

Handbook of Meditation

By

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All over India

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Preface

Every soul is a miniature component of the Universal Soul - the Transcendent omnipresent and as the intrinsic Immanence in the material world. Vedanta states Knowledge of Self is true Knowledge. But unless this reality is realised through experience, the question by the Soul principle: "Who am I?" remains vague and unanswered. Life meanwhile is lived and experienced subconsciously as a blind psychic personality (*chitta*) of mind-intellect-ego. It is not that humankind is not intuitively aware that "I" is not just the senses and organs of action, but it does not know the what, where and how of the path of metaphysical homecoming is.

The soul (a being without physicality) is enmeshed in physicality at the expense of ignoring mental, intellectual and spiritual identification. Mired by magnetic compulsions of Maya, illusions and delusions enshroud the subconscious psychic personality from seeing itself as the Universal Soul. Because the formless Universal Soul is experienced as untouchable, without attributes, and devoid of all qualities, this complete lack of inventiveness leaves an individual soul cut off from the indwelling Spirit - OM.

A yogi following the Path of Knowledge (*Gyana*) intellectually concludes: 'Not this, not this (*neti-neti*). A devotee on the Path of Devotion (*Bhakti*) experiences Nature's love as Bliss. The Pathfinder of Service (*Karma*) experiences the magic of Oneness with Nature and her many expressions. A devotee of the Lord who follows all three paths is a *Raja Yogi*. Such a seeker sees every different presenting pragmatic plot and gives it coherency in life's experience. A *Raja Yogi* understands it is the soul that experiences all because of innate and infinite creativity and activity of the life-force – *prana*.

To arrive at the eternal formless Truth devoid of qualities (*nirguna*) learning to ride *prana* on *gunas* happens by learning to offer Life to Universal Soul. It then gradually evolves into the most appropriate spiritual path designed for a particular soul. Because the psychic personality of mind-intellect-ego exists as life-force energy, its substratum OM witnesses all journeys back to Source. The Paths are dependent on individual Love and Faith in the Truth of living according to the Ten Yogic Commandments of *Yama and Niyama*. When roughness of a stone is chiselled away, the diamond's inner beauty becomes deserving of the Worship (*upasana*) of Shri, the deity of power and beauty.

It is Shri who is *Lakshmi*, the deity of true spiritual wealth – *Dhanalakshmi*. It is She who gives courage of patience and persistence because She is *Dhairyalakshmi*. As *Vijayalakshmi* the deity of victory and as *Shouryalakshmi* She renders the devotee fearless to embark on the inner journey with *Vidyalakshmi*, the deity of Knowledge. *Kirtilakshmi*, the deity of fame and *Rajyalakshmi*, from the majestic domain ensures that *Bhagyalakshmi*, the deity of fortune and *Soundaryalakshmi* give sincere disciples divine beauty.

Once a devotee asked deity Shri, "O Mother, where do you dwell?" She answered, "I dwell in courage and adventure. When you learn to remain detached from worldly transactions, each devotee will imbibe the qualities of your Cosmic Mother."

Sneh Ahuja Chakraburttty

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I INTRODUCION INTO HUMAN LIFE

1 Introduction

Vedic Literature¹ enshrines Eastern thought, both Hindu and Buddhist². Their ideals and principles were always alive. They are preserved in a large collection of books written by sages and *rishis* of yore. These seers are well-informed authorities of Truth who preserved both the material and their secret purpose. Special mantras and esoteric truths were passed down from generation to generation within old Vedic families, who still exist. But it was the well-known Indian Sage Vyasa (1500 BC)³ who had the unrivalled vision to script and rearrange the Vedas, write the Brahma Sutras, the Mahabharata and the Srimad Bhagvatam. He therefore compiled for posterity the entire cultural, political and scientific material in the four ancient Vedas. Vedic literature in its oral form dates from over five thousand years. Vyasa could foresee, back in that era, the impending age of acquisitiveness through indulgences and the loss of ethical values over time. He envisaged worldliness would alter the underpinnings of traditional Vedic families. He could foresee the oral practice of preserving the scriptures would eventually be lost.

For the same reasons, just about two thousand years ago, *Patanjali* (150 BC),⁴ another Vedic scholar, focused on a creature's central nervous system. He educated learned students of Science and Spirituality about the existence of a miniature template of the Universe within a creature's brain and spinal cord. He explained the *Science of Orderliness* within every creature and all that emerges from Nature. He knew the Laws of Nature constantly whisper to themselves. *Patanjali's* description of innate laws and all potential laws embedded throughout a system of Self-referral in a field of Cosmic Intelligence⁵ is still relevant today. He describes how each Nature's whisper intonates itself into a series of co-ordinated hums to achieve harmony in and with Nature. The result of this arrangement was and still is experienced as pure sacred ecstasy. Palpitations in Nature were found of varying frequencies and vibrations. Put together, the whole vibrating Infinity was whispering the all-encompassing Laws of Nature. They include all sciences of physics, chemistry, biology, anatomy, physiology, biophysics, and every law known as well as unknown.

The Yoga Sutras (Alignment Instructions) of *Patanjali*⁶ represent the main source on Yoga or Union/Alignment with Divine Essence. It is one of the six *darshanas* (schools of thought) of Hindu philosophy. The Tibetan spiritually enlightened *Master Djwhal Khul* who is dedicated to spread present-day teachings Great Masters of Wisdom and Compassion, said that Patanjali Sutras. It is the best book ever written on Raja Yoga. It contains all of the underlying principles and ideas for all of the techniques that have been used during the past 2,000 years to control the mind and to achieve self-realization. The Tibetan master DK has said that the Sutras of Patanjali will be the handbook for consciousness control for humanity for the next 7,000 years. The principles underlying many key techniques in kriya can be found by study and reflection on the Sutras of *Patanjali*. There are many versions of the *Sutras of Patanjali* available on the World Wide Web. Alongside the *Bhagavad Gita* and *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, the *Yoga Sutras* are a milestone in the history of Yoga. The book is a set of 196 aphorisms (sutras), which are short, terse phrases designed to be easy to memorize. Though brief, the *Yoga Sutras* are an enormously influential work that is just as relevant for yoga philosophy and practice today as it was when composed. The Sanskrit word *Yoga*, as used by *Patanjali*, refers to a state of mind where thoughts and feelings are suspended or held in check (*nirodha*), and *sutra* means "thread". This is a reference to the thread of a *Japa mala*, on which (figuratively speaking) the yoga

aphorisms that make up the work's content, are strung like beads.

The laws governing every individual life are also governed within Nature's fabric. There is, therefore, order in Nature's infinite diversity. The underlying hum doesn't need anything outside itself to justify the existence of the Universe. It is self-sufficient under its Self-referring quality. It has also the ability to transform itself by the Laws of Nature. This innate 'Knowledge' has a power to self-organise. The more precise the knowledge, the greater is its organising power.⁷ Pure Knowledge of the Infinite is transcendent and unmanifest. That is because it combines the power of Pure Awareness (*Prakriti*) and Consciousness (*Purusha*). It contains all possible interactions with the Laws of Meditation in one unified field of experience. It is therefore available to each spiritual trekker (*sadhak*) who seeks to revisit 'home'.

The text "*Handbook of Meditation*" is divided into six parts. Part 1 explains psychological terminologies, development of the human Mind, and Vedic ideas, including *koshas chakras, nadis* and *mantra*. Part 2 describes understanding how humankind alienates from Nature. By experiencing yogic and pranic physiology relationship with whole is understood. Part 3 is about Legends, Myths and Truth about One and the Two of Truth. Part 4 provides the preliminary guidelines for classical yogic practices. Part 5 is about Scientific relevance to the Spiritual Science of Yoga. Part 6 summarises the practice of Raja Yoga but reintroduces Sri Yogananda's Energising Exercises. Sanskrit terminology used throughout the text is explained along the way, avoiding frequent need to flip pages towards a glossary, which is included anyway.

Relationships⁸

The Universe is born of relationships within its own parts. It is an energetic system that arranges and orchestrates its own diversity. Self-interacting, self-sustaining and self-sufficient, these are independent as well as interdependent. The Obvious Universe is of Intelligent Awareness. It is created in, and is an expression of Unmanifest Conscious Intelligence or *mahat*. The Invisible Spirit (*Purusha*) and the Visible biological Universe (*Prakriti*) are interdependent and mirror images of the One Whole (*Purushotama*); just as humankind, both physically visible and astrally invisible, is one. When humankind lives by the Laws of Nature that govern one's anatomical, physiological, psychological and intellectual processes, ill-health and irrational behaviour are unheard-of.

Humankind is able to fulfil every ambition or want with the Eternal Mother's support. It is She, who is the Cosmic Homemaker for the individual as well as for humanity. When a group of people collectively understand and adopt a spiritually sacred lifestyle, they create a coherent Collective Awareness⁹, which eventually erase stresses in the Fabric of Creation. There is a real increase in the standard and quality of living. Society progresses to a healthier lifestyle. The unified cluster of relationships for devout lifestyle becomes free of disease, stress, crime and antisocial behaviour. If such an environment is possible in families and a group of people, lifting to such lifestyles can compound spiritual transformation in humanity.

This intense insight, that order prevails in the Universe, leads one to definite conclusions. The Self-referring capacity of Unmanifest Intelligence gives the objectified universe its own Self-referring quality, despite multiplicity and diversity. That a connection exists between Unmanifest Intelligence and Manifest Intellect, gives creation and evolution a never-ending replicable order.

Such a conclusion is confirmed when parents encourage learning scriptural material from childhood, in listening or reading. Reproduction of learned material triggers sequential evolution within a growing child's central nervous system. The emerging child, when exposed to the Laws of Virtue or *dharma*¹⁰, matures into a perfected sequence of progressive awareness from

child to youth to adult. Such nurturing of a child's neuronal physiology becomes, eventually, a habit and built-in thought. This is also the foundation of progressive gains made by adult seekers during *sadhana*¹¹ of ego-transcendence.

When spiritual movements are consciously systemised, the purpose of Meditation becomes obvious. Supported by groundwork of values and moral ethics, the seeker has the ability to transcend the mundane mind and its mental activity. When the physical, psychological, mental and intellectual sheaths are made tranquil, Awareness settles into its own restful, yet alert, silent state. Humankind now rests in his own stillness and sees 'self'-transformation. It all happens within the boundaries of his Self-referring state of Consciousness. Over time, all stress of the past is erased. With new, exalted creativity, humankind becomes orderly and dynamic. This change inspires and upholds all thought, speech and action. What is exhilarating about such a transformation is that every want of the changed central nervous system is upheld. This happens because the Laws of Nature sanction it.

Yogic Practices¹²

Yogic practices including scientific breathing (*pranayama*) have been around for thousands of years. From the days before the literary epic *Mahabharata*, was composed between 300BC and 300AD, which in its midst has the *Bhagavad-Gita (4:29)* also refers to *pranayama*. Scientific yogic practices were performed during the *agnihotra yagna* of Fire sacrifice. *Pre-Buddhistic Upanishads* also refer to *pranayama* as a means to arrive at higher states of consciousness. *Hatha Yoga* texts like the *Pradipika*, *Gheranda Samhita* and *Hatharatnavali* written between the sixth and fifteenth centuries AD give detailed description of the practices. At present in the times of oligarchy, capitalism and materialism, there is again a need for revival and to codify the practices that until recently were handed down for safe keeping, only through the oral tradition.

