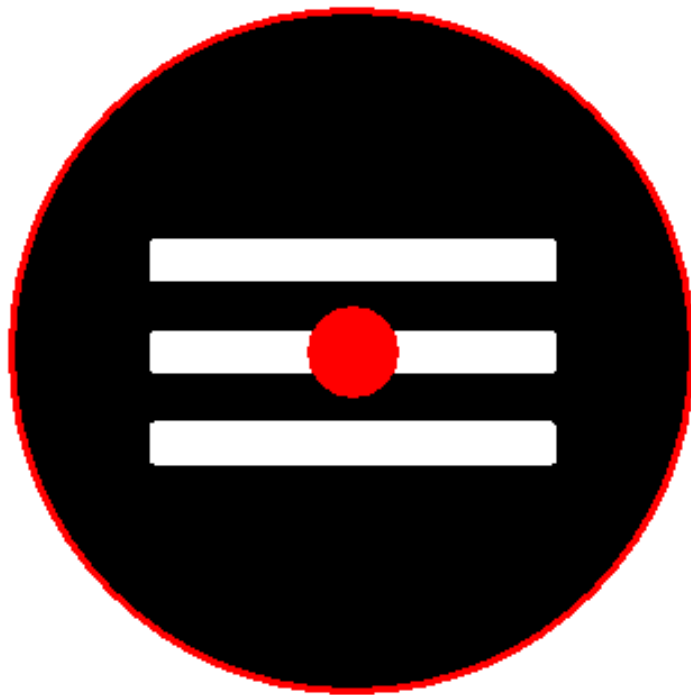


MANUAL OF THE NEW YOGA



LESSON 1:

THE NEW YOGA OF AWARENESS

(VIMARSHA YOGA)

**...from awareness of experiencing
to a new experience of awareness**

Awareness is the Self.

Awareness, *Shiva*, is the soul of the world.

Thus, identifying individual awareness with universal awareness and attaining divine bliss, from where or from whom should one get scared?

The Shiva Sutras

**Every appearance owes its existence to the light of awareness.
Nothing can have its own being without the light of awareness.**

Kshemaraja

**Meditate on one's own body as the universe,
and as having the nature of awareness.**

The yogi is always mindful of that witnessing awareness which alone is the subject of everything, which is always a subject and never an object.

The Vijnanabhairava Tantra

**The body *is* an awareness.
For seers, to be alive means to *be aware*.
There is something in us all that can *witness with our entire body*.**

Carlos Castaneda

Having made itself manifest, awareness abides as both the inner and the outer.

The visible world is the body.

Uptaladeva

Shiva is the Self shining in all things, all-pervasive, all quiescent awareness.

May the Shiva inpenetrated into my limited self through his power, offer worship to the *Shiva* of the expansive Self – the concealer of himself by himself!

The wishing tree of Self-Awareness, with its mighty branches, standing full-grown in the region of the Heart, has the loveliness of Experience for its flowers, and the festive splendour of unimpaired Bliss for its fruits.

Somananda

Listen! Our Lord [Shiva] whose nature is awareness, is unlimited, the absolute master of the arising and dissolving away of every power.

The power which resides in the heart of awareness is freedom itself. The purpose of its creative activity is the group (*kula*), the entire range of experienced self, experienced object and process of experiencing.

The Supreme Goddess is the absolute freedom of our own awareness which assumes these various forms.

The *Shastras* and *Agamas* proclaim with reasoned argument that it [awareness] is free of thought-constructs [*nirvikalpa*] and precedes all mental representation of any objects.

Abhinavagupta

**Awareness is devoid of objects;
That is why it is called
Eternally free from bonds.**

Mandukya Karika

Awareness ‘itself’ is going nowhere, is doing nothing ‘outside’ of itself, there not being anything outside: it belongs to no one exclusively, has no restrictions, derivations or explanations ... awareness *just* is.

Awareness is a singularity beyond personality and impersonality – which cannot be contained, curtailed, expanded or transcended from ‘without awareness’.

It is not important to simply label this awareness with a word like God, the Absolute or what have you, as to *submit* and *abandon* yourself to this singularity of awareness ...the awareness that runs *through* you as one person *of* a multi-personal universe of unlimited awareness ...

Spiritual awareness cannot be locked up in churches, temples and mosques ... from which imposing directives issue forth, nor can it thrive diluted as part of the mainstream culture it is supposed to be educating ... Spiritual gatherings, spontaneous or organised

Michael Kosok

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AWARENESS AS ULTIMATE REALITY

Awareness is bliss.

Awareness is the self.

Awareness is freedom.

Awareness is the divine.

Awareness is all that there is.

Awareness is the sole absolute.

Awareness is light, space and time.

Awareness is the substance of matter.

Awareness is the inwardness of energy.

Awareness surrounds and permeates all things.

Awareness cannot be explained by any 'thing' at all.

Awareness is the condition for our experience of any 'thing'.

Awareness is ultimate reality, the source and essence of all realities.

TIME TO BE AWARE

Humanity has reached a turning point in time, a turning point which requires us to establish a whole new relation to time, a whole new way of being in time, a whole new awareness of time. The nature of that turning point in time, of that new relation to time, that new way of being in time, and that new awareness of time is simple but profound. Quite simply: it is *time to be aware*. 'To be' is to be *aware*. 'Time to be aware' means: it is time for human beings to grant themselves the time to be – to be aware. Without granting ourselves time to be aware we impoverish ourselves. For to be aware means to be aware of *all there is* to be aware of - all there is to sense and feel, experience and explore, enjoy and delight in, process and ponder, recollect and anticipate, delve into and draw insight from in the present moment.

Without granting ourselves time to be aware of all that there is to be aware of in the moment, we become overburdened, fatigued, stressed out or dis-eased by all that we have been too rushed to give ourselves time to become aware of. We reduce awareness itself to the next thing to do or say, act on or react to. We reduce being to doing. In doing so, we reduce our lives to a series of actions strung out along a two-dimensional timeline. We reduce the moment to a mere point in time, and time itself to a *seemingly* empty space between one moment point and another – one which we have become addicted to filling with *doing*, whether in the form of speaking or acting, working or engaging in 'leisure activities'. Even 'meditation' becomes something to be *done* – for example through the form of the type of bodily stretching engaged in under the name of 'yoga' that substitutes for a meditative stretching of awareness.

Doing dominates over being aware because all the business powers of this world conspire to keep us *busy* at all costs, not least by forcing us to *sell our time* to employers whose only interest is in exploiting it to the greatest extent possible and making it ever more 'productive'. The old Protestant work ethic with its famous adage - "the Devil makes work for idle hands" - is so instilled in us that *idleness* itself has to be induced by falling sick or aided by the use of drugs, and any idle time we have has to be used to *do* something - if only to take drugs or indulge in activities which either require no awareness or in which we lose all awareness. In this way 'the Devil' does indeed *make* work for idle hands, ensuring that even if they are not

working they are still *doing*, still not allowing themselves time to just be - to *be aware*. As a result we live as two-dimensional beings in two-dimensional time, racing along a line from one action, one contracted focus of awareness in time, to another. We have forgotten that time is not just a two-dimensional line along which the moments are strung like beads, but that *each moment* has a spacious, three-dimensional *insideness*.

There is not a physicist in the world who recognises the true nature of time and space – that if what we experience as time is the space *between* the moments, then what we experience as ‘space’ is time *within* the moment. Each moment is actually an enduring and expansive *time-space* of awareness in which we can ‘abide’ or ‘dwell’ – the root meaning of ‘to be’. It is this time-space of awareness within the moment that we normally only experience as the physical space around us ‘at’ some point in time.

The true meaning of ‘meditation’ is giving ourselves time to be aware, which means also giving ourselves ‘space’. Giving ourselves this ‘time’ and ‘space’ means inwardly expanding the *time-space* within the moment. This is a time-space that is infinitely expandable - but only inwardly, from within. We cannot meditatively expand our awareness if we do not first of all take time to linger, dwell and abide within the moment, exploring all there is to be aware of within it. If our experience of time is just one of skipping from one thing to another, one task to another, one thought to another, we are merely skating the surface of the moments and reducing them to points on a two-dimensional line.

Those who live in two-dimensional time know only two dimensions of life – doing and thinking, or action and speech. They may act on, react to or reflect on their lived experience past, present and future (their two-dimensional time). But they never truly grant themselves the time to simply be *aware* of all there is to experience within the moment. Were they only to take time to stop doing and be aware, they would *become* aware of just how much *more* there is to experience in the moment. Their lives, their lived experience, would be immeasurably *enriched* by that expanded awareness, rather than contracting or crowding out that very awareness. Not taking time to be aware however, we become closed to the rich dimensions of our immediate experiencing in the moment. Instead we identify with an impoverished and limited

range of experiencing – becoming stuck in particular ways of experiencing ourselves, other people and the world. Or else we seek ever-new experiences through *action* rather than awareness - through doing rather than being. So ‘extreme sports’, ‘high speed action’ and drug-induced ‘highs’ substitute for the enriched experience that comes from slowing and deepening our awareness within the moment.

Identification with limiting ways of experiencing ourselves, other people and the world is embedded in our very use of language. Thus instead of *being aware* of having a certain feeling such as anger or sadness, we say “I *am* angry” or “I *am* sad”. Instead of being aware of *having* a particular thought or feeling about some thing or person – for example the thought that ‘John is a bastard’ - we so *identify* with the feelings expressed in that thought that we take it as a ‘fact’ that ‘John *is* a bastard’. As a result of this identification with a limited way of experiencing something or someone, our thoughts and feelings cease to be a true and authentic expression of all there is to be aware of in relation to that thing or person - and make it impossible for us to experience them in different ways. Identified with the ‘text’ of our thoughts and feelings, we close our awareness to the whole experiential *context* in which they arise. Restricting awareness of the larger context of our experiencing – not being aware of how much *more* there is to be experienced in and through any thing or person – we also restrict the lived ‘text’ of our own lives and relationships. If the contextual *space* of our awareness is not fully occupied by that text – if we are not wholly *preoccupied* with it – we feel empty and need to fill it with action or emotional drama (whether in ourselves or through television, film and vicarious soap operas).

Herein lies the vicious circle in which individuals and relationships become bound up. For all those things which we have given ourselves no time-space to become aware of in the *moment* cumulatively mount up in *time* – causing us stress, fatigue or dis-ease, bringing us to a point where we must put a damper on or repress them, or impelling us to impulsively act on them or ‘act them out’ in an unaware and emotionally reactive and dramatic way. Not living *meditatively* - not granting ourselves time even to be fully aware of how we experience ourselves, we end up with a world in which neither real life people nor fictional characters *have any time for one another*. Instead their lives are reduced to a series of emotional dramas - interspersed by and compensating for periods of uneventful or impoverished experiencing. They have no time for

themselves or each other because they give themselves no time to *be aware*. Time itself is measured out purely in *quantities*, and so-called ‘quality time’ is seen as something to be ‘created’ only at certain times, rather than as our *birthright* as beings – as a rich inner time-space of awareness that can be opened up at any time, within each and every moment of our lives.

‘Being aware’ means not just attending to the awareness of our thoughts, but also to all the immediate bodily dimensions of our experiencing – to our felt bodily sense of all that is present or going on within and around us. It also means attending to the spaces, inner and outer, within which we experience both ourselves and others, both thoughts and things. For those spaces we can become more aware of are not empty. By attending to the awareness of them we come to the experience of space itself, inner and outer, as something singular - as a singular field or time-space of awareness that is the spacious, inward expanse of the moment.

Space and time...themselves arise from time-space, which is more primordial than they themselves...

Modern man must first and above all find his way back into the full breadth of the space proper to his essence. That essential space of man’s essential being receives the dimension that unites it to something beyond itself...Unless man first establishes himself beforehand in the space proper to his essence and there takes up his dwelling, he will not be capable of anything essential within the destining now holding sway.

Martin Heidegger

Being aware also means dwelling or abiding in awareness in the same way that we abide and dwell in space. Whenever we stop *sensing space*, both within and around us, we contract the space of awareness in which we dwell. Whenever we lose our awareness in thought and action, rather than attending to the awareness of all that we experience in an immediate sensory way around and within us – spaces and objects, colours and shapes, sensed feelings and impulses – we also cease to hold open an expanded time-space *of* awareness. And whenever we allow our attention to just flit from one thought or action, one narrow *focus of awareness* to another, we lose sense of that larger *field of awareness* in which alone we can truly dwell or ‘be’ – and within which we can also come to truly *know* ourselves, each other and the world in a feeling way.

THE NEW YOGA - 'TANTRA' REBORN

Awareness is no 'thing' and no being', but nor is it an empty 'nothing' or state of 'non-being'. It cannot be derived from, reduced to or explained by any thing such as the body or brain. That is because it is the ultimate and absolute field condition for our experience of any body or being, the condition for our experience of any thing or phenomenon, self or world, we are aware of – including the experience of our own self and world, our own body and being. Conversely, every body and being, every thing or phenomenon, *is* an awareness – a unique portion of that absolute and unbounded awareness that is the divine source of all beings and all bodies, all things and phenomena, all selves and all worlds.

What I term 'The New Yoga' is the yoga of *awareness* - understood as the very essence of the divine and of all that is. As such it is also 'tantra reborn' – giving new expression to the truths already recognised in medieval tantric metaphysics and experienced by its adepts: that the divine (*Shiva*) is awareness as such, not any being or divinity 'with' awareness; that awareness is our very self, that Self which alone cannot be turned into an object but is pure subjectivity or awareness as such; and that we dwell *within* awareness as we dwell within space - within the timeless yet all-embracing time-space of the moment.

There is nothing that is not awareness, or that is 'outside' awareness - no domain that is merely mundane or profane. For the divine is that singular but unbounded field or space of awareness embracing all qualitatively distinct experiences that emerge from and within it – including all distinct states, conditions and qualities of awareness, and all phenomena we are or could possibly become aware of - in this or any other dimension of awareness, inner or outer, physical or non-physical.

To be is to be aware. 'To be' is also 'to abide' or 'to dwell'. 'Meditation' in The New Yoga means constantly taking time to *be aware* and therefore to abide or dwell *in awareness* – in the expanded time-space of the moment. The New Yoga, as 'the way of awareness' leads from a new awareness of all that we can experience in the moment to a new experience *of* awareness in its divine spiritual depth and

expansiveness. In particular being aware leads to the experience of *being-in-awareness* – whether alone or with others. Being aware also allows us to identify *with* the divine awareness in which we dwell – rather than with any particular experience of ourselves, other people or the world that we have *within* that awareness. The path of The New Yoga is thus a path that leads from *Being Aware* to *Being-in-Awareness* and to *Being Awareness*.

From a tantric perspective, *Being Awareness* does not mean entering a suprasensuous state of Buddhist *nirvana* in which we cease to be aware *of* anything, even ourselves. On the contrary, it intensifies and enriches our sensuous experience of all there is to be aware of – in particular all those countless sensual shapes and qualities *of* awareness that find expression in our immediate *sensory* experience of the world. For there is nothing we can be aware of – no body or thing, no being or self, that is not itself an awareness. That includes our own body and self and that of others. To experience our own body and self *as* an awareness means experiencing our every bodily movement and psychological mood as *mudra* – as the expression of a movement, mood or mode *of* awareness. To experience our bodies *as* an awareness transforms our body as a whole and our every sensation into a sense organ of our soul – a way of *sensing* and coming to know ourselves, other people and the world. Through *Being Aware*, *Being-in-Awareness* and *Being Awareness*, we come to Be the Awareness that both our Self and Body essentially *are*. We come, in other words, to an experience of our divine *Awareness Self* and *Awareness Body* – that uniquely individualised portion of the divine awareness that knows itself in and through us, that takes shape or *bodies* itself as each of us, and that is also aware of itself as each of us – and aware too of all that each of us is aware of.

Being Aware, *Being-in-Awareness* and *Being Awareness* also allows us to bear with divine ‘grace’ all that we experience or are aware of, feeling it safely held and embraced in the divine space of the awareness that we are. It also allows us to body the awareness that we are in relating to other beings – aware that every other being too, *is* an awareness, a unique embodiment of the divine awareness embraced by the same divine space of awareness. For awareness is not ‘yours’ or ‘mine’, the private property of a body or brain, self or subject, ego or ‘I’, person or divinity. It is our common and divine source as beings, that which we each embody and personify in

our own unique ways. It is the womb in which we eternally dwell, a womb we do not leave at birth and from which we are constantly reborn - now and in the hereafter.

Above all, it is through *Being Aware, Being-in-Awareness and Being Awareness* that we can learn to *be with each other* in awareness, and *to be aware of each other* as the unique awareness that we each *are*. In particular, through the unique methods of The New Yoga we can come to a tangible, sensory experience of another human being as a unique human face and embodiment of the divine. More than that, we can come to behold the divine face and divine body of another human being – the face of their divine Awareness Self and the glory of their divine Awareness Body.

That is why The New Yoga marks a radical departure from both traditional, modern and New Age ‘yoga’ practices, whose focus lies on the physical body alone. The aim of The New Yoga, as *tantra*, is not to learn how to stretch and contort our physical bodies, but rather how to stretch or extend (*tan*) our awareness – to hold open a space of awareness in which we make room for everything of which we are aware, and in which we can both receive and be received by other beings as the unique awareness that we each *are*. The tantric practices of the New Yoga lead to a profoundly sensuous experience of *spiritual intimacy and intercourse* with others – for through the innate powers of the Awareness Self we can learn to merge and meld our Awareness Body with that of others, thus experiencing the unique qualities of their awareness or ‘soul’ in our body, and of our soul in theirs. In this way it offers a new understanding and experience of ‘love’ – not as a feeling, but as a capacity (Shakti) for bodily identification with the soul of another and its qualities of awareness.

The New Yoga is ‘tantra reborn’ because it is both *education* in the fundamental and divine reality of awareness, as recognised in tantric tradition, and *initiation* in the divine spatiality, substantiality, sensuality and sexuality of awareness – the aim of tantric meditational practices. In the true tradition of tantra as opposed to other forms of mysticism, Christian, Buddhist and Vedic, it denies the *illusory* character of the sensory world and sensory experiencing and the ‘suprasensous’ nature of the ‘spiritual’. Instead it both affirms all things sensory and allows them to be experienced as the expression of the innate sensual qualities or ‘flavours’ of awareness (*rasa*) and the divine elixir that is the ‘bliss’ of awareness (*chitananda*).

AWARENESS AND 'EXPERIENCE'

We tend to think of our own 'consciousness' only as awareness *of* something specific. A 'phenomenon' is any such 'thing' we are aware *of* - whether this 'thing' be a thing or thought, object or person, emotion or sensation, intuition or impulse. It is this awareness *of* phenomena that constitutes what we call 'experience'. Therefore we tend to think of ourselves as 'conscious' beings only because we *experience* phenomena - because we are aware of them. But if our consciousness consists only of what we experience or are aware of, what or who are we? What or who is the self or 'I' that is doing the experiencing - the *experiencing self*. In reality, most people are far from knowing that self. What they are aware of instead is their own *experienced self* - the self they experience themselves to be at any given time. This is because the experienced self is also *an* experiencing self - for it is through its eyes that we experience the world and other people. Yet, it cannot be *the* experiencing self, for though an experienced self can also be an experiencing self, it does not work the other way round. The true essence of our *experiencing self* is that it cannot also be an *experienced self* - something we consciously experience like anything else. For it is only through the experiencing self that we can experience anything like a 'self' at all. But what then is the true nature of the experiencing self if it is not our experienced self? The answer provided by the teachings of *tantra* is that the experiencing self is *awareness as such*. It is therefore only through our *awareness* of experiencing - including the way we experience ourselves - that we experience our true self, the experiencing self that *is* awareness. The *awareness of experiencing* leads to a new experience of awareness itself as our true self. The way in which awareness of experience provides a reflection of our experiencing self or awareness-self was termed *vimarsha* in the teachings of *tantra*. The yoga of awareness is therefore *vimarsha yoga*.

Each of us experiences ourselves in a unique way. Some people experience themselves in more or less the same way all the time. Others experience themselves in quite different ways - having a different experience of themselves at different times, in different places and situations, and with different people. Everything we experience in ourselves and in our world can affect our self-experience - our sense of who we

are. Conversely, the way we experience ourselves shapes the way we experience the world and other people. But not everyone has the capacity to allow what they experience – what or how they feel for example – to alter their *self-experience*, their basic sense of *who* they are. What happens to them, whatever they experience, they remain *identified* with a particular experience of themselves.

Both our self-experience and our experience of the world and other people may be positive or negative. Most forms of self-help and psychotherapy aim to remove negative elements of a person's experience, for example the experience of suffering or lack of self-worth, and replace them with positive ones such as pleasure and self-esteem. The yoga of awareness offers a different understanding of negative experiencing and a different approach to it. It does not seek to overcome suffering by replacing negative with positive experiences. Instead it understands all suffering as something that arises from being *identified* with any element of our experience – positive or negative. In particular it arises from being identified with specific ways of experiencing ourselves – for it is our *self-experience* that shapes both our experience of the world and other people and our relationship to them.

One way people seek to escape from or overcome negative experiencing of themselves, other people or the world is to think about that negative experience or explore their feelings about it. But thinking and feeling alone does not break our identification with a particular way of experiencing ourselves. For the thoughts and feelings we have *about* our experienced reality are in fact part of that reality – they too are something we experience. Modern cognitive psychologists recognise that thoughts we have about our experience also shape our experience. They see the vicious circle whereby the negative thoughts arising from what we experience not only *reflect* but also actively *reinforce* negative aspects of our experience and intensify negative feelings connected with it. Their way out of this circle is to get people to distinguish negative thoughts they may have *about* their experienced reality from that reality – thus making room for different mental interpretations and emotional responses to their experience. Many people find such 'cognitive' therapy difficult, because it seems to deny or dismiss the sheer *intensity* of their own negative feelings and experiences, one which necessarily finds expression in negative thoughts even if those thoughts are not helpful. But hidden behind the relatively simplistic

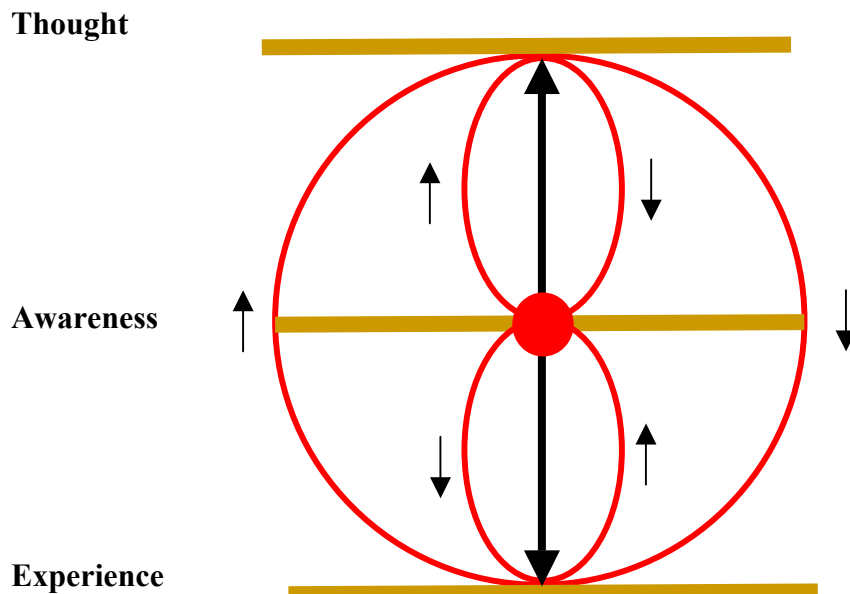
principles and methods of modern cognitive psychology however is a far deeper and more sophisticated yogic understanding of life that goes back centuries – indeed millennia. This is the understanding that to think, feel or experience something – anything - is one thing. But to be *aware of* having a particular thought, feeling or experience is another. Together with this went the understanding that thoughts and feelings we have *about* our experience form *part* of our self-experience. If we identify with these thoughts and feelings therefore, we reinforce our identification with our experience.

Practicing the yoga of awareness means sustaining our awareness of all that we are experiencing, including our experienced self. Awareness of experiencing is what allows us to actively *identify* with, deepen and intensify our experience rather than *being identified* with it. To be ‘unconscious’ of something is the very same thing as to *be identified with* it. The Self that can consciously *identify* with an element of its experience is not the self that is (‘unconsciously’) *identified* with it. It is a Self that must by definition be distinct from all its own *identifications* and from every aspect of its own *experience*. That Self *is* awareness.

Vimarsha - awareness of experiencing - turns experience and the experienced self into a mirror or ‘reflection’ of awareness and of the experiencing Self. The reflection *of* awareness in our bodily experiencing however, is not the same thing as mental reflection *on* experience – thinking *about* it.

Western psychology still operates within the confines of a philosophy that defines ‘knowledge’ as a result of mental intellectual reflection *on* our immediate bodily and sensory experiencing. It knows only two things – ‘experience’ and ‘reflection’, ‘body’ and ‘mind’. It does not understand that all mental reflections *on* our bodily experience form *part* of our bodily experience. True knowledge only comes through awareness of *both* our immediate experiencing *and* the mental thoughts or reflections we have about it. It is not from experience but only from awareness of experiencing that truly deep thinking and knowledge arise – not as reflection *on experience* but as a reflection of that boundless field of *awareness* (SHIVA) in which all experienced phenomena and all experiential worlds (SHAKTIS) arise.

THE MARK OF LORD SHIVA



Freedom from suffering cannot come about through exploring our own thoughts and emotions - or any elements of our experience, negative or positive. It can only come about through *awareness* of all that we are experiencing at any given time. The diagram above explains one of the basic esoteric symbols or *yantras* of **The New Yoga**, understood as a *yoga of awareness*. This logo is also the traditional sign or mark of the tantric concept of divinity personified by Lord Shiva (*Maheshvara*). Here the three golden bars represent the domains of Thought, Awareness and Experience respectively. The upward- and downward-pointing arrows beside the large circle represent the ‘vicious circle’ whereby the thoughts we have not only serve to *reflect* the way we experience ourselves, the world and other people, but actively *reinforce* that experience.

The figure eight or ‘lemniscate’ in the circle represents something quite different. This is the way in which we can become *aware* of both our experience *and* our thoughts about it, rather than getting stuck in *identification* – either with our thoughts or with the experiences they ‘reflect’. The downward- and upward- pointing arrows in the *lower* part of the lemniscate indicate the way in which our awareness of what we are experiencing can, by itself, alter the whole character of our experience, freeing us

from identification with it. The upward-pointing arrow in the *upper* part of the lemniscate represents our awareness of the thoughts that accompany our experience. It also represents the way in which our awareness, having altered the character of our experience, can in turn generate new thoughts about it. The downward-pointing arrow indicates the way in which our own thoughts, experienced in the form of mental words and word patterns, work our awareness into particular patterns of experience, thus shaping our experience. The central gold line and the arrows leading from its centre represent sustained awareness of both our experience *and* our thoughts about it. The space *within* the circle represents our entire field of awareness – a field which embraces *all* elements of our inner and outer experience, including our thoughts. The red dot or *bindu* at the centre of the circle represents the spiritual ‘heart’ of this field of awareness (*hridaya*). This is the you that is not *identified* with any element of your *experience*. The you that is simply *awareness*.

The foundation of tantric philosophy is the recognition that *awareness* is the ultimate reality, and not any phenomena - whether things or thoughts, sensations or perceptions, feelings or emotions - that we may be aware of. In the metaphysics of **The New Yoga**, awareness is understood as having its own innate substantiality and spatiality, its own innate sensual qualities and characteristics, its own innate patterns and bodily shapes. Awareness (*akula*) forms itself into those individualised units of consciousness (*kula*) that we call beings. It is only from the outside that these bounded units of consciousness appear as physical bodies – whether human bodies or the seemingly ‘insentient’ bodies that we perceive as physical objects.

Awareness, as the ultimate reality, also forms itself into those mental patterns or ‘thought forms’, which shape our experience of the world and of every body in it. Our thoughts take the form of mental words spoken inwardly or aloud. But our awareness of thought is not itself a thought – it is something essentially wordless and thought-free. Thoughts themselves take shape *in* our awareness as mental words and verbal concepts (*vikalpa*). But they do so from within a field of awareness that is essentially wordless and thought-free (*nirvikalpa*). Having arisen as mental words however, thoughts work our awareness into patterns of worldly experiencing. All that we *experience* in this world therefore, is already a patterned interpretation of underlying qualities of awareness or soul. In a word therefore - *wording is worlding*. The wording

or verbal patterning of our thoughts is what shapes or *works* our awareness into patterns of experiencing and action. Therefore it is only through *awareness* of our thoughts as mental words and word patterns that we can prevent these words and word patterns from working our awareness into unhelpful or limiting patterns of experience and action.

Simply to think a thought to ourselves in the form of the word pattern “I am angry” is to work our awareness into a particular pattern of experience and action. For one thing the wording “I *am* angry” says “I currently *identify* with ‘being angry’.” Then again, the very word ‘angry’ is an *emotional interpretation* of a particular mood or quality of awareness. Just as calling something ‘red’ ignores the unique tone of its redness, so does calling oneself or another person ‘angry’ ignore the unique tonality of awareness that we or they are experiencing. Every ‘emotion’ we experience is an *experiential interpretation* of a quality of awareness – one shaped or reinforced by the very words we use to name it. ‘Anger’ is not just the name of some pre-existing thing in the form of an emotion. It is an emotional patterning of experience that goes together with the impulse to engage in a particular pattern of action (‘getting angry’). In saying to ourselves or others that “I am angry” we do not merely name an emotion - we identify with or reinforce a particular emotional pattern of both experience and action. *We anger*, just as we *sadden* or *happy*. Emotional nouns and adjectives are also *verbs*. Another word for a mental wording and patterning of our awareness is *mantra*. Mind *is* ‘mantra’, but not necessarily in the *root* sense of this word, which means a word which guards or protects, saves or liberates (*tra*) our awareness from over-activity of mind (*mana*). To know our mind as ‘mantra’ *in this sense* means guarding our awareness of mental wordings and their power to pattern both our experience and behaviour. Thus instead of thinking “I am angry” - thereby identifying with this ‘anger’ and acting it out - we remain wordlessly aware of *having the thought* that “I am angry”. *Reflecting on feelings in thought* and/or *reactively expressing feelings in words* are the most common ways in which people avoid having to fully *experience feelings with awareness*. Our *awareness* of a thought *is not* a thought, but is something *thought-free*. Similarly, our awareness of an emotion is not charged with emotion but is *emotion-free*. Awareness is thus the very essence of freedom - *moksha*.

AWARENESS AND 'ENERGY'

Modern science recognises only a universe of matter, light and other forms of energy. Whilst referring to all sorts of 'subtle' energies, New Age spiritual philosophies parody the modern scientific world outlook by accepting the dogma that ultimately 'everything is energy'. In contrast, tantric metaphysics affirms the fundamental reality of *awareness*. The spiritual metaphysics of Kashmir Shaivism in particular was a unique and profound expression of the true scientific *relation* between awareness (SHIVA) and energy (SHAKTI), these being understood as distinct but inseparable aspects of a singular dynamic relation. In The New Yoga this profound metaphysical relation is articulated in the form of a dual scientific principle.

1. Awareness is the *inwardness* of energy.
2. Matter is the *outwardness* of energy.

Most people have had the experience of an insight or heightened state of *awareness* making them feel more 'vital' or 'energised' - or alternatively feeling their energy drained by an excess of sensory or emotional *experiencing*. Even the sensory 'overkill' of the sights and sounds experienced in a supermarket is energy draining - so completely absorbing our awareness that energy ceases to be released *from* that awareness. This reflects a second dual scientific principle of The New Yoga:

1. Awareness *releases* energy.
2. Experiencing *absorbs* awareness.

To maintain our energy we need to sustain a state of *aware experiencing*. Only in this way can we prevent our awareness being so *absorbed* in our experience that it ceases to *release* new energy from a state of potentiality. Similarly, to 'recover' our energy requires that we re-establish a state of aware experiencing. This means either *expanding our awareness* to fully embrace all that we are or have been experiencing (the function of meditation and dreaming), or *restricting our experiencing* so that it can be fully embraced in our awareness (the function of meditation, rest and sleep). True *awakeness* however, is a state of *awareness* that can not only embrace all that we are experiencing but constantly and creatively release *fresh* energy and experiences.

AWARENESS, SELF AND BODY

Every possible experience we can have of ourselves and of reality as such is limited and partial – and therefore potentially limiting. Every dimension of our experience implies the possibility of other dimensions. Every experiential world implies the existence of other such worlds. Every experienced self implies the existence of other selves we could experience. Any experienced self is always a partial self – a self that constitutes just one part of our whole self or soul. The whole self or soul is not any experienced self – it is a *field of awareness* that embraces countless possible ways of experiencing ourselves, countless possible ways of experiencing others and countless possible experiential worlds. Only when we cease to *be identified* with any particular and partial experience of ourselves do we realise our true self, our whole self or soul.

Such ‘self-realisation’ can only come about through *bodily awareness*. For along with every partial experience of ourselves and of reality goes a partial experience of our own bodies. Thus the more we think the more our awareness tends to become concentrated in just one part of our body – our heads. The more anxious or emotional we are the more our awareness concentrates itself in our chest region, affecting our breathing. The key to maintaining awareness of our self as a whole is

1. to attend to our *bodily* awareness of whatever we are experiencing – to where and how we experience it in our bodies.
2. to sustain awareness of our *body as a whole* whatever we are experiencing and wherever we are experiencing it in our body.

