

Preface

In *Krpalupanisad*, Svami Krpalvananda has given us the basic knowledge necessary for the practice of yoga. *Krpalu* means grace. *Upanisad* means sitting near. Through this scripture we are able to receive the grace of Svami Krpalvananda's profound wisdom, born of over twenty-five years of intense meditation and thorough study of yogic scripture. This combination of yogi and scholar makes Svami Krpalvananda's work particularly valuable for the seeker of Truth. It is rare to find a master of the yogic literature who can bring his own depth of experience to bear upon it, who lives the truths contained in the scriptures.

A native of Gujarat, India, Svami Krpalvananda has practiced Sahaja Yoga meditation ten hours each day for the last twenty-eight years, while also working on humanitarian projects, teaching, and writing. With the blessings of his guru, Bhagavan Lakulisa, he has rebuilt the ancient spiritual center of Kayavarohana, located near Baroda in Gujarat. He now resides in America, where he teaches his disciples and continues his meditation.

His disciple, Yogesvara Muni, founder of the Sanatana Dharma Foundation, has supervised the editing and refining of this English translation of *Krpalupanisad*. We have tried to make the translation as literal as possible in order to keep close to Svami Krpalvananda's subtle and precise meaning; the English is often somewhat unwieldy as a result. I ask God's forgiveness for any errors there may be in this edition.

Krpalupanisad was originally translated from Hindi into English by Gauri Modi. Bharat Gupt and Harihar Pandey assisted in the final

revision of the translation. Isvara (Robert Hartley) of the Gestalt Community Church has financed its publication. To all of the above, I offer thanks and acknowledgement.

May this scripture give clarity and encouragement to all who seek the Absolute!

Narada Muni, Editor

Introduction

Scripture flows from two sources: Universal Absolute Truth, and the wisdom of a *rsi* (seer, sage). When a yogi is in *samadhi* (divine union with the Absolute), he becomes a channel for Universal Truth. The knowledge flowing from this union is revealed knowledge or *sruti* (heard) scripture. *Smrti* (memory), on the other hand, is scripture which flows from the experience and ponderings of a *rsi* and is handed down from generation to generation. The main Upanisads are composed of both *sruti* and *smrti*.

This *Krpalupanisad* is of the same composition: *sruti*, from the *samadhi* of Svami Krpalvananda, and *smrti*, from the wisdom handed down to him by his guru and his own reflections on Truth.

Another characteristic of scripture is its ability to yield Truth regardless of the viewpoint, experience, knowledge, or state of a student. The Truth thus discovered by the student is appropriate to his stage of evolution.

Krpalupanisad also measures up to this test for scripture, since it reveals exoteric Truth to the person of the world, and esoteric Truth to the renunciate.

This text, therefore, takes its place among the Upanisads of ancient India.

Due to the nature of the Hindi and English languages, the terminology in the text primarily takes the masculine body point of view. However, the yogic principles and techniques mentioned apply equally to female aspirants and are equally effective for females and males.

While the text may seem weighted toward technique, woven throughout are the main principles of yoga and the moods of devotion. Frequent rereading and reflection on this text are required for the student of yoga to begin to reach the nectar of Truth lying at its core. The practitioner of yoga should constantly compare his own experiences in yoga to those described in the text. If he cannot find his experiences described there, he should reconsider his practice. When he does find a congruence, the practitioner will know he is on the correct path and will be elated and encouraged.

Yogesvara Muni

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Clarifications on the Definition of Yoga

Yoga (union) has many definitions. Three of them are meaningful and dear to my heart. In one, Lord Sri Krsna says, "Equanimity is itself yoga."¹ Secondly, he says, "Yoga is skill in action."² The third definition, as given by Maharsi Patanjali, is, "Yoga is the cessation of the modifications of *citta* (mindstuff)."³

The first two indicate that the senses are to be restrained, and Maharsi Patanjali's definition says that the mind is to be restrained. If these three are combined into one definition, then yoga would include the restraint of both the senses and the mind.

The *Yogakundalyupanisad* says, "There are two causes of thought impressions in the citta: desire and *vayu* (air, life energy). If one of them is eliminated, the other automatically disappears."⁴ Desire is a state of mind and *vayu* is a state of the body.

Lord Sri Krsna mentions two aspects of faith in the *Srimad*

Bhagavadgita (Song of God): *jnana* (knowledge) and *karma* (action).⁵

Jnana involves the faculties of intellect (hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell), while karma involves organs of action (hands, feet, mouth, anus,

and genitals). There can be only two kinds of faith, therefore there can be only two types of yoga: jnanayoga and karmayoga. The mind is the medium of jnanayoga, and *prana* (breath, life energy) is the medium of karmayoga.

However, without love, jnana and karma are fruitless. Love is the *atman* (soul, heart, core) of yoga. Since love is interwoven with jnana and karma, the Gita has not dealt with it separately.

A *jnanamarga* (knowledge path) *sadhaka* (aspirant) does his *upasana* (worship) through knowledge and neglects karma. A *sadhaka* of the *bhaktimarga* (devotion path) performs *upasana* with full use of his emotions and is keenly attentive to karma. There is a type of *sadhaka* other than the *jnanamarga* *sadhaka* and the *bhaktimarga* *sadhaka*. This scientifically-minded individual looks very closely at the principles of theism and atheism, and acts without prejudice. He is called a *karmayogi*. A *sadhaka* who practices *sakama* (with desires) *sadhana* (spiritual work) is also called a *karmayogi*.

Karma which is for the sake of *bhoga* (ego-gratifying pleasure) is not sacrificial, and leads to bondage. Karma which is for the sake of yoga is meant as a sacrifice, and leads to liberation.⁶

Whether a *sadhaka* follows the *jnanamarga* or the *karmamarga* (action path), karma must happen. No one can remain even for a moment without doing karma.⁷ Since this is true, how then can a *jnani* (one who uses knowledge to seek Truth) not do karma?

Yes, a *jnani* performs karma; however, he does not consider himself to be the doer since he believes *prakrti* (God manifest as Nature) to be the creator of karma.⁸ *Bhaktas* (those who seek God through devotion) also do karma, but their viewpoint is different in that they believe that

God makes them act.⁹

If there is no sense of doership, there is no karma; the means of sacrifice is karma.

There are two subdivisions of karma: *sukhma* (thoughts) and *sthula* (gross actions). Sukhma karma causes sthula karma. Sukhma karma is based on desire and desire is based on sexual activity; therefore desires are gone and *vayu* is restrained only when thoughts are absent. A yoga sadhaka first endeavors to see that the actions of his *prana* are restrained.¹⁰

The Purpose of Yoga

The purpose of yoga is the achievement of the four aims of life: *dharma* (righteousness, law, religion), *artha* (wealth), *kama* (pleasure), and *moksa* (liberation). A *sakama* sadhaka will, because of his incomplete *dharma*, achieve only *artha* and *kama*. A *niskama* (desireless) sadhaka will, because of his perfect *dharma*, achieve liberation. It must be said that a *sakama* sadhaka walks the path of sensual fulfillment, while a *niskama* sadhaka walks the path of liberation. Thus, there are two types of people who may practice yoga: a *samsari* (worldly person) and a *sannyasi* (renunciate).

As long as a sadhaka is attracted toward sensual enjoyment, he cannot walk the path of liberation.

Types of Yoga

Man has the common experience that freedom brings joy and bondage

brings sorrow. When one is awake, one is in close contact with sexual pleasure, resulting in joy and sorrow. In a state of deep sleep, however, one has no such contact, and therefore no joy or sorrow. So it could be concluded that an introspective state of mind is the perfect way to achieve happiness, peace and liberation.

The state wherein sensual desires have ceased is called *nirbija* (without the seed of desire) *samadhi* (union with the Ultimate), and is the final result of all the yogas of the world. Period! To say that yoga does not involve the restraint of both the senses and the mind is an error based on illusion.

God is eternal, and therefore, yoga practiced to attain Him is eternal, indestructible, immortal, and perpetual. Yoga is the only world dharma; it is the dharma of God, the dharma of humanity, the dharma for all, the dharma of Truth, the *Sanatana Dharma* (Eternal Dharma).

There cannot be different kinds of yoga. However, because seekers have different desires and their circumstances differ, there are seemingly different types of yoga. Because there are three different aspects of nature, there are different kinds of sadhakas. Some are *sattvika* (tranquil), some are both *sattvika* and *rajasika* (passionate), some are *rajasika* and *tamasika* (dull), and some are *tamasika*. As a result, logically-minded sadhakas tend to follow jnanayoga; devotional sadhakas, bhaktiyoga; and action-oriented sadhakas, karmayoga.