Vedic culture had declined with the dawn of Buddhism and many yogic practices were lost or misapplied. 4000 years ago, authors *Valmiki* and *Vyasa* alluded to existing ancient texts, and sought to restore the purity and authenticity of such practices. A similar need for its restoration is felt yet again, now in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. For the last few decades Yogic renaissance is witnessing resurgence. Terms such as *asana* and *pranayama* are becoming household terms but the essence and depth of these practices remain unexplored for most practitioners.

Prana and *pranayama* are being studied for their philosophical psychology and physiologically-based foundation. The concept and facts about *prana* is giving humankind some understanding about fundamentals of practices such as *tai-chi*, *reiki*, *healing touch*, *pranayama*, and meditation. Because these are scientific practices they are presented to seekers in a stage-by-stage systematic technique. Through yogic counsel a practitioner is made to understand bodily changes taking place. Metamorphosis towards gradual bodily and mental-intellectual perfection is explained and understood before it is actually practiced.

Tree of Life ¹³

The Human Nervous System resembles an upside-down or upturned *peepal* or *ashvatta* tree (*Ficus religiosa*). The brain and the cranial nerve rootlets are found above in the crown, and the mixed spinal nerves roots carrying motor, sensory and autonomic signals are below. This anatomical area of the human body is philosophically called the 'tree of life'. It is within the 'Divine Cave' where a seeker-'self' (*sadhak*) seeking union with the Self is expected to make such a 'contact'. It is the 'path' one must enter when practicing yogic practices of meditation. By entering the 'tree of life' humankind moves beyond individuality of

"I" & "Me" & "Mine". Through 'self'-unfoldment and eventual 'self'-realisation that one is and always was the Self, one discovers the purpose of human expression and draws nearer to the efforts one must undertake in one's human existence.

The idea of the Tree-of-Life is used in biology, religion, philosophy, mythology as well as in theology. There is a mystical idea to the term, suggesting there is interconnectedness of all life. It connects past-and-present with the planet, variously called Mother Nature, *Prakriti* or the deity Aleph or *El*. It is a symbol suggesting a common descent as well as interrelatedness of individual with the Whole, in an evolutionary sense. The tree connects heaven and underworld by linking the world tree with the cosmic tree.

According to *Vedantins* knowledge and actions, both good or bad, are absorbed individually by personal will and documented in the tree of life. The nature of and quality of a particular tree, is dependent on the inner state of being. When will is focused on vague spiritual truths of faith, will converges on its natural memory knowledge with a 'seeing is believing' attitude. The result is living life according to personal understanding based on memory. For the uninformed, life is 'eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of both good and evil.'

In *Revelation*, the tree is a spiritual journey symbolising self-discovery and spiritual growth - also called regeneration. It provides the leaves (truths) for the healing which if applied to one's spiritual life results in the repair of inherent egotistical tendencies. A cycle of self-discovery through rejection of negativities of 'self' is the 'path' pointed to by the tree-of-life.

The Tree-of-Life has been variously described as the White Stone River, the Philosopher's Stone, as well as *kundalini*. It contains all knowledge of creation. It is a symbol that represents the outcome of man's inner transformation, the 'alchemical' change-over of base 'self'- metal of outer human character to the golden properties of the higher Self. It is all about evolution of *matter* towards the *energy* of consciousness in the alchemy of *space* and *time* (MEST).

There is a fashionable preoccupation with awakening and raising the dormant *kundalini* to its highest consciousness. Statements about 'awakening *chakras*'¹⁴ are bandied around without perceptive understanding. Seven nodes (*chakras*) are surely ensconced within the tree-of-life, but their 'awakening' is directly proportional the degree of ego-transcending practiced (*sadhana*). Awareness then ends in the melting with the Holy Spirit vibration OM in the 'third eye' or *kutastha*. In Yoga, the seven spiritual centres of 'being' existed in the brain and spinal cord. Also known as the 'divine cave' or inner temple it is here where pure reflection of Consciousness is met by those who practice the Science of Kriya Yoga. Nowadays everywhere there is a public outcry about taking up the practices of *Kriya Yoga*. But where does one find an eligible student or an Illumined Mind of revelatory suprarational teacher needed for spiritual and personal evolution? *Kriya Yoga* is about *Brahma-vidya* - the knowledge of *Brahman* or Supreme Consciousness. Other than God-realized Masters or *Rishis* who are *Sadgurus*, nobody is capable of passing on Kriya Yoga.

Rishis are believed to be *Shiva*-natured. Only one who has realized a conscious experience of divine union (*samadhi*) reaches "*Shiva*-hood". It is recorded as evidence that, at the origin of creation, an incomprehensible, fathomless Power through the Will and Forceful Energy creates this world of many forms and expressions. Each then captivates itself in a cloud of enchanting illusions and delusions: each is finally encapsulated within a 'name and identity'. Each 'uniqueness' is composed of elements made up of original notes (*nadas*). Their union with **sh-va** (*Shiva*) results in worshipful speech (*vakyas*) like "Shiva". There are basic teachings summed up in six *vakyas*. They point out the true identity of humankind. They are summed-up basic teachings of Hindu Scriptures and recorded in *Upanishads*¹⁵.

*Upanishads*¹⁶ are philosophical texts that end with summaries through six great sayings (*Mahavakyas*). These are:

- i. "I am Brahman" (*Aham Brahm Asmi*). This declares the common identity of the inmost consciousness of an individual with supreme Divine Consciousness. It is not about worship of a person, book, image or idea. It is not even the worship of God. It states our own Self is true Divinity. It is the Presence of the Absolute (Self) within each heart and in all universes.
- ii. "The Self is Brahman" (*Ayam Atma Brahma*). This also states, more objectively than subjectively, there is likeness in the identity of individual soul with the Absolute. Not only is the individual Self divine, but it is the same Self in all beings. That is the Absolute truth.
- iii. "That thou art" (*Tat Tvam Asi*), meaning: Whatever one sees or thinks, we are that. Not only is the 'I' That, but 'You' is That also. We are that supreme 'I' and 'Thou' in all. The consciousness in the other is also the Divine.
- iv. "Intelligence is Brahman" (*Prajnanam Brahma*), meaning: Insight of truth is the truth itself. It signals Divine Intelligence is present within each and has the power to return us to the Divine. Through the inmost intelligence, which is supreme intelligence, a seeking seeker can merge into the Absolute.
- v. "The Universe is Brahman" (*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*), meaning: The entire universe is Divine, which includes every 'self'. The Divine is not only the consciousness principle in you and I, it is also the 'being principle' in all things. It is the supreme object as well as the inmost subject in all beings. It is one and all and all in one.
- vi. "He is I" (*So'ham*). This statement confirms the identity of the 'self' with the Divine Lord inherent within the natural movement of every breath. "So" is the natural sound of inhalation, "ham" of exhalation.

These are statements of the identity of individual consciousness with the Absolute or Divine reality. They all originate from and merge into OM (AUM), the Divine Word which means "I am all". This Knowledge revealed through self-realization in *Yog-yukta* (yogic union) which states what is directly and automatically expressed are revelations — passed on directly from the Divine. "Shiva" describes a special purified state, displaying as the highest form of divine love. *Shiva* becomes various stages of Shiva-hood, which is the opposite state of Jiva who constantly revolves in bondage. Entrapped therefore within the cycles of birth-and-death the mortal (*jiva*) through the Wheels-of-Time, comes and goes repeatedly. The transformation from Jiva-nature to Shiva-nature is the goal of meditation - Kriya-yoga.

There is never a need to search for a *Sadguru* (God-realized Master)¹⁷. Guru automatically arrives to one who is addicted to spirituality through action and devotion. The Force and Power of *Shiva-Shakti* brings a guru to the ardently seeking – the guru is no ordinary mortal. He is *Ishwar* and revered as the Divine Godhead: A *Sadguru* is "One who opens the window of the *Kutastha* (the third or inner eye), and singly provides confidential guidance. He or she who guides others into new views of the internal world is considered a suitable *acharya* (instructor) and is of *Sadguru* nature." These are the words of Yogiraj Shyamacharan Baba.

Mere perfection of external manners and behaviour do not do. Behind Kriya lies the power (*Shakti*) of the compassionate *Sadguru's* enlightened consciousness (*Chaitanya*). This interplay of *Chaitanya Shakti* of *Sadguru* with a devotee does not have the same effect on everyone. It varies depending on the spiritual receptivity of the disciple. The *Sadguru* is like the great Sun and the *shishya* (disciple) becomes a ray of that Sun. It reflects the divinity of its Source. It is a matter of realization and personal experience highlighted after the effective utility of the First Kriya. The disciple comes on deep understanding while on the path of self-realised knowledge that is leading towards a state 'beyond: in breathless equilibrium' – the state called *paravastha*. All these statements are neither of the emotional **Mind** nor are they logical thoughts of the **Intellect**. They are intuitive understandings made by **Intelligence**.

Intelligence

*Intelligence*¹⁸ is defined in the West as abilities, abstract thought, understanding, self-awareness, mental activity, grasping truths and relationships, facts and meanings¹⁹. The most popular standard of Intelligence in **psychology** is the '**Iq**' test: (Binet's Intelligence Quotient test), which measures mental or abstract skills²⁰. According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory of **personality**, the **id** is the personality part made up of unconscious psychic energy in the causal mind-field that works to satisfy basic instinctive urges, needs, and desires. The **id** performs based on the pleasure principle, which demands immediate satisfaction of wants rather than needs. This inborn-intelligence sends its regrets to worldly existence during late adulthood. It gradually moves from *ego* of 'self-image' to *superego* or 'conscience'.

Meanwhile the view on Intelligence that runs through Vedantic thought is based on a practical fuller view of human life and the human psyche. In an aesthetic sense, intelligence has a synthesising ability of social skills through innate human understanding. It has the talent to know right from wrong through moral discrimination called conscience or the *superego*²¹. It is already established in the growing mind, but gradually becomes more informed through the 'intellect' – *buddhi* as a 'logical' intuition. It is sometimes called the conscience, the power of ethical judgement or the faculty of moral discrimination. Body Mind Intellect chart

Habits, likes-and-dislikes, beliefs, assumptions, tendencies, ideas and information brought back from the memory-bank guide processing *id*, into *ego*, into *superego*, through addition of new information. The indwelling intelligence forces one to deal with unresolved issues from the early stages of childhood and marching towards adulthood. This happens especially when hard information about 'Truth' is incomplete. Such a state becomes a most cruel 'tyrant'. They are incandescent bindings which to the spiritually inclined are even more agonising than *burning the flesh*. Ignorance (*avidya*) burns its way into the soul. When real information is lacking, people leaning heavily on past beliefs and assumptions leads them to delusions about Creation and the purpose of human expression. A Mind is neither good nor bad. It is unavoidable. It is in essence, a distillation of all that one thinks they know about a subject. It forms the tint of the lens through which the world is viewed, but once formed, resists change.