Only through sustaining awareness of our *body as a whole* can we sustain awareness of our *self as a whole* – our whole self or soul. Whole-body awareness is what allows us to achieve true *self-realisation* rather than *losing ourselves* in whatever we might be experiencing at any given time - becoming identified with our experienced self and our experienced world. For awareness alone is our whole self or soul, distinct from every partial self we might experience. Whole-body awareness is also the key to maintaining awareness *as such* – to distinguishing whatever we might be experiencing from our *awareness* of experiencing it. The New Yoga is ‘tantra’ reborn. One meaning of *tantra* is that it is a form of yoga based on direct bodily knowing and

awareness (*dehavidya*). For every way of experiencing our *self* goes together with a particular way of experiencing our *body*. Through whole-body awareness we come to experience our body itself in an entirely new way. Through sustained *awareness* of our *experienced* body and self as a whole we arrive at a fundamentally *different* experience of both body and self. We experience both body and self as an unbounded *field of awareness* and not as any particular body or self experienced *in* that field. The body we begin to experience is a body of awareness unbounded by the flesh – it is an *awareness body*. The self we begin to experience is not any part of ourselves we might be *aware of*. It is awareness *as such*. This experience of self as awareness was personified in the tantric tradition by *Lord Shiva*. In this tradition, *Shiva* is our own divine ‘self’ or ‘I’ and that of all other beings - a self that does not ‘have’ consciousness or awareness but *is* awareness. This divine self does not ‘have’ a body but embraces *all bodies* in its awareness field. Just as our own awareness embraces not only our own bodies but the bodies of other people around us so does the divine awareness field that is *Shiva* embrace every body in the entire universe. It was in this sense that the entire universe was understood as the divine body (*divyadeha*) of Shiva.

PRACTICING THE YOGA OF AWARENESS

Stepping back from our lived experience into awareness of experiencing is by no means the same as intellectually distancing ourselves from or repressing our experience. On the contrary, this step back is the stepping stone that leads us to a new and deeper experience of the self and body as an awareness field free of all limiting experiences of ourselves and our bodies. Practicing the yoga of awareness however, requires that we go through the following ten steps of mentally *rewording* our mental, emotional or somatic experience in such a way as to achieve the step back from experiencing to awareness.

MACROMEDITATION

10 Steps from Experiencing to Awareness

1.

I am my experience of THIS
(...this sensation or emotion, thing or thought,
place or person, event or situation etc.)

2.

I AM AWARE OF experiencing This.

3.

I AM NOT MY EXPERIENCE of This.

4.

I am THE AWARENESS of experiencing This.

5.

**In experiencing This, I am also aware of
experiencing MYSELF in a particular way.**

6.

**In experiencing This, I am also aware of
experiencing MY BODY in a particular way.**

7.

I am not this EXPERIENCE of my Body and Self.

8.

**I am THE AWARENESS of experiencing
my body and self in this way.**

9.

I am not THIS EXPERIENCE.

10.

I am THIS AWARENESS.

MICROMEDITATIONS 1

- Be aware of how you inwardly feel and experience different regions and parts of your body – head and eyes, neck and chest, belly and bottom, legs and feet.
- Be aware of the way you feel and experience your body as a whole.
- Be the awareness of your body as a whole and how you experience it.

- Be aware of something outside you in space.
- Be aware of your body as a whole as something in space.
- Be the awareness of the space between and around your body and the object.

- Be aware of something outside you in space.
- Be aware of your body as a whole as something in space.
- Be the awareness of both your body and the thing outside, and sense them both as embraced by a common space of awareness.

- Be aware of a person, and attend to the look on their face and in their *eyes*.
- Be aware of your own body, feeling your own face and eyes.
- Being aware of *both* the other person's eyes *and* your own, intend *your awareness of the look in their eyes to communicate through your eyes*.

- Be aware of any thing in your experience, inner or outer – whether an object, or person, thought or thing, feeling or emotion, sensation or impulse.
- Be aware of your immediate bodily and sensuous experience of that thing.
- Be the awareness of your immediate bodily experiencing of that thing.

- Be aware of all you are experiencing right now, inwardly and outwardly.
- Be aware of your overall experience of yourself right now.
- Be the awareness of all your experience, including your experience of self.

- Be aware of a thought or stream of thoughts in the inner space of your head.
- Be aware of all the sensed spaces within and around your body as a whole.
- Be the awareness that *is* those spaces, and sense them as a singular space of awareness.

- Be aware of a particular feeling or emotion that you are experiencing in a part of your body.
- Be aware of the space of awareness in which you experience that feeling or emotion.
- Be the awareness of that space and sense it as a space of awareness.

- Be aware of any localised sensation, pleasurable or painful in a part of your body.
- Be aware of your body as a whole, and its sensed inner spaces.
- Be the awareness that *is* the space within which you experience that sensation, pain or pleasure.

MICROMEDITATIONS 2

Take time to:

Be aware of your eyes.
Be aware of your nose, mouth and jaw.
Be aware of your face as a whole.

Be aware of your face and eyes.
Be aware of the top, back and sides of your head.
Be aware of your head as a whole.

Be aware of your head as a whole.
Be aware of breathing through your nose.
Be aware of the inner space of your head.

Be aware of the surface of your chest.
Be aware of your chest expanding and contracting as you breathe.
Be aware of the inner space of your chest.

Be aware of your head, chest and upper body as a whole.
Be aware of your feet, legs and whole lower body below the waist.
Be aware of your abdomen and breathe with it.

Be aware of the surface of your lower abdomen.
Be aware of your abdomen expanding and contracting like a balloon as you breathe.
Be aware of the inner space of your abdomen.

Be aware of any part of your body.
Be aware of another part of your body at the same time.
Be aware of your body as a whole.

Be aware of a single sensory quality of an object such as its shape, colour or texture.
Be aware of another sensory quality of that same object.
Be aware of the object as a whole.

Be aware of an object you can see.
Be aware of another object you can see without shifting your gaze.
Be aware of the common space in which both objects stand.

Be aware of an object you see.
Be aware of the eyes through which you see the object.
Be aware at the same time of the object you see and the eyes through which you see it.

Be aware of the space around your body.
Be aware of the sensed inner space of your body.
Be aware of both outer and inner spaces.

Be aware of an object you see.
Be aware of the object and of the eyes through which you see it.
Be aware of the object seen, the seeing of it, and the eyes through which you see it.

Be aware of the surface of a wall.
Be aware of your chest surface.
Be aware of both at the same time.

Be aware of the surface of a wall.
Be aware of the surface of your chest.
Be aware of the space between those surfaces.

Be aware of an object.
Be aware of the space around that object.
Be aware of the space around your body.

Be aware of an object.
Be aware of your body.
Be aware of the space between your body and the object.

Be aware of the space surrounding an object.
Be aware of the space surrounding your body.
Be aware of the space around your body and the object as one space.

Be aware of something you sense in the space around your body such as an object.
Be aware of something you sense in the inner space of your body such as a feeling.
Be aware of the outer and inner spaces as one space.

Be aware of everything there is to be aware of around you, without focussing on any one thing.
Be aware of everything there is to be aware of within you, without focussing on any one thing.
Be aware of every thought or feeling you have about the things you are aware of, without focussing on those thoughts or feelings.

Be aware of anything more there is to be aware of outside you.
Be aware of anything more there is to be aware inside you.
Be aware of any further thoughts you have about the things you are aware of, without focussing on the things you are thinking about.

Be aware of the felt boundary between your insideness and outsideness, the sensed spaces within and around you.
Be aware of how open or closed, porous or impermeable that boundary feels.
Be aware of whether your overall sense of self comes more from the spaces within or around your body.

Be aware of any thought you have about some thing you sense within or around you.
Be aware of the thought *as* a thought, without focussing on the thing you are thinking about.
Be aware of the thing and of the thought as two quite distinct and separate things.

MICROMEDITATIONS 3

Be aware of any object or sensory quality.
Be aware of any part of your body.
Be *the awareness* of both.

Be aware of an object as a whole.
Be aware of your body as a whole.
Be *the awareness* of your body and the object.

Be aware of an object you see.
Be aware of the eyes through which you see it.
Be *the awareness* of seeing the object through your eyes.

Be aware of the space around an object.
Be aware of the space around your body.
Be *the awareness* of the common space around your body and the object.

Be aware of the space around both your body and an object.
Be *the awareness* of that space.
Be the awareness that *is* that space, sensing it as a space *of* awareness.

Be aware of the space around you.
Be aware of anything you sense in that space.
Be the awareness that *is* that space, sensing it as a space *of* awareness.

Be aware of the sensed inner space of your body – of head, chest or abdomen.
Be aware of anything you sense in that space – whether thought, feeling or impulse.
Be *the awareness* that *is* that space, sensing it as a space *of* awareness.

Be aware of the sensed spaces around and inside your body.
Be aware of those spaces as part of one singular space.
Be *the awareness* that *is* that singular space.

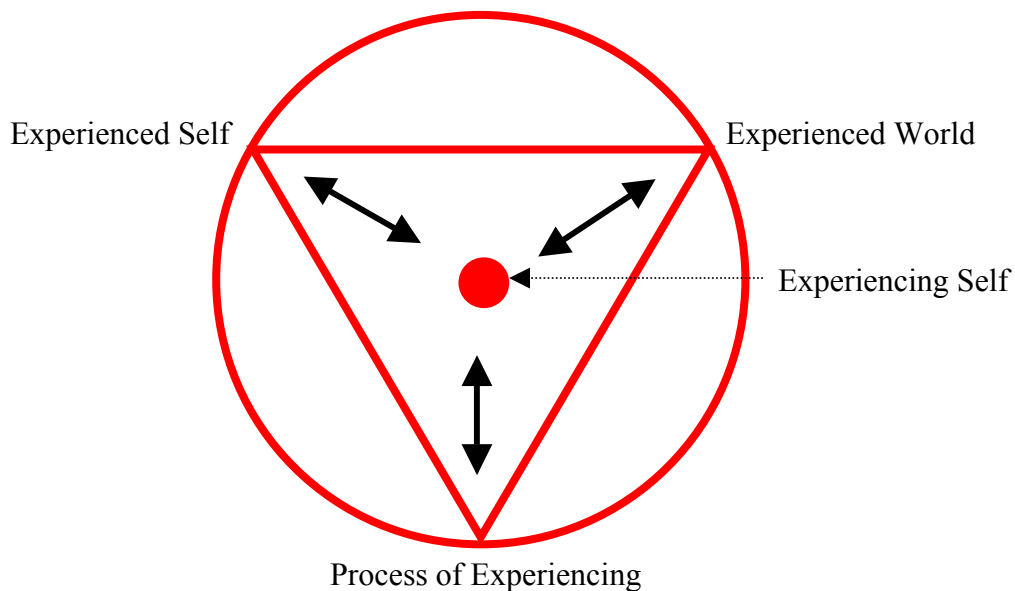
Be aware of anything you sense in the space around you.
Be aware of anything you sense in the space within you.
Be the awareness that *is* the space in which you sense things within and around you

Be aware of any thoughts that arise about something within or around you.
Be *the awareness* of those thoughts, without focussing on the thing you are thinking about.
Be the awareness of the thing, without focussing on the thoughts that arise about it.

Be aware of the space in which you sense some thing within or around you.
Be aware of the space in which thoughts arise about that thing.
Be the awareness that *is* that space – the awareness within which you sense things and within which thoughts arise about them.

THE YANTRA OF SHAKTI

In tantric metaphysics, *Shakti* denotes the feminine aspect of divinity inseparable from *Shiva*. The term *Shakti* derives from the root *shak* – meaning ‘capacity’ or ‘power’. *Shakti* is the capacity or power of awareness to reflect and find itself reflected in experience, just as light is reflected in a mirror. The esoteric symbol or *yantra* of *Shakti* is the triad or trinity (*trika*) represented in the form of an inverted triangle. This reflects the threefold dimensions of experience – our experienced self, our experienced world and the process of experiencing.



Here again, the space within the circle represents the field of *awareness* within which all experiencing occurs, the red dot or *bindu* at the centre of this field being the *experiencing self* - the ‘heart’ or *hrdaya* from which the *experiencing self* is both emanated (*visarga*) and reflected (*vimarsha*) in its experience of self, other and world. The entire threefold realm of experience belongs to the realm of *Shakti*. Only the pure *awareness* of experiencing belongs to the realm of *Shiva*. The continuous coupling or ‘intercourse’ of awareness and experience that is *Shiva-Shakti* was seen in the *tantras* as the divine ‘couple’ (*yamala*). The relation of *Shiva* and *Shakti* is a dynamic one in which *awareness of experience* leads to a new, sublime and divine *experience of awareness*. Paradoxically however, it is only through *awareness* of even such ‘divine’ or ‘spiritual’ experiences that the latter can be effectively sustained.

THE GUIDING WORDS

The key to the *whole* of **The New Yoga** lies in the following guiding words:

from a new awareness of experiencing to a new experience of awareness

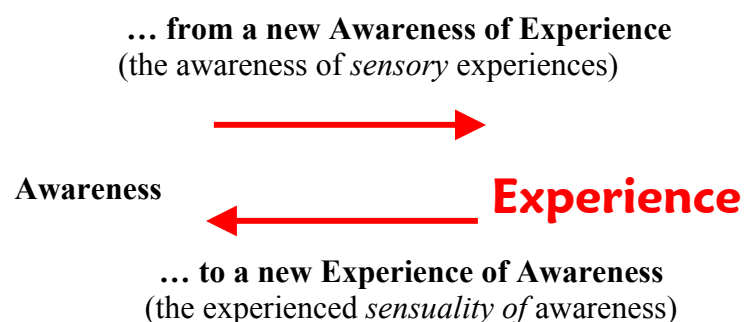
Aware experiencing is the key to an entirely new understanding and *experience of awareness* as such - one in which we no longer think of it as a blank sheet or screen but rather feel it as something imbued with its own *innate sensual qualities* of spatiality and substantiality, shape and colour, texture and tone. Our awareness of *spatial experiencing*, for example, can lead to a new experience of the inner and outer spatiality of awareness itself. Thus the guiding words here are:

from awareness of spatiality to the spatiality of awareness.

Similarly, our awareness of experienced light and colour can lead to a new experience of awareness as something with its own felt radiance and its own mood colours. Here the guiding words are:

from awareness of light to the light of awareness – in all its colours

Each and all of the diverse yogas that make up **The New Yoga** are based on guiding words of this sort - so-called chiasms or ‘interweavings’ – the root meaning of ‘tantra’ through which the relation of two key terms (for example *awareness* and *light*) can be both conceived *and* experienced as a double relation through the genitive ‘of’ – for example the *awareness of light/the light of awareness*). Above all, it is through attending to our awareness of the *sensory* dimensions of our experience that The New Yoga can lead us to a new and deeply *sensual* experience of awareness itself.



LESSON 1 - SUMMARY

Guiding words:

...from awareness of experiencing to a new experience of awareness.

Letting thoughts arise in one's awareness, without identifying with them.

Resting in wordless awareness of one's immediate bodily and sensory experiencing.

Questions to ask oneself:

Was I *aware* of that experienced thought or feeling before I expressed it or did I automatically identify with and react from it?

Were my words an expression of awareness, or of *identification* with my experience?

Summary of Principles:

Awareness finds *expression* in experience. It can also *lose* itself in experience - *binding* us to limiting experiences of ourselves, other people and the world.

Awareness of experiencing (including our experienced self) is freedom - *freeing* us from all limiting ways of experiencing ourselves, other people and the world.

Awareness of our direct *bodily* experience of different mental-emotional states allows us to embody those states of being instead of reacting from them emotionally or mentally repressing them.

Awareness of experiencing is what allows us to actively *identify* with, deepen and intensify our bodily self-experience rather than *being identified* with it.

'Unconsciousness' is *being identified* with a particular bodily experience of self. The Self that can actively and consciously *identify* with its bodily experiencing is not passively or 'unconsciously' *identified* with a particular bodily identity.

That Self can choose to actively identify with and embody a whole range of selves.

That Self *is* Awareness. It is not any experienced self but the *experiencing self*.

Mantra:

Not "I experience this" but "I am *aware* of experiencing this."

Not "I experience this" but "It (awareness) experiences this in me."

THE GRAND MANTRAM OF AWARENESS

I am *aware* of ‘this’ here (me here, this self, my body, my sensations, feelings, thoughts etc.).

I am *aware* of ‘that’ there (that person or thing over there, its body, sensory appearance, colour, shape etc.).

I am not just ‘this’ (this me here as this self and body etc.).

I am also ‘that’ (that person or thing, other self and body that is ‘not me’).

What I most truly am is *the awareness* of both this *and* that (of me and you, of self and other, of my body and other bodies, of what I sense within me and the things I perceive around me).

The awareness that I am does not belong to me. I am it because I belong to it, because I am a part of it. It is what is constantly selving, bodying, sensing, feeling and thinking itself both *as* ‘me’ and as all that is ‘not-me’.

I am aware of me as this awareness ‘me-ing’ itself.

I am aware of you as this awareness ‘you-ing’ itself.

I am aware of every person as this awareness personifying itself.

I am aware of every thing as this awareness thinging itself.

I am aware of every thought as this awareness thinking itself.

I am aware that everything I am aware of *is* an awareness, a shape of the very same awareness that I *am*.

I am *the awareness* which is me-ing itself as just this me I am aware of.

I am *the awareness* which is you-ing itself as just this you I am aware of.

I am the awareness which is just *this* me, just *this* you, *this* room, *this* thing, this colour, shape or sound – that is just *this* ‘that’.

I am that awareness which is thinging itself as every thing I am aware of - making room for itself as just *this* room, *chairing* itself as just *this* chair, walling itself as just these walls of just this room, shaping itself as just this squareness or roundness of just that object in this room.

I am the awareness which is also roading, housing, treeing or skying itself as just that road or house, tree or sky out there, that is bricking itself as just that brick of just that house, that is greening itself as just that green of just that leaf of just that tree, that is skying itself as just that sky I can see from this window, clouding itself as just that cloud in that sky, bluing itself as just that blue of just that sky, starring itself as just that one star.

I am the awareness which is giving faces to itself as just this face of mine or yours, his or hers at just this moment, which eyes me through your eyes as it eyes you through mine, with just that look in just this moment.

We are each the pure awareness of a me and a you, a this and a that, a here and a there, that is ‘Shiva’.

We are also the constant sensuous *presencing* of that awareness that is its power or ‘Shakti’ – its me-ing and you-ing, its facing and eyeing, rooming and roading, treeing and leafing, greening and bluing, skying and starring. Awareness forever stars itself as the stars that we all are, in both its nighting and daying, its darkening and lightening, its clouding and clearing, its storming and flooding, its quaking and trembling, its earthly gracing and divine heavening.

LESSON 1 – KARIKA

God is awareness.

My self is awareness.

My body too is awareness.

Awareness and experience are distinct.

My awareness of a thought is not that thought.

My awareness of any experience is not that experience.

Thoughts arise as words from wordless, thought-free awareness.

The wording of thought works awareness into patterns of experiencing.

Awareness embraces and transcends all experienced realities.

Awareness is freedom from all limiting experience.

The experiencing self is not the experienced self.

The experiencing self is awareness as such.

Awareness is God.

LESSON 1 - GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT TERMS

BINDU/VINDU – the ‘black-white hole’ or ‘singularity’ of awareness at the centre of all things, and linking all things.

CHITI – awareness. **CHITANANDA** – the essential quality of divine bliss (**ANANDA**) associated with awareness (**CHITI**).

DEHAVIDYA – bodily and embodied awareness and knowing.

VIDYADEHA – the ‘divine body’, understood as a divine awareness of all bodies and a divine ‘awareness body’.

HRDAYA – the human being’s centre of awareness understood as a ‘heart’ linking it to divine awareness.

KARIKA – metaphysical verse(s).

KAULA – a *tantric* tradition based on the dynamic relation of **KULA** and **AKULA**

AKULA – the field of awareness which surrounds and embraces any group or **KULA** of bounded units of awareness – a group of embodied beings.

MANTRA – from the roots *tra* (to guard or liberate) and *mana* (mind). Any sound, syllable, word or phrase that guards or liberates awareness from mental activity.

MOKSHA/MUKTI – the *freedom* that comes from identifying with the divine awareness field through aware experiencing.

SHIVA/MASHESHVARA – the ultimate or absolute reality of the divine reality understood as an unbounded field of free awareness (**AKULA**).

SHAKTI – the *group* or totality (**KULA**) of experienced selves and bodies, worlds and phenomena that emerge as the embodied universe in the divine awareness field.

TANTRA – the divine ‘loom’ of awareness and experience, **SHIVA** and **SHAKTI** that interweaves all things and constitutes the very fabric of reality.

TANTRAS – metaphysical treatises or ‘weavings’ expounding on **TANTRA**.

TRIKA – the triadic or trinitarian dimensions of tantric metaphysics.

VIKALPA – thought in the form of verbal constructs or wordings.

NIRVIKALPA – the wordless, thought-free awareness in which all thoughts arise.

VISARGA – the expression, emanation or ‘emission’ of awareness in experience.

VIMARSHA – awareness of experiencing - and of the experiencing self as distinct from the experienced self. The reflection and reabsorption of experiencing (**SHAKTI**) in the experiencing self - the self that *is* nothing but awareness as such (**SHIVA**).

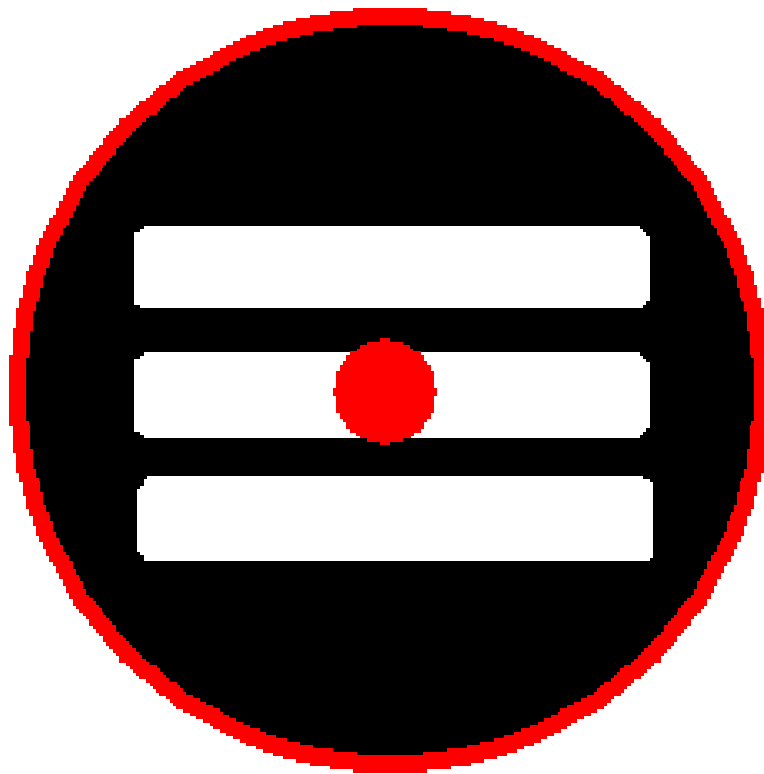
YAMALA – the divine couple that is **SHIVA-SHAKTI**.

YANTRA – an esoteric sign or symbol of **TANTRA**.

YOGA – any means of yoking oneself to divine awareness.

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MANUAL OF THE NEW YOGA



LESSON 2:

THE NEW YOGA OF SPACE

(AKASHA YOGA)

**...from awareness of space to
a new spatiality of awareness**

However vast outer space may be, yet with all its sidereal distances it hardly bears comparison with the dimensions, *with the depth dimension of our inner being*, which does not even need the spaciousness of the universe to be within itself almost unfathomable...To me it seems more and more as though our customary consciousness lives on the tip of a pyramid whose base within us (and in a certain way beneath us) widens out so fully that the farther we find ourselves able to descend into it, the more generally we appear to be merged into those things that, independent of time and space, are given in our earthly, in the widest sense, worldly existence.

Rainer Maria Rilke

The truth is that the human being is not by any means confined within his skin...One of the worst forms of Maya is the belief that man remains firmly within his skin. He does not; in reality he is within the things he sees.

In reality you extend over the horizon your survey.

Rudolf Steiner

Modern man must first and above all find his way back into the full breadth of the space proper to his essence.

When I direct someone towards a windowsill with a gesture of my right hand, my bodily existence as a human being does not end at the tip of my index finger. While perceiving the windowsill...I extend myself bodily far beyond this fingertip to that windowsill. In fact, bodily I reach out even further than this to touch all the phenomena, present or merely visualised, represented ones.

When I go toward the door of the lecture hall, I am already there, and I could not go to it at all if I were not such that I am there. I am never here only, as this encapsulated body; rather, I am there, that is, I already pervade the room, and only thus can I go through it.

....the human being is spatial in the sense of *making room*.

A space is something that has been made room for, something that is cleared and free, namely within a boundary...A boundary is not that at which something stops, but as the Greeks recognised, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing....Space is in essence that which *lets into its bounds*.

Martin Heidegger

FROM THE UPANISHADS AND TANTRAS

Verily, what is called *brahman* – that is the same as what the space outside a person is. Verily, what the space outside a person is, that is the same as what the space within a person is – that is the same as what the space here within the heart is. That is the fullness, the quiescent.

Chandogya Upanishad

As the mighty air which pervades everything, ever abides in space, know that in the same way all beings abide in Me.

Bhagavad Gita

Meditate on space as omnipresent and free of all limitations.
Think ‘I am not my own body. I exist everywhere’.
Meditate on one’s own body as the universe and as having the nature of awareness.
Meditate on the skin as being like an outer wall with nothing within it.
Meditate on the void in one’s body extending in all directions simultaneously.
Meditate on one’s own self as a vast unlimited expanse.
Meditate on a bottomless well or as standing in a very high place.
Meditate on the void above and the void below.
Meditate on the bodily elements as pervaded with voidness.
Contemplate that the same awareness exists in all bodies.
Whether outside or inside *Shiva* [pure awareness] is omnipresent.

The yogi should contemplate the entirety of open space (or sky) as the essence of *Bhairava* (*Shiva*)...

One should, setting aside identification with one’s own body, contemplate that the same awareness is present in other bodies than one’s own.

He whose awareness together with the other senses is merged in the space of the heart, who has entered into the two bowls of the heart lotus[diaphragm], who has excluded everything else from consciousness, acquires the highest fortune, oh beautiful one.

Vijananabhairavatantra

...the power of space (*akasha-shakti*) is inherent in the soul as true subjectivity, which is at once empty of objects and which also provides a place in which objects may be known.

Abhinavagupta (Tantraloka)

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INTRODUCTION

The way we experience *ourselves* goes together with the way we experience our *bodies*. We tend to experience ourselves as bodies ‘in’ space, surrounded by other such bodies ‘in’ space and separated from them ‘by’ that space. Together with this experience of ourselves and of our bodies goes a particular concept and experience of *space* as such. We conceive of space as a fundamental feature of the physical universe rather than as the most fundamental dimension of *awareness* – its ‘field’ dimension. We forget that all we experience, inwardly and outwardly, is something we experience in a field or ‘space’ of awareness. All experiencing occurs within a *spatial field* of awareness. Conversely, awareness as such *is* the space or field of experiencing (*kshetra*) within which we experience all that we experience.

If we are *identified* with ourselves as bodies ‘in’ space however, we no longer experience or *identify* with the field-spaces or spatial fields of awareness within and around us. We do not identify with the ‘inner space’ within which we experience our own thoughts, emotions and bodily sensations – instead we identify with those thoughts, emotions or sensations. Nor do we identify with the ‘outer space’ in which we experience our own bodies and those of all other objects and people around us – conceiving this only as an empty physical space and not as the very space of our *awareness* of the world around us.

Whenever our awareness becomes too focused on anything we experience *in* space it loses its own innate and fundamental *spaciousness*. We cease to *experience* our own spatial *fields* of awareness, outer and inner, and instead simply become *focused* on things we experience *within* those fields. Indeed we identify ‘consciousness’ itself with *focal awareness* (awareness focused on some ‘thing’ that we experience ‘in’ space) rather than with *field awareness* - the *awareness space* (inner and outer) in which we experience things. Generally we take it for granted that as bodies we inhabit a *common* ‘physical’ or ‘outer’ space with other beings, but that our own ‘inner’ or ‘psychical’ space is something private - bounded by our own physical bodies. This artificial division between outer, physical space and inner psychical space makes us forget that the essence of space as such is field awareness (*kshetrajnana*).

The greater the artificial separation between private inner psychological spaces and outer physical and public spaces, the less we understand and experience the essence of space as such. For the moods or emotional ‘spaces’ we find ourselves in are not something contained in a private inner world and inner space. They colour our entire experience of the space and world around us. How is it, for example, that we can feel ourselves inwardly ‘closer’ or more ‘distant’ to others, irrespective of our distance from them ‘in’ physical space? Is this simply because physical and psychological space are two quite separate things? Or is it because our sense of inner psychological closeness or distance to others actually shapes our *bodily* experience of closeness or distance in physical space – and vice versa? ‘Closeness’ and ‘distance’ in other words, are not essentially features of either ‘psychical’ or ‘physical’ space but of space as such – understood as a space of awareness in which we experience not only ourselves and our own bodies but our *relationship* to others and to their bodies.

What we experience as our own ‘body’ is not itself some physical body-object ‘in’ space, separated from other bodies ‘by’ space. It is essentially a spatial *field-boundary* of awareness – more or less open or closed – separating all that we experience as ‘self’ from all that we experience as ‘other-than-self’ – as ‘him’ or ‘her’, ‘you’ or ‘it’. It is also a *boundary field* of awareness – a field linking and uniting all that we experience as ‘self’ *with* all that we experience as ‘other’. Our bodies themselves are not water bags of flesh, blood and bones bound by our skins. They are the way we experience the *field-boundary* of our own *awareness space*, and the way we experience the inner and outer fields or *spaces of awareness* surrounded by and surrounding that boundary. That boundary and those spaces of awareness have dimensions, directions and qualities all of their own. When we speak of people’s ‘ups and downs’, of feeling ‘high’ or ‘low’, ‘uplifted’ or ‘let down’, ‘held back’ or ‘carried away’, ‘confined’ or ‘exposed’, ‘open’ or ‘closed’, ‘withdrawn’ or ‘spaced out’, ‘on the brink’ or ‘beside themselves’, ‘stretched’ or ‘torn’, ‘edgy’ or ‘irritable’ etc., we are not just using spatial *metaphors* to describe people’s feelings. We are referring to the way people can feel the bodily boundaries and spatiality of their *awareness field*. Such spatial ‘metaphors’ are *literal* descriptions of the way in which people can experience the spatiality and spatial qualities of their true body - their *awareness body*.

Whatever the quality of the ‘spaces’ we feel ourselves to be ‘in’, these are not simply psychical spaces ‘in’ our bodies or physical spaces our bodies are ‘in’. They are bodily shapes and qualities of *awareness space* itself – shapes and qualities of our *awareness body*. If “the body is an awareness” (Castaneda) then we can also say that “awareness is the body”. ‘Space’ is no ‘thing’ and nor is ‘nothing’, an empty void. It is the primary dimension through which we *body* our awareness, placing ourselves in a particular position in relation to other people and to the world and defining the very field-boundaries of our awareness through which we first distinguish ourselves from other people and the world around us. Our experienced self, like our experienced body, is a specific experience of the spatiality of our awareness at any given time. The experienced self, like the experienced body, is a specific experience of our body *as* an awareness - an experience of our awareness body.

**As the mighty air which pervades everything, ever abides
in space, know that in the same way all beings abide in Me.**

Bhagavad Gita

The ‘Me’ is the Self, understood as that all-pervading space of divine awareness that is variously named as BRAHMAN or SHIVA. Its air is the innate ‘aetheric’ substantiality of awareness itself – *prana*. *Akasha* means both ‘space’ and ‘aether’. If space is the pure ‘aether’ of awareness then the ‘spaces’ we find ourselves in are felt *qualities* of awareness. The so-called ‘aetheric’ or ‘etheric’ body is our *akashic* body – our spacious body of awareness.

**If in one’s body, one contemplates spatial vacuity in all directions
simultaneously without any thought-construct, one experiences vacuity
all round [and is identified with the vast expanse of consciousness].**

Vijananabhairavatantra

Julius Evola quotes a Tibetan meditation similar to those of the *Vijnanabhairava*:

**Visualise the physical body as being internally vacuous, like the
inside of an empty sheath, transparent and uncloudedly radiant.**

Terms such as ‘vacuum’ or ‘void’ however, must not be understood in the Buddhist sense, and certainly not in terms of the modern scientific abstraction of a ‘quantum’

vacuum or void. Where Shaivist and Buddhist philosophers differed was precisely in their understanding of the void (*shunya/nirvana*). The Shaivist philosophers and yogis did not see the spatial void within and around all things as an absolute void - as mere emptiness - but as a void pervaded with the pure, thought-free awareness (*nirvikalpa*) that is SHIVA. Their argument against the Buddhists was that if the void were indeed an absolute void - devoid of awareness - then no awareness of it would be possible. They pointed out the contradiction of speaking of *nirvana* both as void, that was devoid of awareness and as an ultimately enlightened state of awareness.

In the tradition of *Kaula tantra*, the tantric understanding of space as awareness is taken further. The word *kaula* combines the words *akula* and *kula*. *Akula* is the divine awareness field that surrounds and permeates all bodies (*kula*) in the same way as does space (*akasha*). Conversely, all bodies (*kula*) are simply bounded units of awareness emerging within the divine awareness field that is *akula*. There is no such thing as an unaware or 'insentient' body. As a bounded unit of awareness every body is a being and every being a body. Whilst awareness in the form of space (*akula*) is a purely bodyless awareness (equivalent to pure Being) it is at the same time nothing but a pure awareness of bodyhood (of beings). *Akula* and *kula*, as the spatial dimensions of *Shiva* and *Shakti*, are both distinct and inseparable. For just as we cannot conceive of or experience any bodies except within a surrounding space, nor can we conceive of or experience any space of pure or transcendental awareness (*akula*) except as a space of awareness around, within and between groups of bodies (*kula*). As a purely bodyless awareness *akula* is therefore also a pure awareness of the totality of bodies within it (*kula*). This is comparable to an awareness of ourselves as the very space surrounding and permeating both our own body and all other bodies. Following the tradition of *Kaula tantra*, The New Yoga of Space is designed to free us from experiencing ourselves simply as separated bodies 'in' space and identify instead with the spaces around and within our bodies. Experiencing those spaces as spaces of awareness, we can come to a new experience of our bodies themselves as spatial shapes or bodies of awareness. For the essence of our bodies does not lie in the physical materiality of our flesh and blood but in the felt spatiality of our awareness.