Lord Sri Krsna tells Uddhava in the *Srimad Bhagavata* that there are three paths for the liberation-minded sadhaka: jnanayoga, karmayoga, and bhaktiyoga, there being no other ways than these three.¹¹ In the *Yogavasistha*, yoga is compared to a bird with two wings, jnana and bhakti. Without both jnana and bhakti, it is not possible to fly into the sky.

If one follows karma and bhakti without jnana, jnana and bhakti without karma, or jnana and karma without bhakti, little progress is made. A jnani gives prime importance to jnana and gives karma and bhakti secondary importance. A yogi gives prime importance to karma and makes jnana and bhakti secondary, while a bhakta considers bhakti to be of prime importance and holds jnana and karma as subsidiary. This can be made clear if we think of jnana as a general, and karma and bhakti as warriors in jnanayoga. In karmayoga, karma is the general and jnana and bhakti are warriors. In bhaktiyoga, devotion is the general and jnana and karma are warriors.

There is only one yoga, but it can be reached by various means.

Because of this, yoga has been given many names. Brahmayoga, aksarabrahmayoga, sabdayoga, sankhyayoga, rajayoga, purnayoga, mahayoga, astangayoga, amanaskayoga, asamprajnatayoga, nirbijayoga, nirvikalpayoga, acetanasamadhi, and manonigraha are some other names for jnanayoga. Karmayoga is also known as

sannyasayoga, buddhiyoga, samprajnatayoga, savikalpayoga, hathayoga, hamsayoga, siddhayoga, kriyayoga, tarakayoga, pranopasana, sahayayoga, saktipata, tantrayoga, binduyoga, sivayoga, saktiyoga, kundaliniyoga, pasupatayoga, niskamakarmayoga,

indriyanigraha, and others. Names synonymous with bhaktiyoga are:

karmasamarpanayoga, cetanasamadhi, mahabhava, premayoga, prapattiyoga, saranagatiyoga, Isvarapranidhana, anugrahayoga,

mantrayoga, nadayoga, suratasabdayoga, layayoga, japayoga, and

others. Thus the word "yoga" includes all of these. Karmayoga is the

first step and jnanayoga is the last step. As long as restraint of the sense faculties does not take place, that is, as long as the senses do not

become introverted, the restraint of the mind does not take place. If one tries to restrain the mind and its desires without first having restrained the senses, much time is wasted coping with difficulties caused by desire and impure senses. So, sadhana does not occur. Therefore, a sadhaka should first restrain the senses and then try to restrain the mind. Restraint of the senses is called *purvayoga* (lower yoga) and restraint of the mind is called *uttarayoga* (upper yoga). Purvayoga and uttarayoga should be considered the two stages of yoga.

Yogadarsana (Patanjali Yogasutra) agrees with *sankhya* philosophy (a dualistic philosophy), thus it is a scripture of knowledge. It presents a complete description of God, thus it is a devotional scripture. It also teaches the eight karmas, so it is also yogic scripture.

The Vedas consist of three parts: a jnana *kanda* (section), a karmakanda, and an upasanakanda. In those Upanisads which propound the karmakanda, a thorough discussion of karmayoga is presented. Karmayoga, kriyayoga, sabijayoga, samprajnatayoga, savikalpayoga, and cetanasamadhi all convey the same meaning. Teachings on karmayoga are found in the following Upanisads:

Sandilya, Mandalabrahmana, Varaha, Jabala, Dhyanabindu, Yogacudamani, Yogasikhopanisad, Svetasvatara, Saubhagyalaksmi, Yogakundali and others. There are also independent texts on karmayoga: *Yogiyajnavalkya, Gherandasamhita, Gorak-sapaddhati, Sivasamhita, Hathayogapradipika, Siddhasiddhanta-paddhati, Yogabija, Amanaskayoga*, and others.

Jnanayoga is discussed in complete detail in the Upanisads of the jnanakanda. Jnanayoga, nirbijayoga, asamprajnatayoga, nirvikalpayoga, and a cetanasamadhi are synonymous terms.

Jnanayoga is also propounded in the Upanisads of *Isavasya*, *Kena*, *Katha*, *Prasna*, *Mundaka*, *Mandukya*, *Aitareya*, *Taittiriya*, *Chandogya*, *Svetasvatara*, and others. One should remember, however, that only after achieving the *siddhis* (powers) of karma, can one successfully practice jnanayoga.¹²

Detailed discussions on bhaktiyoga are made in the Upanisads of the upasanakanda. The terms upasana, sabijayoga, samprajnatayoga, savikalpasamadhi, and mahabhava are synonymous. Just as there is niskamakarma in karmayoga, only karma for the attainment of God is done in bhaktiyoga. So, the Upanisads of karmayoga are also the Upanisads of bhaktiyoga. *Isvaravada*, *Yogadarsana*, and *Sesvarasankhya* are also true bhaktiyoga. The eighteen *Puranas* (stories) also expound bhakti, as well as karma and jnana.

A three-fold yoga has been mentioned in yogic scriptures: *anavayoga* (lower yoga), *saktayoga* (energy yoga), and *sambhavayoga* (yoga of transcendence). In *astangayoga* (eight-limbed yoga, equivalent to anavayoga), *asana* (posture), *pranayama* (breath restraint), *mudra* (lock or seal), *pratyahara* (withdrawal), etc. are mentioned. In anavayoga the main aim is to restrain the senses. In order to do this, the sense organs, prana, mind, intellect, etc. are used. Once the *kundalini* (literally, "female coiled one," the evolutionary energy of the Supreme, thought of as a goddess) has been awakened, anavayoga becomes saktayoga. And when progress is made in saktayoga, it becomes sambhavayoga. So, one can see that there is only one yoga, though it has three stages.

Kundalini: The Basis of All Yoga

If a sadhaka has no selfish goals and is only after liberation, he will have to awaken kundalini in order to achieve that liberation. Without awakening kundalini it is impossible to reach liberation, because kundalini is the basis of all yoga.¹³ Kundalini gives a sadhaka access to yoga. Without it, all efforts toward yoga are meaningless. The achievement of Absolute Knowledge is not possible by any other means. This is the only path that leads to achievement of jnana. The only fruit of the rituals of jnana, bhakti, and yoga is the awakening of kundalini.

There is a strange lock which secures the closed gates that lead to the path of liberation. This mysterious lock cannot be opened without a particular key. This key is not easily available to just anyone. This key is kundalini.¹⁴ This serpentlike kundalini is situated at the upper part of the kanda (root of the penis), guarding the path of the susumna (central energy channel). It lies asleep, coiled in a circle. Because of this, this path is closed and cannot be traveled. A samsari sadhaka who takes recourse to kundalini and enjoys sensual pleasures falls into bondage. A sannyasi sadhaka who takes recourse to kundalini, practices yoga sadhana which results in his achieving liberation.¹⁵ Descending sexual fluids cause disease, old age, mortality, and ignorance. Ascending sexual fluids bring about good health, youth, immortality, and Divine Knowledge. Lord Sri Krsna has said that desire is the enemy of all knowledge, and has therefore instructed Arjuna to become an *urdhvareta* (one who has achieved upward flow of sexual fluids).¹⁶

Only a rare yogi dares to awaken kundalini. An ordinary sadhaka is not able to do so. Those who seek powers by spiritual means bow down

to kundalini from a distance and then return. Many sadhakas claim that they know kundalini, but none of them know kundalini in its true form. The one who does know kundalini knows yoga.¹⁷ These scriptural words are not wrong. *Pranotthana* (rising prana) and the awakening of kundalini are two different phenomena. Yes, it is true that asanas, mudras, pranayamas, and *dhyana* (meditation) occur of their own accord through pranotthana. However, such actions do not result in the deflowering of the *cakras* (energy centers), nor in the type of purification of the body or mind which can happen only after kundalini is awake. Pranotthana is worthy of praise because it is the only way that leads to the awakening of kundalini.