The word 'intelligence' is not equivalent to 'intellect'. *Intellect* is connected with scholarly intelligence. *Intelligence* is abstract 'intellectual intuition' and is a part of the causal make-up of all human beings. It equals 'moral sense' and is an inward apprehension of certain aspects of truth; particularly those having to do with what is right and good. *Mental intelligence* or *superego*, as it becomes settled in the growing mind, gradually comes to be known as the 'intellect', which is the higher form of intelligence. It cannot be defined in clear terms because it is an 'inner' intuition, the 'conscience' which is the power of ethical judgement or moral discrimination.

Higher intuition is not of the mind (*manas*). It originates in the psyche or spirit. Through higher intelligence people make important decisions based on ethics. The role of conscience in human thought and action is difficult to describe, define or classify. This ability to evaluate rightly, and be sensible, compassionate, cautious and just, or have a moral-discriminative capacity has to be the highest role of the human mind. It needs both broad understanding and an ability to integrate such knowledge with principles of behaviour. The result of such harmlessness in thought allows the mind to reach right decisions and begin positive acts. Practical ethical intelligence increases with age, but can be made highly developed in youth when placed under the right circumstances of self-discipline. It becomes visible through maturity in reasoning about positive and negative results of harmful or instinctive actions. Maturity is a function of all people's personal experiences with the Law of Cause and Effect (*karma*) and on the degree of a person's calmness, detachment and self-control.

This faculty of conscience or evaluative discrimination allows one to see a clear course ahead through detecting between what is right and good. This moral discriminating role is the highest power of the mind. It is the ability to evaluate with a moral intellect or

'buddhi', enabling it to analyse and discriminate what is ephemeral from what is theoretically permanent. The head is the most important part of the body. Through 'harmlessness' in thought, the head mindfully discriminates and decides on actions and interpersonal behaviour. These build-up habits shape one's character.

Conscience or superego now is the 'voice' of that inner essence of the psyche²². Expression of the conscience is not a 'voice in the wilderness'. It is formed through a process of learning through 'moral experience'. Learning to make right and wrong judgements is influenced by the surroundings in which one grows up. Anyone not having had the benefit of a love-filled and properly directed moral upbringing must strive harder to learn and thwart bad habits of thought, speech and action. They are assimilated through loose living under the supervisory influence of poor understanding and bad nature.

The inner impulse of conscience is independent of intelligence – the kind that displays as scholarly learning and scientific knowledge. Such intellects are applying intuitions gained from conscience. It depends on the extent of morality practiced, exposure to norms of culture and particular society, and environment in which 'intellectualism' flourishes. That happens because there is an amoral and immoral, as well as moral, form of intellectualism. Without ethical-practical reasoning, the voice of conscience cannot lead to righteous action because the active use of intelligence-based-experience is inseparable from right action (*dharma*).

The voice of conscience does not give specific directions because it is independent of the individual's insights and responsibilities. Conscience - the faculty of moral discrimination is not equally developed in everyone. Moral training in upbringing and growth of insight and sympathy are the result of 'developed' moral discrimination. The mind (emotion) is not empowered to act as intellect (logic) because intellect is motivated by will. When the will is correctly told by intellect, there is right action. The act is intelligently thought and carried out, but it is not intellectually told by the practical reasoning power (conscience or inner voice of intuition). Learned experience interacts with Awareness to bring forth the inherent ever-present 'invisible' Truth. Truth has a unitary value which is beyond true and false and stands as an independent standard of what is right and good.

Mental (M & I) intelligence does not discriminate between right and wrong in the moral sense of the words. Conscience also evaluates, but strictly only sets up values by choosing right or wrong. Intellect with higher insights gives the instrument of mind higher compelling influences to produce clear effects. Chief among the influences that help create a 'higher' intellect are the great philosophical and scriptural teachings of the world. The great religions and higher philosophies all express the highest insights into the nature of truth, universal compassion and peace of mind. These are the main instruments of truth that alone satisfies humankind's inescapable want to know: "Who am I"? There is specie of intelligence and it arises in direct intuition.

Intuition

Intuition²³ is a type of Intelligence. Intuition, does not involve mental or intellectual effort. To intuit is to capture something directly without any intermediate thought or preconception. It is self-evident and a self-given insight. Intuition brings knowledge into one's consciousness, but it does that by short-circuiting all goal-directed purposeful behaviour or mental processes. This shows that intuition is not of the mind (*manas*) but of the Spirit. Investigation of this ill-defined and elusive human faculty of intuition is for individual 'self'-discovery. Intuition is an inward phenomenon and not an observable fact. 'Dictates of conscience' are direct intuitions, 'psychic' promptings, precognitive flashes and déjà vu etc.

Intuition is an inner authority which benefits that particular individual but is not necessarily valid for others. It is not controllable or testable. It can take on the form of that conscience, which is experienced on a personal level, though it has a universal source. It can

also take the form of instantaneous awareness of distant events, precognition and various other kinds of mental impressions difficult to confirm or appraise.

Intuition comes from the power of moral reason. It is informed by a still higher Source of ethical discrimination. Civilisation always depended on it for a guiding humanity. 'Intuition' comes 'as a sixth sense'. They can be both vague or accurate and even proven in countless recorded instances from all around the world throughout history. Unfortunately, there are spiritual fantasies promoted by message-makers and others connected with clairvoyance, voices, auras and disembodied intelligences. Such 'paranormal' sensing is not to be relied on and is not a substitute for personal 'self'-inquiry for making decisions based on normal channels. They are a diversion from genuine 'self'-development and have no real relevance to Self-realisation.

The word 'intuition' is used in philosophy and psychology to refer to perceptions through the five senses or in mental reflection on the contents of the mind. Truth is learned by living good values in existing, but is also connected with facts about outer worldly experience and of inner 'self'-investigation. Intuitive judgement of truth assertions or beliefs, interpreted by pure reason and factual experience, must be backed up by a working understanding about spirituality and insight into the goal of life itself.

Psychic Balance

"Recognition of what one lacks is one of the most dynamic forces in the human spirit. Realisation of our greater selves comes first through the recognition of what we are not. That, I suggested, is the significance in the Sermon on the Mount of the enigmatic 'blessed are the poor in spirit': only the spirit that recognises itself to be poor, through what it is not, has any promise of increase." *Laurens van der Post* (1906-1996) the Afrikaner author of *The Heart of a Hunter*.

The Vedic goal of 'psychic development' is not a therapeutically treatable condition²⁴. It refers to an overall state of a person's being. An integrated and well-balanced personality that is intimately related to a personally confirmed understanding of human values takes on truthfulness and tolerance, equanimity, empathy and kindness, virtue, moral uprightness and harmless conduct. A developed healthy psyche depends on what the mind takes in, cherishes and expresses. Mental health is therefore a reflection of a lifestyle ordered by positive values of harmony, coherence of thought, word and deed and calmness in all situations of life and living²⁵.

Social environment and a personality are always in communication. In an environment where values are weak but flourish nonetheless, a healthy personality is less easily formed, defended or enriched. A good person can hardly ever remain well-balanced while living in environments of passive acceptance under pressures of morally dire social surroundings. Personality is *not* independent of social pressures and negative conditions under which a person lives. Psychic development of an individual is therefore the ability to interact more or less fruitfully and positively with and within society.

There is a pressing need for a publicly accessible 'model' of psychic health that enables people to reach a better understanding of their own personalities and to set overall standards for their own fulfilment. The higher psychology draws on the philosophy of *Vedanta*. For eons it has taught standards that are understandable and acceptable to common sense. Even one living in dire circumstances has made progressively quantifiable life-changes through undisclosed clandestine personal experiences.

Connecting 'present' thought, words and deed with every breath is the important test. It is applied in all manner of events in life and sets a true standard for personal development and character education in all spheres of life. In moral and spiritual practices, this

relationship between thought, word and act is the main focus for evaluating 'Mindfulness'²⁶ in all interactions with one another. The greater the harmony between thought, word and deed, the healthier is a person's psyche. *Everything* depends on what one thinks, says and does. Thoughts that follow human values lead to unity and harmony with one another, society and the environment. Antivalues whether harboured in the mind, expressed or acted on, lead to conflicts and disharmony of thought, word and deed.

The relationship between word, thought and deed can be expressed 'non-verbally' at the bodily level²⁷. Inner conflicts that lie behind disunity of thought, word and deed can be explored and changed or removed by the aid of such techniques. By developing supra-personal qualities, egoism can be controlled or mastered and illusions of personal identity transcended in selflessness. The result is one's identification with all beings and all creatures, both by knowing and experiencing. Based on such experience all relations of individual and with society are realised as expressions of the same one 'Over-self'. Each individual expression is recognised as being created in the image of the Whole. The most significant fact about an individual 'self' is its relative insignificance before Universal Selfhood. Such matured recognition allows each trekker of life, whether approved or unapproved, an intuitive recognition of oneself in the image of immensity of the Overself (Atma).

Balanced Childhood²⁸

Early childhood experiences in developing the psyche are a well-established fact of psychology and studies have gone into great depth into causes of the abnormal or 'deviance' from normal behaviour. Meanwhile, 'self' and Self-knowledge are ignored. It is this alone that gives a growing child and young adult the supreme model of attainment of psychological balance and stable psychic health. Understanding developing human personality (*chitta: mind-intellect-ego*), and of character must be founded firmly on an ideal opportunity for development. A potential and attainable goal is inherent in every psyche. Unless such a birthright for a *chitta* is made possible, a typical child/youth discovers the least or a reduced equivalent of the highest essence of learning. The relative effect of learned values is expressed in the behaviour. Daily practices of the parents and family, peer and socialising groups, at school and on playgrounds, affect growing children differently through sensory and mental stimuli. The amount and type of discipline children are subjected to decide effectiveness or failure in training. A healthy growth of character and balanced personality come from balanced loving parents even if they have various traits, individually and are racially or culturally conditioned.

Views on childhood development took its beginnings from views of the Austrian neurologist *Sigmund Freud* (1856-1939). Freud wrote and spoke about emotional and sexual conflicts in early childhood that are repressed because of their social unacceptability. Identity conflicts of the child towards the mother and father were for Freud the key to understanding all psychic unbalance in adults. Early childhood experience is still in the 21st century unquestionably of prime importance in the formation or malformation of many personality traits. Common sense insists that the earlier growth is spoiled in life, the longer their effects persist in a child's life. Habituations to unnatural environments are habits that are harder to break or modify. They become more ingrained with increasing age. Giving excessive importance to childhood trauma is unreasonable because children know adaptation. What is more important is to give children the fundamental values in life which are what make up the emotionally and mentally well-balanced person. A sound view of psychic health should be flexible in giving room for all relevant facts.