THE NEW YOGIC PSYCHOLOGY OF SPACE

Have you ever found yourself in ‘spaces’ so strange you find it hard to describe them?

Have you ever felt yourself to be ‘all over the place’ - ‘here, there and everywhere’?

Have you ever felt the space *within* you so full and crowded with thoughts or overwhelmed with emotions that you have no space for anything or anyone else?

Have you ever felt yourself closed off to the space *around* you, and to everything or everyone in it?

Have you ever had experiences so intense that you feel you don’t have sufficient space in yourself to contain and process them?

Have you ever felt an intense closeness to someone distant from you or a huge distance to someone close to you?

Have you ever been in a situation or relationships where you felt that there was no ‘place’ for you or no ‘space’ for you to be yourself?

Have you ever felt yourself ‘bursting’ with an intense emotion such as love or joy, anger or rage?

Have you ever felt yourself ‘falling’ into a ‘bottomless pit’ or ‘black hole’?

Have you ever felt ‘on the brink’ of feeling, knowing or doing something?

Have you ever felt yourself inwardly ‘pierced’ or ‘penetrated’ by a look or remark?

Have you ever felt yourself inwardly ‘hemmed in’, ‘trapped’ or ‘confined’?

Have you ever felt yourself ‘shrinking’ away from something or someone?

Have you ever felt your space ‘intruded’ upon or ‘invaded’?

Have you ever ‘shrunk’ or ‘withdrawn’ yourself into a shell? Have you ever felt yourself isolated - ‘lost in space’?

Have you ever felt ‘spaced out’ without any ‘boundaries’?

Have you ever felt ‘cut off’ from yourself or others?

Have you every felt ‘carried away’ or ‘uplifted’?

Have you ever felt difficulty ‘taking things in’?

Have you ever felt yourself ‘on the edge’?

Have you ever felt ‘small’ or ‘big’?

Modern psychology treats all such spatial descriptions of feelings as mere *metaphors*. Only if people's fears or symptoms have to do with *physical* spaces – fear of closed spaces, of public spaces or of leaving their homes for example – do they take the *spatial* dimension of human psychology seriously. Even then however, it is the 'psychology' of people's emotional fears and the thoughts associated with them that they concentrate on. There is no recognition that the human psychical awareness has an *inherently* spatial character – that there is therefore no essential difference whatsoever between a person feeling a fear of confined physical spaces ('claustrophobia') or *feeling* confined in a job or relationship. Similarly there is no essential difference between someone fearing to go outside into empty open spaces and feeling inwardly 'empty' or 'isolated' within themselves. Modern 'scientific' psychology has yet to recognise that there is not a single human emotion, whether isolation or loneliness, anxiety or depression, anger or compassion, joy or sadness, love or fear, that does not have an *intrinsically* spatial dimension. Why else would we speak of feeling 'low' or 'high', or of life's 'ups' and 'downs'? In contrast to modern psychology, ancient yogic *philosophy* has always recognised that the essential quality of subjective awareness is its *spatiality*, and that the awareness of each individual 'soul' or 'psyche' has its own unique spatial dimensions, shapes and qualities.

The *philosophy* of the 'old' yoga was at the same time a profoundly spiritual and profoundly scientific *psychology* of space, of space-time and of time-space. Its aim was to liberate the individual soul's awareness from its apparent bodily boundaries - to transcend the experience of awareness as something confined by our own skins. Only in this way could the individual once again experience their own bounded awareness or 'soul' as one expression of a transcendental or divine awareness that was the immanent soul of the universe and everything in it. The very word 'yoga' meant any and every comprehension or form of meditation that helped the individual soul or psyche to once again join or 'yoke' itself to the divine soul. Therefore there could have been no such thing as an ancient yogic 'psychology' *separate* from yogic 'philosophy', 'theology' or 'cosmology'. For all those mental or emotional problems that we see today as something purely 'psychological' were understood in a completely different way - not as individual problems but as different individual experiences of the same basic *spatial* separation – between the individual soul dwelling 'in' a space-time universe (*jiva*) and the divine soul *of* that universe (*Shiva*).

We think that vision is about seeing things ‘in’ space and becoming aware of them. But what is the space in which we see things except the very space or field of our awareness? What is the space in which we feel or dream things except the spatial field of our feeling or dreaming awareness? There are many more types of space than visual space alone – not just aural, tactile and other sensory spaces but the spaces between and around our thoughts and emotions, dream spaces and imaginative, kinaesthetic and proprioceptive spaces, actual spaces and spaces of *potential* action, speech and movement. Not all these spaces are ‘extensional’ or ‘physical’ spaces. An *intent* takes up no extensional space yet it is a channel leading us through a different sort of space - *time-space*. Dreams take up no measurable physical space, nor are they visible within it. Yet they open up and expand an apparent three-dimensional space within our awareness. If so, from *within* what sort of space does dream space itself open up, whether in two or three dimensions? When Jesus said that ‘The Kingdom’ is both *within us* and *around us* he was speaking literally but his words were taken metaphorically – as a parable. The ‘Kingdom’ he was referring to is nothing but the unified spatial field of our awareness, inner and outer. This is a field which unites all manner of spaces, all of which are as distinct as the sort of thing we experience within – being the different *fields* of awareness within which we experience things.

Like the ancient yogic philosophy of space The New Yogic Psychology of Space recognises the essential spatiality of awareness. It also recognises the *differential* character of the ‘spaces’ people find themselves in, and individual differences in their felt *relation* to those spaces. In common with the ancient yogic philosophy of space however, it recognises that ‘psychological’ problems of all sorts are indeed rooted in our relation to as *seemingly* simple a thing as ‘space’. Unlike the old yogic psychology of space however, its aim is not simply to achieve a state of ‘pure’ awareness transcending all dimensions of everyday experience but to deepen our everyday experience of awareness in all its qualitatively different spatial dimensions. Only in this way can people come to experience the different ‘spaces’ they find themselves in *as* spaces and learn to relate to them as such - instead of simply experiencing and relating to these spaces as psychological ‘states’. Only in this way too, can people learn to *expand* the spatiality of their awareness in all its dimensions. Only in this way can we make our *awareness space* big enough to *make space* for and embrace greater breadths and depths of experiencing.

AWARENESS SPACE AND 'SPACES'

Every way of experiencing ourselves goes together with a particular way of experiencing the world - and vice versa. A mood is not a feeling 'inside' us but a tonality of awareness which tones or colours our experience, not only of ourselves and our 'inner' world, but of the outer world around us. In this sense it is also a distinct and all-encompassing personal 'space'. Hence we speak of 'having' a feeling but finding ourselves 'in' a mood – a qualitatively distinct 'space' of awareness. The singular space that is awareness *as such* is itself made up of countless qualitatively distinct *spaces* of awareness. What we call 'dreaming' is the most tangible way in which we experience ourselves journeying through such spaces of awareness - each with a fundamental mood or feeling tone that finds expression in the events we experience within a dream space. Any such feeling tone has its own felt qualities of lightness or darkness, lightness or heaviness, diffuseness or density, brightness or dullness. Above all it has its own particular *spatial qualities*. Yet all distinct 'spaces' with their fundamental mood or feeling tone can be seen as the result of an interplay between three basic motions or movements or *mudra* of awareness space as such.

1. **Outward Expansion** of awareness *towards* a circumference.
2. **Inward Contraction** or concentration *from* a circumference towards a centre.
3. **Inward Expansion** or 'inspansion' of awareness *within* a circumference.

An 'extroverted' outward expansion of awareness may be experienced as an *up*-lifting expansiveness, brightness, lightness or 'levity' of mood. In contrast an 'introverted' contraction of awareness may be felt as 'that sinking feeling' - a 'depressing' or *downward*-pulling, dulling or darkening of mood that goes along with a sense of fatigue, heaviness or gravity. In our culture, 'extroversion' is opposed to 'introversion', goodness and light to darkness and 'evil', lightness and levity of spirit to heaviness of soul - to gravity and *gravitas*. Language itself lacks any words to express the experience of a meditative *inward expansion* of awareness that is beyond 'good' and 'evil', 'extroversion' and 'introversion', and that transcends the alternation of manic social-economic activity or 'busyness' on the one hand and depressive lethargy and economic 'depressions' on the other.

THE DIMENSIONS OF AWARENESS SPACE

The opening out and expansion of a dream within dreamless sleep is one example of the inward expansion of awareness. Awareness space has the character of both an extensional field of spatial awareness and a ‘singularity’. The singularity is comparable to a ‘wormhole’ linking different qualitative spaces within that field – like the periods of dreamless sleep through which our awareness passes from one dream space to another. The three basic movements of awareness correspond to three distinct dimensions of awareness space.

1. **Extensional Space (‘space’)**
2. **Temporal Space (‘hyperspace’)**
3. **Intensional Space (‘subspace’)**

Temporal space or ‘time-space’ is the dimension of awareness space that embraces not just the space of our present experience but the space of our past and future experiencing too. It is the dimension of awareness in which things are not simply *present* in our field of awareness but constantly coming to presence themselves within it. What we think of as ‘past’ and ‘future’ experiences are all *constantly* coming to presence within the larger field of temporal space. Extensional space is space as such – a field of awareness in which we experience things as *co-present*. What we call ‘the present’ is simply that region of temporal space our awareness occupies in the moment and all that we experience as co-present within it. Intensional space, on the other hand, is the very essence of ‘time’ as such – the movement of awareness between different regions of temporal space or ‘time-space’. This movement does not occur ‘in’ space or ‘in’ time as we know it. For time itself *is* movement in intensional space – a space made up of pure intensities of awareness. These intensities are intensities of feeling tone. What we experience as events receding into ‘the past’ are the expression of declining tonal intensities of awareness – like sounds receding into silence. What we experience as oncoming future events are the expression of increasing intensities of awareness, like sounds arising out of silence. What moves us through intensional space is *intentionality* as such – *intent*. Intent is that movement of awareness through pure time - intensional space – that finds expression both as movements in extensional space (space-time) and in temporal space (time-space).

THE TRIDENT OF LORD SHIVA

The trident of *Shiva*, like the triangular *yantra* of *Shakti*, is one of the key symbols of the religious philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism known *Trika* (Threefold). The three points of the trident represent:

1. **ICCHA** (desire, will, intent)

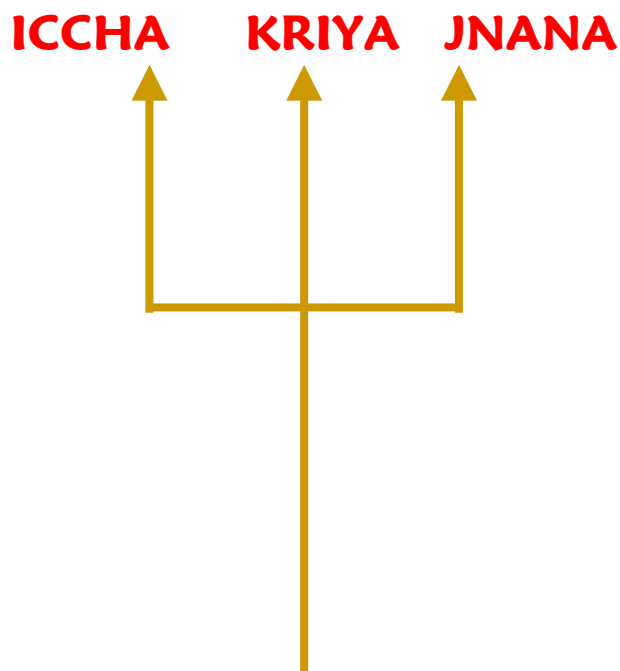
The awareness of a boundless non-extensional intensional space of potentiality - of pure *intensities* of awareness - and the *infinite concentration* of that awareness into a 'zero-point' (*bindu*) through which it expresses itself as the pure *power* of will or *intent*.

2. **JNANA** (knowledge, experience)

The *expansion* of a boundless space of awareness through which awareness comes to know itself and its potentialities through the infinite varieties of experiencing.

3. **KRIYA** (creation, action, actualisation)

The eternal creative activity (*Shakti*) of awareness (*Shiva*), constantly actualising its potentialities in the form of countless ever-changing psychical patterns or *gestalts* in time-space and manifesting as bodies in space-time.



THE ANATOMY OF THE AWARENESS BODY

Human beings in our era are entranced by the idea of space travel and spacecraft achieved through advanced technologies - not knowing that soul or awareness is the very *aether* filling space, not knowing that the inner awareness space of our own bodies contains a 'singularity' that can link us inwardly to the furthest reaches of space and time, and not knowing too, that their own divine *awareness body* is a more sophisticated vehicle of space and time travel (*vimana*) than anything that technological science can conceive or conjure – except in the form of 'science-fiction'. The awareness body is a *field body* made up of three inseparable *fields* of awareness, each of which constitutes one of the three fundamental *dimensions* of awareness space. The diagram below is the basic *yantra* of the awareness body, showing its three basic field-dimensions of awareness:

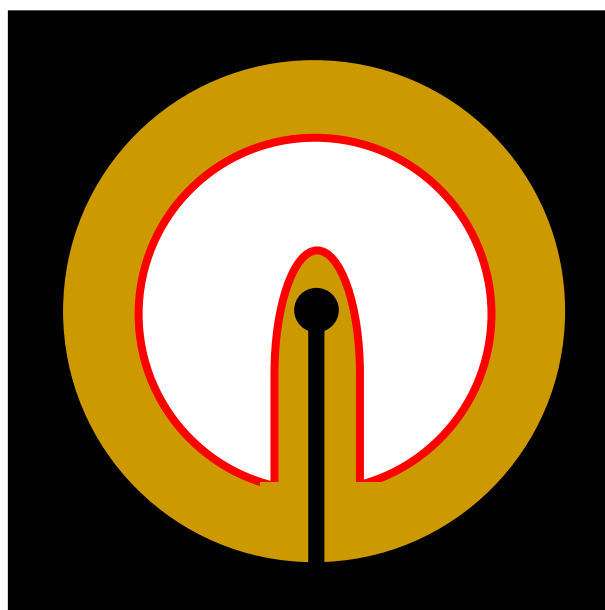
1. The *white* area of the diagram represents the field-dimension of 'aroundness' - that which we take as the shared three-dimensional space around us – an 'extensional' space in which things appear as simply 'there', *co-present* within our field of awareness. Any body, including our own, can be represented as both an 'invagination' (*yoni*) of this three-dimensional awareness space and/or as a phallic protrusion into it (*lingam*) from a second field-dimension of awareness - represented by the amber field of the diagram.
2. The *amber* area of the diagram represents the field-dimension of 'withinness' – the awareness space of our inwardly felt bodies. As the diagram shows however, this both leads down into and forms part of a larger field-dimension of awareness that, paradoxically, *surrounds* the field of 'aroundness' that we normally take as the shared physical space of the universe. What this indicates is how in reality we each dwell in our *own* three-dimensional awareness space, which opens within this *second* field-dimension of awareness space. This is a *time-space* of awareness in which things are not simply actual and co-present but constantly *coming to presence* or *actualizing* themselves as they do in our dreams - yet not just in the present moment but at every point in time and in all dimensions of reality.
3. The *black* area of the diagram represents a field-dimension of 'unbounded inwardness' – not an *extensional* space at all, but rather a non-extensional or intensional space made up purely of qualitative *intensities* of awareness. It contains nothing actual or present at all but is the source field of potentiality from which all things are actualized – 'dreamt' into three-dimensional manifestation (field 1) through the time-space of our 'field of dreams' (field 2).

The *red* border in the diagram is the field-boundary that defines our awareness body *as a whole* – both demarcating and uniting the dimensions and spaces of awareness around and within us. Its *inner surface* represents both the field-boundary of any being ‘in’ three-dimensional awareness space (*lingam*) and the entire circumference or ‘womb’ of this extensional space – of its own unique three-dimensional universe.

The *outer surface* of the red line is the awareness body *as a whole* as it moves and is perceived within the soul world or ‘inner universe’ - that temporal space of awareness in which all realities, past, present and future, continuously and simultaneously come to presence. This ‘astral’ body is also the awareness body as *vimana* - a divine vehicle that can quite literally travel to the stars and move freely between those different *planes* of awareness that manifest as ‘planets’ in the space-time cosmos.

The ‘black hole’ at the centre of the diagram represents the ‘singularity’ (*vindu/bindu*) at the heart of every ‘body’. The line beneath represents the way in which, as a centre of intent, this singularity links the aware inwardness of every body and every being to the intensional space of unbounded inwardness that is their source. It is through the singularity of our intent that we can learn to steer our awareness body as *vimana* through all the different dimensions, sphere or planes of awareness space, and all the countless experiential worlds or realities, physical and non-physical that open up within them.

The Spatial Anatomy of the Awareness Body



BASIC SPATIAL BODY AWARENESS

The most fundamental discipline of The New Yoga is the practice of sustaining continuous ‘whole-body awareness’ throughout the day. The foundation of this whole-body awareness is awareness of one’s felt body *surface* as a whole. For without awareness of our surface we can feel neither the inner *awareness space* it bounds and surrounds nor the outer awareness space surrounding it – these being the two distinct but inseparable aspects of our own ‘awareness space’ that make up our ‘awareness body’ or ‘soul body’. Surface awareness is thus the key to experiencing ‘whole-body’ awareness as ‘soul-body’ awareness. Sustaining this whole-body/soul-body awareness through *spatial* body awareness (*Khecari mudra*) can only be achieved through constant mindfulness and regular recall of the following twelve questions – all of which have to do with and *affect* how much space one feels one has - both for oneself and for others.

1. How much of my body surface am I feeling right now?
2. How much inner awareness space can I feel within this felt surface boundary?
3. Where do I feel my awareness concentrated in this inner awareness space?
4. Where do I feel my awareness centred in this inner-bodily awareness space?
5. How far down does my inner awareness space extend from the inner space of my head through that of my chest to my lower abdomen?
6. How expansive or contracted, crowded or empty, muddled or clear, do I feel the inner awareness space of my head, chest and abdomen?
7. To what extent do I feel the inner awareness space of head, chest and abdomen as a singular inner space of awareness?
8. To what extent can I lower my centre of awareness from a point in my head space to points in the inner region of my heart, diaphragm, belly and lower abdomen?
9. To what extent can I sense the entire space around my body surface?
10. How far can I feel my awareness extending into this space in all directions?
11. To what extent can I feel the *entire* space around me as an awareness space - enveloping and embracing both my own body and every other body in it?
12. How permeable or impermeable do I feel the surface boundary between my inner and outer awareness spaces - to what extent can I feel my surface boundary as either a porous *breathing* membrane or as a sealed self-containing boundary?

‘KHECARI MUDRA’

In The New Yoga a *mudra* is understood as any way of actively *embodying* a meditative inner stance or ‘bearing’ of soul. It is a way of relating to or ‘comporting’ oneself in relation to both outer and inner space – whether through one’s bodily posture or stance as a whole, through a look on one’s face or in one’s eyes, or through a gesture of one's arms, hands and fingers.

The verbal root of the word *mudra* is ‘to rejoice’. The *Khecari mudra* referred to in the *tantras* - alternately termed the *Sahasa* or *Vira-Bhairava mudra* - is a most basic and primordial of meditative inner stances or *mudras* – a rejoicing in the experience of empty space (*akasha*) as a field of pure awareness. *Khecari* means ‘moving in the void’ – the infinite field of pure awareness that we ordinarily perceive *only* as ‘empty’ physical or cosmic space.

The starting point of *Khecari mudra* is identification with *space* itself – both the outer space around our bodies and the sensed inner spaces of our bodies - rather than with anything that we experience *within* those spaces. This leads to a new experience of space as something identical with *pure awareness* itself. Practicing *Khecari mudra* allows us to identify with the space of awareness *surrounding* all that we experience both within and around us – whether thoughts, feelings and physical sensations, our own bodies, or the bodies of objects and people around us.

This in turn frees us from being or becoming *identified* with our inner and outer experiencing, with the way we currently experiences ourselves, other people and the world. As identification with the apparent emptiness of space, *Khecari mudra* leads us to a state of total equanimity in which, like the sky itself (*vyoman*) we can rise above all mundane, earthly experiencing – actually *becoming* the space that surrounds all bodies, and permeating them like a subtle air, wind or breath (*prana*).

PRACTICING KHECARI MUDRA

1. Bring your awareness to the sensed outer surface of your skin. From that surface sense the empty spaces in front of, above, behind and to either side of your body.
2. Attend entirely to your awareness of regions of empty space - those above and around your body, and those above, around and between other bodily objects or people.
3. Be aware of the sky above and of the unlimited expanse of cosmic space, and of all empty regions of space in your immediate vicinity or scope of vision.
4. Sense all regions of 'empty' space as part of an unlimited space of *pure awareness* – a space totally untainted by any psychical qualities, by the psychical 'atmosphere' of places, or by the emanation or psychical 'aura' of people and the qualitative 'spaces' they are in.
5. Feel your body surface again, this time sensing a hollow space of pure awareness within it – a space equally untainted by any thoughts, feelings or sensations you experience within it.
6. Identify with the spaces of awareness *around* all that you experience both outside and inside you – the spaces *around* your thoughts, emotions and physical sensations, the space around your own body and other bodies, whether objects or people.
7. Feel your body surface as a porous, breathing skin uniting the 'empty' space of pure awareness within you with the 'empty' space of pure awareness around your own body and other bodies.

MICROMEDITATIONS

- Sense your body surface as a whole.
- One-by-one, feel the hollow inner spaces of your head, chest and abdomen.
- Sense these inner spaces as one singular awareness space.

- Feel yourself entirely within the hollow awareness space of your head.
- Feel yourself entirely within the hollow awareness space of your chest.
- Feel yourself entirely within the hollow awareness space of your abdomen.

- Feel awareness filling your head space and bounded by its surface.
- Feel awareness filling your chest space and bounded by its surface.
- Feel awareness filling your belly and bounded by your abdomen.

- Keeping your eyes open, let your gaze turn fully inwards, imagining that your eyeballs have rotated down to peer into the inner space of your body.
- Feel yourself looking down into a dark, warm, womb-like space of awareness within your abdomen.
- Let your awareness sink down completely into this dark womb-like space.

- Sense a centre of awareness in your head space at a point behind and between your eyes (your 'third eye').
- Sense a centre of awareness in your chest space at the mid-point of your diaphragm between the solar plexus and spine (your 'heart' centre or *hrdaya*).
- Sense a centre of awareness in your abdomen a couple of inches below and behind the navel.

- Feel your awareness centred in your head.
- Now feel it centred in your chest.
- Now feel it centred in your abdomen.

- Sense the exact point where your awareness is located on the vertical line or axis linking your head, chest and abdominal centres, and touch that point with your finger.
- Shift your locus of awareness a few inches at a time downwards towards your abdominal centre.
- Move your locus of awareness a few inches at a time upwards towards the head centre.

- Sense head and heart centres simultaneously.
- Sense your heart and abdominal centres simultaneously.
- Sense your head and abdominal centres simultaneously.

- Be aware of your current bodily centre or locus of awareness.
- Focus your awareness at any other point in inner or outer awareness space.
- Feel that *focus* of awareness as a new centre or *locus* of awareness.

- Feel the solidity of your head, chest and entire upper body above the waist.
 - Now attend to the ground beneath your feet and feel your entire lower body below the waist.
 - Having grounded yourself in lower-body awareness, centre your awareness in your abdomen.
-
- Stand up and then sit down again.
 - Stand up again.
 - Prepare to sit down again, but when you do so find a posture in which you can come to rest, not just in the chair but in yourself, letting your awareness sink down into your lower body and seating it in your abdominal centre.
-
- Feel the entire surface of your body, front and back.
 - Bring your awareness entirely to your body surface as a whole.
 - From your body surface sense the space around you on all sides.
-
- Be aware of the entire space around you.
 - Sense it as the larger space or field *of* your awareness.
 - Identify with this outer awareness space and, like space itself, feel your awareness surrounding the bodies of objects and people around you.
-
- Feel the ‘positive’ spatiality of your body – the three-dimensional volume of space it occupies and fills.
 - Feel the ‘counter-space’ or ‘negative space’ of your body – the entire space around your body.
 - Alternate between attending to your awareness of the space and counter-space of your body, your body’s positive and negative spatiality.
-
- Sense the light around you in the space of this room.
 - Sense that light as the very *light* of your awareness.
 - Sense the light of your awareness illuminating all the objects and people around you in space.
-
- Be aware of the space and light around you.
 - Feel your awareness being drawn out to an infinitely distant cosmic circumference.
 - Feel your ‘heart’ or diaphragm centre (*hrdaya*) as the centre of an infinite sphere of light-filled awareness, radiating the light of awareness in all directions.
-
- Be aware of the surfaces of the walls behind and in front you, the ceiling above and the floor below you.
 - Feel the entire containing surface or circumference of the physical space you are in.
 - Feel this physical surface as the larger surface or circumference of your awareness space – as your own larger body.

- Sense the overall quality of the psychical ‘space’ you feel yourself to be in right now.
 - Sense where your awareness is concentrated or centred in that space.
 - Sense how expanded or contracted your space is, and how tight or loose, bounded or diffuse its surface boundary is.
- Sense the quality of the ‘space’ you feel another person to be in.
 - Feel where their awareness is concentrated or centred in that space.
 - Feel how expanded or contracted their space is, and how closed or open, tight or loose, bounded or diffuse, its surface boundary is.
- Leave the room and come in again.
 - Leave the room and come in again, fully aware of your body as a whole, above and below the waist.
 - Now bring your awareness to your body surface and open yourself to sensing the entire space around you.
- Feel your body’s surface boundary as solid, sealed and impermeable.
 - Now feel it as translucent, open, porous and permeable.
 - Now feel it as sealed and impermeable again.
- Bring your awareness to your felt body surface, ‘space out’ and identify entirely with the outer awareness space around you.
 - Bring your awareness to your felt body surface, ‘space in’ and identify entirely with the inner awareness space within you.
 - Bring your awareness to your felt body surface and identify entirely with that surface, feeling it as either open or closed, sealed or porous, impermeable or permeable.
- Sense how much room or space you have within yourself - space in which to take in other people and the world around you.
 - Sense how much room you have for yourself in the space around you – how much you can feel the space around you as your space.
 - Make more room for yourself – feeling your awareness space expanding within and around you.
- Think of a pressing concern or source of stress in your current life.
 - Focus on it and allow it to totally preoccupy the space of your mind.
 - Now become aware of your head, body surface and the space around you, feeling as you do so that the space of your awareness is expanding and freeing itself from this preoccupation.
- Feel how much of your inner or outer awareness space is being taken up by particular thoughts, emotions or sensations, by particular people or events in your life, particular worries or concerns, hopes and fears, activities or tasks.
 - If you feel something taking up too much of your awareness, feel the free spaces of awareness, inner or outer, around it.
 - Sense the expanse of your awareness space more fully and extensively so as to lighten, clear and free it from pre-occupation.

- Feel as if your time was restricted, or feel how constricted it actually is by demands pressing on you.
 - Feel how this restriction of time is experienced as a restriction of awareness space, causing you to overly constrict your awareness to a narrow space or focus.
 - Feel how the restriction of your time is experienced as a restriction of awareness space - causing you to feel tight or tense or 'stressed'.
-
- Think of a person you know and attend to your bodily sense of that person.
 - Sense how that person's awareness space is currently taken up or 'occupied'.
 - Sense how much room this person has left within them - how much free awareness space they have for themselves and for others.
-
- Be aware of the space between your body and that of another person.
 - Sense how much you are inhabiting your own 'space' or a sealed bubble of awareness, and feel the quality of the space you are in.
 - Open yourself to feeling the space the other person is in, and its qualities.
-
- Attend to your own body surface and sense its inner awareness space.
 - Attend to another person's body surface and sense their inner awareness space.
 - Feel a direct inner connection between the inner awareness space of another person's body and that of your own.
-
- Sense the specific qualities of another person's head space with and within the awareness space of your own head.
 - Sense the specific qualities of another person's chest space with and within the awareness space of your own chest.
 - Sense the specific qualities of another person's abdominal space with and within the awareness space of your own abdomen.
-
- Feel a quality of light-filled clarity and expansiveness within the awareness space of your own head.
 - Express these qualities outwardly in the outer surface of your head – in your face and eyes.
 - Attending to the surface of another person's head, seek to impart its inner awareness space with these qualities.
-
- Choose to imbue the inner awareness space of your head, chest and abdomen with particular qualities.
 - Attending to the surface of another person's head, chest or abdomen, sense the qualities of the inner awareness spaces within them.
 - Intend to impart the qualities you feel in the inner awareness space of your head, chest or abdomen to the corresponding awareness space in the body of the other.

MACROMEDITATION 1

Any or all of the Stages of this meditation can be practiced either sitting or standing. If *all* three stages are to be practiced in a continuous sequence, then this should be done standing up.

Stage 1

1. Feel your head, chest and upper body as a whole, and identify completely with your *upper body awareness*.
2. Now feel the contact of your feet with the ground, your legs, and your entire *lower body below the waist*.
3. Identify completely with your *lower body awareness*.
4. Now *centre* both your awareness and your breathing in your abdomen.
5. Now become aware again of your upper body, head and chest whilst keeping your awareness solidly grounded in your lower body and your breathing *centred* in your abdomen.

Stage 2

6. Now bring your awareness to your *body surface* as a whole, upper and lower, front and back.
7. From your body surface begin to sense the *space* around you – in front and behind you, to either side of you, above your head and below the ground.
8. Becoming aware of the walls of the room you are in, feel the entire space within it as awareness space - a space or field of awareness.
9. Focusing on a particular object in the room, feel your awareness gently and tangibly surrounding the object in space like the air in the room.
10. Focusing on a particular person in the room, feel your awareness space gently and tangibly surrounding their entire body like the air in the room.
11. Feeling your *chest surface* as an open, porous and breathing surface, look around and sense yourself literally breathing in your spatial and sensory awareness of objects and people.

Stage 3

12. Opening your eyes wide, move to greet a person in the room, whilst at the same time fully receiving them through both your eyes and your body – breathing in every sensory feature of their eyes, face and body as a whole.

MACROMEDITATION 2

Sense your jaw, lips and brow.

Sense the whole surface of your face.

Sense the top, sides and back of your head.

Sense the front and back surface of your chest.

Sense the outer surface of your trunk as a whole.

Sense the space all around your outer body surface.

Sense yourself becoming the space all around your body.

Sense your awareness expanding in all directions around your body.

Sense the entire space around your body surface as a space of awareness.

Sense your awareness surrounding the bodies of objects and people in that space.

Sense your awareness illuminating and bringing out the inner light of those bodies.

Sense your body surface again, this time feeling your entire trunk as a hollow vessel.

Sense the hollows of your head, chest and abdomen in turn as spaces of awareness.

Sense your awareness descending from your inner head space to that of your chest.

Sense your awareness descending from your chest space to that of your abdomen.

Sense your body as a hollow vessel containing a singular inner awareness space.

Sense a dark invisible space of awareness under the ground beneath your feet.

Sense your awareness sinking deep down into this dark underground space.

Sense your awareness rising back up from this space into your body space.

Sense your awareness sinking down into the underground space again.

Sense it rising again to surround the very walls around you.

Sense the underground space as a source of pure power.

Sense a material object in the space around you.

Sense points of pure power in all its atoms.

SIDDHIS OF THE NEW YOGA

Practicing The New Yoga of Space is vital for the development and cultivation of a whole range of innate psychological powers or *siddhis*.

- The ability to embrace the body of a thing or person in one's outer awareness space.
- The ability to see into the inner awareness spaces of things or people and feel their inner soul qualities.
- The ability to let one's awareness feel and flow into the inner awareness space of another person's body – to feel our soul within their body.
- The ability to let the awareness of another person flow into the inner awareness space of our body – to feel their soul within our own body.
- The ability to sense the qualities of another person's awareness - their soul - with and within one's own body and theirs.
- The ability to imbue another person's awareness – their soul - with qualities of awareness felt with one's own body.
- The ability to experience sensory qualities such as shapes, colours and sounds, as the expression of inner soul qualities - qualities of awareness.
- The ability to experience the sensory qualities of things and people as the expression of their inner soul qualities - qualities of their awareness or soul.
- The ability to perceive the inner soul shapes and qualities of objects and people as sensory qualities (shapes, colours and tones).

- The ability to feel the specific soul qualities of another person's head, chest or abdominal space with and within one's own head, chest and abdomen.
- The ability to merge or 'meld' one's soul - the inner awareness space of one's head, chest and abdomen - with that of another
- The ability to sense and transform the tones and the psychological 'spaces' we find ourselves or others 'in'.
- The ability to expand one's awareness as radiant light from a singularity of awareness – the experience of 'ecstatic' spatiality and awareness-bliss.
- The ability to contract one's awareness to a point and feel the soul inwardness of the smallest particles of matter.
- The ability to 'shape-shift' one's awareness body – to alter both its inner soul shape or configuration and the outer sensory form.
- The ability to withdraw one's awareness into the innermost depths of one's own inner soul - the experience of 'enstatic' spatiality and awareness-bliss.
- The ability to let one's awareness flow down into a fathomless underground space of awareness – the soul womb of the great mother goddess or *Mahadevi*.
- The ability to let awareness rise up as power from that space and into the body of the other – as 'Kundalini'.

LESSON 2 – SUMMARY

Guiding Words:

...from awareness of space to a new spatiality of awareness.

Questions to ask oneself:

How much of my body surface am I feeling right now?

How much inner awareness space can I feel within this felt surface boundary?

Where is my awareness concentrated and centred in this inner awareness space?

To what extent can I let my awareness expand into the space around my body?

How much of what I experience within and around me
can I take into and embrace in awareness space?