To explain kundalini to the layman is many more times difficult than to explain color to one who is born blind or tone to one born deaf. Kundalini has several forms. The basic classes of its forms are sthula and suksma. The sthula kundalini is located within the area of the *muladhara* (root) and the *svadhisthana* (sex) cakras. Physiologically, it is located in the area of the excretory and reproductive systems. Sthula kundalini is instrumental in achieving *sabija* (with the seed of desire) samadhi. Suksma kundalini is in the form of the life force, prana. It is the means of reaching nirbija samadhi. Yogis think of the sthula form of kundalini as Siva, and the suksma form as Sakti. Due to this, Siva's combined form is called *Ardha Narivara* (Half- Female God). Siva is in Sakti, and Sakti is in Siva; their relationship is like that of the moon and moonlight. Sakti is the expanded form and Siva is the compressed form.¹⁸

When kundalini is aroused by the blessings of a guru all the cakras and *granthis* (glands, knots) of the body are deflowered.¹⁹

In passing, it should be mentioned that all the sthula *kriyas* (purifying activities) which occur automatically while the senses are restrained are called *kriyayoga* in discourses on *karmayoga*. Because of the importance of *karmadrsti* (seeing karma in its true light) in *karmayoga*, kundalini manifests in *karmadrsti*. This *kriyayoga* is described as the *lila* (play) of the Lord in discussions on *bhaktiyoga*. In *bhaktiyoga*, *bhavadrsti* (seeing devotion in its true light) is given prime importance. So, kundalini is accepted in the form of God or a worshipped deity. "One can achieve everything through devotion. Devotion is the instrument with which one gets a view of God, and leads to the highest of all knowledge." ²⁰ "Nothing is accomplished by constant *japa* (repeating the name of God while counting on a rosary), sacrifices, and austerities which torture the body, because without deep devotion, *yantras* (sacred visual symbols) and *mantras* (sacred auditory formulas) do not yield fruit." ²¹ *Kriyayoga*, or the Lord's *lila*, is called the play of prakrti in *jnanayoga*. In *jnanayoga*, *tattvadrsti* (seeing reality in its true light) is of prime importance, so kundalini is accepted in the form of *tattva* (truth). Kundalini has two forms: inverted and aroused. As long as kundalini is dormant in the human body, the deep darkness of ignorance is predominant, realization of Truth does not occur, bondage in the cycle of life and death is not broken, and one does not achieve immortality.

The inverted kundalini lying in the muladhara is also known as inverted sakti. Many sadhakas, through various yogic rites, arrive at a stage where there is a very thin line between sensual pleasure and yoga; however, because they do not know kundalini's proper form, these rites cause their downfall. This stage is the starting point of the

vama (left-handed) marga.

To awaken the inverted kundalini is easy, but to make it ascendent is difficult. It takes many years of asceticism. One should not expect to make kundalini ascendent in a single lifetime. It takes a minimum of twenty-five to fifty lifetimes. When kundalini is aroused, a sadhaka becomes frightened because his yogic path is flooded with a surge of sensual desires. To overcome these desires and become an urdhvareta by making the semen ascendent is like fighting the great war of the *Mahabharata*.

One enters into the realm of yoga after the muladhara and svadhisthana cakras have been deflowered. These two cakras are the center of bhoga as well as of yoga. Just as a ladder is the means of either descent or ascent, so these two cakras are also the means of both descent and ascent. As long as purvayoga, tarakayoga, samprajnatayoga, sabijayoga, savikalpayoga, or the restraint of the senses is not complete, the sexual centers are the object of constant kriyas. As a result, they become the main object of dhyana. When prana subjugates *apana* (downward flowing prana), and the ajna *cakra* (the center between the eyebrows) becomes the central object of dhyana, then that urdhvareta yogi acquires a Divine Body purified by the fires of yoga, Divine Consciousness, uttarayoga, amanaskayoga, rajayoga, asamprajnatayoga, nirbijayoga, nirvikalpayoga; that is, the restraint of the mind. It says in the Tantras that a yogi is not a human but an incarnation of God.²²

The god most worshipped by yogis is Siva, who is himself an urdhvareta. His symbol is an upright *linga* (phallus). Placed to the east of the linga is Sakti; to the north is a tortoise. Sakti symbolizes the

divine goal, and the tortoise symbolizes *samyama* (the progression of concentration, meditation, and samadhi). Yogi Lord Sri Krsna is an urdhvareta. The mudra in which he is shown standing on the hood of a black cobra is called akarsanimudra, mohanamudra, vaisnavimudra, yonimudra, or lopamudra. Sri Krsna has a flute in his hands which symbolizes *anahatanada* (unstruck sound).

When kundalini, in the form of knowledge, reaches the navel center, the sadhaka is drawn more and more toward renunciation. *Sattvaguna* (tranquil condition) becomes dominant, which results in the sadhaka discovering the springs of Divine Knowledge. At the end, sakti ascends to the *sahasrara cakra* (the crown center), and the yogi is freed from the bondage of *samsara* (worldly existence).

A lower type of *saktipata* (gift of sakti) lies behind descendent sakti, and in ascendent sakti lies the highest type of saktipata.

The Ritual for Awakening the Kundalini

In India, the general sadhanas of jnana, karma, and bhakti have been prevalent in society for thousands of years. It is a special feature of the Sanatana Dharma that by practicing any of these prevalent sadhanas with devotion, kundalini can be awakened.

The path of sakama sadhana of a samsari, being full of desires, differs from that of a sadhaka who yearns only for yoga and follows a path of niskama sadhana. A sakama sadhaka desires siddhis, so his consciousness is filled with confusion; therefore total annihilation of desire does not take place. In contrast, a niskama sadhaka is dominated by the desire to surrender completely. There is no cause for

confusion in his consciousness, and the complete annihilation of all desires can occur.

A samsari sadhaka keeps control of the vital force and maintains celibacy as far as possible when he does sakama sadhana. A sannyasi, in his niskama sadhana, surrenders himself completely to attain the state of urdhvareta.

The second feature of these prevailing sadhanas of jnana, karma, and bhakti is that by their rituals kundalini is aroused, but its force is bearable. As a result, it can be beneficial, if one proceeds taking into consideration the kind of ritual used, the nature of the sadhaka, and the particular circumstances.

It is thus a safe course. However, if a sadhaka is not seeking liberation, but, nevertheless, has received saktipata initiation and wishes to fulfill material goals, he is under a big illusion. He doesn't know that saktipata is an initiation into renunciation, and leads only to liberation. Powers achieved in this path must be surrendered back to the Lord and to Sri Guru's Feet. When a sadhaka begins sakama sadhana, he achieves material abilities which kindle faith and devotion in his heart; thus he becomes firmly religious. As a result, he comes to understand the baseness of sakama actions and the value of niskama actions. A niskama sadhaka, both in the beginning of his sadhana and in the middle portion, attains spiritual powers. Thus his renunciation is strengthened and he gradually forgets the ways of the world.

A sannyasi following the path of knowledge lives in a forest and pursues his study of scriptures, reflecting on them. He is discriminating, ascetic, and seeks liberation and the treasure of knowledge in the *Darsanas* (the six systems of Indian philosophy). Thus his ascending

path stays clear of all obstructions and in the end he becomes its master.

A samsari following the path of knowledge lives in a city and yet pursues the study of scriptures diligently, trying to reflect on them. He tries his best to discriminate and follow an ascetic path. He tries to reach liberation and to understand the Darsanas. Thus he earns the right to become a sannyasi.

A sannyasi following the path of yoga lives in a forest where he performs *tapas* (austerity), practices yoga, and studies scripture. He meditates on his study and closely follows the *yamas* (restraints) and *niyamas* (observances). This results in an increase of knowledge and asceticism in his heart, and produces spiritual powers. Thus his ascending path of yoga is cleared.

Whether the knowledge-seeking sadhaka follows bhakti or karma yoga, or some other yoga that is included in these two, the kundalini must be awakened in order to attain knowledge. Yoga and bhakti marga sadhakas can awaken the kundalini by the following rituals of sadhana.

By Constant Practice of Siddhasana the Kundalini Sakti Can Be Awakened

The yogis say that the cakras are centers of sakti or centers of nadis (energy channels). The principle cakras are the *muladhara* (root), *svadhisthana* (sex), *manipura* (navel), *anahata* (heart), *visuddha* (throat), *ajna* (eyebrow), and *sahasrara* (crown). Other subsidiary cakras are the soma(moon) and *manas* (mind); and more subsidiary, the *vyoma* (space) and *lalana* (tongue) cakras. Although these cakras are located

in the back of the body, their expansion is in the front of the body. By practicing siddhasana, the deflowering of the muladhara cakra begins, then gradually the deflowering of the other cakras starts. Kundalini is aroused by the yogic fires which are kindled in the muladhara cakra through the practice of siddhasana.

The regular practice of various *asanas* (postures) brings the same result.