Feelings are complex phenomena of mixed emotions, flustered logic and confused ideas of self-worth. If abnormal, they influence psychic health. The way bodily structure coordinates - whether expressed or repressed is important to discover. What are

rejected by science-programmed psychologists are time-honoured value-based beliefs and religious convictions. Influence about cultural or faith-based practices, whether on a child, family or community, happen by mimicking exactly *lived* examples. A child's personality is influenced by example and behaviour of a parent, sibling or elder who are role models for gaining physical, emotional and moral habits.

Copying worthy examples by imitation from potential 'role models' is not often ideal especially when elders live by the adage: 'Do as I tell you not as I do!' Effectiveness of duplication depends on truthful exploits by parents, elders and peer groups. It is about copying role models, rather than listening to advice.

Mind and Mentality²⁹

'Mind' is a subjective view of emotion and logic on a substratum of knowledge-memories buried in the causal mind of every individual. On a cosmic scale, Mind is Universal Intelligence embedded in Universal Consciousness which is the substratum and Unified Force-field of the Creative will-power. The subjective individual mind shares with the Universal Mind its creativity as well as its victimization under the power of *maya* of delusion and illusion. Each independent mind entity therefore experiences itself as distinct from the objective universe and from other minds. They appear apart and external in their objective universe. Experiencing an independent existence, removed from connectivity with the Whole, does not give one secure reality. The mind is the source of this and all experience. All objects, emotions and thoughts (OET) in individual dualistic mind seemingly have an independent existence, faraway from the 'based on fact' non-dual Mind.

Individual Mind has a habit of losing itself in materialistic thoughts and ambitions. It happens at the cost of ignoring the Power of the Universal-Mind: (*prakriti or Nature or El or Holy Spirit*). It is She who plays to the tune and Will and Force of the Creator Mind: (*purusha or Elohim or God-the-Father*). Both manifest their Love through a veil of illusion called *Maya* by excluding their involvement as the real Player behind the Spirit-Mind. It is because of humankind's 'self'-fascination, that humankind individually and together have so little awareness about the mysterious cause and history of life and creation. After satisfying oneself with normal and creative want, pride enters the individualized mind and its achievements are paraded as 'successes' by a 'justified ego'. The Cosmic Doer of all individualized achievements being displayed by the human subject are not the Reality but the ego sees them in the sensory and physical world, as those of the 'self'.

The subject cannot become the object of the Cosmic Doer because it has neither memory nor knowledge that he or she is part of Creation's fixed existence. This act and understanding wants 'transcendence'. That is what makes each a seeing subject and internally it reaches beyond them (objects-emotions-thoughts or OET). This is termed 'inner reality' from where all limited and conditioned viewpoints are intuitively understood and experienced. Such subjective discoveries by moving Mind inwards towards contemplation is an act of the spirit towards its Source: it is the Self. This experience of the 'self' being the Self cannot be neglected because life in 'reality' is about balancing worldly activities of 'self' and its spiritual practices towards Self.

For 'self', Reality is not 'seen' working directly or indirectly through Nature and the objective Universe. This intuitive consciousness of the 'unseen hand' of Nature happens only through the medium of a higher nature: Self-Awareness or conscience. It is an expression of divinity realized by the unfolding soul (subtle astral and causal beingness). The worthy intuitive soul becomes *siddhic* or entering supernormal perceptual states. When Mind transcends the body, Awareness is in an inner MEST (matter-energy-space-time). Mind transcends thoughts and gains thought-free state of 'being' – the real 'I' beyond 'self'. Such 'realization': *tat twam asi-* 'That

you are', is knowledge of Self-realisation. This 'self'-discovery of Self-hood gives the seeker peace, calmness and faith. There is devotion for the alliance of 'one' with the 'whole'.

There is an inner 'Reality' experienced as *Existence with Knowledge* that brings 'self' the *Bliss of Self (sat-chit-anand)*. The Mind now weaves into the *chitta*-personality and threads into intuitive perception, thought and into a memory of blissful experience. When the experience is rooted in Awareness and later after deeper meditation into Consciousness, individual-'self' is inwardly aware of its identity with 'I' the Self. Bearing that in mind, as suggested by the spiritual Master *Ramana Maharishi (1879-1950)*, the real 'I' persists and endures objectively, all changes of the body-mind-intellect (BMI).

This 'witnessing-I' is the Self who is the changeless identity of each humankind. Once the (BMI) is made to recede away from 'Me and Mine' then Mind integrates with Self and also with the Cosmic Self. This 'Self-Discovery' is the heart of all religions of every different faiths. It happens through a progressive growth of insights which is slow, gradual but purposeful. *Mary Victoria Sackville-West (1892-1962)* the English novelist in one of her many famous quotes about the soul or *atma* and the mystical union with the Cosmic-Soul states: "... belief in the possibility of an intimate and direct union between the human spirit and the fundamental principle of the being, a union which makes up at one and the same time an existence and a method of knowledge foreign and superior to normal existence and normal knowledge is any interior state which, in the eyes of the subject, appears as a contact (not through the senses, but 'immediate' and 'intuitive') or as a union of the self with something greater than the self, which may be called the soul of the world, God, or the Absolute according to choice."

Channelling and Conscience³⁰

Channelling is about receiving communications through 'automatic writings' or experiencing the 'inner voice' of 'conscience'. Genuineness of experiencing inner voice in a spiritual person is a psychic experience and is not a hallucinatory derangement of the Mind. The 'voice of conscience' is not 'heard' in or outside the head. A genuine inner voice of the Self is unable to coexist with ego. It is neither intellectual nor perceptual through mental or sense-faculties. The genuine 'inner voice', is a secret and personal illumination or prescription from the individual or Cosmic Self to the individual 'self' or Self (*jivatma*).

Paul Brunton (1898-1981) a German-Jewish philosopher from Britain was a mystic who during his travels lived among yogis, mystics and holy men and especially *Ramana Maharishi*. He spent half his lifetime studying the nature of mystical experiences and clarifies them: "Revelations come from the Self; messages are broadcast to us and they are true enough in their beginning. But personal desires seize on them instantly, change and fashion them to suit the ego. We should distinguish the theories and doctrines woven round the mystic's experience from the significant features of the experience itself. And those features are: the awareness of another and deeper life, a sacred presence within the heart, the certitude of having found the Real, the gladness and freshness which follow the sense of this discovery."

In the end, whether genuine or otherwise, occult and psychic powers are extensions of humankind's true capacity or comes from his five physical senses. They are still partly materialistic, because mystical experiences are connected with ego or with the bodily senses. All spiritual powers come from different planes. They are a function of evolution and transformation of the 'self' to the divine Self. Mystical experience lack emotional and intellectual content³¹. However, if the experience is a strong clear mental impression, the mystic phenomenon comes from a spiritual plane. It is not a 'spiritual power'. It comes from "Analysis (*vichara*), detachment

(*vairagya*) and good company (*satsang*). They are helpful to gain steady spiritual growth" wrote *Sanyal Mahasaya (1877-1962)* the youngest disciple of Lahiri who blossomed into a divine person while in the spiritual environment of his family.

Understanding

Thoughtful acceptance of opinion and sympathizing with such human development is the human faculty of understanding. It begins with conceptually relating and comparing objects and subjects³². It then changes into thoughtful understanding of wide-ranging intangible ideas and theoretical thoughts. These trigger new questions and trying out new ways of gathering information. Literary sources and discussions are followed until understanding is concretized, real and even made specific. Understanding is therefore an analytic process of knowing the immediate and natural world which includes the society one lives in. That leads to understanding life.

Life of a beginner begins with factual relationships with parents and family. Insights come about when dealing with others in humanity. Efforts at identifying with contacts during growth period come with challenges of usual human existence and with one's personal identity while existing in a sea of uncertain destiny. There is eventually a qualitative understanding of one's affiliation with the world at large. Quantitative understanding about life and living is proportional to the extent of factual knowledge gained during the years of nurturing and learning from ethics of human dealings.

Understanding therefore precedes personal maturity³³ and then exceeds everything that teaches through hard-knocks of life. Nobody therefore understands everything at once. Measuring awareness is too vast and abstract for human awareness to grasp. Therefore from the earliest of times, even as children, understanding is limited to learned observations and exposures to plant, creatures and humankind. Understanding then becomes a practical network of relations of individual with things, their utility and purpose. In all actions, there is an interconnectedness of one to another. In all other meetings unless there is curiosity and wonder about the 'unknown' there is no understanding because it causes one no insecurity, anxiety and is 'meaningless.'

Understanding in the curious involves a broadening of viewpoint and a deepening of awareness. Philosophies are filled with facts and theories. To authenticate such understanding involves personal identification with it. By uniting with such philosophies intuition is born that all share in the One Being, despite all diversity. Everyone and everything has its importance and confirmation within the 'whole'. Such understanding about anything begins by viewing it closely and broadly. Further understanding rises from the lowest level and towards universal values and truth. By then bookish knowledge counts as less significant. Such psychic understanding works at the 'supra-factual' level: by giving one the 'whole essence' through insight. Such is possible only when personally construed knowledge is integrated with gained knowing and backed by intuition, self-discovery and through experienced insights.

Individual ability to silence the psyche of thoughts makes Mind clear for emergence of intuition and insight against a clear background of 'no-thought.' Inherent creativity of humankind allows for reflection, which if objectively noted and subjectively experienced becomes conviction. This is how humankind delves deep within to seek Truth already inherent in each and is only seeking confirmation for understanding.³⁴ Truth which once presented itself with many limits becomes an all-embracing reality. Its value is measured in compassion, concern, and sympathetic understanding for those still trying to understand the mystery of the created and creation. Such knowledge and wisdom come because of a creative environment, normal upbringing and societal nurturing. Many with a potential to creatively reach the same understanding remain stunted. That is because of unsure environments and restricted, sectarian or narrow exposure to life while growing.

Self-adjustment in life is a function of developing personal but intuitive self-sufficiency about the universe an individual lives in. Humankind must feel comfortably adjusted within its outer space. Such adjustment rejecting 'this and that' comes from an inner understanding through reflection and intuition. Such 'realization' is not based on theories and ideas made 'real' through intellectual experimental studies. They are irrelevant subconscious opinion and 'conscious' intuitive interpretation. The quality of such understanding comes cleanly filtered through a heart filled with noble qualities of friendliness towards all and love for plant, creature and humanity.

Understanding oneself at the level of self-purification naturally allows sympathetic identity with all expressions of Nature. It makes one constantly aware 'self' is an expression of awareness inherent as holiness in all that is. This 'self'-knowledge and understanding hereon finds its real fulfilment in 'self'- transformation. Since this is a journey of continued changing, the will to transform becomes a 'continuous-effort' until the 'change' is secured through self-effort.

Self-transformation needs understanding about why it is desirable³⁵. The goal needs recognition and the path of the journey clearly made known. The teacher must point out to inherent difficulties along the voyage of a spiritual journey (*sadhana*), and how to continue motivation towards something not so far experienced by such a one. Certain fundamentals (discipline, self-esteem, self-discovery and self-perception) are important in the explorer's psyche while on the path of spirituality, seeking oneself through intuitive understanding and self-transformation.