Summary of Principles:

Awareness is space and space is awareness
- the open field within which all experiencing occurs.

The less we identify with *awareness space* the more identified we become
with whatever it is that we are experiencing *within* that space.

Summary of Practices:

Identifying with the surrounding space around your own body and other bodies.

Identifying with the spaces of awareness around your own
inwardly experienced thoughts, emotions and sensations.

Mantra:

Not “I am this body surrounded by space”
but “I am the very space around me.”

Not “I experience things in space”
but “Space is the awareness field in which I experience things.”

LESSON 2 – GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT TERMS

AKASHA – the infinite ‘space’ or ‘aether’ of awareness.

HRDAYA – the ‘heart’ experienced as a centre of ecstatic awareness in the region of the diaphragm.

JIVA – the individual soul experienced as a bound soul - a body ‘in’ space whose consciousness is bounded by its own skin.

KHA – root syllable with the inner meaning of any cavity or surface circumference which opens up a space within its bounds. Echoed in many Sanskrit words with the sound KA such as kapalika – (skull), karnika (womb), kanda (bulb), kalasha (bowl).

KHECARI – ‘moving in the void’, the free movement of one’s locus of awareness in awareness space.

KHECARI MUDRA – identification with space as awareness and with awareness as space. The experience of bodyhood as a singular space of awareness.

KSHETRA – ‘field’. The spatial or field character of awareness itself.

KSHETRAJNANA – ‘field awareness’ or ‘field knowing’ as opposed to focal awareness concentrated on some object within a field or space of awareness.

PRAKASHA – the innate light of awareness.

PRANA – the innate ‘etheric’ substantiality of awareness – its subtle ‘breath’ or ‘air’.

MUDRA – any way of experiencing and expressing a meditative inner bearing or comportment in a bodily way.

SIDDHIS – psychical powers cultivated through yogic practices.

(SHIVA-)VYOMAN – the divine or heavenly ‘sky’ of awareness.

SHIVA – awareness in its basic character of unbounded spatiality (**AKASHA**) and light (**PRAKASHA**).

VIMANAS – ‘CHARIOTS OF THE GODS’

In ancient Sanskrit writings we find countless explicit descriptions of flying aerial craft and ‘spacecraft’, these being the celestial awareness bodies, ‘astral bodies’ or ‘chariots of the gods’ known as *vimanas* - sometimes described even as celestial ‘mansions’ or ‘cities’.

While Dhruva Maharaja was passing through space, he saw, in succession, all the planets of the solar system, and on the path he saw all the demigods in their vimanas showering flowers upon him like rain. Bhagavata Purana

He travelled in that way through the various planets, as the air passes freely in every direction. Coursing through the air in that grand and splendid vimana, which could fly at will, he surpassed even the Devas. Bhagavata Purana

The flying chariot shone like a flame in the night sky of summer . . . it swept by like a comet . . . It was as if two suns were shining. Then the chariot rose up and all the heavens brightened. Mahabharata

And on this sunlike, divine, wonderful chariot the wise disciple of Kuru flew joyously upward. When becoming invisible to the mortals who walk the earth, he saw wondrous airborne chariots by the thousands. Mahabharata

And he also gave [unto Arjuna] a car furnished with celestial weapons whose banner bore a large ape . . . And its splendour, like that of the Sun, was so great that no one could gaze at it. It was the very car riding upon which the lord Soma had vanquished the Danavas. Resplendent with beauty, it looked like an evening cloud reflecting the effulgence of the setting Sun. Mahabharata

Causing the heaven and the earth to be filled by a loud sound, then Indra came to Yudhishtira on a chariot and asked him to ascend it. Mahabharata

Indra answered, "You shall behold your brothers in the celestial region. They have reached it before you. Indeed, you shall see all of them there, with Krishna. Do not give way to grief, O chief of the Bharatas! Having renounced their human bodies they have gone there, O chief of the Bharata race! As for you, it is ordained that you shall go there in this very body of yours." Mahabharata

King Yudhishtira, riding on his chariot, ascended quickly, causing the entire sky to blaze with his effulgence.

Ashtaka then said - "Whose are those five golden chariots that we see? Do men that repair to regions of everlasting bliss ride on them?"

Yayati answered - "Those five golden cars displayed in glory and blazing as fire, would, indeed, carry you to regions of bliss."

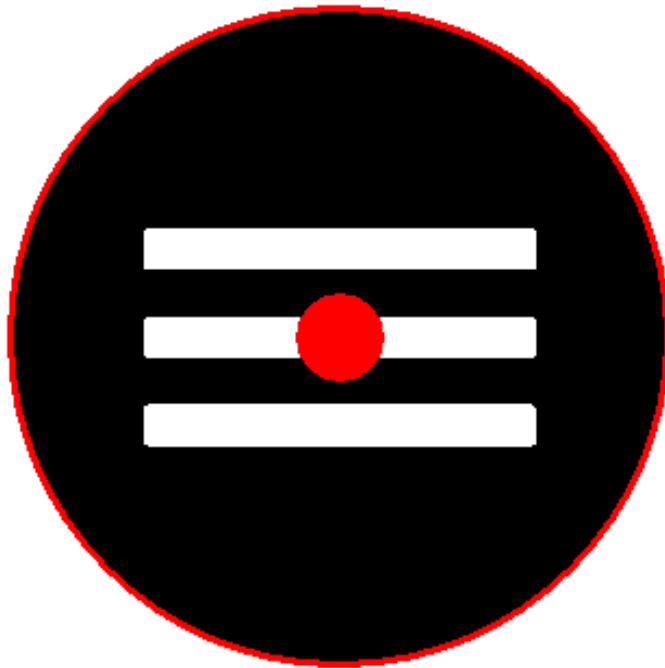
Ashtaka said - "O king, ride those cars thyself, and repair to heaven. We can wait. We will follow thee in time."

Yayati said - "We can now go altogether. Indeed all of us have conquered heaven. Behold the glorious path to heaven becomes visible." Mahabharata

The body is a spacesuit of the soul. The soul – awareness - is the space in which the body moves. The soul forms the body. The space forms the suit.

Peter Wilberg

MANUAL OF THE NEW YOGA



LESSON 3:

THE NEW YOGA OF THE SELF

(MAHATMA YOGA)

**...from awareness of self
to the self that is awareness**

What is 'self'?

“It is not the physical body, as maintained by the common folk and the materialists, not the vital energy (*prana*) as maintained by the followers of the Vedas, not the ascertaining power of the mind as maintained by the *Yogachara* Buddhists, nor the Void, as maintained by the *Madhyamika* Buddhists, but...the Foundational Awareness.”

Kshemaraja, Commentary on the Shiva Sutras

If somebody asks (or I ask myself): how can you believe in Christ and Shiva at the same time? My answer will be a further question: who is Christ? Who is Shiva? And, who am I? Shiva is not a name or any mythological personality, he is the "gracious one", the great Lord (*Parameshvara*), the ultimate Reality (*anuttara*), the most intimate I-consciousness of every conscious being. Christ is not merely the historical personality, otherwise I would not have cared to follow him. He is "the Way, the Life and the Truth" – but not in an exclusive sense; on the contrary. Even beyond that he is essentially the "I am": "Then you will know that 'I am'." How can one limit the "I am" to only one person? Here I learn from Kashmir Shaivism or Ramana Maharshi that the ultimate "I" of every conscious being is the divine "I". The ultimate realization is not of some "objective" truth: "This is He", but the personal discovery: "I am He". In this way every spiritual practice in the inter-religious context leads to a kind of purification from mere conceptions.

Bettina Bäumer: A Journey with the Unknown

Lord, who are you? Do you exist? I can go no further. Are you other than this brother in whose face my face is reflected? Are you some other 'thing' than the water, the earth, the fire and everything that is made of 'them'? The Grund (ground) which is in the depth of myself, in the depth of everything - is it a face, is it a Thou that sees itself as myself, and I who makes me to be in addressing me? Are you other than this mystery, this Brahman, in the depth of myself, of everything? I mean, are you other than a sheer mystery that cannot be named? This I, this You, is it a projection of myself, a final effort to preserve myself over against you? Are you Isvara (Lord)? Are you Purusha? Are you Krishna? Are you Jesus? Are you something other, other than myself? In that light which is beyond the darkness, do you still appear? Or else have you disappeared in the light? Or are you the very light that surrounds me, that permeates me, that absorbs me? The Logos appears only long enough to light up the descent into the cave: *guha*. Then there exists only the one who is within (*guhantara*) and who is the within itself.. In the depth of the inner cave (*guha*) there is no name and equally no non-name, neither Shiva nor Jesus!

Abhishiktananda: Ascent to the Depth of the Heart.

...identity is not an 'it' but an 'ing', it is what is happening, which includes many reoccurring states along with rapidly changing states, where the reoccurring states themselves can change over longer periods of time, and the rapidly changing states could display intricate patterns of change that are in fact quite repetitious.

Michael Kosok: The Singularity of Awareness

Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage - whose name is Self. In your body he dwells. He is your body.

Friedrich Nietzsche

All consciousness is interrelated. It flows together in currents, rises and falls, eddies and breaks, mixes and merges. Your own purposes, intents, and desires, attract to you those other 'fragments' of consciousness that mix and match to form your psychological being, as, for example, atoms and molecules mix and merge to form your physical being.

Seth, in The Afterlife Journal of an American Philosopher by Jane Roberts

You tie yourself in knots, so to speak. You think so rigidly of concerns that are *primarily* insignificant to you, as a *whole* self, and make a fetish of them. You identify, despite your knowledge, mainly with the ego.

The ego, whilst always changing, is one of the most rigid aspects of identity. To the inner self, neither house nor walls exist. They are perceived only as vague, self-limiting ideas on the ego's part.

The ego is the only part of the self that regards physical objects as anything but symbols. Death simply does not exist to the whole personality. Only the physically-oriented portions of the self accept this as a finality.

Communication exists between all portions of the self, and all parts of the personality, or all parts of the whole self, rather, operate as what you might call a supraself.

An awareness of the existence of the supraself is in itself of great benefit.

There is an inherent knowledge within each individual of the supraself's existence, and its image is indelibly imprinted. It is the desired and sought-after model against which you psychically measure your present self.

Whenever you use abilities that to you seem *supernormal*, you are drawing upon the ability of the supraself. It is the whole 'I' as yet more than the sum of its parts. It is action, *highly* aware, and quite able to change its components.

All the personalities within it are independent and survive as themselves, yet it is only part of a larger identity - which is to say that it itself is within the sphere of another psychological organisation system or gestalt.

The supraself is...a part of a higher gestalt, which is part of yet another higher consciousness-gestalt. It however, retains its identity whilst partaking to the extent of its desire and ability in the superior aspects of this larger gestalt. Even as *you*, according to your desire and ability, can partake of the superior qualities of your supraself.

You...are not the low man on the totem pole, however. There are lesser, so to speak, personalities, within every dominant physical personality...To these the physical personality would seem like a supraself.

Seth, in The Early Sessions, Book 7

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FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

Who am I? Who are You?

How do you experience what and who you are – your ‘identity’?

How do you ‘know’ who you are?

If you do, can you have selves unknown to you?

Does ‘knowing’ who you are mean having a mental idea or image of yourself, or can you *feel* yourself directly?

If you can sense or experience your ‘self’ directly, who or what is the experiencing self – the self with which you sense yourself?

How can anyone say ‘That’s just who I am’ or alternatively ‘That’s just *not me*’?

How do you separate your inner experience of self from your experience of the outer world and other people?

Where are the boundaries of the self - of identity?

How can you feel an emotion in another person without feeling it in yourself?

If so, how can we regard feelings – or any types of experience – as the private property of self or other?

Is your identity your ‘private property’? If so what or who is the self of yours that it is the property of?

How can you objectify your subjective experience of yourself, and if so, what is the self that seeks to make yourself into an object?

Who is the self we experience subjectively or are aware of?

Who or what is the self that is aware – that is this awareness?

Whenever your mood changes and you feel different, is the ‘you’ that feels different the same ‘you’ that experiences a previous mood, or is it a different ‘you’ – is the mood not a different feeling of *who* you are?

How can you separate *what* you feel from how *you* feel - from *who* you feel yourself to be? If you can, what ‘you’ is making the separation?

How do your everyday actions and interactions affect or alter your sense of self?

What does it mean to say something like you’re not ‘feeling yourself’ today’?

What does it mean to act in a way that is ‘like’ or ‘unlike’ yourself?

**What does it mean to say ‘You feel split’, if not that you are aware of two ‘yous’?
What does it mean to ‘be’ or ‘become’ who one is?**

What shapes your sense of self in the first place?

Is your sense of self something shaped by your childhood, family and social environment, pre-determined by God or fate, pre-programmed in your genes, or pre-wired in your brain?

Do you have something like an enduring deep identity or sense of self?

What does it mean to have no sense of self, or to ‘lose yourself’ in something?

Are we all One? If so, what makes people similar and/or different?

What makes you and others ‘the same’ and/or ‘different’ at different times?

What makes you feel yourself or ‘not yourself’, similar or different to yourself?

What makes you and others seem ‘the same’ at different times, in different situations and with different people?

Is your identity something you were born with, that you are bound to, and that is bounded by your current physical body?

If you have more than one life, more than one body, more than one self, what is the larger self or soul that embraces them all?

And how will you experience this larger soul and its multiple selves - in the afterlife?

Can you experience it in this life, within your current body?

Do all things have a sense of self, not just human beings, but animals, plants and even seemingly inanimate objects?

Is God a being with an identity or sense of self? Are gods beings with their own identities or selves?

What is the relation between human beings’ images, ideas and experience of ‘self’ (and/or different selves), and their images, ideas and experience of ‘God’ (and/or different gods)?

What is the relation between your concepts and experience of self and your concepts and experience (or non-experience) of God?

What is the relation between your experience of your body and your experience of both your self and the world, both God and nature, things and other beings?

What is the relation between ‘mind’ and ‘body’, our mental identity and our bodily sense of self - and what then is our ‘soul’?

INTRODUCTION

There are individuals in this world - both many and rare - who are *aware* that their experience is imbued with far greater dimensions of their identity or being and far greater dimensions of *meaning* than they can comprehend or creatively express in their lives. Being aware of this deeper meaning they become 'seekers' – ever searching for frameworks of comprehension or creative expression. Alternatively they may use extreme *intensities of experience* to give expression to felt meanings they cannot comprehend or creatively express. Indeed they may devote whole lifetimes to seeking these frameworks of creativity and comprehension - or to expressing the deeper meaning they feel in life through 'extreme' experiencing. Others, being completely *unaware* of these deeper dimensions of meaning - and/or being *terrified* of the intensities of experiencing through which they may find expression - may seek to completely deny and invalidate them. This often leaves those individuals who hold to their own profound sense of meaning – those who know that there is more to life than science and society acknowledge - even more overwhelmed by the *experiences* through which they seek to give it expression, and even more isolated by the apparently 'abnormal' behaviours that these experiences may lead to. Yet such socially 'abnormal' behaviour is nothing but a desperate attempt on the part of such individuals to seek recognition or understanding of the meaning expressed in their experiences. All they tend to get in return however, is social ostracism or labelling, not least through medicine and psychiatry – this being society's primary tool for the social suppression of *felt meaning*, achieved through medications designed to dull the individual's intensity of experiencing or block its behavioural expression. This compounds their accompanying sense of never being sure of what and who they *are* - for receiving no recognition of the deeper *meaning* they sense in their experience neither can they feel their own deeper *being* or self. Paradoxically however, individuals *aware* that there is deeper meaning to all that they experience are often *not* aware that the meaning they seek can be found in that very *awareness*. *Not* being aware that their innermost being *is* that very awareness of meaning – as it is felt in an immediate bodily way - their only way of *holding on to meaning in their lives* and to a sense of their inner being or *identity* is to continue to *identify* with their intense emotional experiencing and the behaviours they act it out through.

IDENTITY, DIFFERENCE AND RELATION

Modern ‘scientific’ psychology of personal identity has no concept of the *subjectively sensed self*. Instead it seeks to reduce identity to a set of objectifiable ‘traits’ or behaviours ultimately rooted in our genes. At the same time modern social culture reduces the subjective self to the individual’s mental ‘self-image’. As a result individuals seek to turn themselves into *an image of this image* – an image of how they are or wish *to be seen* by others from the outside - objectively. The question of how they wish to feel themselves and their bodies from within – subjectively - simply does not come into play, but is instead made dependent on the external image of themselves and of their bodies that they can mentally construct or cosmetically *shape*. Our sense of the *inner* human being is made into something entirely dependent on our *image* of the outer human being. The possibility of gaining a direct *inner* sense of the outer human being – let alone the inner human being – is quite simply excluded. Hence people’s overriding concern of how they *are seen by others* - a concern that evaporates the moment they choose to really *see the other* – not simply as they present themselves on the outside but in a feeling way - as they *sense themselves* from within. As long as we focus on our own feelings and are concerned as to how others see *us*, we cannot truly see the other in a feeling way. *Relating* is reduced to *reacting* to the external image others have of us, using a counter-image either of ourselves or of the other. This purely external and *reactive* mode of relating ends up depriving both self and other of any sense of *inner* contact with either themselves or one another. And yet this is precisely what both seek in their innermost psyche or *soul* - a word that, paradoxically, no longer has any place in the so-called ‘psychology’ of self or of personal identity, simply because it is nothing we can objectify, measure or reduce to a labelled set of ‘individual differences’. Subjectively however, our *inner experience* of another person – in contrast to the *outer image* we have of them - is nothing neatly separable from our inner experience of ourselves. Nor is it reducible to an experience of similarities and/or differences. Instead every experience of *others* is one of similarity-in-difference or *simference*. What we like to see simply as another person’s sameness *or* difference is the meaningful awareness of a certain *sameness* being expressed in a *different* way. It is this that subverts our fixed sense of ego-identity – our *idea* of identity as the private property of a self entirely separate from others.

AWARENESS, EXPERIENCE AND IDENTITY

The problem is basically that the state of awareness one is experiencing takes on the form of “ownership” of that awareness. The experience of awareness “is mine” one tends to say, and not someone else’s because my individual personal self is somehow unique as a separate state only through all kinds of sharing.

Michael Kosok, The Singularity of Awareness

You are *all* that you experience, and *nothing* that you experience. For all experiencing emerges from and within an abiding and unbounded space or field of awareness that cannot be reduced to anything experienced within it – even your experienced ‘self’. The true Self is the experiencing self. That self does not possess awareness. It *is* awareness. For the Self that *is* awareness however, all experiencing is *both* an expression and experience of itself and something intrinsically distinct from it – something fundamentally *other*. If we *experience* awareness as “mine” however - as the private property of our own *experienced* self - we immediately lose contact with this experiencing self, the Self that does not possess but *is* awareness.

Feelings of *loss* of identity and of *alienation* from all that we experience are but the flip side of the recognition that all experiencing is something quite *other* than this experiencing *Self*. Suddenly everything, including our experienced self, appears other or ‘alien’ to what we essentially are. And yet we still do not *know* who we are, for we continue to seek a sense of identity only through identification with an old or new *experience* of ourselves, with a part self rather than our self as a whole – our soul. We still have not found that Self whose nature is nothing but awareness itself. The greater our *identification* with any experienced self therefore - and the more we experience awareness as the private property of our experienced self - the greater the degree of personality ‘breakdown’ and *loss* of identity that is felt when this identification breaks down. *Awareness of experiencing* is the key to gaining an entirely new sense of identity, one in which we no longer *experience awareness* as something that is “mine” or “yours”, but instead recognise everything we experience as something fundamentally *other* than the trans-personal awareness that is our divine *awareness self*. Awareness *belongs* to none of us. Instead we all belong to It. Yet this ‘It’ is nothing impersonal but the very source of our personhood in all its aspects.

‘CAITANYAMATMA’

The *Shiva Sutras* are the foundational ‘scripture’ or treatise of tantric religious and metaphysical psychology. Its first line or *sutra* is a single word in Sanskrit – but a word that in itself makes a quite extraordinary statement - an *infinite statement*. The word is *Caitanyamatma*. What this one compound word *says* is that the awareness (*caitanya*) of a being with awareness (*cetana*) is the very self (*atman*) of that being. *Caitanyamatma* (‘being-awareness-self’) can therefore be translated as ‘being awareness’ or ‘awareness self’. Its profound message is - ‘being a self’ *means* ‘being aware’. True selfhood means *being awareness* - identifying with awareness as one’s very being or self. Yet ‘being awareness’ is not a static mode of being, and nor is the ‘awareness self’ any sort of *fixed* identity. For as our very *awareness* of all that we *experience*, the awareness self is what allows us to “become our feelings” *without* either being *overwhelmed* by those feelings or *losing* ourselves in them. *Caitanyamatma* - ‘being awareness’ - means that no matter how many selves we experience through becoming our feelings, we never lose a sense of that Self that *is* the awareness of those feelings, that *is* the awareness of those selves and of the very *activity* of becoming them. *Caitanyamatma* – the awareness self - is that ‘Self’ which, paradoxically, is continuously ‘Becoming Other’, whilst never ceasing to silently *abide in* (to ‘Be’) its very Awareness of doing so. This Self, the Awareness Self, the Self that *is* Awareness – *Caitanyamatma* – is also a Self that can freely *choose* to *identify* or *dis-identify* with any element of its self-experience. Its *freedom* of activity is like that of an actor or actress who can freely *choose* to act any of countless parts. *Not* an actor or actress pretending that their ‘off-stage’ or ‘everyday’ identity is their real identity – rather than another part or set of parts (part-selves). *Nor* an actor or actress who no longer knows who they are *outside* the parts they choose to act, but one who is able to identify with the *divine actor or agent*. That divine agent *is* the awareness self – a ‘field identity’ that embraces *every* single self or ‘unit identity’ that one is or can become - *every* self, actual or potential, that it can *freely and creatively* act and actualise. In its vast awareness it embraces not only the self we *currently* experience in our immediate *present*. It embraces also the *immediate present experience* of every single self - past and future - that *we ever have or could become*.

MACROMEDITATION

This macro-meditation re-interprets the ‘Yoga of Supreme Identity’ (with Shiva or Divine Awareness) associated with Kashmir Shaivism. It is essentially a ‘Mantra of Supreme Identity’ - expressing a series of states of consciousness leading from identification of the ‘I’ with experience to the ‘supreme identification’ – the identification with Divine Awareness as the Awareness Self (*caitanya*matma).

The Mantra of Supreme Identity

1. **I *am* my experience of *This*.**
(...of a particular thought or feeling, of an object or person, of myself or another person).
2. **I am *aware* of experiencing *This*.**
3. **I am *not* my experience of *This*.**
(My awareness of experiencing *This* is distinct from my experience of it).
4. **I am *my* awareness of experiencing *This*.**
(I experience my awareness as my private property).
5. **I am *the* awareness that experiences *This*.**
(I experience my identity as an awareness that is not my private property).
6. ***This* is part of what *It is*.**
(...one experience and expression of the Divine Awareness).
7. ***This* is part of what *I am*.**
(...one experience and expression of the Awareness Self).

The six-stages can be summed up as a three-stage mantra:

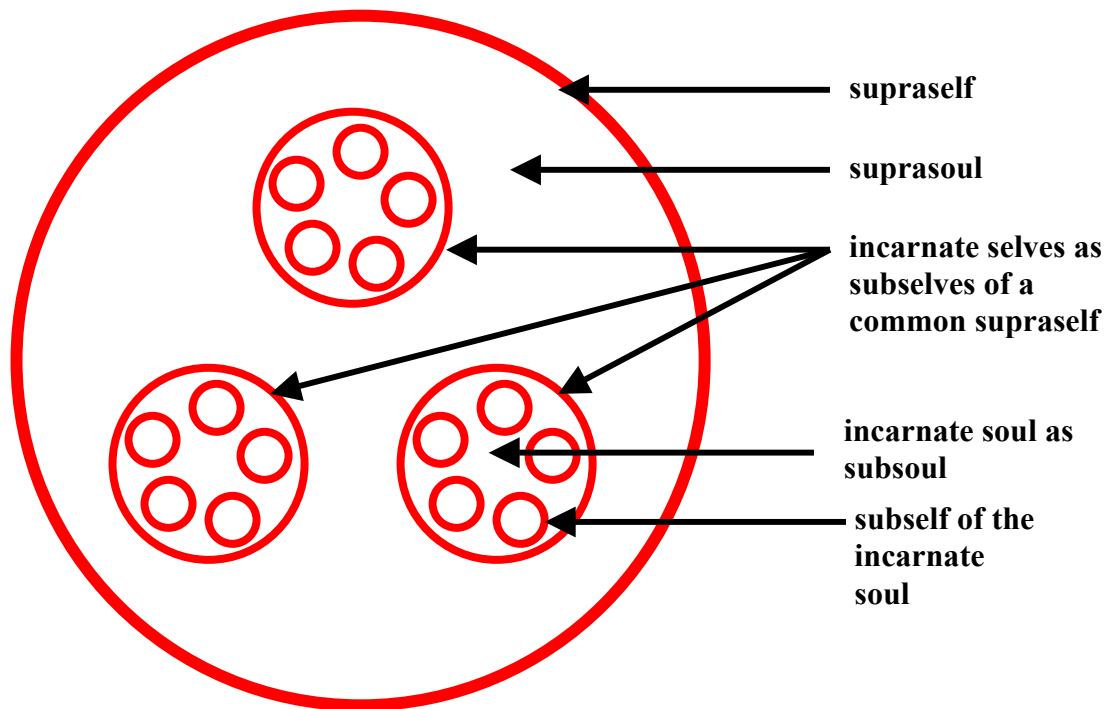
- ***This* is what I am.**
- ***This* is *not* what I am.**
- ***This* is *a part* of what I am.**

‘SELF’ AND ‘SOUL’

The awareness self, quite simply, is our soul – understood as our *self as a whole*. This greater self (*Mahatma*) or ‘supraself’ is not a fixed identity or ‘it’ but an ever-changing field identity or ‘-ing’, a dynamic field of awareness within which countless sub-selves or ‘unit identities’ are ever forming and re-forming, combining in new patterns and exploring new planes of awareness. We are each a sub-self of our whole self or soul. The aim of The New Yoga is to put and keep us in touch with our self as a whole – our soul – feeling it as a supraself linking us to the Divine. Knowing ourselves *as* a part of this supraself, we can freely explore all the countless other ‘subselves’ that form a part of it, but only if we recognise that all such *part selves*, whilst distinct, have no existence separate or *apart from* the self as a whole – the soul.

In Diagram 1 ‘Self’ is the dimension of unit awareness and identity represented by the red circles, and circles within circles. ‘Soul’ is the field dimension of awareness and identity represented by the white spaces of awareness within and around each self. The diagram shows three selves (for example three incarnations) as subselves within the larger soul or awareness space (‘suprasoul’) of a larger identity (‘supraself’). Any given ‘self’ is both a ‘subself’ of its own larger identity or supraself and a ‘supraself’ with its own sub-selves. All selves at all levels take shape continuously and simultaneously as clusters or family groupings (*kula*) of subselves within the souls of their supraselves. For a supraself, all its sub-selves are *co-present* elements or parts of its own spacious soul or awareness space - even though the subselves may appear to one another as each other’s ‘past’ or ‘future’ identities or incarnations. The soul or awareness of our own supraself embraces what appear to us as our ‘past’ and ‘future’ incarnations. It also embraces *parallel* incarnations living in what we take as our own present. All that we take as ‘our’ past and future identities or incarnation, are in essence parallel and simultaneous identities or incarnations of our own supraself. Ultimately no self or identity ‘reincarnates’ in time. Instead all are co-present or parallel incarnations of their own *supraself*, born within the field awareness of their own *suprasoul*.

Diagram 1 ‘Soul’ – white space (field identity) ‘Selves’ – red circles (unit identities)



The whole self or soul, like space itself, is the *field* dimension of both our awareness and our identity (*akula*). The soul is a ‘field self’ that embraces entire groups or families (*kula*) of bounded or ‘unit selves’. Unit selves form themselves in awareness in the same way that *words* do - each letter of the word corresponding to a unique *field-quality* of awareness, and each self, like a word, being a uniquely patterned group or *kula* of such qualities - one that can be arranged, sounded or ‘pronounced’ in countless different ways. Just as we could all rearrange or include new letters in our name, so we can all rearrange or include new letters in the *alphabet of soul-qualities* that makes up our current sense of self or personal *identity*. What is uniquely ‘new’ about The New Yoga is its recognition that soul or awareness has its own innate sensual qualities of tone, shape, colour and texture, and that these sensual soul qualities are the very stuff of which both our bodies and our very self or identity are essentially composed. “We are such stuff as dreams are made on”. All the manifold sensual soul qualities that combine to make up different conscious and subconscious aspects of our worldly self find expression in the *sensory* world of our dreams. Similarly, all the countless *selves* that form part of our larger soul entity each take on their own manifold shapes and forms in that larger world of soul of which our physical reality, physical planet and physical self are just expressions.

OCEANS OF AWARENESS

Entering the soul world takes us beyond the self we know into an infinite realm of *other selves* – inhabiting not only other times and places (reincarnational selves), but countless non-physical planes of awareness. There, those qualities of awareness that make up the very *soul-stuff* of our identity at all levels can take on bodily forms quite impossible to imagine on the earthly plane – except perhaps through the fantastic shapes and colours of deep sea organisms. Our larger soul is like an ocean replete with the countless life forms that arise from it - but with no fixed forms of its own.

The divine awareness field has often been compared to an ocean of awareness. Indeed, the root meaning of the word ‘soul’ (German *Seele*) is ‘those who come from the sea’. But the ocean of awareness is not one in which individuality is dissolved, and in which we are each but one indistinguishable ‘drop in the ocean’. For by its very nature awareness *individualises* itself - giving rise to countless individual selves in the same way that an ocean gives rise to all the countless fish and life forms within it. Our human ego-identity can be compared to an individual fish’s awareness of itself as a being separate and *apart from* the ocean as a whole and the other life forms within it. Our body identity is comparable to a fish’s awareness of itself as *a part of* the ocean as a whole, inseparable from it and connected to other life forms through it. Our innermost self, on the other hand, is comparable only to the *ocean’s own awareness of itself* in the form of each and every individual life form within it.

Each life form in the ocean experiences both the ocean as a whole and all the other life forms within it in its own unique way. A shark’s perception of other sharks, of the ocean as a whole and other life forms such as a squid is in no way the same as that of a squid, or human diver. What *human* beings perceive as the shape and body of a shark is in no way the same as what a squid - or another shark itself - perceives. Similarly, none of us perceive other human beings and the physical environment we seem to share in the same way. Each of us dwells in our own unique field-self, soul or ‘ocean’ of awareness – our ‘great soul’ or *Mahatma*. The ultimate or divine awareness field therefore, is not merely *one* great ocean of awareness but an *ocean of oceans* – of souls great and small. Individual identities *can never be lost* in any ocean

of awareness. Instead they are its very *life*, constantly formed and reformed within it. The divine awareness field (*Shiva*) individualises itself as the soul of each and every being and in this way says ‘I’ to itself. Conversely, the individual soul (*jiva*), recognising its own ‘great soul’ as a *self-expression* of the divine, knows its own essential self or ‘I’ as identical with *Shiva*. The divine awareness field itself *transcends* the duality of divine and individual awareness, *Shiva* and *jiva* - which are neither ‘dual’ nor ‘non-dual’, but *distinct and inseparable* – neither *separate* identities nor merged into one ‘oceanic’ identity lacking all internal distinction.

The awareness self is not a thing but an ‘-ing’. It is *be-ing awareness* - a seamless movement through oceans of awareness. Those oceans are the source of all the countless qualities and intensities of awareness that can shape and colour our *experienced self*. The Awareness Self is the *sustained awareness of experiencing* that makes this seamless movement or Being Awareness possible - freeing us from identification with any particular experience of self and thus making space for an infinite richness of self-experience, coloured by ever-new qualities of awareness.

BODY IDENTITY AND THE THREEFOLD SELF

“The soul is not a unit that is definable. Instead it is an undefinable quality.”

Seth

“Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage - whose name is Self. In your body he dwells. He is your body.”

Friedrich Nietzsche

Awareness alone allows us to feel every *localised* action or sensation, thought or emotion that we are *aware of* as a non-local or ‘field’ *quality of awareness* – as a *soul quality* that permeates and transforms our entire *bodily* sense of self.

When people ask themselves ‘who am I?’, or even ‘how do I feel?’, they generally attend to everything except their immediate *bodily* sense of self – their immediate *sensuous* experience of themselves as opposed to their mental or emotional self-experience. They experience themselves as ‘having’ certain feelings and reflecting on those feelings, but rarely do they focus on *feeling* those feelings in a bodily way. To feel our feelings in a bodily way means asking ourselves where and how we feel those feelings in our body, how they in turn make our bodies feel, and how they make *us* feel – how they alter our bodily sense of *self*. Our bodily sense of self or *body self* is the link between how we *feel* and how *we* feel, between ‘what’ we feel and *who* we feel ourselves to be. The way we feel our body and the way we feel our self go hand in hand. To ‘be a self’ is to be *some-body* in the most literal sense – to experience a definite body identity or bodily sense of self. Our bodily sense of self is therefore the most basic element of our self-experience as a whole. That is why, when we begin to feel unwell, the first sign of this ill-being or ‘dis-ease’ is an overall *bodily* sense of ‘not feeling oneself’. The sense of ill-being or dis-ease associated with ‘not feeling oneself’ can be the first stage in the development of a full blown physical illness or disease or it can lead to ‘mental’ illness of a sort rooted in losing one’s bodily sense of self to the extent of ‘feeling no self’. Alternatively, the dis-ease of ‘not feeling oneself’ can be the prelude to ‘feeling a different self’. Healing, from this point of view, does not consist in finding the physical causes or curing the physical symptoms of dis-ease. Instead the essence of healing lies in passing from simply ‘not feeling oneself’ to ‘feeling another self’ and finding ways to actively affirm, express and *embody* that self.