Every asana affects one or more cakras. For example, in mulabandhasana, virasana, ardhamatsyendrasana, vrsasana, parsvasana, and others, one presses the center of the anal orifice with the heel. Thus these asanas affect the muladhara cakra. In the same way, when the heel gives pressure to the perineum while doing siddhasana, simhasana, muktasana, dhirasana, khanjanasana, kurmasana, gomukhasana, and others, these asanas affect the svadhisthana cakra. Then there are asanas like pascimottanasana, bhunamanapadmasana, pavanamuktasana, prsthasana, uttanapadasana, karnapidanasana, suptadvipadasirasana, halasana, and others, in which the abdominal walls are contracted and expanded. This action affects the manipura cakra. The anahata cakra is affected when the chest cavity is contracted while breathing out, or while retaining air in the chest during saralahastabhujangasana, makarasana, pranipatasana, adhvasana, khagasana, suptaparsvasana, and others. In the asanas in which the throat is under pressure, like sarvangasana, halasana, karnapidanasana, suptadvipadasirasana, supta-ekapadasirasana, and others, the visuddha cakra is affected. Those asanas in which the gaze is attracted toward *bhrumadhya* (the region between the eyebrows) automatically, like padmasana, sthirasana,

svastikasana, siddhasana, mulabandhasana, vajrasana, and others, affect the ajna chakra. Those asanas where the head is on the ground and the feet are up affect the sahasrara chakra. They are sirsasana, ekapadasirsasana, vrksasana, ekapadavrksasana, urdhvapadmasana, and urdhvasamyuktapadasana.

The Kundalini Sakti Is Also Aroused by Regular Practice of One or More of the Ten Yogic Mudras

The ten chief *mudras* (seals, locks) are mulabandhamudra, uddiyanabandhamudra, jalandharabandhamudra, mahavedhamudra, mahamudra, mahabandhamudra, viparitakaranimudra, sakticalanamudra, vajrolimudra (yonimudra), and khecarimudra-. These ten mudras are the immortal experiences of yoga. An advanced sabijayoga sadhaka, by the thorough sadhana of yoga, becomes acquainted with these mudras. Mudras are developed forms of asanas. When one does asanas, the body organs are mainly involved and prana is secondary; but in performing mudras, the main factor is prana, and the body organs are secondary. The same mudra may be repeated in various asanas. This proves that the asana is secondary, and the process of prana is primary. Also, several mudras can occur together during one asana.

There are many mudras, but the above ten are the most important. Mudras are connected with specific cakras.

1. Mahamudra

Sit on the floor, stretch the right leg out. Fold the left leg and press the

left heel hard on the *sivani* (the area between the anus and the genitals). Hold the toes of the outstretched foot with both hands, holding the air outside the body after exhalation. *Jalandharabandha* (throat lock) is performed and the body bent forward until the head touches the right knee. This mudra is called mahamudra. This mudra can be done using the right heel instead of the left. Mahamudra is connected with the muladhara cakra. When this mudra is mastered, it also becomes connected with the sahasrara cakra.

2. Mulabandhamudra

Sit on the floor and press the sivani with the right heel, and place the left heel at the base of the penis. Then contract the anus and pull the navel hard toward the spine. This will raise the apana. This is called mulabandhamudra and it is connected with the muladhara cakra.

3. Sakticalanamudra

Sakticalanamudra is the basis of all other mudras. It is the prime secret of all yoga. It is therefore kept secret. A guru passes on this secret personally only to the best sadhaka disciples who are capable of living the life of an ascetic.

A general reference to sakticalanamudra follows. After having assumed siddhasana, apply pressure on the kundalini that has travelled up to below the navel with the closed fist of the right hand. This makes prana attract apana gradually into the manipura, anahata, visuddha, ajna, sahasrara, and other higher cakras. It should be remembered that as long as apana is not weakened, prana cannot attract apana into the higher cakras. This conflict goes on between apana and prana for

many years. In the end, when prana conquers apana and becomes very strong, the defeated apana starts rising into higher cakras.

During this stage the prana arouses kundalini over and over, but the kundalini defeats prana each time and returns to dormancy. However, when the prana becomes victorious, kundalini raises its head and begins to ascend and help the sadhaka to achieve sabijasamadhi. When kundalini moves away from the entrance of the susumna, then yonimudra will begin.

Without sakticalanamudra, khecarimudra and yonimudra do not occur. Sakticalanamudra is connected with the svadhisthana cakra. When sakticalanamudra is complete, then it also becomes connected with the sahasrara cakra.

4. Mahabandhamudra

Assume siddhasana or muktasana, folding the right leg and placing the right heel so as to press the sivani. Place the left heel so pressure is put on the root of the penis. Do all three *bandhas* (locks) and practice sagarbha or sabija pranayama. This is called mahabandhamudra. - Automatically the sadhaka at this stage will experience sakticalanamudra, khecarimudra, mulabandhamudra, uddiyanabandhamudra, and jalandharabandhamudra during the pranayama. As a result, he can obtain *bindu* (spot, drop of fluid) in part. This mudra is connected with the muladhara and sahasrara cakras.

Mahabandhamudra only occurs when a sadhaka reaches the final stages of sabijasamadhi. A beginner cannot practice this mudra in its complete form, and it is useless to him.

5. Uddiyanabandhamudra

In uddiyanabandhamudra, while one performs a long exhalation the abdomen is pulled toward the spine. In the beginning, mulabandhamudra, uddiyanabandhamudra, and jalandharabandhamudra are done in siddhasana. Later on they happen in any posture. When these three mudras happen simultaneously, it is called *tribandha*. In the language of the Tantras, tribandha is symbolized as Lord Siva's or Goddess Sakti's trident. When tribandha happens along with jihvabandhamudra (khecarimudra), tribandha becomes secondary in importance. An ordinary sadhaka should do the mudras only after properly practicing pranayama. Uddiyanabandhamudra is connected with the manipura and sahasrara cakras.

6. Jalandharabandhamudra

If the chin is firmly pressed onto the chest in any asana at the end of inhalation or exhalation, so that the throat is constricted, then jalandharabandhamudra has happened. After the inhalation or exhalation the breath is held. During this mudra, prana moves up the *pascimamadhyamarga* (rear median path) and rests in the sahasrara cakra. Murcha and bhramari pranayamas happen during this mudra.

7. Viparitakaranimudra

Start by lying stretched out on the back. Then, while exhaling, raise the legs until the trunk is resting on the shoulders, the hands supporting the back and the gaze fixed on the navel, concentrating on the manipura cakra. Then hold the breath. This is viparitakaranimudra. While this mudra resembles sarvangasana, note that in sarvangasana the chest

and legs are in a straight line, but in viparitakaranimudra, only the forearms and legs are in a straight line. Sarvangasana is a posture only, and is done without any special ritual, but viparitakaranimudra, being a mudra, is done as follows. During viparitakaranimudra, the genitals are repeatedly contracted inward. In the *Sivasamhita* this ritual is recommended and is called sirsasana. Sirsasana is the complete form of viparitakaranimudra.

8. Khecarimudra or Jihvabandhamudra

A beginner in yoga does not experience khecarimudra. Only a sadhaka who has had pranotthana and experienced sakticalanamudra perfectly will come close to khecarimudra.

Khecarimudra may happen in any posture. In this mudra the tongue enters the tenth orifice, the pharynx, and the gaze becomes fixed between the eyebrows.

A sadhaka who cuts the ligament under the tongue after reading about khecarimudra or following the directions of an imperfect guru cannot reach samadhi or other yogic states by practicing khecarimudra. The blessings of God or Guru lead to the awakening of kundalini, which in turn leads to khecarimudra. First, powerful yogic fires cut the ligaments under the tongue so that the moving and milking actions of the tongue occur. In the end, the tongue tries to, then succeeds in entering the *kapalakuvara* (the tenth orifice).

At the end of sabijasamadhi, when one experiences vajroli or yoni mudra, the tongue becomes hard and erect like the penis and causes apana to ascend, deflowering the brahmagranthi, and the yogi becomes an urdhvareta.

When khecarimudra is complete, a yogi will taste *amṛta* (nectar). As a result, the old cells are destroyed and replaced by the new cells which make up the Divine Body. Nirbijasamadhi begins only after Divine Body is achieved.

Khecarimudra is connected with the muladhara, the visuddha, and the ajana cakras.

9. Mahavedhamudra

Assume mahabandhamudra. Inhale while doing khecarimudra and fix the gaze firmly on ajna cakra. Then bend the head backwards, spread out the hands, and bend forward until the palms of the hands lie on the floor in front of the body. The buttocks will rise off the floor. Lastly, come back to the original posture and hit one side of the body repeatedly with a closed fist.