From Cradle to Sadhana³⁶

Sadhana is a journey that accomplishes itself in 'ego-transcendence'. It is a spiritual movement consciously systemized with a purpose and a place to arrive at. The purpose is to release life from the limits of "I & Me & Mine" with which it is bound. It is a lifelong process beginning with early nurturing, aimed at an inward and onward march. Obstacles along the path are many, but, so long as self-knowledge through continuous effort is secure, nothing can stop one from taking such a journey.

Many difficulties along life's journey are closely related to confusion or lack of values in the social environment and in life. Such antivalue systems range from disturbing experiences of parental addictions (drugs and alcohol) to acclimatization to lying and violence. Unintentional approvals of loose living are discovered by interacting, watching or listening to popular dramas on communication networks. These present as conflicts between clearly held values. A certain training in ethical thought and problem-solving behaviour is needed. This does not happen instinctually or intuitively. It happens in the 'cradle of understanding.' It is mostly learned behaviour through imitation of role models, through rules, examples and education.

Humankind is born into environments of opinions, attitudes and beliefs of parents and elders, not to mention schoolteachers, religious instructors, and authors of books, films or through friends. Some attitudes and opinions are absorbed before the mind can reflect on their soundness. A developing child's mind is open to mental conflicts of mixed environments. Their effects rarely last long if the mind remains open to undecided questions about truth, honesty, courage and genuineness. From first maturity of childhood until the end of teenage period, adult worldly experience begins to make their impact. Most parents are uninformed that their children's opinions are not judgmental about people, the world and the universe. With value-based knowledge and home environment, teenagers make up permanent practical opinions and close their mind off against competing ideas that are wrongly driven by destructive circumstances. Teenagers climax everything on a fixed biased idea of natural innocence.

Such 'open-mindedness' and tolerance to every ideology is in real danger of being practiced without discrimination, without the guidance or some genuine higher form of knowledge. Correct mental protection comes through a trustworthy elder and spiritual guidance. In the global society with its mingling of all cultures, faiths and peoples through information, migration and travel, it is no longer likely that orthodox religious belief will smoothen the way of teenagers. Protection of the growing psyche depends much on the thoughts and on the company one seeks. Higher aims for life are a better influence than those concerned only with personal ambition, self-satisfaction, moneymaking and success in the eyes of the world. It helps the growing psyche to form value-based living. It lays the foundation for 'self'-change through 'self'-investigation and inward Self-discovery which usually begins in most after the mid-point in life.

The concrete aims and battles which expand one's worldly knowledge in youth are only later replaced by the wider motivations of the mind and heart, towards the human soul and the Universe. This search for a deeper understanding for wisdom is carried out through *sadhana*. Earlier understanding only gives one a broad grasp of the subject of moral lifestyle. The understanding is still superficial and securing such knowledge in depth means it is wide-ranging in scope. Depth of understanding arises through insight. It cannot happen without deep concentration or psychic reflection and steady effort to understand oneself towards everything. It therefore depends on 'self'-knowledge. The individual's personal evaluation is of prime importance. The natural inclination to freely know and understand is necessary for development of personality of oneself and the society lived in. Repression of such universal human leaning to want and understand leads to stunted personalities and ill-functioning societies.

Understanding arises to the degree one achieves control over negative or stunting mental exposures. To 'rediscover' real knowledge through personal experience is reaching out to the embedded and indwelling teacher in the 'within.' The guru or teacher reflects in awareness through 'self'-created discrimination inherent in every human mind. Such potentials open the mind within oneself to virtuous teachings and disciplines.

Though the essences of all traditional religions express the same truth, it is no easy matter to separate their soul from historical build-up (causal mind-field) of mistaken interpretations. Therefore, a teaching which concentrates the essence of spiritual living is more spiritually relevant. It should be able to embrace all peoples and beings through the values of love, truth and goodness in action. It is the only way towards spiritual protection and personal progress. Centuries of degeneration through enforced dogmatism and empty rituals set up in religions have weakened humanity with confusion. There is virtual loss of human and moral values. It has left humankind in a spiritual vacuum and personal insecurity brought about by threats of massive industry and racing technology. They are being catered to thousands as pseudo-spiritual thought and a new type of business under the guise of democracy. The spiritually deprived materialist with a confusing world-view gropes towards a short cut to personal happiness and peace of mind. Many a 'spiritual technique' is being offered to the suffering anxiety-filled humanity who endures both failure and self-doubt. Temporary benefits are not sustainable because there is no sensible and moral fundamentals to the spiritual work offered. The end-results are self-centred that are able to block the gateway towards spiritual power.

The task ahead is to cut through the tangled overgrowth of semi-traditional beliefs and competing ideologies of every kind. A clear, easily understood and noble teaching that inspire faith and states the goal of human effort is necessary. Its authority should inspire goodness, vision, clarity, consistency and truth of its explanations. Based on such foundations spiritual advancement should be experienced because of following its practices and rules. Self-transformation is only real against a background of understanding oneself

through exploration and 'self'-inquiry. It is all about 'finding out for oneself' by joining in with a suitable conversation or counselling with group purposes, meditating, or writing 'self'-biographical account of changes one undergoes.

It is not enough to have a mere curiosity for the sacred without self-understanding. Wanting the wisdom that frees one from limits 'allegedly imposed' by the universe one lives in, is the most important inventor of spiritual life. Some seek *siddhis* (psychic powers) by practicing Yogic practices. When these are not arrived at many explorers lose patience and abandon the spiritual path. Mere curiosity does not help. Introspective analysis of thoughts and real spiritual hunger are necessary ingredients in a seeker seeking achievement against lust, anger, egoism and selfishness. Moral purity and spiritual ambition are the first steps in the seeker's path.

Self-confidence is 'self'-belief and an assurance in one's own inner divinity and its comforting power. Worldly achievements do not give one the basic trust in the underlying 'finding out for oneself' peace of mind experienced, despite the constant change in worldly conditions. If such a state is lacking in any individual, whatever the cause of lack of self-esteem, it comes from a lack of faith in all today's that make the future. The key to all human problems lie in the solving them always in the present. Yesterday cannot be changed and tomorrow is so far unborn.

To the extent one is suspicious of life, life will prove itself mistrustful. People chronically lacking faith in others, whatever the practical reasons, similarly lack genuine self-trust. Their doubts fulfil their own prophecies or induce and attract the experiences they expect. The nature of anticipation for the future affects individual psychic strength. If a prospect is based on experience it serves to prolong useless patterns of thought and feeling, limits their vision and hinders thinking, feeling and living fully in the present.

Self-confidence that leads to Self-discovery is a long journey along a path that leads to 'self'-realisation. It is about looking into oneself, through scrutiny of one's own thoughts, words and actions. Discoveries made through 'self'-inquiry lead to improvement of oneself and one's life through discipline. Such processing takes many forms according to culture, person, personality and stage in personality-development who when one arrives at the door of a preceptor already has a little 'self'-trust.

Self-trust in the early stages is founded on parental love. Natural self-confidence comes with a child's ability to gradually learn exercises in 'self'-discipline. The child decides to surrender to 'self'-regulation as a responsibility. Self-trust then becomes the basis of self-transformation. Experiencing self-confidence comes from achievements in response to self-discipline. They become obvious in the physical and social environment. Such 'bodily based' confidence as opposed to 'mind or spirit-based' 'self'-belief does not last if it is not founded on self-realisation.

Self-belief is 'self'-trust which comes from positive relations between humankind and its societal upbringing. It develops in the earliest years of interaction. Self-discipline, reflection release 'inner' qualities and faith in oneself comes from recognition of the meaning and purpose of human existence. A conviction the purpose of life is for higher achievements both charitably and acquisitively, affects the individual's attitude and personality. While aiming for individual achievement even though 'self'-confidence may waver with the tide of life and living, 'hindrances' walk simultaneously with self-belief because it comes from deeper certainty about oneself. Such self-confidence comes from having a positive feeling and self-image about oneself.

Acceptance, certainty, affirmation and positivity towards the way and reality about life invariably bring about a balanced existence. These are fine talents and bring about a logical life resulting from acting sincerely along a chosen path aiming for a clearly defined helpful objective. Making flexible life-patterns depend on self-trust and therefore life becomes and is enjoyable with every challenge and possibility. Trust in one's abilities becomes a measure of one's best possible standard which has no limits. The degree of effort put into purpose of human existence is directly proportional to 'self-effort and self-belief'. They are the preconditions of self-

fulfilment, self-esteem and contentment with the gifts enjoyed by the five senses and by the destiny of action and reaction. A healthy lifestyle without materialistic indulgences become self-regulatory ethics of living as one matures with age.

There is indirect guideline on how to deal with bodily wants. The need for a healthy physique becomes obvious for long-term enjoyment of an agile and able human body. There is insight the human body is the temple of the soul. As understanding deepens, there is realisation about the transitory nature of material satisfaction. Fulfilments of wanted objective comforts lose their allure. Quantity in life becomes unsatisfactory. It seeks instead a quality to life. To develop qualities - those that are experienced as inner gains are independent of externals. Humankind by mid-life seeks peace of mind through thoughtful, selflessness, uprightness and care of humanity.

If happiness is the goal of life, each must know how to gain it – through 'self-knowledge.' The most satisfying knowledge comes from knowing amity from ill will, right from wrong, and honesty from dishonesty. The most satisfying knowledge expresses itself as composure that one has done no wrong against plant, creature or humankind. Such inner peace is an intuitive value of the mind inherent in some during childhood but can be achieved through control and disciplining the mind. The self-satisfaction experienced as happiness with oneself is different from the environment one lives in when ego-driven. It becomes a wanted Self-image of a *chitta*-personality of mind-intellect-ego. Only a transformed *chitta* remains stable through changing life circumstances. Eventually Self reaches an unchanging state of equilibrium. Even deprivation and awaiting death do not affect such a one and hence, being at ease and peace with oneself increases. It becomes more stable with age.

Self-understanding implies the mind is controlled, emotions are stilled and actions are not controlled by unruly fancies, imaging's of creative possibilities. There is clarity of vision and inner conviction that comes from deeper reflection about life and its losses and achievements. Depending on one's moral upbringing and spiritual culture, self-image seeks detachment from thoughts about 'I&Me' &'Mine.' Dispassion is a direct reaction to such detachment. Ego is sacrificed by 'self' at the feet of Self, the real 'I'. Giving up possessiveness is an act of unselfishness born of detachment from worldly bonds. It is more of non-attachment than detachment. It is renunciation which expresses itself as a need for secluded hermit-like life.

According to Shakespeare everyone, both men and women, in humanity are 'players on a world stage.' They have individualized entrances and exits. He divides a lifetime into seven separate 'drama-roles' experienced through "seven ages". The first 20 years of life is filled with miracles of infancy and schooling. As lover with a bearing of a soldier who is filled with foolish idealism of justice the actor plays 25 years experiencing marriage, parenthood and writing one's destiny. The last five years in retirement is to enjoy wealth gained – but, after enduring life's theatrical successes humankind experiences a second childhood, "without teeth, without eyes, without taste, without everything."