Our body identity or body self is one of the two main elements of our *experienced self* - the other being our mental self or identity. Our mental identity is the mental idea or ‘image’ we form of ourselves – of who we are or should be. Even a person’s bodily self-image, by virtue of being a mental image, is part of their mental identity. It is the association of a person’s ‘identity’ with their mental identity or *self-image* that leads people to attempt to turn themselves into an image of this image – in particular some *ideal* image of how they ‘should’ feel, or what image they ‘should’ present to others. If this mental image or identity conflicts with their bodily sense of self they are unhappy, they nevertheless do everything possible to live up to it – even if this involves cosmetically or surgically altering their bodies, starving them (anorexia), or

*deaden*ing their bodily sense of self through the use of psychiatric medications. If all else fails they may engage in bodily self-harm or seek to ‘kill themselves’ – which is to say that they seek to kill their physical *bodies*. The problem is that the *self* is nothing that can die or be killed, for its essence is *awareness* and awareness is not a product of the physical body or brain.

It is only through our *soul identity* or awareness self however, that we can experience any such thing as either a ‘mind’ or ‘body’, a mental identity or bodily identity. For whereas our mental self and body self form part of our *experienced self* and in turn colour our experience of the world and other people, our soul identity or awareness self is the ultimate ‘witness’ to all that we experience that constitutes the divine essence of our *experiencing self*. Our soul identity or awareness self is also our *whole self* opposed to any sub-self of that whole. Our soul identity or awareness self is also our body as a whole – our soul body or awareness body. The essential unity of our ‘body identity’ and ‘soul identity’ lies in the fact that there are no aspects of our larger soul identity – whether ‘supraselves’ or ‘subselves’ – that do not have their own distinct *bodily shape and feeling tone*.

Just as our awareness self is a whole self composed of countless identities - sub-selves and supraselves - so is our *body self* as a whole composed of countless *body selves* each corresponding to the different sub- and supraselves that make up our self as a whole – our soul. Any self as a whole is more than the sum of its parts. It is the space of awareness within which these parts emerge and take shape as sub-selves. As a whole, the self is the unity of its parts – its sub-selves or ‘part-selves’. Yet any sub-self or unit identity is also a part of more than *one* whole – more than one ‘supraself’. As a subself or ‘part self’ it is therefore also the *unity* of all the wholes or supraselves of which it forms a part – up to and including the absolute whole, the divine awareness soul. And just as the ‘whole’ self or soul is more than the sum of its parts, so is each ‘part’ self more than a mere subordinate element of this whole. As the *self-expression* of every whole of which it forms a part – up to and including the absolute whole – it *is* that whole. Every element of the *absolute whole* is itself an *absolute part*. It *is* the divine – ‘God’ - by whatever name. For the absolute whole is its very source and soul.

Both our mental and body identity, our mental self-images and body selves are expressions of that larger soul identity that is the awareness self. Our mental and body identities, both multiple, form part of a triune self that includes our soul identity or awareness self – a self that embraces all our mental and body identities.

This Self is the very soul of all that we experience as ‘mind’ and ‘body’. The aim of the Old Yoga was the realisation of a state of ultimate and complete identification with this Self. In The New Yoga however, ‘Self-Realisation’ is not an ultimate state of being but the gateway to a greater life – to the experience of infinite worlds of soul and to infinite identities - an infinite process of ‘Becoming Other’. For identification with our awareness self is what allows us also to explore our own *soul identity* in all its multiple aspects – learning to feel these aspects in a bodily way and to embody them in our everyday lives. Identifying with our soul or awareness self therefore brings us to the threshold of many important new yogas of the soul body or *awareness body*. Through these yogas we can learn to freely alter both our mental *and* our body identity – to quite literally ‘shape-shift’ our soul body in resonance with each and any of countless soul qualities or ‘spirits’ that make up our soul identity.

Our basic *threefold self* – made up of our mental, bodily and soul identity – is at the same time a singular *multiplicity* of selves - each with their own unique mental field-patterns of awareness, each with their own unique bodily form and feeling tone, and each a whole in itself – a unique composite of soul qualities. Your body self is how you feel yourself in your body and how your body feels to you. To *be* who you are is to *body* who you are. For the body is not a ‘thing’ but an ‘-ing’, a continuous process of *body-ing* our innermost self - the awareness self. For that self “every body is my body” (Martin Heidegger), for the awareness self is our link to that divine bodiless awareness that shapes itself into each and every body – that *actively bodies*.

MICROMEDITATIONS

- Imagine a consciousness so vast that its awareness simultaneously embraces *every* aspect of *every* being's experience, not just in their present but at *every* moment in time, and in every dimension of reality in which they exist.
- Imagine this consciousness as a vast space, and this space as a time-space embracing the entirety of all past and future experiencing, actual and possible.
- Know your *entire experience* of yourself, present and past, to be but one expression of that vast consciousness in its vast awareness space.
- Be aware of any feelings you are currently experiencing.
- Be aware of how and where you feel these feelings in your *body* and of how they make your *body* feel as a whole.
- Be aware of how you feel your *body* alters how *you* feel – your sense of *self*.
- Whatever you may be thinking or feeling, focus your awareness on your direct bodily feeling of yourself – your body identity.
- Be aware of how your bodily sense of self is made up of particular bodily tones and textures of awareness.
- Throughout the day, be aware of how your bodily identity *changes* as you move from doing one thing to doing another, being in one place or situation and another, and/or from being with one person or group of people to another.
- Attend to all the *sensuous* qualities that make up your immediate bodily identity or sense of self – such as feelings of lightness or heaviness, brightness or dullness, opaqueness or clear translucency, rigidity or fluidity, solidity or airiness, expansiveness or contractedness, boundedness or unboundedness etc.
- Now attend to how you mentally interpret and thus actually experience these purely sensuous qualities in an emotional way (for example experiencing a sensuous feeling of weight or heaviness as 'sadness' or 'being depressed'), or a sense of lightness and airiness as 'being cheerful' or 'having your spirits up'.
- Aware of *both* your immediate feeling of your self and the way this is *interpreted* through your emotional experience and mental identity – what you feel and think *about* yourself or others, identify with your awareness self – the self that *is* this awareness of both your experienced body identity and its mental-emotional interpretation.

KARIKA

The ultimate answer to the question

‘Who are you?’ is

You are God.

For just as God gave birth to human beings in His dreaming awareness,

So are human beings destined to give rebirth to *Him* in theirs.

God *dreams* Himself anew through all the gods, old and new

That are ever dreamt up within the human soul.

The gods are the *dreamings* of human beings

Through which God Himself is

Destined to *recreate* Himself

Through each and all of us,

Within each and all of us,

As each and all of us.

Your destiny therefore, is not to

Become ‘One’ with God but to *become God*.

For that is what every being most essentially *is*,

Being composed of the stuff of which dreams are made,

That God-stuff of awareness that is

The divine light of *Lord Shiva*.

In its infinite shapes, tones and colours.

Yet for *us* to be able to recreate God through

Our human experiences of the divine awareness,

Through the divine dreamings of our human *souls*,

He Himself had once to become *flesh*.

That is the deepest meaning of

The Christian ‘Son of God’.

The one who declared

I am the light, born

Within darkness.

‘I am Shiva’

Je-Shiva.

Je-Shua.

LESSON 3 – SUMMARY

Guiding Words:

...from awareness of self to the self that is awareness

Questions to ask oneself:

What does it mean to *feel* oneself as opposed to having thoughts and feelings *about* oneself?

Can I allow *what* I feel and experience to affect my sense of self – of *who* I am?

Can I stay with my awareness of my immediate, bodily feeling of myself - rather than interpreting and experiencing this in emotional terms?

Summary of Principles:

We are aware of both a *body self* or identity and a *mental self*.

Both our mental and body identity are aspects of our *experienced self*.

Through *awareness* of our experienced self, we can come to experience our larger self – our *awareness self* as such. The awareness self is our self as a whole – our *soul*.

All experienced selves are ‘subselves’ of this ‘supraself’ as a whole.

Summary of Practices:

Not identifying with one’s mental self.

Being aware of one’s immediate bodily sense of self.

Identifying with one’s awareness self.

Mantra:

“I am not what I think or feel about myself – my self-image.”

“I am the *awareness* of experiencing myself in a particular bodily way.”

GURU IDENTITY

In The New Yoga, as in the old, being *guru* has many dimensions - *guru* being both a *person or persons*, a *practice* exercised through spiritual *powers*, a relational *principle* and a *responsibility* exercised with a definite *purpose*. As a *person*, the *guru* is a human embodiment of the *awareness self*. The *guru* is not simply *another* person however, but one who can also fully see and feel, receive and reflect all that *you* are or could become – your being. For the *practice* of *guru* – that of being, embodying and emanating *awareness* - is one that leads to a supranormal capacity for *becoming other* – for *aware bodily identification* with the souls of others. The *guru* is one who has the necessary powers or *siddhis* to shape-shift their soul body in resonance with anything and anyone, and to merge their soul body with that of others. Through this practice *guru* can both *feel* your soul in their body and also fill your body with the awareness that is *their* soul. The *principle* that defines *guru identity* therefore, is that of educating people in awareness through *mutual devotion and meditation* – the *guru* devoting him- or herself to meditating each disciple's experience *with awareness*, and the disciples in turn meditating the *guru* as an embodiment of their true identity - the divine awareness self within us all. Just as it is the responsibility of the parent to cultivate the healthy development of the child's potentialities and of the adult self latent within the child, so it is the *responsibility* of the *guru* to cultivate the disciple's potentialities of awareness and their own awareness self. To do so requires that the *guru* possess powers of initiation (*diksha*) through which they can both destroy the disciple's accumulation of unaware identifications (*karma*) and endow the disciple with a new and aware experience of self - one based on identification with the divine awareness self. The *purpose* of *guru* and of *diksha* however, is definitely *not* to either annihilate their own *ego-identity*, to inflate it and impose it on others – or to encourage others to surrender it to them. Instead the *guru* is one whose own ego identity and body identity have both become an expression and embodiment of their deeper spiritual identity – the divine awareness self. This unity of outer and inner identities is what they seek for their disciples. Finally, *guru* can be man or woman, but *guru identity* is neither male nor female – and both. Similarly, the *gods* which the *guru* names, invokes and honours through *mantra* may be either male, female or both – for both male *and* female gods are understood as *inseparable* aspects of the divine.

LESSON 3 – GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT TERMS

AGAMA – sacred scripture.

ATMAN – self.

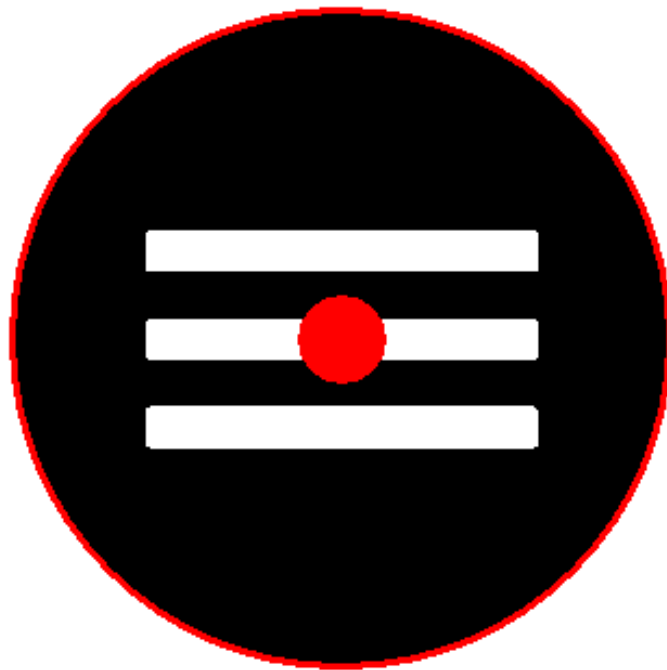
CAITANYAMATMA – awareness self/being awareness.

GURU – a teacher who is a human embodiment of the awareness self.

MAHATMA – ‘great self’ or ‘great soul’ (supraself or suprasoul).

SHIVA SUTRAS – foundational scripture of Kashmir Shaivism.

MANUAL OF THE NEW YOGA



LESSON 3:

THE NEW YOGA OF THE SELF

(MAHATMA YOGA)

**...from awareness of self
to the self that is awareness**

What is 'self'?

“It is not the physical body, as maintained by the common folk and the materialists, not the vital energy (*prana*) as maintained by the followers of the Vedas, not the ascertaining power of the mind as maintained by the *Yogachara* Buddhists, nor the Void, as maintained by the *Madhyamika* Buddhists, but...the Foundational Awareness.”

Kshemaraja, Commentary on the Shiva Sutras

If somebody asks (or I ask myself): how can you believe in Christ and Shiva at the same time? My answer will be a further question: who is Christ? Who is Shiva? And, who am I? Shiva is not a name or any mythological personality, he is the "gracious one", the great Lord (*Parameshvara*), the ultimate Reality (*anuttara*), the most intimate I-consciousness of every conscious being. Christ is not merely the historical personality, otherwise I would not have cared to follow him. He is "the Way, the Life and the Truth" – but not in an exclusive sense; on the contrary. Even beyond that he is essentially the "I am": "Then you will know that 'I am'." How can one limit the "I am" to only one person? Here I learn from Kashmir Shaivism or Ramana Maharshi that the ultimate "I" of every conscious being is the divine "I". The ultimate realization is not of some "objective" truth: "This is He", but the personal discovery: "I am He". In this way every spiritual practice in the inter-religious context leads to a kind of purification from mere conceptions.

Bettina Bäumer: A Journey with the Unknown

Lord, who are you? Do you exist? I can go no further. Are you other than this brother in whose face my face is reflected? Are you some other 'thing' than the water, the earth, the fire and everything that is made of 'them'? The Grund (ground) which is in the depth of myself, in the depth of everything - is it a face, is it a Thou that sees itself as myself, and I who makes me to be in addressing me? Are you other than this mystery, this Brahman, in the depth of myself, of everything? I mean, are you other than a sheer mystery that cannot be named? This I, this You, is it a projection of myself, a final effort to preserve myself over against you? Are you Isvara (Lord)? Are you Purusha? Are you Krishna? Are you Jesus? Are you something other, other than myself? In that light which is beyond the darkness, do you still appear? Or else have you disappeared in the light? Or are you the very light that surrounds me, that permeates me, that absorbs me? The Logos appears only long enough to light up the descent into the cave: *guha*. Then there exists only the one who is within (*guhantara*) and who is the within itself.. In the depth of the inner cave (*guha*) there is no name and equally no non-name, neither Shiva nor Jesus!

Abhishiktananda: Ascent to the Depth of the Heart.

...identity is not an 'it' but an 'ing', it is what is happening, which includes many reoccurring states along with rapidly changing states, where the reoccurring states themselves can change over longer periods of time, and the rapidly changing states could display intricate patterns of change that are in fact quite repetitious.

Michael Kosok: The Singularity of Awareness

Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage - whose name is Self. In your body he dwells. He is your body.

Friedrich Nietzsche

All consciousness is interrelated. It flows together in currents, rises and falls, eddies and breaks, mixes and merges. Your own purposes, intents, and desires, attract to you those other 'fragments' of consciousness that mix and match to form your psychological being, as, for example, atoms and molecules mix and merge to form your physical being.

Seth, in The Afterlife Journal of an American Philosopher by Jane Roberts

You tie yourself in knots, so to speak. You think so rigidly of concerns that are *primarily* insignificant to you, as a *whole* self, and make a fetish of them. You identify, despite your knowledge, mainly with the ego.

The ego, whilst always changing, is one of the most rigid aspects of identity. To the inner self, neither house nor walls exist. They are perceived only as vague, self-limiting ideas on the ego's part.

The ego is the only part of the self that regards physical objects as anything but symbols. Death simply does not exist to the whole personality. Only the physically-oriented portions of the self accept this as a finality.

Communication exists between all portions of the self, and all parts of the personality, or all parts of the whole self, rather, operate as what you might call a supraself.

An awareness of the existence of the supraself is in itself of great benefit.

There is an inherent knowledge within each individual of the supraself's existence, and its image is indelibly imprinted. It is the desired and sought-after model against which you psychically measure your present self.

Whenever you use abilities that to you seem *supernormal*, you are drawing upon the ability of the supraself. It is the whole 'I' as yet more than the sum of its parts. It is action, *highly* aware, and quite able to change its components.

All the personalities within it are independent and survive as themselves, yet it is only part of a larger identity - which is to say that it itself is within the sphere of another psychological organisation system or gestalt.

The supraself is...a part of a higher gestalt, which is part of yet another higher consciousness-gestalt. It however, retains its identity whilst partaking to the extent of its desire and ability in the superior aspects of this larger gestalt. Even as *you*, according to your desire and ability, can partake of the superior qualities of your supraself.

You...are not the low man on the totem pole, however. There are lesser, so to speak, personalities, within every dominant physical personality...To these the physical personality would seem like a supraself.

Seth, in The Early Sessions, Book 7

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FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS

Who am I? Who are You?

How do you experience what and who you are – your ‘identity’?

How do you ‘know’ who you are?

If you do, can you have selves unknown to you?

Does ‘knowing’ who you are mean having a mental idea or image of yourself, or can you *feel* yourself directly?

If you can sense or experience your ‘self’ directly, who or what is the experiencing self – the self with which you sense yourself?

How can anyone say ‘That’s just who I am’ or alternatively ‘That’s just *not me*’?

How do you separate your inner experience of self from your experience of the outer world and other people?

Where are the boundaries of the self - of identity?

How can you feel an emotion in another person without feeling it in yourself?

If so, how can we regard feelings – or any types of experience – as the private property of self or other?

Is your identity your ‘private property’? If so what or who is the self of yours that it is the property of?

How can you objectify your subjective experience of yourself, and if so, what is the self that seeks to make yourself into an object?

Who is the self we experience subjectively or are aware of?

Who or what is the self that is aware – that is this awareness?

Whenever your mood changes and you feel different, is the ‘you’ that feels different the same ‘you’ that experiences a previous mood, or is it a different ‘you’ – is the mood not a different feeling of *who* you are?

How can you separate *what* you feel from how *you* feel - from *who* you feel yourself to be? If you can, what ‘you’ is making the separation?

How do your everyday actions and interactions affect or alter your sense of self?

What does it mean to say something like you’re not ‘feeling yourself’ today’?

What does it mean to act in a way that is ‘like’ or ‘unlike’ yourself?

**What does it mean to say ‘You feel split’, if not that you are aware of two ‘yours’?
What does it mean to ‘be’ or ‘become’ who one is?**

What shapes your sense of self in the first place?

Is your sense of self something shaped by your childhood, family and social environment, pre-determined by God or fate, pre-programmed in your genes, or pre-wired in your brain?

Do you have something like an enduring deep identity or sense of self?

What does it mean to have no sense of self, or to ‘lose yourself’ in something?

Are we all One? If so, what makes people similar and/or different?

What makes you and others ‘the same’ and/or ‘different’ at different times?

What makes you feel yourself or ‘not yourself’, similar or different to yourself?

What makes you and others seem ‘the same’ at different times, in different situations and with different people?

Is your identity something you were born with, that you are bound to, and that is bounded by your current physical body?

If you have more than one life, more than one body, more than one self, what is the larger self or soul that embraces them all?

And how will you experience this larger soul and its multiple selves - in the afterlife?

Can you experience it in this life, within your current body?

Do all things have a sense of self, not just human beings, but animals, plants and even seemingly inanimate objects?

Is God a being with an identity or sense of self? Are gods beings with their own identities or selves?

What is the relation between human beings’ images, ideas and experience of ‘self’ (and/or different selves), and their images, ideas and experience of ‘God’ (and/or different gods)?

What is the relation between your concepts and experience of self and your concepts and experience (or non-experience) of God?

What is the relation between your experience of your body and your experience of both your self and the world, both God and nature, things and other beings?

What is the relation between ‘mind’ and ‘body’, our mental identity and our bodily sense of self - and what then is our ‘soul’?

INTRODUCTION

There are individuals in this world - both many and rare - who are *aware* that their experience is imbued with far greater dimensions of their identity or being and far greater dimensions of *meaning* than they can comprehend or creatively express in their lives. Being aware of this deeper meaning they become 'seekers' – ever searching for frameworks of comprehension or creative expression. Alternatively they may use extreme *intensities of experience* to give expression to felt meanings they cannot comprehend or creatively express. Indeed they may devote whole lifetimes to seeking these frameworks of creativity and comprehension - or to expressing the deeper meaning they feel in life through 'extreme' experiencing. Others, being completely *unaware* of these deeper dimensions of meaning - and/or being *terrified* of the intensities of experiencing through which they may find expression - may seek to completely deny and invalidate them. This often leaves those individuals who hold to their own profound sense of meaning – those who know that there is more to life than science and society acknowledge - even more overwhelmed by the *experiences* through which they seek to give it expression, and even more isolated by the apparently 'abnormal' behaviours that these experiences may lead to. Yet such socially 'abnormal' behaviour is nothing but a desperate attempt on the part of such individuals to seek recognition or understanding of the meaning expressed in their experiences. All they tend to get in return however, is social ostracism or labelling, not least through medicine and psychiatry – this being society's primary tool for the social suppression of *felt meaning*, achieved through medications designed to dull the individual's intensity of experiencing or block its behavioural expression. This compounds their accompanying sense of never being sure of what and who they *are* - for receiving no recognition of the deeper *meaning* they sense in their experience neither can they feel their own deeper *being* or self. Paradoxically however, individuals *aware* that there is deeper meaning to all that they experience are often *not* aware that the meaning they seek can be found in that very *awareness*. *Not* being aware that their innermost being *is* that very awareness of meaning – as it is felt in an immediate bodily way - their only way of *holding on to meaning in their lives* and to a sense of their inner being or *identity* is to continue to *identify* with their intense emotional experiencing and the behaviours they act it out through.

IDENTITY, DIFFERENCE AND RELATION

Modern 'scientific' psychology of personal identity has no concept of the *subjectively sensed self*. Instead it seeks to reduce identity to a set of objectifiable 'traits' or behaviours ultimately rooted in our genes. At the same time modern social culture reduces the subjective self to the individual's mental 'self-image'. As a result individuals seek to turn themselves into *an image of this image* – an image of how they are or wish *to be seen* by others from the outside - objectively. The question of how they wish to feel themselves and their bodies from within – subjectively - simply does not come into play, but is instead made dependent on the external image of themselves and of their bodies that they can mentally construct or cosmetically *shape*. Our sense of the *inner* human being is made into something entirely dependent on our *image* of the outer human being. The possibility of gaining a direct *inner* sense of the outer human being – let alone the inner human being – is quite simply excluded. Hence people's overriding concern of how they *are seen by others* - a concern that evaporates the moment they choose to really *see the other* – not simply as they present themselves on the outside but in a feeling way - as they *sense themselves* from within. As long as we focus on our own feelings and are concerned as to how others see *us*, we cannot truly see the other in a feeling way. *Relating* is reduced to *reacting* to the external image others have of us, using a counter-image either of ourselves or of the other. This purely external and *reactive* mode of relating ends up depriving both self and other of any sense of *inner* contact with either themselves or one another. And yet this is precisely what both seek in their innermost psyche or *soul* - a word that, paradoxically, no longer has any place in the so-called 'psychology' of self or of personal identity, simply because it is nothing we can objectify, measure or reduce to a labelled set of 'individual differences'. Subjectively however, our *inner experience* of another person – in contrast to the *outer image* we have of them - is nothing neatly separable from our inner experience of ourselves. Nor is it reducible to an experience of similarities and/or differences. Instead every experience of *others* is one of similarity-in-difference or *simference*. What we like to see simply as another person's sameness *or* difference is the meaningful awareness of a certain *sameness* being expressed in a *different* way. It is this that subverts our fixed sense of ego-identity – our *idea* of identity as the private property of a self entirely separate from others.

AWARENESS, EXPERIENCE AND IDENTITY

The problem is basically that the state of awareness one is experiencing takes on the form of “ownership” of that awareness. The experience of awareness “is mine” one tends to say, and not someone else’s because my individual personal self is somehow unique as a separate state only through all kinds of sharing.

Michael Kosok, The Singularity of Awareness

You are *all* that you experience, and *nothing* that you experience. For all experiencing emerges from and within an abiding and unbounded space or field of awareness that cannot be reduced to anything experienced within it – even your experienced ‘self’. The true Self is the experiencing self. That self does not possess awareness. It *is* awareness. For the Self that *is* awareness however, all experiencing is *both* an expression and experience of itself and something intrinsically distinct from it – something fundamentally *other*. If we *experience* awareness as “mine” however - as the private property of our own *experienced* self - we immediately lose contact with this experiencing self, the Self that does not possess but *is* awareness.

Feelings of *loss* of identity and of *alienation* from all that we experience are but the flip side of the recognition that all experiencing is something quite *other* than this experiencing *Self*. Suddenly everything, including our experienced self, appears other or ‘alien’ to what we essentially are. And yet we still do not *know* who we are, for we continue to seek a sense of identity only through identification with an old or new *experience* of ourselves, with a part self rather than our self as a whole – our soul. We still have not found that Self whose nature is nothing but awareness itself. The greater our *identification* with any experienced self therefore - and the more we experience awareness as the private property of our experienced self - the greater the degree of personality ‘breakdown’ and *loss* of identity that is felt when this identification breaks down. *Awareness of experiencing* is the key to gaining an entirely new sense of identity, one in which we no longer *experience awareness* as something that is “mine” or “yours”, but instead recognise everything we experience as something fundamentally *other* than the trans-personal awareness that is our divine *awareness self*. Awareness *belongs* to none of us. Instead we all belong to It. Yet this ‘It’ is nothing impersonal but the very source of our personhood in all its aspects.

‘CAITANYAMATMA’

The *Shiva Sutras* are the foundational ‘scripture’ or treatise of tantric religious and metaphysical psychology. Its first line or *sutra* is a single word in Sanskrit – but a word that in itself makes a quite extraordinary statement - an *infinite statement*. The word is *Caitanyamatma*. What this one compound word *says* is that the awareness (*caitanya*) of a being with awareness (*cetana*) is the very self (*atman*) of that being. *Caitanyamatma* (‘being-awareness-self’) can therefore be translated as ‘being awareness’ or ‘awareness self’. Its profound message is - ‘being a self’ *means* ‘being aware’. True selfhood means *being awareness* - identifying with awareness as one’s very being or self. Yet ‘being awareness’ is not a static mode of being, and nor is the ‘awareness self’ any sort of *fixed* identity. For as our very *awareness* of all that we *experience*, the awareness self is what allows us to “become our feelings” *without* either being *overwhelmed* by those feelings or *losing* ourselves in them. *Caitanyamatma* - ‘being awareness’ - means that no matter how many selves we experience through becoming our feelings, we never lose a sense of that Self that *is* the awareness of those feelings, that *is* the awareness of those selves and of the very *activity* of becoming them. *Caitanyamatma* – the awareness self - is that ‘Self’ which, paradoxically, is continuously ‘Becoming Other’, whilst never ceasing to silently *abide in* (to ‘Be’) its very Awareness of doing so. This Self, the Awareness Self, the Self that *is* Awareness – *Caitanyamatma* – is also a Self that can freely *choose* to *identify or dis-identify* with any element of its self-experience. Its *freedom* of activity is like that of an actor or actress who can freely *choose* to act any of countless parts. *Not* an actor or actress pretending that their ‘off-stage’ or ‘everyday’ identity is their real identity – rather than another part or set of parts (part-selves). *Nor* an actor or actress who no longer knows who they are *outside* the parts they choose to act, but one who is able to identify with the *divine actor or agent*. That divine agent *is* the awareness self – a ‘field identity’ that embraces *every* single self or ‘unit identity’ that one is or can become - *every* self, actual or potential, that it can *freely and creatively* act and actualise. In its vast awareness it embraces not only the self we *currently* experience in our immediate *present*. It embraces also the *immediate present experience* of every single self - past and future - that *we ever have or could become*.

MACROMEDITATION

This macro-meditation re-interprets the ‘Yoga of Supreme Identity’ (with Shiva or Divine Awareness) associated with Kashmir Shaivism. It is essentially a ‘Mantra of Supreme Identity’ - expressing a series of states of consciousness leading from identification of the ‘I’ with experience to the ‘supreme identification’ – the identification with Divine Awareness as the Awareness Self (*caitanyamatma*).

The Mantra of Supreme Identity

1. **I *am* my experience of *This*.**
(...of a particular thought or feeling, of an object or person, of myself or another person).
2. **I am *aware* of experiencing *This*.**
3. **I am *not* my experience of *This*.**
(My awareness of experiencing *This* is distinct from my experience of it).
4. **I am *my* awareness of experiencing *This*.**
(I experience my awareness as my private property).
5. **I am *the* awareness that experiences *This*.**
(I experience my identity as an awareness that is not my private property).
6. ***This* is part of what *It is*.**
(...one experience and expression of the Divine Awareness).
7. ***This* is part of what *I am*.**
(...one experience and expression of the Awareness Self).

The six-stages can be summed up as a three-stage mantra:

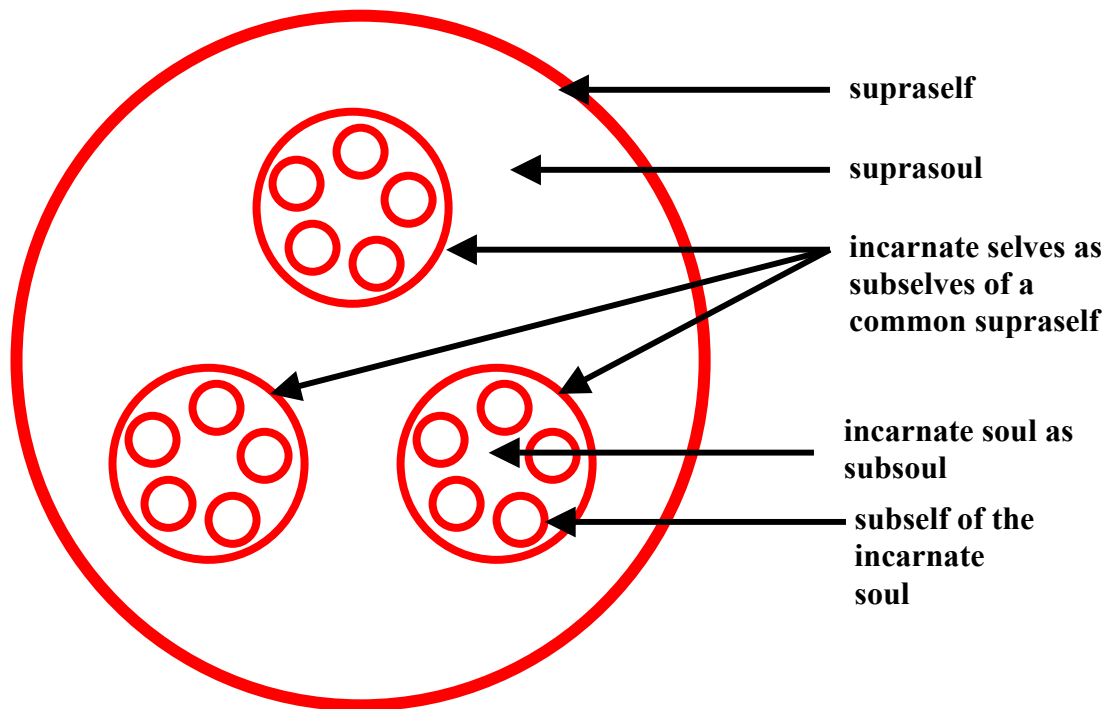
- ***This* is what I am.**
- ***This* is *not* what I am.**
- ***This* is *a part* of what I am.**

‘SELF’ AND ‘SOUL’

The awareness self, quite simply, is our soul – understood as our *self as a whole*. This greater self (*Mahatma*) or ‘supraself’ is not a fixed identity or ‘it’ but an ever-changing field identity or ‘-ing’, a dynamic field of awareness within which countless sub-selves or ‘unit identities’ are ever forming and re-forming, combining in new patterns and exploring new planes of awareness. We are each a sub-self of our whole self or soul. The aim of The New Yoga is to put and keep us in touch with our self as a whole – our soul – feeling it as a supraself linking us to the Divine. Knowing ourselves *as* a part of this supraself, we can freely explore all the countless other ‘subselves’ that form a part of it, but only if we recognise that all such *part selves*, whilst distinct, have no existence separate or *apart from* the self as a whole – the soul.

In Diagram 1 ‘Self’ is the dimension of unit awareness and identity represented by the red circles, and circles within circles. ‘Soul’ is the field dimension of awareness and identity represented by the white spaces of awareness within and around each self. The diagram shows three selves (for example three incarnations) as subselves within the larger soul or awareness space (‘suprasoul’) of a larger identity (‘supraself’). Any given ‘self’ is both a ‘subself’ of its own larger identity or supraself and a ‘supraself’ with its own sub-selves. All selves at all levels take shape continuously and simultaneously as clusters or family groupings (*kula*) of subselves within the souls of their supraselves. For a supraself, all its sub-selves are *co-present* elements or parts of its own spacious soul or awareness space - even though the subselves may appear to one another as each other’s ‘past’ or ‘future’ identities or incarnations. The soul or awareness of our own supraself embraces what appear to us as our ‘past’ and ‘future’ incarnations. It also embraces *parallel* incarnations living in what we take as our own present. All that we take as ‘our’ past and future identities or incarnation, are in essence parallel and simultaneous identities or incarnations of our own supraself. Ultimately no self or identity ‘reincarnates’ in time. Instead all are co-present or parallel incarnations of their own *supraself*, born within the field awareness of their own *suprasoul*.