During mulabandhamudra, when the prana and apana unite, a sadhaka yogi will experience plavini pranayama. As a result, air fills the body cavity, and when one side is hit repeatedly, a roaring sound "hum" emerges from the mouth. One should remember that mahamudra, mahabandhamudra, and mahavedhamudra are to be practiced simultaneously. Mahavedhamudra is connected with the ajna cakra.

This mudra occurs only in the last stages of sabijasamadhi and is useless to an ordinary sadhaka.

10. Vajrolimudra or Yonimudra

A sadhaka can push a lubricated rubber catheter into the orifice of the penis, beginning by pushing it up one inch and, with practice, going up to twelve inches. This is done only to clear the urinary tract and not to

draw up milk or lost semen at the end of coitus, which is not vajroli, but only an error based on misunderstanding.

Assume siddhasana. Raise the united prana and apana to the forehead, close the eyes with the respective index and middle fingers, close the ears with the thumbs, the nostrils with the ring fingers, and the lips with the little fingers. Concentrate the gaze and the thoughts on the bhrumadhya, then contract the genitals inward.

Until yonimudra is obtained, making the semen ascendent, a sadhaka will not understand its greatness. Only after achieving mulabandhamudra will a sadhaka be able to go on to yonimudra. Attaining the union of prana and apana is as difficult as making the Ganges ascend to heaven. The yogi who can achieve yonimudra achieves sabijasadhi and the Divine Body filled with yogic fire. Yonimudra is connected with the muladhara and the sahasrara cakras. It occurs only in the last stages of sabijasadhi and is useless to an ordinary sadhaka. This mudra can be used to gain insight into the ordinary meditation of pratyahara.

If these mudras are arranged according to the viewpoint of yoga, the sequence is: mulabandhamudra, uddiyanabandhamudra, jalandharabandhamudra, sakticalanamudra, khecarimudra, viparitakaranimudra, mahabandhamudra, mahamudra, mahavedhamudra, and vajroli or yoni mudra.

These mudras can be divided into different types of foci for *pancadharana* (five concentrations): parthividharana, ambhasidharana, agneyidharana or vaisvanaridharana, vayavidharana, and akasidharana. The five mudras bhucari, agocari, cacari, and others, are also manifested in these. Of secondary importance are mudras like

tadagi, mandavi, sambhavi, nabho, asvini, pasini, kaki, matangini, bhujangini, sanksobhini, dravani, akarsani, vasi, unmada, mahankusa, manduki, and others.

Pranayama is the Key to Yoga

The regular practice of *anulomaviloma pranayama* (alternate-nostril breath) awakens the kundalini sakti.

The only difference between a live body and a corpse is that a live body has prana and a corpse is bereft of it. Thus prana has the topmost importance in a body. Prana is the link between the atman and the gross body. Without this link the body is lifeless. Whatever type of yoga one may practice, directly or indirectly one must worship prana; then the cessation of modifications in the mindstuff occurs. The five main elements that make up nature are *prthvi* (earth), *jala* (water), *agni* (fire), *vayu* (air), and *akasa* (ether). Prthvi is the grossest, jala is more subtle, agni more subtle, vayu still more subtle, and akasa the most subtle. Vayu is the fourth element. Restraining it leads to the rapid purification of the other four elements.²³

Sadhakas of the jnanamarga give great importance to prana samyama. The Vedas and Upanisads have praised the worship of prana. The divine Sankaracarya said in his interpretation of the *Svetasvataropanisad* that only a sadhaka whose sins have been removed by the union of prana and apana can reach God. Therefore, first all one's nadis should be purified, and only then will one be qualified to practice pranayama. Sankara finally supported Maharsi Yajnavalkya's view that one should practice pranayama in the following order:

"exhalation, inhalation, then retention. The union of prana and apana is called pranayama. O Gargi, the pranava is seen in a three-fold way. The combination of exhalation, inhalation, and retention is pranava."²⁴

Practice of Pratyahara Alone Can also Awaken Kundalini

There are five sense organs, therefore, there are five kinds of *pratyahara* (withdrawal). A sadhaka should begin with pratyahara of the particular sense organ which seems easiest and most attractive to him. Once having achieved pratyahara of that sense, the rest of the pratyaharas will begin automatically. After that there is no problem of sequence. Since the mind is connected with the sense organs, in order to steady the mind one must resort to any one of the senses of intellect.

In order to make the mind introverted instead of extroverted, one must make the sense faculties introverted. Close the opening of the sense organ that you wish to make introverted. This is called pratyahara meditation. One can achieve pratyahara without closing the sense organ orifices, by concentrating on an external object. However, one is more easily distracted by the external environment. Because of this, there are repeated disturbances in the pratyahara. The purpose of closing the sense organ orifice is to avoid agitation in the mind caused by the sense faculty. Just as a hand pulls back automatically when it touches fire, a sense organ is contracted to avoid undesirable sensations.

If *dharana* (concentration) or *dhyana* are done without first achieving pratyahara, they are like a body which is soulless and lifeless. In this state samadhi is impossible.

Whether pratyaharas of the five senses (hearing, touch, sight, taste, and smell) are done separately or together, the respective orifices can be closed or kept open.

1. Pratyahara of the Ears

In pratyahara of the ears, the eyes need not be shut. However, in order to practice this pratyahara perfectly and withdraw completely from the outside environment, the eyes are usually shut. In doing pratyahara of one sense, another can be included at the same time.

Since the senses of sight and sound are the greatest disturbers of the mind during pratyahara, the pratyaharas of ears and eyes appear easy and attractive to beginners. The special feature of these pratyaharas is that one can alter his posture and maintain the pratyahara. One should concentrate only on either the eyes or ears, and allow the body to change position to prevent fatigue, not worrying about body position during the practice of the pratyahara. One should perform dhyana only after allowing complete freedom to the body.

What is the difference between dhyana and pratyahara?

Pratyahara is a lower form of dhyana. During pratyahara, prana and the sense organs are most important, and the mind is of secondary importance. Because of this, all efforts are made to make the sense organs and prana introspective. However, during dhyana, prana and the mind are primary, and the sense organs secondary, so all efforts are made to make prana and the mind steady.

Assume a comfortable posture. Close the eyes and place the index and middle fingers lightly on both eyelids. Place the thumbs into the respective ear holes and try to hear the anahatanada from within. Place

the ring fingers on the upper lip, right below the nose, and the little fingers on the upper part of the lower lip. This ritual is called pratyahara of sound, nadasamadhi, or nadanusandhana. The gaze should be fixed on the bhrumadhya, and the head raised toward the sky. This ritual for pratyahara of the ears is part of kriyayoga.

When a bhakta does pratyahara of the ears with devotion, he does not close the ears with thumbs or cotton, but listens with great longing and full concentration to great saints expounding scripture or telling of the lives of goddesses and gods, or listens to hymns to God.

This will give him his first experiences of pranotthana. Thereafter, he can close his ears, and listen to the internal sounds.

2. Pratyahara of the Skin

The body is covered with skin which is full of pores. Which holes should one close in order to do pratyahara of the skin? The orifices of the ears, eyes, nose, and tongue are in the head, but the skin covers the whole body. So, to practice pratyahara of the skin means that one must accomplish the combined pratyahara of all five sense organs. The corollary of this is that when desire for sex is aroused, the desire for the pleasure of all the five senses of the lustful person is aroused. Because of this, the advanced sadhaka who practices the higher levels of sabijasamadhi resorts first to sakticalanamudra and then, towards the end, does yonimudra.

This pratyahara is done in siddhasana with the right or left heel pressing the sivani, and the other heel pressing at the base of the genitals; or the anus is pressed by one heel, and the base of the genitals by the other. Close the ears with the thumbs, close the nostrils

with the ring fingers, and with the little fingers close the lips. Then do dhyana while holding the breath, in order to experience the Divine Touch. This pratyahara is called yonimudra or layasamadhi. During this pratyahara the contraction of the genitals is performed repeatedly and the apana is drawn upward by khecarimudra.