In Hinduism, human life is believed to comprise of four stages or *ashramas*. Everyone should ideally go through each of these stages of life. The First is of '*Brahmacharya*' or the Student Stage, the Second is '*Grihastha*' or the Householder Stage, the Third is '*Vanaprastha*' or the Hermit Stage, and the Fourth is "*Sannyasa*" or the Wandering Ascetic Stage.

Progressive detachment towards non-attachment lies in an attitude of mind. Nobody is bound to take on a life of self-denial or removing oneself from possessions. Non-attachment is a product of self-investigation and finds expression in restrained behaviour about others, oneself and the world. Giving up all property for the begging bowl is misconceived 'renunciation'. It makes one a load to others. Detachment is about drawing a clear line between personal needs and wants. It happens naturally in the advanced stages of existence as an attainment of genuine self-fulfilment. It is representative of values that reject hostility in thought and leads to peace of

mind. Self-sacrifice in the Western world is the selfless service as an expression of self-sacrifice. Such servicing or *seva* should be done in a spirit of non-attachment, especially when one seeks fruits of doing service. Only actions dedicated to the Common Good, is considered pure selfless sacrifice. *Seva* should express itself in self-fulfilment which arises from virtues of moderation, courage, and knowledge-seeking. Conscience calls for right attitude in *seva*-action. It creates a true sense of development of character and consciousness, transcendental love and universal realisation.

'Self' and Selfhood³⁷

Both humans and humanity of humankind views itself as it 'thinks' about itself in 'self'-opinion. It is usually unaware of its Selfhood. It is through thinking, feeling, knowing and acting in the world that 'self' has a 'self-image'. Its judgment is from a 'self'-assessment which is Instinctive, automatic, and unconscious rather than Intuitive. It is 'self'-perception which serves well for 'self'-preservation against worldly harassment. It takes its birth as individualistic ego-driven 'self'-image by dipping into the memory-bank of experiences, habits, likes-and-dislikes and tendencies. It is the *chitta*-personality³⁸ (mind-intellect-ego) or 'self'-image that each sees in oneself as and how each projects to others.

There is a substratum to every *chitta*-personality projecting itself as 'self'-image. Self is both Self and imagined 'self'. Each in humankind is a mixture of the imaginary 'self'-image and real Selfhood presenting itself to the world as a 'whole' being. This 'whole' image of *chitta*-personality (BMI & Causal-Vasanas & OM) may present itself as physical, emotional, intellectual, tendency-driven, or spiritual personas or 'self'.

Most of humanity thinks of itself as **bodily creatures** with both weight and physical attractiveness meant for ageless beauty. It rejects effects of age because it imagines aging-body is judged repulsive to others and damaging to 'self'-image. There is detachment of self-image from imagined physical-image of oneself. Until there is concurrence between thought, feeling and self-image, there is no agreement between real and imagined self-image. Imagined self-image must agree with the *chitta*-personality to reach existential harmony with the outer world.³⁹

Over Time, shifting bodily appearances progressively changes self-image and the 'self' realizes one is not the body. There is experienced difficulty and realisation when facing-up-to progressive self-realisation there is a purpose to life and human expression. Discovery of the obscured true Self within is not the 'self' viewed by oneself and others, in the physical appearance. Through reflection and following the question: "Who am 'I'?" The ego-feeling rejects all irrelevant self-images and grows inwards through progressive inner expansion and arrives at the door of the real "I" – the Self.

Having confirmed one is not the *Physical-self*, one must now deal with the **Mental-Intellectual-'self'** who also has a 'self' or personal-identity that presents itself to the world as a 'special' identity. **Social-image⁴⁰** is supported by a substratum of social selfhood reflecting itself through admirable qualities and through personal achievements. Although the 'self' here carries out what humankind displayed for: about uncompleted wishes and wants, it is also realised the succeeded emotional-intellectual 'self' is not the real pure Self. Internalized views of one, when admitted by one's social and worldly interaction, fortifies one's imagined and projected social self-image. It defines a 'social-image' of a successful (or unsuccessful) 'self.' Social consensus whether through positive or negative experiences, can become helpful or destructive to self-confidence. Both are felt by the ego-feeling.

Ego-feeling is causal in origin and comes from Bodily, Emotional, and Intellectual (BMI) desires seeking social acceptance because of attachments to accomplishments⁴¹. Ego-feeling develops gradually through successes until it is stable in maturity. The *self-*

image and *social-image* personalities become subtly merged with unrealistic wants for a *false ego-driven self-image*. Even high expectations or ideals for one, can often become just about unreachable and *delusional*. This can be overcome through self-knowledge.

Selfhood is the genuine 'self'- personality who realizes its true identity. It is what outfits and holds together the individual profiles of physical-emotional-causal 'self'-images.⁴² Although each 'self' image is a reflection of the real Self, selfhood has characteristics of the I-ego (I-Me-Mine) which is distinctive from the real "I" the Self. Inner discovery of the meaning of "I" through self-inquiry leads to human evolution and reorientation. Overall orientation is made possible through Knowledge which leads to self-transformation. It becomes obvious in thought, speech and action. Mindfulness launches self-confidence and self-realisation on a changing self-image. Progress is dependent on confidence in the Knowledge which promises potential development and on recognizing that problems in life have no power. They cannot keep themselves on 'blame' when weighed against gained wisdom.

Blame is a faculty of self-deception which takes birth in one's sense of inferiority, superiority and refusal to admitting the cause-effect relationship of human action and experiences⁴³. Unless self-image accepts the Law of Karma, it fails to connect with one's true potential in divine Selfhood. Such positive thinking is not only self-healing while in the 'awake state' but filters into the astral subconscious, as well as, into the unconscious causal state.

This self-transformation is neither imagined nor autosuggested. A changed 'self'-image towards Self-image is a positive experience of Self-discovery that "I" is neither BMI & Ego (body-mind-intellect-ego) nor the Causal being. The real "I" is experienced first as Awareness and then as Consciousness. The psyche experiences Selfhood which treks towards Unity with the Whole – its essential identity in a Cosmic Connectedness⁴⁴.

The Freudian 'superego' or Conscience based on ideas, beliefs or patterns of emotional upbringing and education act as an internal controls on natural instincts and socially unacceptable impulses⁴⁵. Ideas and feelings of social responsibility set limits to behaviour as a part of a person's inner life of an individual. The 'inner voice' is not necessarily agreeing with the true voice of conscience. A genuine call of conscience originates within the person in the intellect-intelligence.

Becoming and Being Self⁴⁶

Becoming Self comes from received spiritual knowledge intellectually and realizing it through deep contemplation. It is a lifelong process of 'self'-discovery and emotional-intellectual understanding of relationship: of one with the cosmos. Being Self happens by becoming Self. It is a result of Wisdom experienced after absorbing Knowledge inwardly. It is an intuitive knowing "I am Self." It is realized in a deep spiritual 'self'-Self-experience.

Such harmless thoughts and ideas have the potential of making deeds a true vision of becoming Self. True judgment, conscience and convictions are needed. Becoming Self stands opposed to ego-driven false 'self.' Individual integrity leads to self-integration. For the sake of what is right in one's understanding takes the trekker towards conviction. Being Self is the result of a long process of maturation, through *sadhana*, but depends partly on upbringing and cultural background.

Being Self is not fully achieved until a person reaches a stable, integral personality. The ability to recognize personal weaknesses and complicatedness and stresses of self-deception are difficult to escape from. Some are due to strictly objective conditions that can be worked on. Such challenges such as by drinking and drug-taking always remain in the background ready to return. One's own ideas about such problems which one projects on to other people or societies become major problems for 'self' seeking Self. Freud believed in the need of strong social controls because of baser instincts are everywhere found within man. Meanwhile, the psychology of split

personality and multiple identities claims these derangements are both genetic and physical in origin. Such dual-personality problems display in social reactions such as lacking understanding, need for care and love, and can contribute to perpetuating 'deranged' responses.

Such lasting changes in life are not of the personal ego. The *Self Overself witnessing 'I'* the individual Ego-awareness is within or 'behind' human-consciousness. When thus grasped and 'experienced' through contemplation as a transcendent conscious individual, the 'self' is observed as NOT being the product of (BMI) because they are seen to be its instruments. It is an autonomously directing power over BMI. This witnessing Self is the sole indispensable basis of ideas of self-control, self-mastery, self-discipline and individual selfhood. It is the highest expressible form of individual soul or jiva-identity which makes one realize 'oneself.' It is a pure inward identity which sees the one identity between all individuals, but also differences because of various bodies and minds. By recognizing the nature of 'self'-hood as being the same living spirit of I-awareness in everyone, there is awareness the personal soul is one with the universal spirit.

Self-effort ⁴⁷is the Path to Spiritual Journey

Tendencies are not influenced by heredity, specie-development (Darwin's theory), environmental forces or social custom. Such conditional 'determinism' would erase understanding of human potentiality for change and promote helplessness. Such fatalism would deny humanity the power to individually and collectively transcend inner and outer conditions of life, including that of society. 'Blame' is a common societal monopoly of oligarchy through capitalism and socialism. They make individuals alienate from themselves as passive victims of societal pressures. By denying individuals of personal responsibility, the 'blame-game' in social and political systems is ascribed to ghastly environment and material poverty or similar 'extenuating circumstances.' Self-defeatism and dependency on others is increasingly made a State responsibility in emerging societies of East and West.

Eastern thought when uninfluenced by Western thought remains unimpressed by 'democratic' large-scale commercial entrepreneurship that threatens small-scale free enterprise. Darwin's evolutionary theory makes all of Nature's expression a species arising from natural selection under environmental-driven development enforced through biological need for survival. Freud's psychology makes humankind a victim of forces and drives humankind beyond self-awareness and self-control. Marx and Engels' ideas of 'historical need' have made individuals powerless pawns of vast societal movements enforced by mass economic trends. This powerful brew of flawed ideas has intoned into the powerlessness of an individual.

Such misconceptions arise from 'biologism' and are the result of over-identification of human nature with that of animals. It ignores the human potential to the 'higher life' through human values⁴⁸. The body and five senses, certain instinct and natural 'intelligence' are beyond question shared with animals. Yet the growth of human psyche aims for self-knowledge, living according to values, striving towards evolution, and realizing the full potency of the higher Self. These represent an integral part of higher thinking. On all social fronts excessive liberality is mistaken as 'freedom of speech' and confused for a licence to misbehave. Securing protective limits on personal freedom lie in understanding the need for self-discipline and taking responsibility for oneself. Unless there is self-restraint and mind-control, genuine moral and spiritual development and self-realisation are impossible.

Faith in the human capacity to change even after long periods of negative experience and behaviour is also based on realism. That is so because Vedanta recognizes the essence of the embodied 'self' to be in Onement with the Self and the Cosmic Self. It promotes the assumption that each being makes 'existential choices' what course to follow, what or who to become, how one wishes to

live, which principles to follow, and what to believe or not. Some such issues, whether through habitual build-up or self-fulfilling experience, become almost irrevocable. But even at this level of thought tendencies they can become so binding that only a major upheaval can hope to alter their life-course.