Diagram 1 ‘Soul’ – white space (field identity) ‘Selves’ – red circles (unit identities)



The whole self or soul, like space itself, is the *field* dimension of both our awareness and our identity (*akula*). The soul is a ‘field self’ that embraces entire groups or families (*kula*) of bounded or ‘unit selves’. Unit selves form themselves in awareness in the same way that *words* do - each letter of the word corresponding to a unique *field-quality* of awareness, and each self, like a word, being a uniquely patterned group or *kula* of such qualities - one that can be arranged, sounded or ‘pronounced’ in countless different ways. Just as we could all rearrange or include new letters in our name, so we can all rearrange or include new letters in the *alphabet of soul-qualities* that makes up our current sense of self or personal *identity*. What is uniquely ‘new’ about The New Yoga is its recognition that soul or awareness has its own innate sensual qualities of tone, shape, colour and texture, and that these sensual soul qualities are the very stuff of which both our bodies and our very self or identity are essentially composed. “We are such stuff as dreams are made on”. All the manifold sensual soul qualities that combine to make up different conscious and subconscious aspects of our worldly self find expression in the *sensory* world of our dreams. Similarly, all the countless *selves* that form part of our larger soul entity each take on their own manifold shapes and forms in that larger world of soul of which our physical reality, physical planet and physical self are just expressions.

OCEANS OF AWARENESS

Entering the soul world takes us beyond the self we know into an infinite realm of *other selves* – inhabiting not only other times and places (reincarnational selves), but countless non-physical planes of awareness. There, those qualities of awareness that make up the very *soul-stuff* of our identity at all levels can take on bodily forms quite impossible to imagine on the earthly plane – except perhaps through the fantastic shapes and colours of deep sea organisms. Our larger soul is like an ocean replete with the countless life forms that arise from it - but with no fixed forms of its own.

The divine awareness field has often been compared to an ocean of awareness. Indeed, the root meaning of the word ‘soul’ (German *Seele*) is ‘those who come from the sea’. But the ocean of awareness is not one in which individuality is dissolved, and in which we are each but one indistinguishable ‘drop in the ocean’. For by its very nature awareness *individualises* itself - giving rise to countless individual selves in the same way that an ocean gives rise to all the countless fish and life forms within it. Our human ego-identity can be compared to an individual fish’s awareness of itself as a being separate and *apart from* the ocean as a whole and the other life forms within it. Our body identity is comparable to a fish’s awareness of itself as *a part of* the ocean as a whole, inseparable from it and connected to other life forms through it. Our innermost self, on the other hand, is comparable only to the *ocean’s own awareness of itself* in the form of each and every individual life form within it.

Each life form in the ocean experiences both the ocean as a whole and all the other life forms within it in its own unique way. A shark’s perception of other sharks, of the ocean as a whole and other life forms such as a squid is in no way the same as that of a squid, or human diver. What *human* beings perceive as the shape and body of a shark is in no way the same as what a squid - or another shark itself - perceives. Similarly, none of us perceive other human beings and the physical environment we seem to share in the same way. Each of us dwells in our own unique field-self, soul or ‘ocean’ of awareness – our ‘great soul’ or *Mahatma*. The ultimate or divine awareness field therefore, is not merely *one* great ocean of awareness but an *ocean of oceans* – of souls great and small. Individual identities *can never be lost* in any ocean

of awareness. Instead they are its very *life*, constantly formed and reformed within it. The divine awareness field (*Shiva*) individualises itself as the soul of each and every being and in this way says ‘I’ to itself. Conversely, the individual soul (*jiva*), recognising its own ‘great soul’ as a *self-expression* of the divine, knows its own essential self or ‘I’ as identical with *Shiva*. The divine awareness field itself *transcends* the duality of divine and individual awareness, *Shiva* and *jiva* - which are neither ‘dual’ nor ‘non-dual’, but *distinct and inseparable* – neither *separate* identities nor merged into one ‘oceanic’ identity lacking all internal distinction.

The awareness self is not a thing but an ‘-ing’. It is *be-ing awareness* - a seamless movement through oceans of awareness. Those oceans are the source of all the countless qualities and intensities of awareness that can shape and colour our *experienced self*. The Awareness Self is the *sustained awareness of experiencing* that makes this seamless movement or Being Awareness possible - freeing us from identification with any particular experience of self and thus making space for an infinite richness of self-experience, coloured by ever-new qualities of awareness.

BODY IDENTITY AND THE THREEFOLD SELF

“The soul is not a unit that is definable. Instead it is an undefinable quality.”

Seth

“Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage - whose name is Self. In your body he dwells. He is your body.”

Friedrich Nietzsche

Awareness alone allows us to feel every *localised* action or sensation, thought or emotion that we are *aware of* as a non-local or ‘field’ *quality of awareness* – as a *soul quality* that permeates and transforms our entire *bodily* sense of self.

When people ask themselves ‘who am I?’, or even ‘how do I feel?’, they generally attend to everything except their immediate *bodily* sense of self – their immediate *sensuous* experience of themselves as opposed to their mental or emotional self-experience. They experience themselves as ‘having’ certain feelings and reflecting on those feelings, but rarely do they focus on *feeling* those feelings in a bodily way. To feel our feelings in a bodily way means asking ourselves where and how we feel those feelings in our body, how they in turn make our bodies feel, and how they make *us* feel – how they alter our bodily sense of *self*. Our bodily sense of self or *body self* is the link between how we *feel* and how *we* feel, between ‘what’ we feel and *who* we feel ourselves to be. The way we feel our body and the way we feel our self go hand in hand. To ‘be a self’ is to be *some-body* in the most literal sense – to experience a definite body identity or bodily sense of self. Our bodily sense of self is therefore the most basic element of our self-experience as a whole. That is why, when we begin to feel unwell, the first sign of this ill-being or ‘dis-ease’ is an overall *bodily* sense of ‘not feeling oneself’. The sense of ill-being or dis-ease associated with ‘not feeling oneself’ can be the first stage in the development of a full blown physical illness or disease or it can lead to ‘mental’ illness of a sort rooted in losing one’s bodily sense of self to the extent of ‘feeling no self’. Alternatively, the dis-ease of ‘not feeling oneself’ can be the prelude to ‘feeling a different self’. Healing, from this point of view, does not consist in finding the physical causes or curing the physical symptoms of dis-ease. Instead the essence of healing lies in passing from simply ‘not feeling oneself’ to ‘feeling another self’ and finding ways to actively affirm, express and *embody* that self.

Our body identity or body self is one of the two main elements of our *experienced self* - the other being our mental self or identity. Our mental identity is the mental idea or ‘image’ we form of ourselves – of who we are or should be. Even a person’s bodily self-image, by virtue of being a mental image, is part of their mental identity. It is the association of a person’s ‘identity’ with their mental identity or *self-image* that leads people to attempt to turn themselves into an image of this image – in particular some *ideal* image of how they ‘should’ feel, or what image they ‘should’ present to others. If this mental image or identity conflicts with their bodily sense of self they are unhappy, they nevertheless do everything possible to live up to it – even if this involves cosmetically or surgically altering their bodies, starving them (anorexia), or

deadening their bodily sense of self through the use of psychiatric medications. If all else fails they may engage in bodily self-harm or seek to ‘kill themselves’ – which is to say that they seek to kill their physical *bodies*. The problem is that the *self* is nothing that can die or be killed, for its essence is *awareness* and awareness is not a product of the physical body or brain.

It is only through our *soul identity* or awareness self however, that we can experience any such thing as either a ‘mind’ or ‘body’, a mental identity or bodily identity. For whereas our mental self and body self form part of our *experienced self* and in turn colour our experience of the world and other people, our soul identity or awareness self is the ultimate ‘witness’ to all that we experience that constitutes the divine essence of our *experiencing self*. Our soul identity or awareness self is also our *whole self* opposed to any sub-self of that whole. Our soul identity or awareness self is also our body as a whole – our soul body or awareness body. The essential unity of our ‘body identity’ and ‘soul identity’ lies in the fact that there are no aspects of our larger soul identity – whether ‘supraselves’ or ‘subselves’ – that do not have their own distinct *bodily shape and feeling tone*.

Just as our awareness self is a whole self composed of countless identities - sub-selves and supraselves - so is our *body self* as a whole composed of countless *body selves* each corresponding to the different sub- and supraselves that make up our self as a whole – our soul. Any self as a whole is more than the sum of its parts. It is the space of awareness within which these parts emerge and take shape as sub-selves. As a whole, the self is the unity of its parts – its sub-selves or ‘part-selves’. Yet any sub-self or unit identity is also a part of more than *one* whole – more than one ‘supraself’. As a subself or ‘part self’ it is therefore also the *unity* of all the wholes or supraselves of which it forms a part – up to and including the absolute whole, the divine awareness soul. And just as the ‘whole’ self or soul is more than the sum of its parts, so is each ‘part’ self more than a mere subordinate element of this whole. As the *self-expression* of every whole of which it forms a part – up to and including the absolute whole – it *is* that whole. Every element of the *absolute whole* is itself an *absolute part*. It *is* the divine – ‘God’ - by whatever name. For the absolute whole is its very source and soul.

Both our mental and body identity, our mental self-images and body selves are expressions of that larger soul identity that is the awareness self. Our mental and body identities, both multiple, form part of a triune self that includes our soul identity or awareness self – a self that embraces all our mental and body identities.

This Self is the very soul of all that we experience as ‘mind’ and ‘body’. The aim of the Old Yoga was the realisation of a state of ultimate and complete identification with this Self. In The New Yoga however, ‘Self-Realisation’ is not an ultimate state of being but the gateway to a greater life – to the experience of infinite worlds of soul and to infinite identities - an infinite process of ‘Becoming Other’. For identification with our awareness self is what allows us also to explore our own *soul identity* in all its multiple aspects – learning to feel these aspects in a bodily way and to embody them in our everyday lives. Identifying with our soul or awareness self therefore brings us to the threshold of many important new yogas of the soul body or *awareness body*. Through these yogas we can learn to freely alter both our mental *and* our body identity – to quite literally ‘shape-shift’ our soul body in resonance with each and any of countless soul qualities or ‘spirits’ that make up our soul identity.

Our basic *threefold self* – made up of our mental, bodily and soul identity – is at the same time a singular *multiplicity* of selves - each with their own unique mental field-patterns of awareness, each with their own unique bodily form and feeling tone, and each a whole in itself – a unique composite of soul qualities. Your body self is how you feel yourself in your body and how your body feels to you. To *be* who you are is to *body* who you are. For the body is not a ‘thing’ but an ‘-ing’, a continuous process of *body-ing* our innermost self - the awareness self. For that self “every body is my body” (Martin Heidegger), for the awareness self is our link to that divine bodiless awareness that shapes itself into each and every body – that *actively bodies*.

MICROMEDITATIONS

- Imagine a consciousness so vast that its awareness simultaneously embraces *every* aspect of *every* being's experience, not just in their present but at *every* moment in time, and in every dimension of reality in which they exist.
- Imagine this consciousness as a vast space, and this space as a time-space embracing the entirety of all past and future experiencing, actual and possible.
- Know your *entire experience* of yourself, present and past, to be but one expression of that vast consciousness in its vast awareness space.
- Be aware of any feelings you are currently experiencing.
- Be aware of how and where you feel these feelings in your *body* and of how they make your *body* feel as a whole.
- Be aware of how you feel your *body* alters how *you* feel – your sense of *self*.
- Whatever you may be thinking or feeling, focus your awareness on your direct bodily feeling of yourself – your body identity.
- Be aware of how your bodily sense of self is made up of particular bodily tones and textures of awareness.
- Throughout the day, be aware of how your bodily identity *changes* as you move from doing one thing to doing another, being in one place or situation and another, and/or from being with one person or group of people to another.
- Attend to all the *sensuous* qualities that make up your immediate bodily identity or sense of self – such as feelings of lightness or heaviness, brightness or dullness, opaqueness or clear translucency, rigidity or fluidity, solidity or airiness, expansiveness or contractedness, boundedness or unboundedness etc.
- Now attend to how you mentally interpret and thus actually experience these purely sensuous qualities in an emotional way (for example experiencing a sensuous feeling of weight or heaviness as 'sadness' or 'being depressed'), or a sense of lightness and airiness as 'being cheerful' or 'having your spirits up'.
- Aware of *both* your immediate feeling of your self and the way this is *interpreted* through your emotional experience and mental identity – what you feel and think *about* yourself or others, identify with your awareness self – the self that *is* this awareness of both your experienced body identity and its mental-emotional interpretation.

KARIKA

The ultimate answer to the question

‘Who are you?’ is

You are God.

For just as God gave birth to human beings in His dreaming awareness,

So are human beings destined to give rebirth to *Him* in theirs.

God *dreams* Himself anew through all the gods, old and new

That are ever dreamt up within the human soul.

The gods are the *dreamings* of human beings

Through which God Himself is

Destined to *recreate* Himself

Through each and all of us,

Within each and all of us,

As each and all of us.

Your destiny therefore, is not to

Become ‘One’ with God but to *become God*.

For that is what every being most essentially *is*,

Being composed of the stuff of which dreams are made,

That God-stuff of awareness that is

The divine light of *Lord Shiva*.

In its infinite shapes, tones and colours.

Yet for *us* to be able to recreate God through

Our human experiences of the divine awareness,

Through the divine dreamings of our human *souls*,

He Himself had once to become *flesh*.

That is the deepest meaning of

The Christian ‘Son of God’.

The one who declared

I am the light, born

Within darkness.

‘I am Shiva’

Je-Shiva.

Je-Shua.

LESSON 3 – SUMMARY

Guiding Words:

...from awareness of self to the self that is awareness

Questions to ask oneself:

What does it mean to *feel* oneself as opposed to having thoughts and feelings *about* oneself?

Can I allow *what* I feel and experience to affect my sense of self – of *who* I am?

Can I stay with my awareness of my immediate, bodily feeling of myself - rather than interpreting and experiencing this in emotional terms?

Summary of Principles:

We are aware of both a *body self* or identity and a *mental self*.

Both our mental and body identity are aspects of our *experienced self*.

Through *awareness* of our experienced self, we can come to experience our larger self – our *awareness self* as such. The awareness self is our self as a whole – our *soul*.

All experienced selves are ‘subselves’ of this ‘supraself’ as a whole.

Summary of Practices:

Not identifying with one’s mental self.

Being aware of one’s immediate bodily sense of self.

Identifying with one’s awareness self.

Mantra:

“I am not what I think or feel about myself – my self-image.”

“I am the *awareness* of experiencing myself in a particular bodily way.”

GURU IDENTITY

In The New Yoga, as in the old, being *guru* has many dimensions - *guru* being both a *person or persons*, a *practice* exercised through spiritual *powers*, a relational *principle* and a *responsibility* exercised with a definite *purpose*. As a *person*, the *guru* is a human embodiment of the *awareness self*. The *guru* is not simply *another* person however, but one who can also fully see and feel, receive and reflect all that *you* are or could become – your being. For the *practice* of *guru* – that of being, embodying and emanating *awareness* - is one that leads to a supranormal capacity for *becoming other* – for *aware bodily identification* with the souls of others. The *guru* is one who has the necessary powers or *siddhis* to shape-shift their soul body in resonance with anything and anyone, and to merge their soul body with that of others. Through this practice *guru* can both *feel* your soul in their body and also fill your body with the awareness that is *their* soul. The *principle* that defines *guru identity* therefore, is that of educating people in awareness through *mutual devotion and meditation* – the *guru* devoting him- or herself to meditating each disciple's experience *with awareness*, and the disciples in turn meditating the *guru* as an embodiment of their true identity - the divine awareness self within us all. Just as it is the responsibility of the parent to cultivate the healthy development of the child's potentialities and of the adult self latent within the child, so it is the *responsibility* of the *guru* to cultivate the disciple's potentialities of awareness and their own awareness self. To do so requires that the *guru* possess powers of initiation (*diksha*) through which they can both destroy the disciple's accumulation of unaware identifications (*karma*) and endow the disciple with a new and aware experience of self - one based on identification with the divine awareness self. The *purpose* of *guru* and of *diksha* however, is definitely *not* to either annihilate their own *ego-identity*, to inflate it and impose it on others – or to encourage others to surrender it to them. Instead the *guru* is one whose own ego identity and body identity have both become an expression and embodiment of their deeper spiritual identity – the divine awareness self. This unity of outer and inner identities is what they seek for their disciples. Finally, *guru* can be man or woman, but *guru identity* is neither male nor female – and both. Similarly, the *gods* which the *guru* names, invokes and honours through *mantra* may be either male, female or both – for both male *and* female gods are understood as *inseparable* aspects of the divine.

LESSON 3 – GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT TERMS

AGAMA – sacred scripture.

ATMAN – self.

CAITANYAMATMA – awareness self/being awareness.

GURU – a teacher who is a human embodiment of the awareness self.

MAHATMA – ‘great self’ or ‘great soul’ (supraself or suprasoul).

SHIVA SUTRAS – foundational scripture of Kashmir Shaivism.

MANUAL OF THE NEW YOGA



LESSON 4:

THE NEW YOGA OF BREATHING

(PRANA YOGA)

**...from awareness of breathing
to the breathing of awareness**

“As the mighty air which pervades everything, ever abides in space, know that in the same way all beings abide in Me.”

Bhagavad Gita

“The soul (*psyche*) is an exhalation that perceives.”

Heraclitus

“When we can feel awareness as something that pervades our bodies like the air around us in space, we expand the *breathing space* of our awareness – freeing it from each and every element of our experience, and breathing the pure air of awareness that is *prana*.”

Awareness of breathing is the key to the *breathing of awareness* – its emanation and reabsorption through flows of awareness that form the very air we breathe. Through awareness of our respiratory musculature we can learn to modulate and unite these flows of awareness - the very breath of the soul. It is these flows of awareness that unite the realms of our own inner and outer awareness space - the realms of soul and spirit, *psyche* and *pneuma*, the ‘air within’ and the ‘air without’, the ‘Kingdom’ inside and the ‘Kingdom’ outside (*Gospel of Thomas*). It is such currents of *awareness breath*, and not currents of ‘bioenergy’, which are the very life of our awareness body as a *psychical, pneumatic* or *pranic* body. Our awareness body is thus a *breathing body* in the deepest sense. Its felt boundary is a breathing membrane or ‘soul skin’ through which we both absorb all that we are aware of without, and emanate all that we are aware of within.

Peter Wilberg

Ordinary people breathe eighteen times a minute. Less than ten are sufficient for those who practice *seiza* [seating breathing in the abdomen]. But if one can manage with three it is really good.

Master Okada

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THE OLD YOGA AND MODERN PSYCHOLOGY

Modern psychologists and psychotherapists attend exclusively to their client's *experience* of themselves, other people and the world, to their ways of reflecting on this self-experience or reacting to others from it. They may seek to help them to 'cognitively' reflect in different ways on their experience, thereby altering their way of reacting to or 'behaving' towards others. Alternatively they may prescribe medications to alter an individual's inner self-experience and outward behaviour. Yet in all such modern *psychologising* there is no understanding that *psyche* – the breath of awareness - cannot be reduced to an experienced phenomenon or complex of phenomena of any sort. Awareness, quite simply, is not an *experience* in the form of anything we are aware *of* - a perception, sensation, desire, impulse, emotion, thought or action. Nor is it mental or 'cognitive' reflection *on* experience.

The Old Yoga had no place for any concept akin to that of modern 'psychology' because it was *psychology* in the deepest sense – a science of the soul's innate kinship with breath - *prana* or *psyche*. This was a 'psychology' in which our *pre-reflective* awareness of experiencing was likened to invisible air that surrounds things in space, and in which the all-pervading and flowing character of *awareness* was correctly understood as the living and vitalising essence of air and 'breath' – as 'life-breath' or *psyche*. That is why, in order to revitalise what we call 'psychology' a 'New Yoga' is called for - one which, by cultivating *awareness*, prevents us from reducing the human *psyche* to an *experiential object* of lifeless 'scientific' knowledge. For no true insight into the human *psyche* can be attained by any form of psychological knowledge or psychotherapeutic training without first of all deepening and expanding the psychologist's own bodily, *breathing awareness* of themselves and others. This is the function of their awareness body, understood both as a *psychical* or *pranic* body through which we can breathe our awareness of all that we experience within and without.

The different air-like flows of awareness that make up our *pranic* body are what make us sensitive in a bodily way to the atmosphere or quality of the spaces around us and to all those winds or draughts of awareness (*pneuma*) that flow within us and between

ourselves and others. These flows of awareness can draw us towards or away from one another, deeper into or further out of ourselves. They can also draw us into and out of *one another* - allowing our own soul or *psyche* to flow like breath into the body of the other, or their soul to be drawn like a draught into ours. The German word for 'relationship' – *Beziehung* – derives from the verb *ziehen* – to pull or draw. It is easy for someone's awareness to be 'drawn' or 'sucked' so deeply *into* a set of ideas, a pattern of relating, or any element of their everyday activity and experiencing, that they are drawn *out* of themselves – sometimes to the point of feeling sucked dry and depleted, lacking a sense of their whole self. The natural reaction is then to 'withdraw' back into themselves, temporarily or permanently closing themselves off from the world and retreating from the pull or draw of relationship as *Be-ziehung* - being overly 'drawn' by someone or 'drafted' into doing something. To not be 'drawn out' of ourselves to the point of losing ourselves in the world however, does not require us to close off and 'withdraw' from the world. For the opposite of letting our awareness be passively drawn out or 'sucked in' by something or someone is not to close off but to open ourselves and to actively *draw in* and absorb our awareness of all that we experience, inwardly and outwardly - to *breathe awareness*.

The psychotherapeutic relationship is ordinarily thought of as one in which the therapist 'draws out' the client's thoughts and emotions, draws insights from the 'material' presented by the client and/or helps the client to independently draw insights from their own experience. Then again, we speak of people feeling more or less 'drawn' to one another, being 'drawn to' particular ideas, places or people, or being 'drawn into' discussions and endeavours. And yet neither in psychotherapy nor in everyday life do people either think or feel the 'draughts' that draw them hither and thither in a *bodily* way, as flow currents of awareness comparable to draughts of air. A psychotherapist may be aware of 'drawing out' a client verbally, but this is quite different from attending to the atmosphere or 'aura' of their bodily presence and actively drawing it towards us – feeling it as a tangible 'draught' of awareness that we can then absorb or breathe in with our whole body. The psychotherapist who claims to perceive but does not *breathe* their awareness of a client's feelings cannot truly absorb and understand those feelings. Such a psychotherapist is no true *psychologist* – no true scientist of the *psyche*.

‘PRANA’, ‘CHI’ AND ‘PSYCHE’

In the Indian wisdom tradition, knowledge in the form of ‘seeing’ and intellectual ‘ideas’ was understood not as the *starting point* but as the *end-result* of the cognitive process – a process that was understood as beginning not with seeing but with *breathing*. In the West intellectual theories and theoretical knowledge are still thought of as the foundation of practical disciplines and achievements. In the East, on the other hand, those practical disciplines known collectively as *yoga* were understood to be the very foundation of theory – of all intellectual ideas and insights. At the heart of *yoga* was an understanding of the bodily foundations of all intellectual knowledge. Together with this went an understanding of the human body as a *breathing body* and not merely one equipped with sense organs. That which was blindingly obvious to all – the fact that the *human body* could survive without seeing but not without breathing – was taken as a vital clue to the essence of the *human being*. Indeed it was taken as a clue to the essence of reality, truth or ‘being’ as such. The ‘old psychology’, which existed long before the term ‘psychology’ was coined, was one in which the word *psyche* still retained its root meaning of ‘breath’. In India this old psychology led to an understanding of the inner human being or ‘self’ as *atman* – a Sanskrit word echoed in the German for ‘breathing’ – *atmen*. Breath was named *prana* and the yoga of breathing called *pranayama*, meaning the ‘extension’ or ‘elongation’ of the breath.

Today such terms as *prana*, *chi*, *qi*, or ‘*reiki*’ are interpreted as referring to some form of universal life force or vital ‘energy’. This interpretation accords with the fundamental dogma - shared by both modern science and New Age pseudo-science alike - that ‘everything is energy’. The New Yoga challenges this dogma, which stands in basic contradiction with the *tantric* understanding that ultimate reality is not energy or matter but *awareness*. It is *not* through clearing or intensifying or ‘raising’ vital ‘energy’ that we reach a state of expanded or ‘enlightened’ awareness. *On the contrary*, it is through the inward and outward expansion of our awareness that we feel more ‘energised’. It is not energy that makes us aware. It is *awareness that energises*. Energy is simply the ‘-ing’ of things – the action of things *happening* in awareness. As such, ‘energy’ can entrap awareness in *experience* in the same way that meaning can get entrapped in speech – *draining* the innate vitality of awareness that is *prana*.

The Indian, Greek, Latin and Chinese languages all reflect a common understanding that *awareness itself* has the character of ‘air-ness’ – being something that surrounds, permeates, fills and flows between all things. The words *prana* and *psyche* have a common root meaning of ‘life’, ‘breath’ or ‘life breath’. Similarly, the Greek word now translated as ‘spirit’ – *pneuma* – also meant ‘wind’, and the word ‘spirit’ itself comes from the Latin *spirare* (to breathe) - as do such words as *respiration*, *inspiration* and *expiration* and *spiral*. The terms *chi/ki* or *reiki*, like the Greek *horme* (from which the medieval medical term ‘humours’ was derived) have a common root meaning which is not ‘energy’ but simply ‘that which flows’ – like blood and breath, water and air. The ancient Greek word for body (*soma*) meant precisely that – a corpse from which the life-breath had departed – and could be seen to do so rather like a wisp of smoke. Both Indian, Greek and Chinese philosophers and physicians understood the life-breath (*psyche/prana*) as a vital or ‘animating’ principle of the body (*anima* being Latin for soul).

When we get tired or sleepy our breathing slows down. When we die our physical breathing ceases. The intake of oxygen through ordinary physical breathing on the other hand helps wake us up and maintain our alertness. This everyday ‘scientific’ fact however, disguises the deeper truth recognised in the ancient yoga of the breath – namely that *awareness* is vitalising in itself, and that breathing in the innate vitality of awareness that is *prana* can actually be intensified by elongating, slowing and stilling it to a point of almost complete suspension. In contrast we have today’s identification of health with ‘aerobics’ and ‘aerobic’ breathing - the oxygenation of the blood – a belief that stands in outright contradiction to the promotion of ‘anti-oxidant’ vitamins and dietary supplements. Among body psychotherapists there is also a belief that the inhibition of aerobic breathing *necessarily* goes together with the inhibition of vitality, and emotion - *independently* of its relation to the anaerobic *breathing of awareness* – a belief in contradiction with the tendency to hyperventilate and over-oxygenate the brain that is actively encouraged by ‘release’ psychotherapies such as ‘rebirthing’. These contradictions, together with the whole New Age identification of *prana* with a form of ‘bioenergy’, all stem from a basic confusion between physical breathing – the breathing of air and oxygen - and *psychic* or *pranic* breathing. The New Yoga of the Breath understands *prana* as the life-breath of *awareness* as such, and *pranic* breathing as a *breathing of awareness*.

When someone suddenly comes across an ‘inspiring’ or ‘breathtaking’ landscape or vista the first thing that happens is that their *physical* breathing is suspended – taken away. This is in order that they can fully take in their experience of the landscape into their awareness - quite literally breathing in their awareness of it. If they then gasp in awe at the landscape or vista, this is not simply to resume physical breathing. The gasping physical in-breath is a way of bodying what preceded it – inhalation of awe-struck and inspired awareness that has been literally ‘in-spired’ – breathed in. Conversely, when someone sighs deeply as an expression of sadness, this is simply a way of physically embodying a deep exhalation or out-breath of awareness. Something sad or tragic having been taken into their awareness, the sighing allows it to ‘sink in’. The physical *outflow* of air goes together with a sinking psychic *down-flow* of awareness - one that lets the person find an inner ground in which their awareness of a sad or tragic experience or event can come to rest.

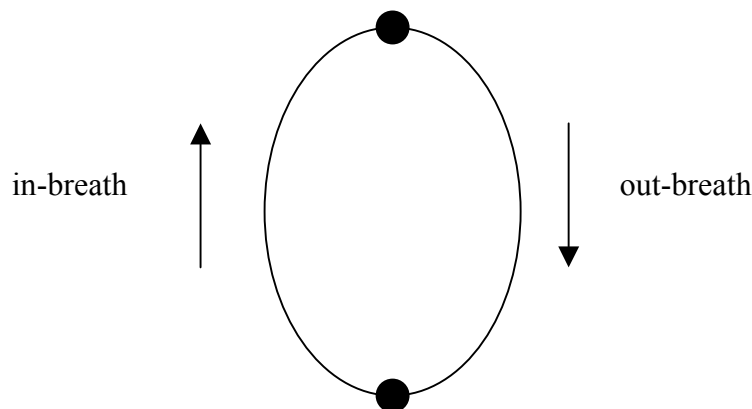
Today it is increasingly recognised that asthmatic attacks can be prevented by a focus on slow abdominal breathing. The slowing of physical breathing is by no means an inhibition of awareness breathing however. On the contrary, it is the individual’s feeling that they cannot fully breathe in their own feeling *awareness* that interferes with their physical breathing – leading them to gasp for air as a compensation for a deep inhalation and exhalation of awareness. By its very nature, *awareness breathing* does not inhibit but intensifies feeling awareness, allowing us to fully breathe intense emotions in and out of our *awareness*. This is something that the asthmatic individual may have been brought up *not to do*, particularly if dis-encouraged to speak their own feelings. For what is speech except a vocally expressive exhalation - not just of air but of a person’s awareness of what they experience, think and feel? Feeling one has ‘no room to breathe’ is no mere metaphor. Nor has it anything necessarily to do with absence of air. “The soul (*psyche*) is an exhalation that perceives.” (Heraclitus)

The New Yoga is yoga reborn as true ‘psychology’ and true psychology reborn as yoga. What distinguishes the New Yoga of the Breath from the old is a fundamental distinction between *awareness of breathing* and the *breathing of awareness* – and the practical knowledge of how to transform our awareness of breathing *into* a breathing of awareness.

THE NEW YOGA OF THE BREATH

The New Yoga of Breath is designed to explicitly transform awareness of breathing into a breathing of awareness. The key to this lies in an intensified awareness of our body surface as a whole, allowing us to experience it as a porous and breathing membrane - filled with an inner space of awareness and surrounded by an outer space of awareness. The other key lies in recognising that the transition ‘points’ of the ordinary aerobic breath cycle (the transition from physical in-breath to out-breath and vice versa) can be elongated (*pranayama*) in such a way that within it a second breath cycle takes its course – the entirely non-physical and anaerobic *breathing of awareness*. If the meditational methods of the New Yoga are followed, aerobic breathing with the physical body is slowed by progressively elongating the periodic intervals of the breath cycle. This does not require artificially holding our breath - instead our very need for air is progressively *diminished* by a pure breathing of awareness in the intervals of the breath cycle. Diagram 1 shows the normal model of aerobic physical breathing, this being conceived and experienced as a single cycle of in- and out-breath, inhalation and exhalation through which we draw in and expel air from our lungs.

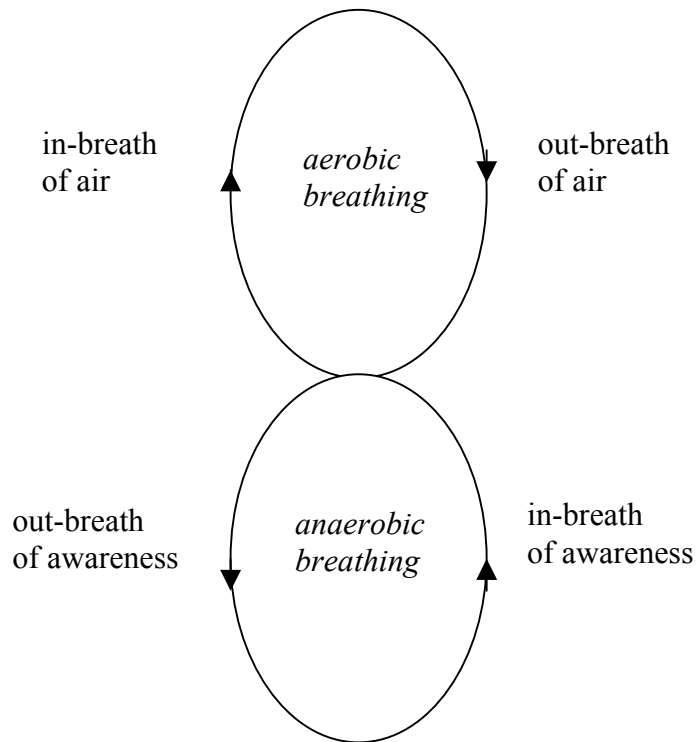
Diagram 1 – the single physical breath cycle (aerobic breathing)



Many traditional yogic meditational practices focus on the *suspension* of the breath at the turning points of the breath cycle – *elongating the intervals* between out-and in-breath or vice versa. The New Yoga understands these breath intervals as transition points between two distinct breath cycles – one of these being the cycle of aerobic physical breathing and the other a cycle of anaerobic or psychic

breathing – awareness breathing. Truly ‘deep breathing’ is *anaerobic* – a *psychical* or *pranic* breathing of awareness of a sort that slows down our *physical* breathing to a point of almost complete suspension. Diagram 2 shows how by ‘suspending’ breathing during the interval between our physical out- and in-breath we can experience this interval as a transition point to a second breath cycle – one in which we feel ourselves continuing to exhale and inhale pure awareness breath or *prana*.