A yogi practices this pratyahara to prevent his semen from falling and to make it rise. Unless the semen rises, sabijasamadhi cannot be completed and the yogi cannot become an urdhvareta. An urdhvareta yogi has a Divine Body and Divine Consciousness. In the science of yoga it is held that only after this state is reached can a yogi reach nirbijasamadhi. A yogi who has not achieved Divine Body and Divine Consciousness may be world famous, but he is still only a sadhaka. Divine Body and Divine Consciousness can be achieved by a jnana yogi, bhakti yogi, or a karma yogi. Kapila and Vyasa are examples of perfect jnana yogis, Suka and Sanatkumara are examples of perfect bhakti yogis, and Matsyendra and Goraksa are examples of perfect karma yogis. They all achieved Divine Body and Divine Consciousness.

The path of sabijasamadhi is full of obstacles and as a result, is divided into two stages: *kramamukti* (gradual liberation) and *sadyomukti* (immediate liberation), which are also called the *daksinayana* (southern) and *uttarayana* (northern) paths respectively. Only after many cycles of birth and death does a kramamukta yogi achieve his goal and become liberated from rebirth. Then he is qualified to achieve sadyomukti. In India, the birthplace of yoga, such a yogi is born once every five hundred or a thousand years. In order to achieve sabijasamadhi it is necessary to have the generous blessing of Almighty God. To an atheist one would say it is necessary to have an appropriate nature in order to

master yoga.

An ordinary sadhaka should not use siddhasana while doing this type of dhyana. Only the special sadhaka should resort to siddhasana, and then only if it occurs involuntarily due to pranotthana. Pratyahara of the skin is prescribed only in niskamakarmayoga.

A sadhaka who treads the bhaktimarga is full of devotion, that is, he is incomparably happy worshiping the image of his God. However, in spite of much practice he will not be able to keep that image steadily in his mind, so he uses an external image of his God. Thus, true devotion to his God is unbroken and complete.

The physical body of man can also be an idol, but when it becomes lifeless no one will love it. Just as the body is loved only for the life that pulsates through it, so also, one ignores the gross quality of an idol and worships the godliness which has been embedded in it. Just as a convex lens concentrates the sun's rays to set fire to dry grass, so also a special type of devotion is necessary to catch a glimpse of God in the idol.

This sort of devotion is found in the devotee of the bhaktimarga. He accomplishes pratyahara of the sense of touch by touching an idol or image of God. However, as he progresses and pranotthana takes place, he enters the regions of God's lilas. The devotion of the gopi, or a sort of pure Divine Love, is inspired in him and he starts doing the involuntary dhyana of niskamakarmayoga.

A sadhaka of the jnanamarga does pratyahara of touch by touching the holy feet of his Divine Sadguru, or by thinking of them. This is layacintana or nididhyasana, which is synonymous with pranotthana in karmayoga.

3. Pratyahara of Sight

When the sun rises and one wakes up and opens one's eyes, images of many objects are reflected into those eyes, resulting in the sight of various objects. As a result, the mind is disturbed, just as a constant fall of pebbles on still water causes ripples in its surface. To remove this disturbed state of mind, practice pratyahara of sight.

Assume a comfortable posture and place the index and middle fingers on the closed eyes, pressing them lightly. Raise the head toward the sky and gaze at the light of the atman by concentrating on the eyes. At the same time use the ring fingers to press down on the upper lip, and the little fingers to press on the lower lip. This dhyana is called pratyahara of sight or jyotirdhyana. If necessary, close the ears with the thumbs in order to concentrate better. During this dhyana one will see yellow (earth element), white (water element), red (fire element), smokey color (air element), and a mixture of many colors (ether element).

A sadhaka of the bhaktimarga performs pratyahara of sight by looking at the image of his God with unblinking eyes. A sadhaka of the jnanamarga does the pratyahara of sight by concentrating with open eyes on a flame or on the beauty of the symbol "aum," and some sadhakas practice the pratyahara of sight by staring into the void with unblinking eyes.

The above methods are a primary stage of sadhana, however, when a sadhaka of jnanamarga enters the natural state of layacintana, he resorts to the previously described ritual of kriyayoga. The bhakti sadhaka also starts the ritual of kriyayoga when he reaches the stage in which he has insight into God's lilas.

4. Pratyahara of Taste

The mind and the tongue are frivolous. No matter how one tries to control them, one slip is enough to completely lose control. As long as an unclean mind is not yet purified by the good company of devotees, the mental darkness is not touched by the white of knowledge, the saffron of devotion, or the gray of yoga. Only after being touched by one of these colors does the pratyahara of taste become easy.

The ritual for the pratyahara of the skin is similar to the ritual for the pratyahara of the tongue. The special ritual of pratyahara of the tongue is the reversal of the tongue up into the tenth orifice, the pharynx, so that it can taste the nectar oozing down. This is rasanandasamadhi.

A sadhaka of the bhaktimarga sings hymns, chants mantras, drinks the water used in washing the feet and image of his God, and partakes of the holy food presented before that idol. This is the pratyahara of the tongue. When he passes this stage and enters the stage of God's lilas, he experiences anahatanada and chants "Rama" or "aum." In this stage he has the good fortune to taste nectar in the name of Hari Rama when the pratyahara of the tongue occurs as described in niskamakarmayoga.

A sadhaka of the jnanamarga chants aum mantras and drinks the water with which his Sadguru's feet have been washed. This is also pratyahara of the tongue. When he finishes this stage, he experiences anahatanada of aum or Rama mantras continuously by the means of layacintana. The granthi of ignorance (pineal gland) is deflowered, the sadhaka has a vision of *Advaita* (indivisible God) everywhere, and he tastes nectar. In this state the jnani practices the yogic rites as described

in niskamakarmayoga.

One can achieve layacintana or pranotthana by chanting the *Samaveda* or other vedic hymns.

One can also achieve pranotthana by practicing the notes of the ragas in slow rhythm. Classical Indian music is itself a product of yoga, and hence a part of Indian culture. Music is considered to be a part of nadayoga, layayoga, binduyoga, or hathayoga. Music is the best method of the bhaktimarga.

Involuntary dancing (the dance of Siva) is also connected with anahatanada. This dance of inner devotion is called *rasalila*. Dancing is a product of yoga and is hence a part of Indian culture. Dancing is a part of the various yogas described above. Its importance is shown by the carvings of goddesses and gods in dance postures on the walls of temples and mountain caves. Some think these carvings were meant to teach dancing to future generations, but this is not correct. The great yogis had these dancers carved on the walls of temples and caves for a certain purpose. The roots of civilization are in dharma. Dharma is based on the complete, true experiences of bhakti, jnana, and yoga. These experiences have been skillfully carved into many idols. These idols are the secret sculptures of yoga. The secrets of the rituals and scriptures of jnana, bhakti, and yoga have been illustrated by these idols. One should learn music and dance for the sake of dharma and culture, and not for pleasure only.

Lord Sri Bhalacandraji (Siva) is also called "Naresvara." Lord Sri Krsnaji is called "Natavara." Names with meanings synonymous with these have a special significance. Both Lord Siva and Lord Krsna were musicians and dancers. The tandava dance of Lord Sivaji and the rasa

dance of Lord Sundaraji (Krsna) are famous in India. They were both exponents of yoga also.

Anahatanada is achieved through yoga. It is itself sakti.²⁵ The Goddesses Durga and Radha love music and dancing because music and dancing are their form.

5. Pratyahara of Smell

The urge to smell is very strong. It can lead a man to the wrong path. A sadhaka crosses the ocean of smell with the help of discrimination and intelligence.

Assume a comfortable posture and close the right nostril with the right thumb. Then slowly draw in air through the left nostril. When the inhalation is complete, close the left nostril with the index and middle fingers of the right hand, and hold the breath. After holding the breath to capacity, exhale slowly through the right nostril. When the exhalation is complete, use the same nostril to inhale the air slowly. When the inhalation is complete, close the right nostril with the right thumb, again hold the breath to capacity, and then slowly exhale through the left nostril. This pranayama is known as anulomaviloma pranayama. The above ritual, when completed, is one pranayama. When doing pranayama, one should mentally chant the mantra prescribed by one's Sadguru or by God. Eventually, a sadhaka performing this pratyahara of smell will experience Divine Perfume. This ritual is called ajapajapa, hamsayoga, hathayoga, and *pranopasana* (the devotion of prana).

Another ajapajapa is described in the following ritual. Keeping the head, neck, and trunk in a straight line, assume a comfortable posture. Fix the gaze on the tip of the nose and "watch" the flow of the breath.