At the same time, each person's destiny is contained within karmic law⁴⁹. Each soul is fated to endure effects of activities of previous lives through an overall set of impulses and tendencies each brings into an existence. According to Vedanta, though constrained by objective limits set by the laws of karma, there is an alternative: to seek liberation from cycles of action and reaction through transcendence. This infers it is possible to get what one wants by free-will. Exercising such freedom has outcomes. If freedom is exercised through selflessly doing what is right, it leads to peace of mind and the experience of inner freedom.

Freedom in a spiritual sense relates to activity of the mind, and afterwards to the heart and lastly to the head. The mind, when not occupied by pressing needs of providing livelihood may be free to roam, but freedom of the mind does not necessarily lead to greater understanding. Freedom of thought can develop into the ability to regulate desires or adjust them towards increased mental and emotional balance. Unless all these are in place, it is impossible to control impulses that sustain the ego. It is such inner freedom from the influence of mental bonds and desires that push and pull one through worldliness that brings peace of mind, while still engaging in the world⁵⁰.

Self-discipline⁵¹ to bring about control of the mind has many vagaries. Awakened senses fuel desires. Five receptive senses (*jyanendriyas*) and five active 'senses' like speech, locomotion, reproduction (*karmendriyas*) through personal ways detach from mental control. Control of instruments of mind leads to control of thoughts, words and acts. But what about those undesirable thoughts that keep habitually returning? There are still always alternatives about how to master one's own mind. 'Compulsive thoughts' can exert power over unbreakable habits of a lifetime. Moralizing and preaching seldom have any effect. It is better consciously to entertain alternative thoughts for a more likelihood of success.

Conviction about the value of self-discipline and enough faith in spiritual practice is the right choice to make. The one important quality of mind when it calls for 'self-discipline' is an attitude of positivity, affirmation and acceptance. *New Age* calls it 'positive thinking.' *Emile Coué (1857-1926)*, the French psychologist defines it as 'autosuggestivism' with the famous phrase "Every day, in every way, I'm growing better and better." Positive thinking affirms what is morally right is spiritually desirable. It leads to more lasting personal benefits and peace of mind. Thoughts that we wish to weaken and avoid cannot always just be cancelled.

Non-attachment involves keeping mind above any turmoil or trials of the environment. Non-attachment arises in adopting the long-term perspective on any matter, and avoiding spontaneous impulses, and immediate fears or short-term satisfactions. It is achieved to the extent of one's understanding, experience and proper nurturing. It enables one to realise the fuller meaning and outcomes of attitudes and deeds. Non-attachment that produces composure is based on an attitude of 'being in the world but not being of it' or *vairagya*. This does not mean an avoidance of personal responsibility or abdication of personal initiative. It implies inner well-being and independence from external events. It means identification with one's true nature as humankind and one's higher potentialities or 'spirituality', in the widest sense.

Such non-attachment implies a renunciation of worldly wishes, detachment of feelings from both positive and negative events in the physical or social spheres. It is an attitude won of witnessing with the mind and caring with the heart. Such understanding is itself a progressive fruit of life experience from practices of non-attachment. It results unavoidably in fulfilling maximum potential for development. But this is only a 'superficial grasp' on the subject. Practical experience comes from study, reflection over time, and

practice. There is gradual insight into worldly matters and relationships. One then automatically reattaches to the universal Greater Self.

This detachment and reattachment to the Cosmic Greater Self gives both self-satisfaction of peace of mind. They are born of knowing its permanence, awareness about spiritual values in life, understanding change on the backdrop of changelessness and inner expansion. Independence from emotional disturbances born of habits, judgmental passions, tendencies and mind control become positive observable effects of detachment. Unavoidable worldly disturbances are witnessed without emotional reactions. Judging everyday life through the 'witness-prism' strengthens insight and reinforces detachment and non-attachment to things, beings and events.

'Witnessing' the Mind-screen giving birth to thoughts and following them until they disappear is a perfect prescription for practicing 'concentration'.⁵² *Sri Chinmayananda (1916-1993)* a renowned 20th century Hindu spiritual leader who inspired children, youth, and adults by teaching eternal values of living, prescribed this method to free one from recurrent thoughts that were compulsive. This was his technique for encouraging contemplation and meditation in individuals seeking inner awakening to the higher Self.

Once 'concentration towards a thought-free state' is achieved, it is possible to concentrate on real and imaginary negativities in oneself as witness. Neutral witnessing of every thought passing across the mind-screen leads to even-mindedness unruffled by prejudices, attachments, dislikes, partisanship, and injustice. The state of constant calmness through neutralization of restless thoughts is gained by continuous practice and keeping fixed attention on blanking the Mind-screen.

There is realisation that negative experiences of dejection, disillusionment, disappointments, despondency and disenchantment have no existence except as thoughts in the mind. Negative or positive views displaying as thoughts are expressions of wants and attachments, consciously chosen them. Feeling or '*chitta*' (M & I & Ego) make them negative or positive as subjective qualities. Negativity can be deep-seated, becomes embedded in early life and often is not recognized as negativity in thoughts and feelings.

Refraining from expressing negativity of feeling is not only stored up emotionally in fixed reactions and thoughts but lurk in the subconscious to emerge as bad dreams, in unguarded words or uncontrolled self-destructive behaviour. One puts things right through non-attachment to witnessed thoughts. Composure is achieved through success with concentration. This achievement cannot happen suddenly. Self-knowledge arises from struggling with many experiences in life. Correct insights arrived at through self-development do not come automatically. They must repeatedly be guided by the right questions and inspired by sound ideas from spiritual teachings. They provide a 'working theory' and a helpful framework for experiences⁵³.

Harmlessness⁵⁴ is the harmony of thought, word and deed. These traits, taken together, describe a highly freed and selfless person. Always non-attached selflessness and its consequent self-realisation result in a determined will-power. Non-attachment develops at a gradual pace through persistent tries over a long time, and is a matter of will-power and 'psychic health' of the person. The extent of attainment is proportional to a trekker's positive personality traits, and attitude of non-attachment.

Sadhana⁵⁵

The spiritual path of ego transcendence is rugged, thorny, and precipitous. The thorns need weeding. That needs patience and perseverance. Some thorns are internal while others are external. Lust, want, greed, wrath, delusion, vanity and jealousy are the internal thorns. Company with the malicious or the wicked who are habitually coarse and of evil disposition and aims are external thorns. Keeping companionship with the materialistic should be avoided because the 'self'-assigned period of *sadhana* is a time of

introspection. It is time for self-isolation and for obeying the Ten Yogic Laws of Do's and Don'ts. During the period of *Sadhana*, do not mix much; do not talk much; do not walk much; do not eat much; do not sleep much.

Observe carefully the five 'do-not's.' Socializing with the world disallows the mind from being fully occupied with spiritual pursuits. Living with householders, both rich and poor, stir up ingrained passions. As a beginner there is no need to test one's spiritual strength and purity when on the spiritual path. A seeker may return among own family only under dire circumstances. Yogic rules and laws for a student-yogi disallow permission to stay in a home environment for long periods. The force of past impressions is gargantuan. Unless all previous impulses left in the subconscious and unconscious mind (*sanskaras*) are thoroughly burnt, it is not safe to live in one's own native place.

In the beginning a spiritual path may appear difficult, thorny, precipitous and even slippery. Detachment has to be progressive and that takes time until renunciation of objects-emotions-thoughts (OET) happens. *Vairagya* or non-attachment is a product of self-investigation and finds expression in restrained behaviour when relating to things, others, oneself and the world. Loneliness and the sense of being neglected and abandoned by friends and family vanish. Backed always by the mighty power that works in the cosmos, there is nothing to fear and incidental bumps and bruises along the path take care of themselves.

Some seekers leave *Sadhana* after some time because there is expectation of immediate grand fruits for their efforts. They rarely understand there are layers of Awareness between the ordinary human awareness and Consciousness. Many veils have to be torn down on the way. Many life-centres need cleaning, hurdles overcome, before reaching the final goal. There are veils but there are also two ways each views oneself – each is independent of each other and yet imperceptibly revealing as one SELF.

Guru Disciple Relationship in Self-development⁵⁶

The motivating energy that makes self-transformation through self-development possible is the guru's love-imbued wisdom and teachings. Self-development is like polishing tarnished silver to its original shimmering quality. Self-development and the many expressions of transformations result from a guru's unflinching desire to free disciple from the anguish of worldliness. Spiritual teachings are made potent only by the guru's love and compassion. Empathy is an essential expression in their relationship. Unselfish generous bonding must be the standard of affiliation between student and teacher. Such an attitude is essential to the development and expansion of a disciple's mind, personality and character. The degree of harmony between them depends largely on the influence of common trust, sincerity, reciprocal respect and interactive satisfactoriness of affection and care.

There is widespread confusion about the nature of love and affection. In much of today's world the word 'love' is used to refer to sexual arousal or anticipation, and understood to be conditional love between parent and child or one's pets (*sneha*). Even the educated have lost sight of that great poetic or spiritual truth that unconditional love (*prema*) is a sublime value with universal dimensions. A biologically conditioned love urge is an instinct of affection and attachment necessary for ego-existence. In it is the common fulfilment of 'self'-oriented wishes. Freud rejected a spiritual understanding ascribed to 'universal love' to mean non-attached or selfless care, concern and appreciation for all and everything. *Prema* or universal love is that expression which Freud denied. But it is *prema* that believes in the sublimity of human love for God and God's love for humanity and the individual. Its universality is encoded in the dictum: "God is Love".

At 'values,' love expresses itself in its connections: It is a proper means of expression when there is a common essence at an individual, as well as, at its indefinable most universal level. It is characterized as selflessness, altruistic, acceptance and affirmation in

personal relationships, towards other beings, creatures and Creation. It always moves towards understanding, integration, unity and blending. The growth of understanding by the heart is experienced as complete unity.

Unity is its 'universal value.' It is inherent in human nature as being fundamental to life for all peoples. Love of truth and knowledge and of goodness in the world are also valid expressions of love. The love of humanity, if genuinely practiced, is a powerful agency of human transformation. It nurtures self-love that includes in its loving embrace everything in existence as being One. Self-esteem is founded on the sense of being of worth – or self-love. It is founded on the extent to which one can identify with what is good and positive. It springs from inherent goodness, and becomes reflected in personalities. Universal care or love is a learned expansion of mind and heart. Developing a loving heart and mind is not a matter of short cuts.

It implies a 'guru' has progressively mastered a disciple's lower instincts, impulses and is helping the student overcome the ego, but not before the development of personality. The growth of spiritual character through heartfelt, selfless service and gradual recognition of divinity give true teachers insights and revelatory experiences. Until the mind and soul of a teacher are well prepared through lifelong self-purifying action, it cannot be the receptacle for spiritual consciousness able to take a disciple to the portals of unchanging truth. In the end, self-transformation of a disciple is the result of 'unified minds.' It is not a change in a symptom by itself. Metamorphosis happens in the whole lifestyle, in the way mind interprets experiences, the meaning it gives to life, and in the actions in which it responds to impressions received from the body and the environment.