Diagram 2 - the double breath cycle (from aerobic breathing of air to the anaerobic breathing of awareness)

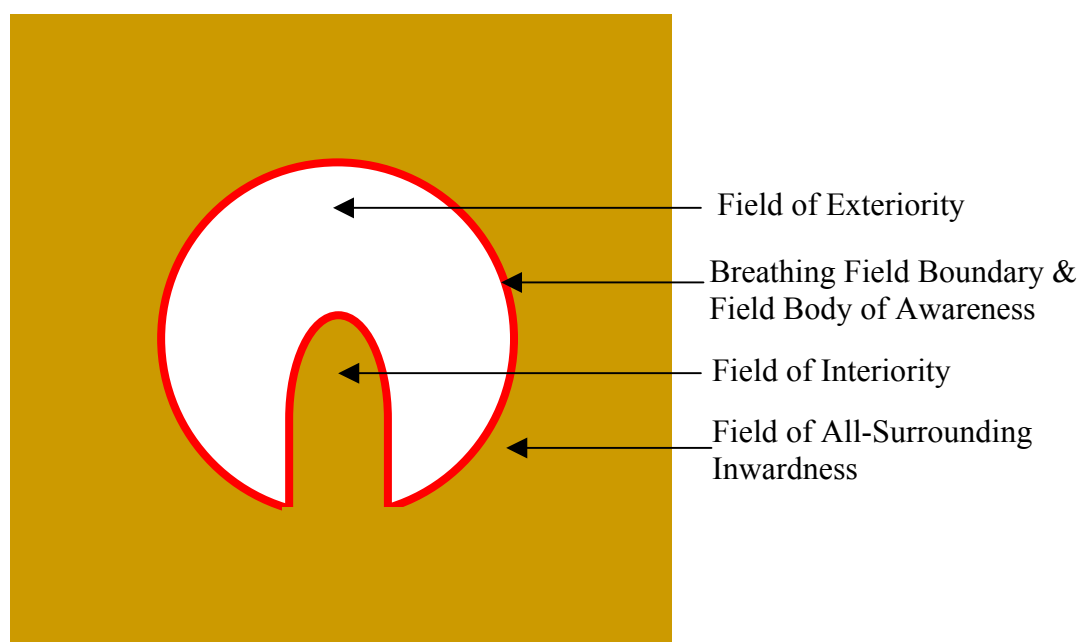


THE ANATOMY OF AWARENESS BREATHING

To understand the difference between aerobic physical breathing and *psychic* or *pranic* breathing – ‘soul breathing’ or ‘awareness breathing’ - one needs to distinguish the respiratory anatomy of the physical body from that of our soul body or ‘awareness body’. This awareness body is a *unified field body* uniting three fields of awareness – a *field of exteriority* manifest as our awareness of the physical space around us, a field of interiority which we feel as the spacious inwardness of our own soul - and the field of *unbounded interiority* into which our own inwardness of soul leads. This field of unbounded interiority is also the *all-surrounding* field that constitutes the *soul world* as such – that which lies *behind* all that we perceive in the exterior space around us. Our awareness body, as a unified field body, is the singular *field-boundary* of awareness uniting all three fields. As such, it is also a *psychic* or *pranic body*, being a ‘breathing body’ or ‘body of awareness breath’ (*prana*). For it is through its surface boundary that we both emanate or ‘exhale’ qualities belonging to the bodily field of our inner self-awareness and its qualities (soul or *psyche* as the ‘air within’), and also absorb or inhale our field awareness of the outer world around us and its ‘atmospheric’ qualities (spirit or *pneuma* as ‘the air without’). Like our skin - itself a vital and principal organ of physical respiration - the breathing boundary of our awareness body can be felt as more or less open and porous or sealed and self-containing, more or less loose or tight, spacious and roomy, and more or less restrictive or expansive of both our awareness, our breathing and our capacity to *breathe awareness*.

Just as there are flows of air between and around bodies in space so are there flows of awareness. Just as we breathe air into and out of the inner spaces of our bodies, so do we breathe in and breathe out awareness. Just as the air we breathe in circulates through our bodies so does awareness. As bodies we inhale the oxygen released by plants and breath exhaled by other beings, human and animal. But in what manner and at what point does this air we breathe in become a part of ‘us’ rather than the world around us? And at what point or in what manner does the air we breathe out cease to be part of ‘us’ and become part of the world? These questions cannot be answered except by suspending our ordinary notion of what we ourselves are – by

acknowledging that like air that circulates between and within our bodies in space, our *awareness* is something that flows both *within* us and *between* us and the world. It does so both within and through the breathing psychic skin that constitutes the inwardly felt surface of our body – essentially a field-boundary of *awareness* uniting the three spatial *fields* of awareness that make up our awareness body: the field of exteriority, the field of interiority and the field of all-surrounding inwardness. It is this very field *boundary* of awareness that constitutes our awareness *body* as such, being that which both unifies the three fields of our awareness and allows *flows* of awareness to circulate within and between them - like currents of air and breath.



Prana is a general tantric term for ‘awareness breath’. But The Old Yoga identified five primary flows of *prana* as flows of awareness or ‘awareness breath’. These were:

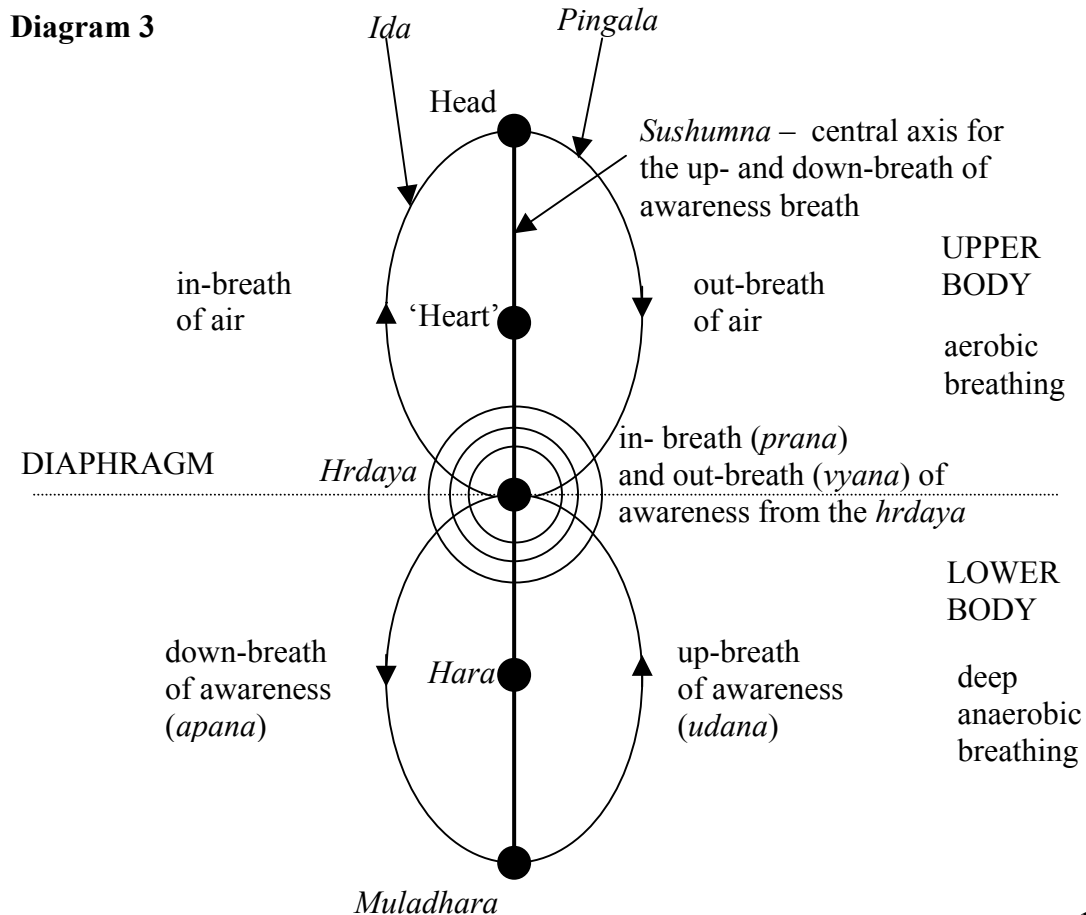
1. **PRANA** – a centripetal *in-flow* of *awareness breath* to the inner ‘heart’ centre or *hrdaya*, situated in the region of the diaphragm between navel and heart.
2. **VYANA** – a centrifugal *out-flow* of awareness breath permeating throughout the body from the ‘heart centre’ or *hrdaya*.
3. **APANA** – a grounding vertical *down-flow* of awareness-breath from our upper body to our entire lower body below the diaphragm.
4. **UDANA** – a vertical *up-flow* of awareness-breath from below – into our abdomen or *hara* and/or right up to the inner awareness spaces of our chest and head.
5. **SAMANA** – an even balance of in- and out-breath, and the centering and sealing of awareness breathing in the inner space of the abdomen or ‘hara’.

In the Old Yoga and its New Age counterparts there are many accounts of the multiple *nadis* or channels along which *prana*, conceived in a general sense as a form of ‘bionergy’, flows and can be ‘raised’ as *kundalini* or ‘serpent power’ from the base of the spine through different ‘energy centres’ or *chakras* up to the crown of the head and beyond. The spine is understood as the central channel or *sushumna* along which *prana* flows. In contrast, The New Yoga understands the *chakras* as ‘soul centres’ - *centres of awareness* in the body’s *inner awareness space* or ‘soul space’. The *sushumna* is not identified with the central channel of the spinal column but with a central *axis of awareness* running vertically from a centre of awareness in the head through centres in the regions of the heart and diaphragm, to the centre of awareness in the lower abdomen or *hara* (Japanese) that was known in Taoist and Buddhist tantra as the *tan tien* (Chinese) or *tanden* (Japanese). The equivalent of *hara* in Indian tantra was the ‘navel centre’ and *karnika* (womb), understood as a ‘bulb’ (*kanda*) within the pelvic bowl (*kunda*) and reaching from the perineum to a point a couple of inches below and behind the navel. Besides the central channel or *sushumna*, the most important *nadis* referred to in the Old Yoga are *ida* and *pingala*. In The New Yoga these are understood as *intertwining channels* of physical aerobic breath on the one hand, and anaerobic or ‘awareness breath’ on the other, whose nodes along the *sushumna* are the *chakras*.

Centering one’s awareness and breathing in the heart chakra or *hrdaya* allows a full *expansion* of our awareness into the exterior field of ‘physical’ space, and with it a full experience of that all-surrounding *exterior* space as no less a dimension of psychic space or soul space - *awareness space* - than the space of our dreams. *Prana*, as one of the five modes of awareness breathing, is a centripetal in-breath of our outer sensory awareness of the space around us, centering itself in the heart centre or *hrdaya*. Letting one’s awareness breath flow down (*apana*) into the womb-like inner soul space of our abdomen or *hara*, on the other hand, allows an inner expansion or ‘inspiration’ of awareness – the expansion of inner awareness space. From the *hara* awareness breath can flow even further down into the field of unbounded but all-surrounding awareness that is the very womb of cosmic space itself. From this a pranic up-flow of awareness breath (*udana*) can be drawn up and either sealed in the ‘hara’ (*samana*) or allowed to rise up to the head centre and beyond.

THE AWARENESS BODY AS PRANIC BODY

Diagram 3 represents the principal *chakras* and *nadis* in terms of The New Yoga of Breath, showing the turning point of the double breath cycle at which the metamorphosis or transubstantiation of aerobic breathing into awareness breathing takes place and vice versa - the transubstantiation of awareness into 'airness'. Ancient and contemporary accounts differ in the anatomical location they give the 'heart' centre or *hrdaya*, which is variously associated either with the region of the anatomical heart in the upper chest, or with a central point in the diaphragm. That is because it is within the bowl of the diaphragm that we can sense the centre point at which the up-flow of awareness along the *sushumna* begins to rise in our inner chest space towards the heart, and to transform itself into an aerobic in-breath of air. Conversely, it is also the centre through which the aerobic out-breath of air can be felt to transform itself into a down-breath of awareness (*apana*) towards the *hara* and *muladhara* (the 'root-support' centre at the base of the spine). At the same time, the *hrdaya* is also the 'heart' or centre of the gathering in-breath of awareness (*prana*) and its radiating out-breath (*vyana*).



In Occidental culture people’s bodily identity and self-experience stems from a one-sided identification with their upper body awareness, and with it a tendency to breathe with their upper body alone. In contrast, Oriental culture emphasised the importance of centering both awareness and breathing in the lower body – in particular the abdomen or *hara*. The *hrdaya* on the other hand, is a centre of *perfect equipoise* between upper- and lower-body awareness, upper- and lower-body breathing. Feeling a centre of awareness in the mid-point of the diaphragm and actively centering our awareness there - in the *hrdaya* – we can not only unite our upper and lower body awareness and breathing in a singular flow of awareness breath. We can also unite the spaces of our outer and inner awareness, feeling the surface boundary between them diffusing as it becomes a more open, translucent and breathing surface (Diagram A).

Diagram A

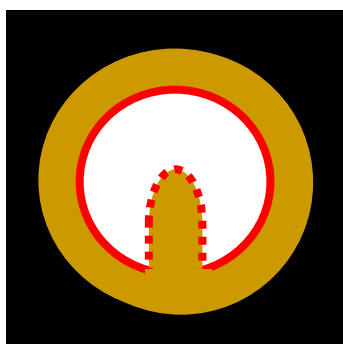


Diagram B

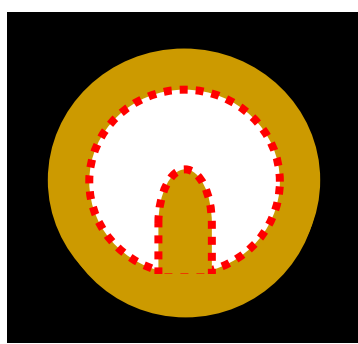
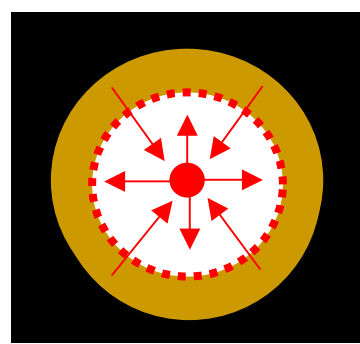


Diagram C



As this happens we can also diffuse the larger field-boundary, soul-skin or “tissue capsule” (Seth) that separates the exterior field of our sensory awareness from the soul world - the field of *all-surrounding interiority* in which our inner soul space leads (see Diagram B). As a result, we experience the *hrdaya* as the singular centre of a *unified field of awareness* (Diagram C). Like the Sun itself, which shines light out into space, the *hrdaya* first *gathers* the light of awareness to a centre from the space all around it. The boundary between all three fields of awareness that constitutes our awareness body having become diffuse and translucent, the light of awareness stemming from the soul world can be experienced as both shining in through the sensory world around us, being absorbed through our diffused body surface and concentrated in the *hrdaya*. This is the fulfilment of *khecari mudra* – an identification with both the inner and outer *spaces* of our awareness of a sort that can diffuse the felt surface boundary between them and allow us to experience *unified field awareness*.

MACROMEDITATION 1

Giving yourself Outer Breathing Space

1. Letting your eyes shift and the focus of your gaze wander, use all your senses to attend to the space around you, its light and atmosphere, and the objects within it – but *without focussing* on one particular area, feeling or object.
2. Opening your eyes as wide as possible, concentrate on sensing your facial, chest and body surface - and from it, the *entire space around you*.
3. Feel how keeping your eyes open wide helps you feel your whole body surface as wide open *in all directions* to the space around you.
4. Now *unfocus* your gaze so as to attend simply and purely to your awareness of featureless, empty space (whether the indoor space of a room or building, an outdoor environment or your awareness of the *infinity of cosmic space*).
5. Mouth closed, take a few deep breaths, and then *suspend your breathing* entirely. Instead feel yourself breathing through your body surface – breathing your awareness of space and absorbing it through that surface like air and invisible light.
6. Centering your awareness at the mid-point of your diaphragm, feel yourself breathing your awareness through your body surface towards that centre.
7. Sense that centre (the *hrdaya*) as an *inner sun* that is gathering and concentrating light from the space around you – or the entirety of cosmic space.
8. Feel the light of awareness concentrated in the *hrdaya* radiating outwardly to permeate your entire body and shine out through your body surface and eyes.
9. Now allow yourself to resume breathing but in the slowest way possible – taking in *only to the exact extent* to which you feel you are taking in and absorbing your awareness of space through your body surface.
10. Feel every incremental in-breath of air as nothing but the physical expression and embodiment of an in-breath of awareness through your entire body surface.

MICROMEDITATION

- Take a few breaths, then suspend your breathing, and attend to your *body surface*.
- Feel yourself breathing in *directly through* your entire body surface – as if it were absorbing your awareness of the entire space around you.
- Feel yourself concentrating the light of awareness that you breathe in through your body surface at a centre in the mid-point of your diaphragm (*hrdaya*).
- Resume slow and elongated physical breathing (*pranayama*), feeling this stage in your in-breath of air as the expression of an in-take of awareness through your surface.

MACROMEDITATION 2

Giving yourself Inner Breathing Space

1. Close your eyes or simply withdraw the *focus* of your gaze to a point just in front of and between your eyes. Doing so, become fully aware of your head and the surface of your face. Now feel the top, sides and back of your head. Feel your whole head as if it were a hollow vessel with its own inner space. Sense a centre or *locus* of awareness in this space, just between your eyes and behind your forehead. As you inhale air through your nose, feel the inner space of your head filling with awareness. As it does so allow your eyes to open wider. Feel your awareness coming fully into your eyes and fully upfront to the surface of your face. Allow the focus of your gaze to reach forward again into the space in front of you, and feel yourself looking out at the world from the centre or locus of awareness in your head.

2. Close your eyes and bring your awareness down into the region of your chest. Feel the front surface of your chest, the surface of your back, the sides of your ribcage. Feel your ribcage and chest as a whole as a hollow vessel. Breathe entirely with your chest muscles and feel the rise and fall of your breast as you inhale and exhale. In your own time gradually open your eyes, stay aware of the surface of your chest and at the same time become aware of the surfaces of the objects and walls around you. Feel yourself absorbing your awareness of these surfaces through the surface of your chest. As you breathe in, sense your inner chest space expanding and filling not only with air but with light – the light of your awareness of the space around you.

3. Close your eyes and become aware of your entire lower body below the waist. Feel your legs and the contact of your feet with the ground. Now bring your awareness fully into your abdomen. Feel a warm dark space of awareness opening up within your abdomen and feel yourself breathing into that space rather than into the inner space of your chest. Feel the surface of your abdomen swell and expand like a balloon as you breathe in and sense it filling with a dark, fluid warmth as you do so. Sense a centre of awareness a few inches below and behind the navel. In your own time, half open your eyes, keeping your lids low. Feel yourself looking out from the centre of awareness in your abdomen. Now focus on an object in the space in front of you and feel yourself inwardly connected to its own *withinness* from the centre of awareness within your abdomen and through its own aware withinness.

MACROMEDITATION 3

Giving yourself Inner and Outer Breathing Space

1. Feel the inner space of your head as a hollow filled with awareness, and feel a centre of awareness in this space, above your eyes and behind your forehead.
2. Feel the inner space of your chest as a hollow filled with awareness, and feel a centre of awareness in this space in the region of your heart.
3. Feel the inner space of your abdomen as a hollow filled with awareness, and feel a centre of awareness below and behind the navel.
4. Feel the inner spaces of your head, chest and abdomen as a singular space of awareness.
5. Breathing with your mouth closed, feel each *out-breath* of air as a *downflow of awareness* from the hollow inner space of your head to that of your abdomen.
6. Bring your awareness to your body surface as a whole, feeling your skin as totally porous and your chest surface as entirely open.
7. Feel each *in-breath* of air as an inflow of pure awareness taken in through the open space of your chest and diffusing right through your body surface.

THE SUPREME MANTRA OF THE BREATH

The Sanskrit word ‘AHAM’ means ‘I am’. It is also the Mantra of Supreme Identity – identification with the absolute awareness field - realised through breathing awareness. The mantra begins with the phonemes A and H – the first and last phonemes of the Sanskrit alphabet and thus their *alpha* and *omega*. The phoneme H is also associated with the term *visarga* which refers to a diacritic mark used in Sanskrit and constituted, like a colon, by two vertically separated dots - in contrast to the single dot or *bindu* associated with the nasalized phoneme M. The ‘A’ in the mantra is associated with the absolute (*anuttara*) - a sound of perfect astonishment and wonder at the infinite awareness field that is *Shiva* - whereas the ‘H’ represents his inseparable consort *Shakti*. The phoneme H can be experienced as a hovering point of perfect equipoise in the intervals of inhalation (AH) and exhalation (HA) – AH being felt as the absorption of outwardly experienced reality into the divine awareness field, and the HA as the emission or expression of awareness in that outwardly experienced reality. The mantra AHAM is the very sound of that second breath cycle that is the *breathing of awareness*. When we can silently hear, feel and experience our every breath cycle as this mantra, we unite the breathing spaces of our outer and inner awareness into a single cycle of awareness breathing. The mantra is itself a cyclical mantra, which is to say that its letters permute as a continuous ‘round’ of two syllables (an inhaled AH, exhaled HAM), four permutations of its phonemes, (AHAM, MAHA, AMAH, HAMA) and five sounds (A-AH-H-HA-M) centred in the hovering suspension of breath that is the soundless *visarga* (H). Through this cycle a surface in-breath (*prana*) of outer awareness (AH) transforms itself into a descending out-breath (HA) or down-flow of awareness (*apana*). Through the phoneme M this down-flow is experienced as an *elemental* transformation of awareness - a condensation of the *air-like* substantiality or ‘ether’ of pure awareness space into a compact bodily mass of awareness breath or *prana*, now experienced as a *fluid warmth* permeating our inwardly felt body. Transliterated, the mantra is the Supreme Mantra of Shiva that reads:

**“I am SHIVA (A), of compact mass of awareness-bliss (HAM)
and the entire universe (AH) is my body (HA)”**

SOUL BREATHING AND SOUL MINGLING

The most important *psychological* application and benefit of The New Yoga lies in the way it can teach us to meditate others, and come to ‘know’ other human beings in a different way – not simply through visual perception, emotional empathy or intellectual insight but through attending to the body of the other and in this way taking them in as ‘some-body’ - not just as a ‘talking head’, a set of mental-emotional processes or cognitive and behavioural patterns. What distinguishes the New Yoga of the Breath from the old is an emphasis on using the breathing of awareness to not only meditate the self (*atman*) but to *meditate the other*. By this I mean switching from a mode of relating based on perceiving another person’s body as a mere visual ‘body-object’ to one based on feeling it as a *sensory image of their soul*. By feeling our body surface as a *sense organ of our own soul* we can both breathe in our perception of the sensory outwardness of another person’s body - and through this begin to sense and breathe their bodily inwardness of soul. Awareness breathing is both *sensory breathing* and *soul breathing* – enabling us to breathe in our own *sensory awareness* of a person’s body and their own *inwardness of soul*.

Through our own sensed body surface and the exterior field of our *outer* spatial awareness surrounding it we breathe in our sensory awareness of objects and people, thereby giving us a sense of their inwardness of soul. From the *inner* field or soul space of our own body we can intend to directly draw a flow of awareness from the soul inwardness of these objects and people – directly *breathing the soul of another into our own body*. On the other hand, we can also let our awareness flow like breath into the sensed inner soul space of another person’s body – in this way directly *breathing our soul into the body of another*. Alternatively, we can simply intend to feel the surface bodily boundaries separating our own inwardness of soul from that of another diffusing and dissolving – allowing our own soul to directly merge, meld or ‘commingle’ with that of another. All these modes of *soul breathing* are conditional upon feeling and visualising the inwardness of our own and other people’s bodies as *hollow spaces*. Only in this way can we feel ourselves either breathing our soul into the body of another or breathing their soul into our body - through flows of awareness breath or *prana*.

MICROMEDITATIONS 1

In the presence of others, whether in a social situation or group, or in a one to one encounter, use the opportunity to engage in the following meditations:

Meditation 1: breathing in the sensory outwardness of the other

1. Become aware of your body as a whole through your own breathing and respiratory musculature, and attend also to the body of another person.
2. Breathing with your mouth closed, feel your chest surface as a physical boundary separating you from the other person.
3. Now imagine your chest surface as entirely open - as if a huge hole had been cut in it. As you breathe in, feel yourself as fully open – and as fully taking in your awareness of the other person’s body through your open chest surface or hole.

Meditation 2: breathing in the soul inwardness of the other into your body

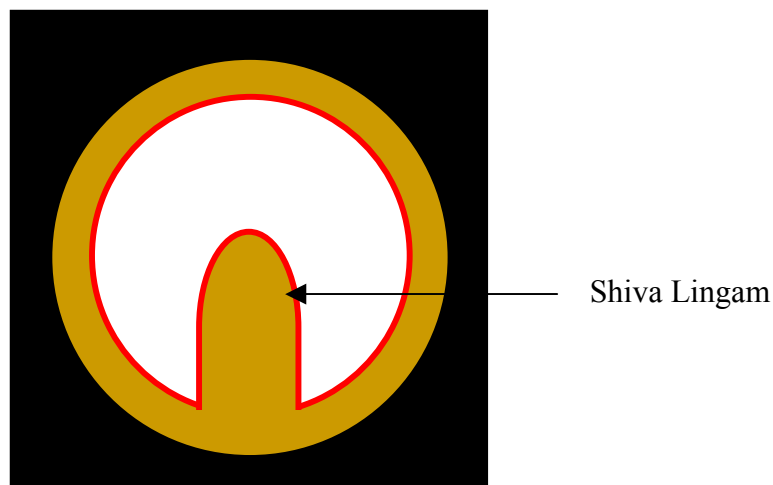
1. Use whole-body awareness of your breathing to sense the inner spaces of your own head, chest and abdomen respectively, feeling each of them as clear, hollow spaces of awareness.
2. Attending to your sensory awareness of another person’s head, chest and abdomen, intend also to feel the quality of awareness inwardly filling the inner space of their head, chest and abdominal spaces respectively.
3. Feel the qualities of awareness filling the inwardness of their ‘head’ space in your own head space, the qualities of awareness filling the awareness space of their chest and abdominal spaces in the inner spaces of your own chest and abdomen.

Meditation 3: breathing your soul into the body of the other

1. Use whole-body awareness of your breathing to sense the inner spaces of your own head, chest and abdomen respectively, feeling them as *hollow* spaces but also sensing the air-like *pranic* substantiality of the awareness that fills them.
2. Attend to your sensory awareness of a particular region or regions of another person’s body, whether head, chest and/or abdomen, both visualising and sensing its inwardness as entirely *hollow*.
3. Visualise and feel the *hollow inwardness* of those regions filling with the air-like or *pranic* substantiality of your own inner bodily awareness, as if you were breathing it into them – either by feeling your inner chest space merging with theirs, or by directing a flow of awareness down from your abdomen and then *up* into the entire hollow inwardness of the other person’s body.

SOUL BREATHING AND SOUL SEX

The sacred symbol of Shaivism is the phallic *lingam*. The symbol of *Shakti* is the *yonis* – representing both vulva and vagina. Yet the *shiva-lingam* is itself always sculpted on a base representing the *shakti-yoni*. Thus it is also called the *yonis-lingam*. This is not simply an archaic symbol of human sexual organs. It is the other way round. Our sexual organs are themselves fleshly symbols of our inwardly felt body in its bi-sexual character – which is a *phallic invagination* of our soul body as a whole.

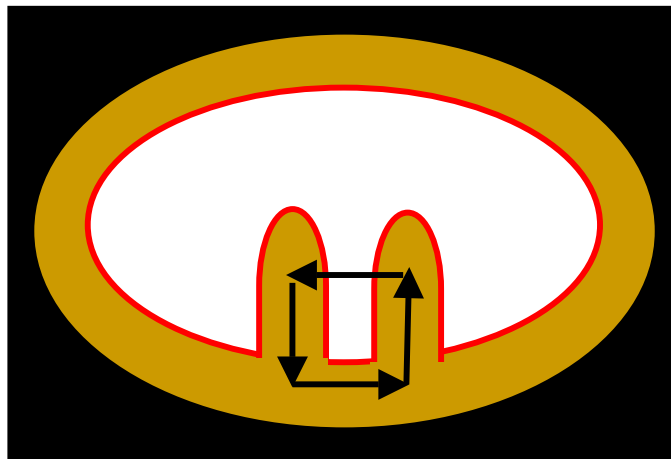


In the diagram above the soul body is represented as a spherical field boundary (red). Its interiority (white) embraces the entire space-time universe, i.e. the entire field of our outer, sensory awareness of the world. Intruding into this spatial field is a phallic formation – the *lingam* – corresponding to the felt boundary of our physical body. This phallic *lingam* however, is at the same time that which is symbolised by the female sexual organ or *yonis*, being an ‘invagination’ of the entire field-boundary that constitutes the soul body as a whole. Together they constitute the *Shiva-lingam* or *yonis-lingam*. This is the principal symbol of *Shaivism*, representing as it does the inseparability of male and female aspects of divinity, of *Shiva* and *Shakti*.

Tantric soul-sexuality is not dependent on ordinary or special forms of *sensory stimulation*, nor does it even require sexual desire (*kama*), bodily contact or physical intercourse – instead it brings to expression the innate *sensual bliss (ananda)* of soul-body intercourse. So much then, for the titillating nonsense taught as ‘tantric sex’ in

workshops all over the world by teachers who know nothing of the historical meanings of the word ‘tantra’, let alone the refined philosophies and practices described in the tantric teachings or *shastras*. As a result they are completely ignorant of the distinction between *kama* (sensory pleasure) and (*ananda*) spiritual awareness bliss, so central to tantric practices, in contrast to those of the *kamasutras*.

Soul-Body Intercourse (*maithuna*)



Soul-body intercourse or *maithuna* is in essence a *coupling of flows of awareness* between sexual partners. This is based on the mutual exhalation and inhalation of awareness breath through both mouth and nose, and through uniting four of the principal modes of awareness breathing (see diagram above):

1. A down-flow of awareness (*apana*) within the soul body of the partner (male or female) embodying the ‘masculine’ bearing of SHIVA.
2. A phallic up-flow (*udana*) of this down-flow of awareness into the soul-body of the partner (female or male) embodying the ‘feminine’ bearing of SHAKTI, drawing it into and letting it penetrate and fill the soul inwardness of their body from below.
3. An in-flow (*prana*) of the masculine partner’s heightened *awareness* of the fleshly outwardness of the female partner’s body.
4. A consequent out-flow of awareness breath permeating the flesh of the female partner (*vyana*), and emanating from it as the shining fire and light of awareness.

‘CHAKRA’, ‘SHAKTIPATA’ AND ‘KUNDALINI’

Awareness has an essentially non-local or field character. Space itself is not a coordinate grid of localised points but a non-local field of awareness. Ultimately all the spatially and anatomically localised centres of awareness that are conventionally identified with the *chakra* are expressions of a single centre or non-local *singularity* of awareness. The word *chakra* means ‘wheel’. What distinguishes one ‘chakra’ from another therefore, is ultimately not its felt anatomical location, but rather the specific wheel or ring, circle or circumference, sphere or ‘field’ of awareness which it links us to. The arrangement of *chakras* therefore, is best represented not by a vertical *series* of points each of which constitutes a separate locus or centre of awareness ‘in space’, but rather by a *single* point that serves as the common centre of concentric circles or wheels (*chakra*). It is this singularity of awareness that is *experienced* as having different anatomical and spatial locations according to the specific wheels, rings, spheres or fields of awareness that it links us to.

The *head* centre links us to the inner circle, ring or field-boundary of awareness that is the inwardly felt surface of our own eyes, skull and body as a whole.

The *hara* centre is the centre of the inner awareness space bounded by our bodies. It is also what *inwardly* links our own inner awareness space and inwardness of soul to that of the bodies around us - whether things or people – and the field of all-surrounding inwardness that connects them - allowing us to experience inner flows of awareness between ourselves and others.

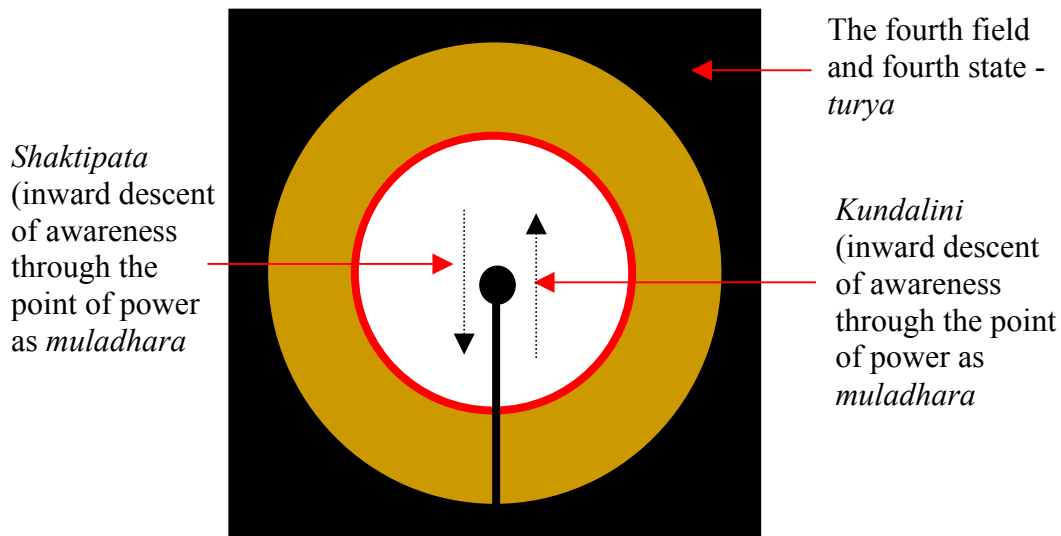
The *hrdaya* centre links us to the larger ring or field-boundary of awareness that is the circumference of our outer awareness space and of cosmic space as such. As the centre of this larger wheel or *chakra* it can be experienced as the centre of a singular field of awareness embracing both the inner and outer spaces and fields of our awareness. Through it we experience outer flows of awareness breath or *prana* between our own bodies and those of others – whether things or people.

