance between theism and atheism is highly valued. We do not find the slightest hint of worshipping idols, gods, gurus, or sacred books – at the same time, we do not find any atheistic doctrine. We know that Yoga, in addition to being a rigid system of meditation practice, implies devotion to the Eternal Intelligence or Self. Patanjali affirms that the aspiration of the heart should be directed towards Om.

Yoni Mudra

The final realization of the Kriya path is a potential outcome of this technique. The Kutastha, situated between the eyebrows, is the origin of the individual soul. It is necessary to dissolve the deceptive Ego there. The technique involves bringing all energy to the point between the eyebrows and preventing it from being dispersed by closing the openings in the head.

The area between the eyebrows and the throat is where the breath remains quiet. If a state of deep relaxation is established in the body, this practice manages to create a very intense ecstatic state that spreads throughout the body. As far as practical realization is concerned, there are slight differences between the schools. Some schools give greater importance to the vision of the Light and less to the dissolution of the breath and the mind. Among the first, there are those who instruct by maintaining a constant position of their fingers to focus on each Chakra and notice their distinct colors. A satisfying observation found in traditional Yoga literature is that this technique derives its name from 'Yoni', which means 'womb' because like the baby in the womb, the practitioner has no contact with the outside world, and therefore, consciousness is focused only inwards.

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