As you inhale through both nostrils, mentally chant "Rama." As you exhale, count each exhalation silently. While this rite continues, note which organs are affected by the flow of the breath. In the beginning, the breath can be shallow or deep. As practice increases and one's observation becomes continuous and subtle, one will have no trouble finding the correct speed and depth of breath. If one loses count in the middle of one's practice, one should start over again. "Rama one, Rama two, Rama three..." As concentration increases, one will keep losing count and become drowsy. Instead of the Rama mantra, one could use "aum," "so'ham," "Krsna," "Siva," "Durga," and other such mantras. This ritual is known as ajapagayatri, ajapajapa, hamsamantra, or just japa.

Progress is quicker through pranayama than through any other means; however, it is absolutely necessary that a sadhaka be guided by a guru well versed in yoga. Without such guidance many obstructions will be experienced.

Sadhakas of the bhaktimarga sing *bhajan*s (songs), and *panditas* (scholars) recite the Vedas and vedamantras. Prana is controlled in these activities also, so this sort of pratyahara may be included in pratyahara of smell.

Kundalini Sakti Is also Aroused by the Constant Practice of Dhyana

The knowledgeable and experienced master teaches *acala* (non-moving) dhyana to the sakama sadhaka, and *cala* (moving) dhyana to the niskama sadhaka. In acaladhyana a sadhaka is taught to restrain the sense organs and in caladhyana a sadhaka is taught to liberate the

sense organs.

Saktipata or Pranotthana

The Tantras use the word saktipata or saktisancara. This same ritual is called *anugraha* (blessing) in bhaktiyoga and jnanayoga.²⁶ A guru who is able gives saktipata by one of four methods: sight, word, touch, or vow. Because of saktipata, pranotthana takes place.

In ancient times, a yogi guru would give saktipata only when necessary to advanced disciples who wished only for liberation. The disciples would then experience the automatic occurrence of various yogic rituals. Thus, such a disciple would not have to learn the rituals from any guru, and he could practice sadhana on his own.

It is not possible to tread this yogic path to completion without pranotthana. Pranotthana is necessary, regardless of the type of yoga. Pranotthana can be experienced through the powerful ritual of jnanayoga and bhaktiyoga without a guru, and also the kundalini sakti may awaken, but in this case, the sadhaka is not able to interpret correctly or according to yogic principles the actions which take place. As a result, his progress is hampered by the obstacle of doubt. It is necessary to be guided by an experienced, perfect guru if one wishes to tread this path.

It is worth mentioning here that a guru who gives saktipata is not necessarily a perfect yogi. Any guru, if he is pleased with his ordinary sadhaka, can teach him the science of saktipata, provided the sadhaka's pranotthana has taken place by saktipata at least four days before. Such a sadhaka can, in turn, give saktipata to hundreds of persons at once. However, such a sadhaka cannot correctly guide other sadhakas

of a higher order because of his own limited experience in yoga.

In modern times, most yogis who give saktipata believe that the pranotthana that takes place is the arousal of kundalini. This belief is an illusion. Yes, kundalini is definitely aroused following pranotthana, but this only happens when a sadhaka has the blessings of his teacher or God. In the beginning phases, it is prana which is rising in the body, and not kundalini. Prana helps to arouse kundalini. Then the gross kundalini is used to deflower the various cakras and granthis. When the cakras have been deflowered, the rising prana and apana flow constantly in the susumna. At this stage the work of the sthula kundalini is taken over by the suksma kundalini in the form of upward-flowing prana and apana. Then sakticalanamudra gives up its original form and becomes yonimudra.

The rites as prescribed in sabda and sankalpa are included in the ritual of saktipatadhyana given below. My special instruction is that only sadhakas of the highest order should perform this ritual.

1. Keeping the head, neck, and trunk in a straight line, take up a comfortable asana. Though the body is kept erect, there should be no tension in it.

2. Then pray freely and deeply for awhile to Sri Sadguru or to God, according to your faith. Ask Him to bless you so that you may practice His dhyana in the best way. "Asatoma sadgamaya, tamasoma jyotirgamaya, mrtiyorma amrtamgamaya." "O Treasure of Mercy, lead me from falsehood to Truth, from darkness to light, and from death to immortality." Thus pray for His blessings.

3. Then do dlrghapranayama, bhasrika pranayama, or anulomaviloma pranayama twenty-five times.

4. Then lift the dominion of your mind from your body, that is, relax completely. Your body will then start performing yogic rites of its own accord. Do not stop these actions.

5. Either concentrate on the experiences your body is going through, or dwell upon the miracles of Sri Gurudeva or God, or mentally chant the name of Rama, Siva, Krsna, Durga, or any other deity, whichever is dear to you. You could chant your gurumantra. I have described the ajapajapa ritual in the section on pratyahara of smell, which may be followed if you wish.

6. Keep your eyes closed until the end of the dhyana.

7. Do the dhyana for one hour each day.

8. Come out of the dhyana slowly, and again say the prayer "Asatoma sadgamaya..."

Ordinary sadhakas are notable to perform this best of dhyanas because they try to keep their body straight. This makes it tense. They do not lift the dominion of the mind from the body. Therefore, the mind is not able to dive into the depths of the atman. As one is not able to cross a river in a boat if it is tied to one bank, so, as long as the mind is tied to the body, the mind is not able to become introspective. When a person is in deep slumber he is not conscious of turning over in his sleep. Also, singers, musicians, sculptors, orators, authors, and other artists become so engrossed in their work that they do not notice when they change their postures. In the same natural way, a sadhaka changes his posture. Prana takes care to see that the body is comfortable. It does not need instructions from the mind.

What Happens when the Kundalini Is Aroused?

A sadhaka who has had saktipata must first experience pranotthana. Then he will experience a variety of events during dhyana. Some feel excited, some start shivering, some begin to rock, some do asanas, mudras occur to some sadhakas, some sit and then swing round and round using the buttocks as a pivot, some leap like a frog, some dance, some have pranayama, some chant "Rama" or "aum," etc., some chant the name of God, some sing classical Indian music, some murmur, some cry, some laugh, some roar, some scream, some sit in bhunamanasana, some bend backward and do matsyasana, savasana, or other asanas for a long time, some have luminous visions, some have frightening visions, some see floods of light, some see colors, some have a glimpse of the various lilas of God, some have visions of goddesses and gods or of their guru, some slip into slumber, some experience yogic sleep, some faint, some lose control of urination, some witness the discharge of their semen. In these ways various physical rituals take place and lead the sadhaka into the mysterious region of dhyana. These are only ordinary incidents on the path of yoga.

In the *Srimad Bhagavata*, there is a description of the grace of saktipata; in it God describes the condition of the meditating devotee: "As long as the body is not in a pleasant state and the mind is not full of joy, as long as there is no flow of tears of happiness from the eyes, and as long as the mind is not full of devotion, "²⁷ such a sadhaka has no possibility of purification; and "Uddhava! My devotee's voice is blessed with compassion, his heart melts, his eyes are full of tears, he laughs loudly, he sings and dances shamelessly; such a devotee not only purifies his own mind but is instrumental in purifying the whole Samsa-

ra."²⁸ "Great devotees of God have in their minds only great desire for God and His lilas and His virtues; they sing His praises recklessly, without shame, wandering the world totally detached. "²⁹ "Keeping his vows and thinking only of God, a sadhaka sings the praises of his beloved God, fills his mind with great longing for God, becomes demented and gives way to free laughter and tears. He expresses himself, he screams, he sings loudly, he dances with abandon, and does not care about public opinion."³⁰ These rituals mark the beginning of sabijasamadhi. However, the sadhakas who experience them are not able to recognize God when faced with Him. Only an advanced sadhaka can recognize this revelation completely.

The ritual of saktipata is described in Puranas like the *Siva Purana*, in Upanisads like *Yogavasistha* and *Mandalabrahmana*, in the *Narada Bhaktisutra*, and in tantric scriptures.

Because of various experiences through which a sadhaka goes on the path of yoga, he becomes full of faith, prowess, patience, knowledge, enthusiasm, devotion for his guru, devotion for scripture, and desire for God. In the beginning, a sadhaka will experience asanas, mudras, and pranayama. Later, he will get to know the lower and middle cakras. By the end, when he experiences the upper cakras, he comes to know the *brahmagranthi* (knot of creation), the *visnugranthi* (knot of survival), and the *rudragranthi* (not of transformation), anahatanada, jyoti pratyahara, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi. Thus, a sadhaka obtains yogic wisdom and travels the path of yoga.

As a sadhaka makes progress he will come across similar experiences, but in new forms. A beginning sadhaka, therefore, must not think that his experiences are necessarily final. There are three main

divisions of yogic experience: higher, medium, and lower. A higher experience gives concrete results and takes the same form for nearly all sadhakas. Medium and lower experiences occur in irregular forms and go on changing. While yogic scripture describes asana, mudra, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, and dhyana, nowhere will you find a detailed description. The descriptions are short and only the salient features are given. Only final experiences are given in scripture.