The disciple is at first helped to seek and 'find' itself at its emotional, intellectual and tendency levels. Self-centeredness is moved towards 'others-centeredness.' Action or *karma* is towards service or *seva* through selflessness. With lessening concerns about oneself, egoism is gradually displaced by humanism and universalism. This is a spiritual realisation in response to being selfless most of the time. Self-perception is now a justified insight of goodness in humanity – a feedback that is neither authoritarian nor disciplinarian. The disciple makes clear distinctions between good and bad and seeks the oneself while doing good to others. Life becomes a path of self-seeking through selflessness.

Self-satisfaction in doing good is that of the ego but it also encourages the disciple's ego to see oneself in All. The central insight gained from such encouragement by the guru is that interconnectedness has a purpose – a Common Good for each plant, creature and humankind. Such a view to one's gives the disciple a subjective realisation; humankind is tied together through each one's contribution and cooperation. A unified Mind of individual and cosmos is experienced because of progressive inner transformation and gives the disciple a 'meaning to life'. Living in such a 'unity' of 'self' with Self and with the Greater Self is the Path to Spiritual Life or *sadhana*.

Spiritual Progress⁵⁷

There is no jumping right into self-realisation when on the spiritual path. Even after much subjective unfolding and understanding one needs years of 'post-graduate' and intense but protracted effort at ego-transcendence (*sadhana*). There are no short-cuts to the destination while along the spiritual path. There is no 'royal road' to the kingdom of immortal bliss. There is no half-measure on this divine path of *sadhana*. Strict, hard discipline is wanted. Then alone one conquers *Maya*: it is She who is the principal deity that manifests, perpetuates and governs the illusion and dream of duality in the Universe. *Maya* to the materialist is an unsolvable enigma but Creation must be connected to - through understanding and intuition.

The goal of enlightenment is to understand, to experience and intuitively see the distinction between the 'self' and the Universal Self. *Maya* appears as if Creation is split into this and that. This false splitting of the Whole into two non-overlapping parts is witnessed

by the mortal. The distinction between consciousness and physical matter, between mind and body, is the result of an unenlightened perspective. Even sages and yogis admit they are victims of the illusion Nature invents even in a controlled mind. Only the deluded spiritual traveller (*Sadhaka*) imagines he or she has controlled the mind and gets a terrible downfall. It is the nature of life, mind and Creative constitution (*Prakriti*) to be in constant creative activity. If the mind wants the highest goal achieved, creativity (*rajas*) will always move towards it, whether downward or upward. Spiritual progress for higher realization needs following until breath finishes at the nostril.

Spiritual progress is slow because the path is difficult to understand and can be painstakingly lengthy. It is like the spiral. In the beginning, great determination is needed. Gradually the striving becomes less as self-esteem and self-confidence increase. The seeker slowly gains increasing spiritual strength. The march towards the goal once only envisaged becomes gradually reachable through patient perseverance. The gradual inward progress is silent and unseen. Real spiritual progress is measured by attaining peacefulness, serenity, and calmness in one's waking state.

A healthy body and mind, scanty bodily emanations, soft voice, lustrous face and radiant personality are the natural result of sincere yogic practices. Ever calm, tranquil, and poised the seeker-yogi is ever cheerful, fearless, and contented. Dispassionate and discriminative, such a one has no attraction for the world and is neither upset nor ruffled in the mind. Through introversion a one-pointed, sharp, subtle mind longs for solitude and more meditation. The idea that all creative expressions are forms of the Lord gets increasingly stronger. Cosmic Connection is felt everywhere within the presence and nearness God. Experienced Oneness manifests as a burning desire for selfless service. Even in such *sadhana* the ego has a habit of raising its head.

Watch the spiritual path moving back or progressing. If self-inquiry (*vedantic vichara*) produces egoism, it is not then a spiritual *sadhana*. Watch the 'self' and introspect. Practice self-analysis and kill the formidable egoism. Egoism (*ahamkar*) lurks like a thief and assumes various forms like a chameleon or a dramatist. Do not stop the *sadhana* even if one gets glimpses of realization. Continue the practice because it is important. To stop practice and moving back into the world, often leads to a downfall after reaching great heights through self-effort. Do not be carried away by name and fame. The ego finds it difficult to renounce intellectual pleasure gained through name and fame. Anyone who can draw happiness from the soul (*atman*) within refuses trifles of emotional and intellectual pursuits. By assuming a circumspective attitude, ignoring things trivial, and steadiness in practice they lead towards the final beatitude. It is experienced as a constant God-consciousness. Masters insist *sadhana* should be regular, continuous, unbroken, and earnest to wipe out the undercurrent of *vasanas* of 'me and mine'.

Sometimes the seeker gets stuck and cannot advance or is sidetracked through *siddhis* characterized by supernormal perceptual states. Such a one misses the way and walks away from the goal into another direction. Attacked by temptations and false contentment, carelessness and laziness fill the spiritual path with hurdles of imaginations, senses and the mind. There is always an *indriya* (sensory demand) waiting to assault the seeker with redoubled force and vigour. Great patience, perseverance, vigilance, and undaunted strength are needed to stave the ego. Vigorous spiritual practices when started young reap a rich spiritual harvest when one becomes old. But during advancing years efforts need an experienced guide.

Effort⁵⁸

Life is a journey. It is a pilgrimage to fulfil life's purpose. Its goals are duty or *Dharma* of desire for fulfilment or *Kama*. They come first. Discovering and introducing human birth to the meaning, objective and purpose of wealth comes next: as *artha*.

Experiencing liberation from the wheel of birth-and-death or *moksha* is the final goal of a human birth. Human life is a battleground to regain peace, tranquillity and true happiness. Conflicts of existence are born through humankind's social lives, the family one is born into, and exposures at the workplace and in the world. Inner conflicts and values contradict moral values and ideals. In this struggle, humanity is victimised by negativity and forced to make unnecessary compromises. As a result, humankind becomes a victim of more want, anger, greed, jealousy, hypocrisy and possessiveness.

After carrying out the first two goals of life (desire and duty), one re-evaluates life and realises the need for permanent happiness because of its eternal nature. He embarks on his spiritual journey looking to rise above simple biological existence and searching for inner tranquillity and spiritual emancipation. Without a map and an experienced guide, a spiritual journey is difficult. Though scriptural texts serve as the map, it is often difficult to decipher the chart without an experienced teacher.

The chosen Master should have made the journey himself in his or her past. To transform humankind, the path must be lit up with true spiritual knowledge and revelation of Truth, as opposed to material knowledge. Putting spiritual knowledge to practice is *sadhana*. The eventual experience of *sadhana* is a life of self-discipline and meditation.

During their spiritual effort, seekers come up with issues. Some feel their progress is too slow. Some feel a sense of bewilderment. Some endure a sense of loneliness. Some are troublesome experiences of phenomenon during deep meditation. Others feel they have slipped backwards. But these feelings are often a result of failure to endure by *yama* and *niyamas* (the do's and don'ts) of personal conduct. To direct a wavering seeker through the forests of temptation, restlessness and emotional weakness, a *guru* is essential. Surges of inner awakening through this unknown energy within the seeker are signs of progress. A teacher must now be there to guide the student through hurdles. Regulated slow breathing, as taught by the *guru*, combats fears of falling into a void.

The biological human body is like a chariot. The Soul is the charioteer. The five senses are horses that draw the chariot. When driven by the egoistic individualised 'self', the horses pull in different directions. For a spiritual journey, the body and the senses must be healthy, well trained and under control of Universal Intelligence. The transforming individualistic self needs the grace of the witnessing Consciousness and the will of Nature's Awareness. The self, in turn, must agree to the teachings of an experienced *guru*. Well-versed in the art of self-control and self-unfoldment the teacher takes the self to submit to the Self for gradual awakening.

¹ Vedic Texts are Hindu Vedic Texts: Hindus themselves often use the term to describe anything connected to the Vedas and their corollaries (e.g. Vedic culture)".

² Radhakrishnan Sarvepalli; Moore, Charles A., eds. (1957), *A Sourcebook in Indian Philosophy* (12th Princeton Paperback ed.), Princeton University Press, ISBN 0-691-01958-4.

³ Vyasa is also credited with the writing of the 18 major, if not all, Puranas. His son Shuka is the narrator of the major Purana Bhagavata-Purana

⁴ The Mahabhashya of Patanjali with annotation (Ahnikas I-IV), Translated by Surendranath Dasgupta, Published by Indian Council of Philosophical Research.

⁵ Maharishi World Peace Endowment: Intelligence of Unified Field of All Laws of Nature – Vedic Science that Higgs Field interacts with space.

⁶ PSI-SCIENCES: <http://www.psi-sciences.com>; Patanjali-Yoga Sutra: <http://www.scribd.com/trueidentity>; http://www.flickr.com/groups/patanjaliyoga_sutra/

⁷ Dr. John Hagelin's *Manual for a Perfect Government* provides a comprehensive action plan to create an ideal national administration in accord with natural law. It provides Mechanics of Global Transformation by following Natural Laws for Humanity.

⁹ Tony Crisp from 'Collective Consciousness – The Dawn of Awareness';

¹⁰ Dharma *that which upholds supports or maintains the regulatory order of the universe*) means *Law* or *Natural Law* and is a concept of central importance in Indian philosophy and religion. In traditional Hindu society, dharma has historically denoted a variety of ideas, such as Vedic ritual, ethical conduct, caste rules, and civil and criminal law. Its most common meaning, however, pertains to two principal ideals; that social life should be structured through well-defined and well-regulated classes (varna), and that an individual's life within a class should be organized into defined stages (ashramas, see dharmasastra). A Hindu's dharma is affected by the person's age, caste, class, occupation, and gender;

¹¹ Conscious systemised spiritual movement with objective to release life Sri Sivananda www.dishq.org/teachings; pannir@dlshq.org

¹² Yogic practices www.anahata.balance.com/yogalifestyle.

¹³ Tree of Life www.answers.com/topic-of-life-science;

¹⁴ Awakening the chakras at the Zinal Conference September 1981 www.yogamag.net/archives/1982;

¹⁵ Advaita Vedanta Home Page – Upanishads www.advaita-vedanta.org/avhp/upanishad

¹⁶ Swami Sivananda www.dishq.org/religions/upanishads.html:[Http://hindunet.org/upanishads](http://hindunet.org/upanishads)

¹⁷ Guru: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guru>.

¹⁸ Intelligence: www.rationality.net/intelligence.

¹⁹ Aristotle's Psychology//plato.stanford.edu/entries/Aristotle-psychology

²⁰ Intelligence Testing of Alfred Binet; <http://suite101.com/article/intelligence-testing>

²¹ Superego: Allpsych.com/psychology101/ego

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- ²² Id, Ego and Superego: www.wilderdom.com/personality/L8-4StructureMindEgoSuperego;
- ²³ Intuition: [www.angelfire.com/hi/The Seer/intuition](http://www.angelfire.com/hi/The%20Seer/intuition);
- ²⁴ Psychic development: www.mysticalempowerment.com;
- ²⁵ www.newagedirectory.com/psi/spiritual_development;
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