Because God defies all description, the experiences of yoga also defy description. If God could be described, then yogic experiences could be described adequately.

The mind is peaceful and unlimited. God is endless and unlimited. When the mind is unmoving, how can the action of speech occur? Speech expresses experiences associated with the sense organs but not subtle experiences independent of the sense organs.

Initiation into saktipata is the same as initiation into *sannyasa* (renunciation). In both states one abandons the results of actions. Saktipata is also an initiation into niskamakarmayoga in which the sadhaka must strive to be urdhvareta. A sakama sadhaka, on the other hand, can manage with discipline and moderate celibacy.

A sadhaka who has had saktipata initiation does not use scripture as a guide in performing yogic rites. He only reads scripture to see if his own experiences tally with those described in scripture. When such a sadhaka finds his experiences in scripture, he is greatly inspired and his progress is increased. Great pleasure is had in dwelling on scripture. However, if a sadhaka cannot find his experience in scripture, the real mystery of the grace of scripture will continue to baffle him.

Preachers who do not understand the viewpoint of the ancient

scriptures defame them. Such a preacher outwardly seems humble, but he is actually ego-centered, desirous of establishing his own greatness, and secretly convinced that his own experiences are the ultimate. A sadhaka who wishes for the scriptures to be well-respected starts praising the experiences of former master teachers, and elevates the position of the scriptures in society.

Scriptures continue to exist because of their outstanding quality and because the Truth is being expounded in them. In ancient times many ordinary books were written, but in spite of efforts to preserve them all, many of them have been lost. Today nobody even knows their names. On the other hand, today people are making great efforts to obtain unavailable scriptures. Let us suppose the ancient scriptures contain some error; nonetheless, they would still be extremely useful, because one must logically judge for himself their truth or untruth. However, even that judgement must continually be tested on the altar of experimentation. Yoga is not philosophy or faith. Yoga is the name of the testing altar of philosophy and faith.

Samadhi

In the beginning, kundalini sakti is awakened by various rituals, and then made ascendent. In the end it reaches the sahasrara cakra and meets Siva. Rajayoga, unmani, manonmani, amaratva, laya, tattva, sunyasunya, paramapada, amanaska, advaita, niralamba, niranjana, jivanmukti, sahajavastha, and turyavastha are various names given to samadhi.³¹

In samadhi, prana diminishes and the mind is destroyed; that is, all

modifications of the mindstuff cease and the individual self becomes established in its own form.³² The final stage of yoga is samadhi. Yogi Maharsi Gheranda has said that there is no yoga which is different from samadhi. A yogi who reaches samadhi is most fortunate. Samadhi is not the result of physical efforts by a yogi; it is the result of a yogi's devotion to his Sadguru and that guru's blessing.³³ Yogi Yajnavalkya says that the word yoga means the union of *jivatman* (the individual self) with *paramatman* (that which is beyond the self).³⁴

There is only one samadhi, but it occurs in different stages. The first stage is called sabija, samprajnata, savikalpa, kriyayoga, or cetanasamadhi. It is the forerunner of the final samadhi. In the *Yogadarsana*, dharana, dhyana, and samadhi are all defined as samyama.³⁵ The seed of desire is the mind, which is still present in this type of samadhi. Therefore, it is called sabijasamadhi. In this samadhi one experiences uncertainty regarding the form to be taken, and perceives a Reality which is void of sexual desire.

Samprajnatasamadhi (cetanasamadhi) has four stages: savitarka, savicara, sananda, and sasmita.

Pranotthana leads to the awakening of kundalini, after which the stage of savitarkasamadhi begins. In this stage a sadhaka's mind is disturbed when he sits for meditation. He becomes overwhelmed with sexual desires. Only if such a sadhaka has the guidance of an experienced guru will his sadhana remain intact. Otherwise, his progress will stop or he will resort to another path. At this stage, if a determined sadhaka does not have a guru, he will be destroyed and become a raving lunatic.

In savicarasamadhi, the disturbances of the first stage become less. However, the sadhaka becomes stupified and spends a lot of time sleeping.

Sanandasamadhi is the third stage. In this stage rajoguna and tamoguna decrease, and sattvaguna takes their place. As a result, the sadhaka's body is full of energy and his mind is full of joy.

Sasmitasamadhi is the final stage of sabijasamadhi. In this stage a sadhaka's mind is full of concentration. The fruits of sabijasamadhi are: Divine Consciousness, detachment, the Divine Body filled with yogic fire, and the ability to practice nirbijasamadhi. The body is made of five elements. A yogi purifies these five elements through the yogic rites and emerges victorious over them. Then the eight siddhis come to him: *anirna* (to become as small as he wants and go anywhere without being noticed), *laghima* (to become as light as he wants and fly through the air), *mahima* (to become as large as a mountain), *prapti* (to touch anything, no matter how far away), *prakamya* (to realize or materialize anything; his resolve never fails), *vasitva* (to make any animate or inanimate thing behave as he wishes, while he is beyond control), *isitva* (to create, sustain, and destroy any element or piece of matter), and *yatrakamavasayitva* (to change the qualities of any matter).

In sabijasamadhi the mind goes through four types of experiences: *ksipta* (depression), *mudha* (perplexion), *viksipta* (elation), and *ekagra* (concentration). Then it reaches the fifth, unobstructed stage of nirbijasamadhi.

In sabijasamadhi the mind and body are separated. In sabijasamadhi many efforts are made to make the free prana and the extroverted senses introspective. Then, after many years of sadhana,

restraint of the senses is accomplished. In nirbijasamadhi the mind is separated from the atman. Hathayoga starts from the muladhara cakra and continues through the visuddha cakra. Rajayoga covers the ajna cakra and the sahasrara cakra, and the restraint of the mind is accomplished.³⁶ A sadhaka who begins dhyana without first clearing the susumna through the rites of niskamakarmayoga does not achieve samadhi, but only goes into *murcha* (unconscious trance).

Though sabijasamadhi is very important, it is not very significant in comparison to nirbijasamadhi. Because, after pranotthana, a sadhaka usually practices cetanasamadhi for many years, he will begin to think that cetanasamadhi is the final samadhi. However, this view is illusionary. Only when both prana and bindu are steady does a yogi reach nirbijasamadhi. In nirbijasamadhi a yogi has no sense of sound, touch, sight, taste, or smell. He has no sense of difference between "his" body and "another's" body.³⁷

The final result of yoga is *kaivalya*; in this stage the jivatman manifests in its true being and has no bondage to nature. Some karma yogis divide samadhi into four stages: nadayoga, rasanandayoga, layayoga, and bhaktiyoga. Some further separate nadayoga into the stages of arambhavastha, bhatastavastha, paricayavastha, and nispatyavastha.

From the rituals of jnanayoga, the jivatman becomes established in its own form, which is called *jivanmukti* (liberation while still alive). The asamprajnatasamadhi of yoga is itself the final self-experience of jnana.

The final result of the bhaktimarga is the achievement of God, which is liberation. In bhaktiyoga there are five stages: salokya, samipya, sayujya, sarupya, and sastarya. In the salokya form of liberation, a devotee associates with saints, listens to scripture, sings hymns, and

chants God's name. In the samipya form of liberation a devotee has a glimpse of the divine lilas of God's incarnations. In the sayujya form of liberation a devotee becomes a complete devotee of God. This stage is called the awakening of the kundalini by a practitioner of yoga. In the sarupya form of liberation a devotee becomes like God. In the yoga-marga this is called samprajnatasamadhi. During this stage one achieves the Divine Body filled with yogic fire, and Divine Consciousness comes, along with total dispassion. In the sastarya form of liberation the devotee achieves all powers of God. In the yogamarga this last stage is called asamprajnatasamadhi.

All perfect yogis achieve Divine Consciousness, Divine Body, and total dispassion. While the ways of achieving these are different, the yogic rites are similar. I end by saying that I bow again and again to the Susumna; the underlying power, Kundalini; the Nectar emanating from the moon; and to the powerful *Manonmanisamadhi* (mind-beyond-the-mind samadhi) in the form of Atman. 38

Asatoma sadgamaya,

Tamasoma jyotirgamaya,

Mrtyorma amrtamgamaya.

Blessed One, lead me from falsehood to Truth,
From darkness to light,
And from death to immortality.