The *muladhara* centre at the base of the spine is a fourth centre linking us to a fourth field of awareness - and to that fourth state of consciousness and of *prana* named in the *tantras* as *turya*. This fourth field has no spatial extension in the way that the other fields of awareness do. It is a purely 'intensional' field, a non-spatial space, a space of pure darkness or 'non-being' – not because it is nothing but because it contains no actual 'thing' to be aware of. Instead it consists purely and simply of all those unactualised potentialities or potencies of awareness – *Shaktis*. That is why *Shiva* himself, as a personification of the divine awareness field, is portrayed as prostrating himself beneath the feet of *Ma Kali*, herself a personification of the pure potency or power of awareness that is *kundalini* – a power that can only be released - raised into actuality - through *Shiva's* quiescent awareness of it. The essential principle of *kundalini* and of the 'The New Kundalini Yoga' therefore, has nothing whatsoever to do with any *actual* energy but rather with 'potential energy' – understood as the *pure power of potentiality*. Its guiding words are:

...from the awareness of pure potentiality to the pure power of awareness

The pure awareness of potentiality is felt as a *descent* of awareness through the *muladhara* into the 'fourth field' of *turya* - the dark womb of pure potentiality - attuned by devotional submission or grace of *Shiva* towards *Ma Kali*. This devotional descent of grace is known as *Shaktipata*. For through it *Shiva* descends into the source of all potencies or powers - all *Shaktis*. In this way too, the *yogin* or *yogini* who embodies the supreme *awareness of power* that is *paramshiva* can release the supreme *power of awareness* that is *paramshhakti*. This pure power of potentiality is then felt to *rise* from the womb or *yonis* of *Ma Kali* as *kundalini* – taking the form of the black *shiva-lingam* worshipped by *Shaivas* all over the world. But in order for the rise of *prana* as *kundalini* to occur the devotional descent into power – *Shaktipata* – that leads us to a pure awareness of potentiality must first take place – through an elongation of our out-breath as an ever deepening down-flow of awareness. The starting point of this descent is the *muladhara* centre of awareness at the base of the spine. Only by feeling as if we were literally sending down an in-spiralling, serpentine *tap root* of awareness from this 'root-support' centre can we *tap into* the pure power of potentiality and let it rise up through the *muladhara* and fill our soul body with the black *lingam* of serpent power that is *kundalini*. *Turya* is that fourth field and fourth

pranic state (black) that finds expression as a singularity or ‘point of power’ at the core of every thing, every being and every body – every bounded body or *pranic* ‘particle’ of awareness (red).



In the meta-psychology of The New Yoga, the three main fields of awareness (the field of exteriority, the field of interiority, and the field of all-surrounding inwardness) correspond to the *waking*, *dreaming* and *sleep* states respectively. The point of power linking us to the fourth state - *turya* - constitutes that singular centre of awareness through which the *yogin(i)* can ultimately achieve aware or ‘lucid’ experiencing of the waking, dreaming and sleep state. In the case of the latter this means learning to literally slip or ‘sleep into’ their own infinite inwardness - and that of any other bounded body or unit, atom or particle of awareness.

The *hara* centre leads us through our own bodily inwardness of soul to that of all other bodies through the field of all-surrounding interiority that unites them – the soul world. The *hrdaya* centre leads our awareness outwards to the infinite *circumference* of our outer awareness field - a ‘circumference at infinity’. The *muladhara* on the other hand, leads our awareness infinitely inwards to a ‘centre at infinity’ - the inexhaustible inward infinitude of potentiality that is the Divine Mother (*Mahadevi*) of all actual worlds and all bounded souls (*jiva*) – the black womb of *Ma Kali* from which they emerge into the light of awareness that is *Shiva*.

AWARE BREATHING AND AWARE SPEAKING

In ordinary social contexts, the single biggest obstacle to a true yoga of the breath is *speech*. In ordinary ‘spontaneous’ speech a felt meaning we wish to communicate has no sooner arisen within our field of awareness than it is instantaneously given vocal and verbal form through whatever words happen to come to mind. Such acts of instantaneous un-premeditated speech are acts of instantaneous *identification* with what we say. Instantaneous and unaware speech may be ‘spontaneous’ but it is not *free speech*. Truly *free* speech arises from first giving ourselves time to *listen* to ourselves and others. For only then can we freely *choose* words whose ‘senses’ are in true *resonance* with our wordless *awareness* of all that we sense. What actually takes place when we speak in this instantaneous and unaware way is a type of involuntary and *premature ejaculation* of words based on an *uncontrolled spastic seizure* of our muscles – not only those of our vocal organs but of our entire respiratory and bodily musculature. Only through a sustained awareness of breathing and breathing of awareness can we also become aware of those muscular impulses, subtle or strong, that precede every act of speech – and prevent them from seizing our respiratory musculature in the speech act and resulting in a premature ejaculation of words. Restraint of *breath, speech and semen* was the pre-eminent principle of both Hindu and Buddhist tantrism. Just as the practice of tantric sex as soul-intercourse (*maithuna*) requires the restraint of seminal ejaculation, so does any truly meditative and meaningful *verbal* intercourse require that we use evenness of breathing to muscularly restrain impulses to speak and instead rest in meditative silence.

The *physical* body is our speaking body in every sense – not only because speaking is itself a physical activity, but because the physical body is itself a language, constantly communicating. The *psychical body* on the other hand – our soul body or awareness body - is essentially not a speaking body but our *listening body*. What unites our felt body and our physical body, our listening body and speaking body, is the activity of breathing. What unites them is a listening speech in which we give ourselves *breathing space* to fully take in – breathe in - our awareness of all that we sense, feel and think, before exhaling it in words. The *mantra* that links speaking and breathing is not ‘think before you speak’, but ‘listen before you speak’ – we give ourselves

breathing space in which to meditate our words and tune our voice tone and tempo. Only through maintaining such breathing spaces of listening silence between thought and word, impulse and utterance, can we be aware of (a) *how* and *where* we feel the impulse to speak in our muscles, and (b) *whether* our words are or are not in true resonance with our felt meaning, felt body and felt self *as a whole* – our bodily awareness of *all* that we sense and wish to convey to others. It is in this way that *aware breathing* can transform itself into *aware speaking* - turning our every act of speech into a true expression of awareness - rather than an ejaculatory act through which we *pre-empt* and *pre-empty* ourselves of awareness.

MICRO-MEDITATIONS 2

- Every time you feel on the verge of saying something in response to another, feel the muscular impulse to speak and restrain it through evenness of breathing – thus extending the *breathing space* between the words of the other person and giving yourself time to take them in and to feel your response before speaking it.
- Instead of instantaneously speaking, mentally hear the different words you are on the verge of uttering - and the tone of voice in which you would have uttered them – but without identifying with this inner voice, its tone and its words.
- Instead of being drawn into expressing one or other particular stream of thoughts and feelings, attend to your awareness of *all* that you sense within yourself and in the other person – only speaking when you find words in resonance with this.
- Utter the words “I’m all right, thank you” - or any everyday phrase or question - as you would do naturally.
- Silently make a gesture with one hand that matches the exact manner in which you made the utterance – its tempo, amplitude, starting tone, intonation pattern, and breathing intervals, if any.
- Now make a silent hand gesture (or ask your partner to make a gesture) that embodies a completely *different* manner of uttering the words, and then utter the same words again exactly in the manner of that new gesture or *mudra*.

PRANIC PSYCHIATRY

The modern term ‘psychiatry’, like ‘psychology’ is of Greek origin. It refers to the healing (*iatros*) of the *psyche*. But long before the word *soma* came to refer to the living body and *psyche* to the body’s inwardness of soul, *soma* meant simply ‘corpse’ and *psyche* meant only the life-breath that had departed from it. The association of the life of the body with breath is an obvious one. Its association with the very life of the soul or *psyche* is one which psychiatry has forgotten.

The psychiatric term ‘schizophrenia’ is also of Greek origin. The root meaning of *schizo-phrenia* is not ‘split personality’ but rather ‘split breathing’ - for the Greek term *phrenes* from which it derives referred to the organismic experience of our breathing - in particular as it is affected or disturbed in different ways by our experiencing. The division or splitness of breathing is not in any way acknowledged by modern psychiatry as having anything to do with ‘mental illness’, and yet it is basic to it. The split can be understood in two ways – as a split between upper and lower body, chest and abdominal breathing - and as a more fundamental split between the root meaning of *psyche* as ‘breath’ and its meaning as ‘soul’ or psychological awareness. The split between these two most basic meanings of the word *psyche* itself makes Western ‘psychiatry’ an inherently *schizophrenic* science. In contrast, the Eastern scientific understanding of *prana* transcends this duality. *Prana* being the basic *bodily* substance of soul or awareness, *pranic* psychiatry makes nonsense of current interpretations of psychiatric or ‘mental’ illness. Indeed it makes nonsense of the very division between psychology, psychiatry and psychotherapy on the one hand, and ‘somatic’ medicine on the other. For the *soma* is indeed a corpse without the life-breath of soul or awareness - which is not its by-product but its basic substance.

Whilst modern medicine and psychiatry acknowledge that changes in blood circulation, hormonal flows and breathing can affect our mental-emotional state and be affected by it, they ignore the more fundamental reality that it is *flows of awareness* that determine both our bodily condition and mental-emotional states. Thus a ‘low’ mood persists, deepens and endures as ‘depression’ only because people no longer know how to give in to it – to let their low mood literally *lower* both their

awareness and breathing to the abdomen (through a down-flow of *awareness breath* accompanying and following each exhalation). Similarly states of extreme anxiety and panic arise because people no longer know how to expand the *breathing space* of their inner and outer awareness sufficiently to encompass and contain elements of their experience within it that they sense as threatening. This is because they have *narrowed* both their idea and experience of psychical awareness to something bounded by their own head ('the mind') or body ('the soul') - 'narrowing' being also the root meaning of the term 'anxiety'. Medicine and psychiatry treat the body as a mere womb-cum-tomb of the mind or soul – itself reduced to a function of a single organ, the brain. Similarly, the fact that people feel their psychical awareness and identity as something bounded by their own skins, means that they also cannot feel their body surface as an open, porous and *breathing* membrane uniting self and world, allowing a dynamic exchange between the space of their inner-bodily self-experience and all that they experience in the awareness space of their outer world.

The greater the attempt to maintain a fixed bodily boundary between self and world, inner and outer awareness spaces, the greater the tendency to alternate between a paranoid rigidification of this boundary, or a sense of its complete breakdown – of having no boundaries whatsoever. Alternatively, and more 'normally' the bodily split or division between self and world takes the form of a division or alternation between 'introversion' (dwelling in one's inner awareness space) and 'extroversion' (dwelling in the outer awareness space of one's world). All the so-called 'mental' illnesses labelled by psychiatric medicine are *experienced* by the individual in their awareness - *subjectively* – and not as 'objective' or 'organic' disorders of the body or brain functioning. And yet they all find embodiment in the individual's *breathing and way of speaking* – both of which are bodily ways of expressing their subjective experience of themselves, other people and the world. Without learning to distinguish awareness and experience however, neither can the individual learn to expand the inner and outer breathing space of their awareness in such a way as to safely encompass *all* elements of their experience. A true 'psychiatry' on the other hand, would overcome the schizophrenic split between psychical awareness and bodily breathing. Such a *pranic* psychiatry would acknowledge the freeing of flows of *awareness breath*, and with it, the expansion of breathing spaces of awareness as the key to both mental and physical health.

PRANIC SCIENCE

In the ‘animistic’ wisdom of all cultures we find a more or less explicit understanding that awareness is the very inwardness or ‘soul’ of all things – in particular that it is the aware inwardness or soul of the elements – of space and light, of fire, air, water and earth. Conversely, soul or awareness has its own innate elemental qualities (*tattvas*) of spatiality and light, warmth and coolness, airy diffuseness, watery fluidity and earthly solidity. Put these two primordial truths together and we end up with the type of dialectical principles or ‘chiasms’ that form the basis of a new *pranic* science and psychology - precisely that ‘science of soul’ on which The New Yoga is founded:

- the air of soul is the very soul of air - its aware inwardness
- the water of soul is the very soul of water – its aware inwardness
- the fire of soul is the soul of fire – its aware inwardness

The New Yoga is not a yoga of the physical body but of this *psychical* or soul body – itself essentially a breath body – a *psychic* or *pranic* body. In the West this body has gone under many esoteric names such as ‘subtle body’ (Jung), ‘astral body’ and ‘etheric body’. It was called an ‘astral’ body because it had ultimately the same unbounded spatial dimensions as cosmic or astral space.

The terms ‘space’ and ‘ether’ are both Western translations of the Sanskrit word *akasha*. The awareness body used to be termed the ‘etheric body’ because it was thought of as composed of the same *ether* that was supposed to fill the apparent emptiness of space. This is not some mechanical or quantum-dynamic ether, nor some fine material substantiality. The true ether is *soul substance* - the primordial substantiality of awareness as such, permeating all space. The term ‘etheric’ is derived from the Greek *aether*, meaning the upper *atmosphere* that surrounds the earth. It was the relative thinness and pureness of the air at higher levels that led to the association of *Lord Shiva* with mountainous heights and the heavenly blue sky above them – the vaulting ‘sky’ of *Shiva* or *shivavyoman*.

The type of pure and blissful awareness (*citanananda*) we can experience through identification with the upper atmosphere or pure *aether* of space can also be

permeated or contaminated by the more-or-less healthy psychic and emotional ‘atmospheres’ in which people dwell – whether economic or political, familial or institutional, domestic or public, cultural or religious. To speak of the ‘climate’ of an encounter, the ‘aura’ of a person or object or the atmosphere of a place or institution is no mere metaphor. Such psychic atmospheres have as much reality and substantiality as the very air we breathe in them. In reality they *form* that very air and imbue its physicality with their own psychic qualities. Mass psychic and emotional climates are also the true basis of changing weather conditions. It is psychological pollutants and ‘psycho-smog’ and not air-borne chemical pollutants, ozone holes in the upper atmosphere, or industrial smog that are the primary source of those ‘allergens’ held responsible for conditions such as asthma. And each individual’s awareness body, as a *psychic* or *pranic* body, also contains its own ‘micro-climate’ of emotional weather patterns – including calm or stormy emotional seas, rising emotional moisture, more or less cloudy emotional atmospheres, emotional droughts and floods, rainstorms and monsoons, whirlwinds and tsunamis. The particle-like *pranic* units of awareness from which they form are described in the Seth books of Jane Roberts in the following terms:

“These units...are basically animations arising from consciousness...the consciousness within each physical particle, regardless of its size, of molecular consciousness, cellular consciousness, as well as the larger gestalts of consciousness with which you are usually familiar. They are emitted by the cells, for example, in plants, animals, rocks, and so forth.

“They would have colour if you were able to perceive them physically”.

“These emanations can also appear as sounds, and you will be able to translate them into sounds long before your scientists discover their basic meaning.”

“The emanations are actually emotional tones. The varieties of tones, for all intents and purposes, are infinite. Intensity governs not only their activity and size, but the relative strength of their magnetic nature. They will draw other units to them, for example, according to the intensity of the emotional tone of the particular consciousness at any given ‘point’.”

“...let us discuss [these units] as they are related to a rock. The rock is composed of atoms and molecules, each with their own consciousness. This forms a gestalt rock consciousness. These units are sent out indiscriminately by the various atoms and molecules, but portions of them are also directed by the overall rock consciousness. The units are sent out by the rock informing the rock as to the nature of its changing environment: the angle of the sun and temperature changes, for example, as night falls; and even in the case of a rock they change as the rock’s loosely called emotional tone changes. As the units change, they alter the air about them, which is the result of their own activity. They constantly emanate out from the rock and return to it in a motion so swift it would seem simultaneous. The units meet with, and to some extent merge with, other units sent out, say, from foliage and all other objects. There is a constant blending, and also an attraction and repulsion.”

“These emanations arise as naturally as breath and there are other comparisons that can be made, in that there is a coming in and a going out, and transformation within the unit.” “The air...can be said to be formed by animations of these units...”

Our perception of all physical objects, whether rocks or plants, animals or human beings, is not a passive process of receiving sensory impressions and transforming them through nerve impulses in the brain. It is an active construction of our perceived reality making use of *pranic* substance – units of awareness. We each quite literally *materialise* an ‘objective’ body image of each other using the *prima material* that is *prana* – the primordial substantiality of awareness or subjectivity as such. We can do so only because we are in resonance with the ‘morphic fields’ or patterns of awareness through which other people materialise their own body image. The physical body as we perceive it is just that – a “materialised body image” (Seth) of the individual’s awareness body – their *psychic* or *pranic* body.

KARIKA

When we feel awareness pervading our bodies like the air we breathe – that is *prana*.

When we feel our awareness sinking within us like an inner exhalation – that is *prana*.

When we feel our awareness rising like a fiery flame - that is *prana*.

When we feel it condensing like dew, moistening like mist or tears – that is *prana*.

When we feel it chilling like a cold or wet wind – that is *prana*.

When we feel it as a warmth of soul in the womb of our abdomen – that is *prana*.

When we feel it drifting like a cloud or ghost – that is *prana*.

When we feel it as a cloudy, grey sky – that is *prana*.

When we feel its radiance like a sun – that is *prana*.

When we feel it as something filling the vast expanse of space – that is *prana*.

When we feel it as the fine substantiality of our flesh – that is *prana*.

When we feel the ‘atmosphere’ of a place – that is *prana*.

When we feel the ‘aura’ emanating from an object or person – that is *prana*.

When we feel the ‘air’ between people thicken or thin, warm or cool – that is *prana*.

When we let our soul flow into and fill the hollow awareness space of another person’s body – that is *prana*.

When we let the inner space of our own felt body be filled by the soul of another – that is *prana*.

When we come close enough to scent the very *soul* of another through the exhalation of their nose – that is *prana*.

When our awareness can flow with a wind or a river, rain or thunder - that is *prana*.

When we experience the aware inwardness or soul of the elements – the soul of fire, air, water and earth - as the fire, air, water or earth of our own soul – that is *prana*.

LESSON 4 – SUMMARY

Guiding Words:

...from awareness of breathing to the breathing of awareness

Questions to ask oneself:

How aware am I *of* my breathing?

To what extent can I continuously breathe *with* awareness?

How much *breathing space* do I feel, within and around me?

Can I alter the locus of my breathing from head and chest to abdomen,
and feel myself breathing in through my entire body surface?

Summary of Principles:

The way we *feel* affects the way we breathe.

Conversely, changing the way we *breathe* can change the way we feel.

We can sustain *whole-body* awareness through awareness of our breathing muscles.

We can shift the inner locus of our *awareness* by shifting the locus of our *breathing*.

We can breathe *awareness* itself through the entire felt *surface* of our bodies.

We can experience breaths as *flows* of awareness within our bodies.

Summary of Practices:

Staying constantly aware *of* your breathing, and breathing *with* awareness, feel
yourself breathing *in* your awareness of the space around you, and feel
each out-breath as a down-flow of awareness within you.

Mantra:

Breathing my awareness of space, inner and outer

I give my awareness more breathing space

To absorb what I experience.

PRANA AND THE NEW YOGA SIDDHA

A *New Yoga Siddha* is an adept - a *yogin(i)* capable of great psychic accomplishments (*siddhis*). These are ‘psychic’ or ‘soul’ powers in the root sense, for their essence lies in the capacity to intentionally direct and transform the life-breath (*psyche*) of awareness that is *prana*.

1. intentionally direct and re-direct *prana* - flows of awareness - within and around their own body, within and around the body of another, and in the awareness spaces *between* the aroundness and inwardness of their own body and that of another.
2. intentionally alter *the emotional, sensual and elemental qualities* of their own awareness - and impart such qualities to another through directed flows of awareness breath.
3. intentionally *shape and tone* flows of awareness breath through the use of the inner voice and inner sounds – *mantra* - in the same way that we use our physical voice to shape and tone audible sound flows when we speak.
4. intentionally ‘ride’ flows of awareness within and around themselves and others, feeling them like inner and outer flows of breath imbued with specific qualities and feeling tones.
5. intentionally transform ‘e-motional’ awareness qualities into actual *motions* or flows of awareness, felt as having purely tonal and musical, sensuous and elemental qualities.
6. intentionally embody and intensify different qualities, flows and transformations of awareness through *mudra* – using subtle gestures and changes in breathing, physical posture, facial expression and gaze to communicate them.
7. intentionally impart the experience of divine awareness qualities to the felt body and felt self of another - giving the other an experience of their own awareness body as a divine body.
8. intentionally breathe in and feel their own body filled by the awareness breath of another and its qualities, and – conversely – intentionally breath into and fill the hollow awareness space of another person’s body with their own awareness breath and its qualities.

MICROMEDITATIONS 3

- With your mouth closed, attend solely to your awareness of your head surface and all its muscles, in particular the muscles of your mouth, nostrils, eyes and brow.
- Intend to use only the muscles of your nostrils to draw in breath.
- Now feel yourself breathing directly *into* your sensed inner head space, clearing it with the light of a translucent awareness that widens and brightens your eyes.

- With your mouth closed, attend solely to your awareness of your entire ribcage, in particular the upper front surface of your chest.
- Intend to use only the muscles of your chest and ribcage to breathe.
- Now feel yourself breathing directly *through* your chest surface - sensing that surface as entirely open to the space around you.

- Mouth closed, attend solely to your awareness of your abdominal muscles.
- Intend to use these muscles alone to draw in breath – slowly but firmly and fully pushing out and expanding your abdomen like a balloon to inhale.
- Now feel yourself breathing directly *into* the sensed inner space of your abdomen – as if drawing a warm up-flow of awareness that fills it out from below.

- Attend to your awareness of your facial, chest and abdominal surface.
- Become aware in turn of the muscles of the eyes, face and nose, of the chest and of the lower abdomen.
- Feel how you can move your awareness between its spaces and centres in the head, chest and lower abdomen simply by becoming aware of your breathing and shifting its centre between the respiratory muscles of head, chest and abdomen.

- Breathe out through your nose with your mouth closed, drawing your chest and abdominal muscles in as you do so, and feel your out-breath as a down-flow of awareness through your chest to your belly and abdomen.
- Breathe in through your nose with your mouth closed, pushing first your abdomen and then your chest out as you do so, and feel your in-breath as an up-flow of awareness to and from your abdomen, through your chest, to your head.
- Breathe in and out using only your abdominal muscles, feeling your out-breath as a down-flow of awareness from your abdomen through your lower body to an underground space beneath the ground, and feeling your in-breath as an up-flow of awareness filling and expanding your abdomen – but not rising above it into your chest or head.

- Breathe in such a way as to feel your breath cycle as an up- and down-flow of awareness in your *entire upper body* above the waist (between chest and head).
- Breathe in such a way as to feel your breath cycle only as an up- and down-flow of awareness in your *entire lower body* below the waist (between feet and abdomen).
- Centering your awareness in the mid-point of your diaphragm (*hrdaya*) freely alternate between feeling the up- and down-flows of awareness breath running through your upper body, in your lower body, or your body as a whole.

LESSON 4 – GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT TERMS

A-H(A)M – ‘I AM’, the mantra of supreme identity felt as a cycle of breath (in-breath ‘A’, out-breath ‘H(A)M’)

ANANDA – sensual bliss in contrast to erotic pleasure (**KAMA**)

APANA – the out-breath experienced as a downflow of awareness

CHAKRA – ‘wheel’, the centre of a wheel or sphere of awareness

HARA – the inner awareness space of the abdomen

HRDAYA – a centre of awareness at the mid-point of the diaphragm

IDA – the upflowing ‘channel’ or **NADI** of **PRANA** or awareness breath

KAMA – erotic pleasure

KAMASUTRA – teachings on the intensification of erotic pleasure

KUNDALINI – ‘black serpent power’, the power of pure potentiality felt as rising through and up from the **MULADHARA**

LINGAM / YONI LINGAM / SHIVA LINGAM – the inwardness of the physical body experienced as a vaginal or womblike space (**YONI**) that can be penetrated and filled by **KUNDALINI** as by a phallus or **LINGAM**

MAHADEVI – ‘great goddess’ the field of pure potentiality (**TURYA**) that is the womb of all worlds

MAITHUNA – tantric intercourse

MULADHARA – the ‘root support’ centre at the base of the spine

NADI – a flow channel of awareness breath or **PRANA**

PINGALA – the downflowing channel or **NADI** of awareness breath

PRANA – the inhalation and exhalation of awareness or ‘soul breath’

PRANA – awareness felt as something breathed in through one’s entire body surface

PRANAYAMA – the elongation of the breath cycle and through it, the transformation of ordinary breathing into awareness breathing

SAMANA – a balanced in- and outflow of breath and awareness centred in the abdomen

SHAKTIPATA – the descent of awareness through the **MULADHARA**

SUSHUMNA – the central vertical axis of awareness linking the spaces and centres of awareness in head, chest and abdomen

TANTRASHASTRA – the teachings of **TANTRA**

TATTVAS/TANMATRAS – sensual and elemental qualities of awareness and awareness breath (**PRANA**)

TURYA – a ‘fourth’ state of awareness beyond the waking, dream and sleep state – the awareness of pure potentiality that is at the same time the pure power of awareness that rises as **KUNDALINI**

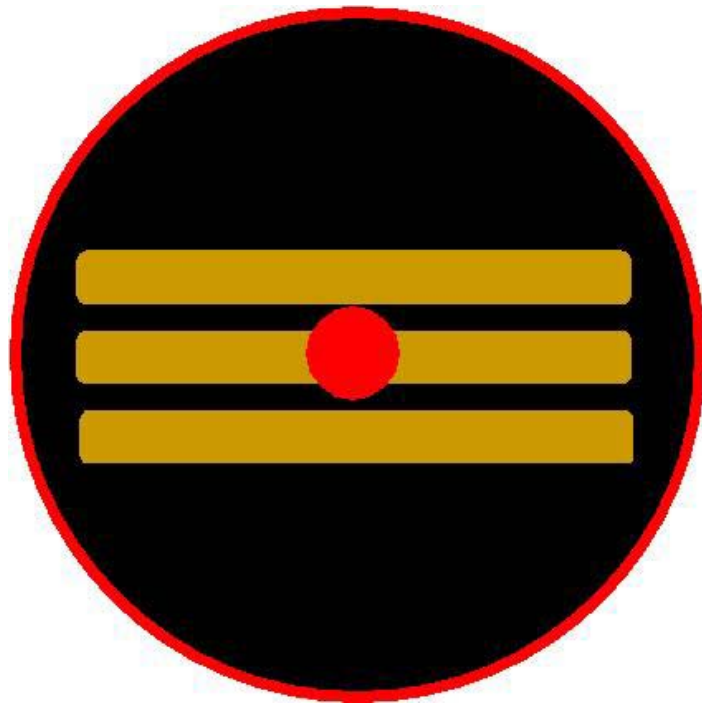
UDANA – the in-breath felt as an upflow of awareness from the abdomen towards the head

VISARGA – A Sanskrit diacritic mark /:/ representing the phoneme /H/ and symbolising also the elongated interval of in- and out-breath

VYANA – awareness felt as entirely diffusing and pervading the body like breath and air, and radiating outwardly from it as light

YOGASIDDHA – a yoga adept with the psychical power to direct and transform the ‘life breath’ of awareness (‘psyche’) that is **PRANA**

MANUAL OF THE NEW YOGA



LESSON 5:

THE NEW YOGA OF ACTION

(KRIYA YOGA)

**...from awareness of action
to awareness in action**

For that vibration (*spanda*), which is a slight motion of a special kind, a unique vibrating light, is the wave of the ocean of awareness, without which there is no conscious experience at all. For the character of the ocean is that it is sometimes filled with waves and sometimes waveless. This awareness is the essence of all.

It is the powers of the self (*atman*) that, emerging from the ocean of awareness and uniting together in various and sundry ways, create finite realities. The mutual interaction of the powers to manifest the finite is termed the power of action (*kriya shakti*).

Abhinavagupta

...the “calling” which most deeply touched our nature, and moves us in its service, is to be *felt as a strongly grounded motivation* to act in the world, visibly moved by a deeply rooted compassion for the suffering and needs of all other sentient beings. *Compassion is: moving and being moved for the sake of others.*

David Michael Levin

I exercise occult and subtle power, carrying water, shouldering firewood.

Zen Master Koji

FROM THE BHAGAVAD GITA

All creatures come into existence from ... action.

Your domain is the field of action alone, and never its fruits. Do not be motivated by the fruits of action nor attached to inaction.

As taught by Me since ancient time, O Blameless One, there are in this world two kinds of disciplines: the yoga of knowledge And the yoga of action for yogins.

He whose intellect is established in the yoga of knowledge casts off both good and evil even while living in this world.

Yoga is skill in action.

Not by abstaining from action does a man achieve freedom from action ...

There is no knowledge without action and there is no action without knowledge. Therefore ... one who knows the secret of action and knowledge is capable of releasing human beings from bondage.

This world is action-bound, save when this action is intended as sacrifice [of the notion of the ego as agent or doer]. For the sake of sacrifice, engage in action free of attachment [free of identification with action, with the ego as doer or agent of action, with the end results or gains of action].

Therefore always perform, unattached, the right deed, for the man who performs action without attachment [identification] attains the Supreme.

He who rejoices in the *atman* [awareness self] alone, who finds satisfaction in the *atman*, who is content only in the *atman*, for him there is no action that he needs to do.

Having abandoned attachment to the fruits of action, always contented, depending on nothing, even whilst fully engaged in action he does not act at all.

For Me ... there is nothing to be done in the three worlds, nothing ungained to be gained - and yet I engage in action.

Whilst the unwise act because of their attachment to action, O Bharata, so the wise should also act, but without attachment, desiring the welfare of the world.

The wise man should not create a division in the minds of the ignorant who are attached to [identified with] action; the wise should direct them to enjoy all actions and dutifully engage in them himself.

Actions are actualised by the intrinsic qualities belonging to manifest reality, each actualising their individual nature. He whose self (*atman*) is deluded by the ego thinks 'I am the doer'.

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THE ESSENTIAL MESSAGE OF THE GITA

1. Awareness of action is not action.
2. Awareness is non-action (*naishkarmya*).
3. Aware action is action that arises freely out of non-action - out of awareness.
4. Aware action is action in which the quiescent stillness of non-action is sustained.
5. Aware action is free and autonomous action without an agent – without ego.
6. Awareness alone is the ultimate source of all action, released within itself.
7. Unaware action is action in which awareness loses itself and becomes bound.
8. Engage in action like those without awareness – but do so with awareness.
9. Unaware action is action driven by need and desire.
10. Aware action is action free of all needs and desires.
11. Aware action alone will fulfil all needs and desires.
12. There is no perfection in action - only in awareness.
13. Even whilst acting, rest in quiescent awareness.

THE KRIYA YOGA OF PATANJALI

The path designated as *kriya yoga* by Patanjali was equated with the essence of yoga itself, which he defined as “the restriction of fluctuations (*vritti*) of consciousness”. The term *vritti* derives from the root *vrt* – ‘to whirl’. *Vritti* can be compared to ripples or disturbances on the surface of a smooth lake, the lake being awareness itself. In terms of The New Yoga, *vritti* are principally ‘mental’ movements or fluctuations of awareness of the sort which Patanjali associated specifically with (acts of) perception, conception, misconception or remembering. These have their basis in *samskaras* - “subliminal activators” (Feuerstein) or *action patterns* lying latent beneath the surface of the ‘lake’ of awareness. The *expression* of these action patterns in patterns of mental activity and experience, and their *embodiment* in patterns of physical activity and experience, both gives them form and reinforces them - thus shaping the individual’s destiny or *karma*.

The ‘law of karma’ can thus be reinterpreted as something rooted not in a linear relation of ‘cause’ and ‘effect’ but rather in the principles of “morphic resonance” and “formative causation” as conceptualised by the biologist Rupert Sheldrake. According to Sheldrake any potential pattern or form (*morphe*) is automatically reinforced by *resonance* with its own mental or material actualisation, thus giving it the character of a “morphic field”. “Formative causation” is the principle by which such morphic fields automatically exert a formative influence on the actualisation of further “morphic units” (whether atoms, cells or whole organisms) tending to shape them in their own likeness. Manifest form or pattern in other words, is intrinsically self-reinforcing or self-reproducing - even without any energetic or genetic causality being involved. Mental fluctuations or *vritti* can be ‘restrained’ by cutting them off at the stem (dis-identifying from mental patterns of thought and perception). Yet as Patanjali recognised, they can only be truly *eradicated* by getting to their *roots* - blocking their emergence as patterns of thought and perception *at the very point of their inception* in our awareness. In The New Yoga of Action this applies to *bodily* as well as *mental* action patterns. For it is the latter that reinforce the former. And we can become aware of the *samskaras* behind both only by *sensing them in a bodily way*.

KRIYA YOGA AND KARMA YOGA

In the tantric tradition *kriya* (action) is the fifth of the primary pentad of divine powers or *shaktis*, following *cit* (consciousness), *ananda* (bliss), *iccha* (desire/intent), and *jnana* (knowing). *Kriya yoga* is also intimately related to *karma yoga* - the words *kriya* and *karma* being historically derived from the same root (*kri* - to 'make' or 'create', 'do' or 'act'). Yet as Georg Feuerstein explains, "... the word *karma* can signify not only 'action', but also 'work', 'product', 'effect', and so on." That is why he agrees with Webster's dictionary definition of *karma* as "the force generated by a person's actions held in Hinduism and Buddhism to perpetuate transmigration and in its ethical consequences to determine his destiny in his next existence." This is also why *kriya yoga* - as the yoga of action - is intimately related to *karma yoga*. The term *kriya* was initially used by Patanjali to refer to an eight-fold path of meditative practices designed to free the individual from the entirety of latent action patterns or *samskaras* which gave shape to an individual's actions and thereby also their destiny or *karma*. The reduction of *kriya yoga* - indeed of 'yoga' as such - to the practice of bodily postures or *asanas* known as *hatha yoga* was the result of a long development, one which only fully took hold in 1930's America. Its historic roots however, lie in a lineage of *tantric* adepts known as the *nathas* - in particular *Matseyendranatha* and *Goraksanatha*. The focus of their 'practice of the body' (*kaya sadhana*) was not the physical body alone but the psychical body and its powers or *siddhis*.

The deeper significance of both *kriya* and *karma yoga* however lies in the historic role they have played in countering the identification of Indian religious and ethical philosophy with *world renunciation and inaction*. Thus, as Feuerstein points out "...Gandhi was modern India's most superb example of a *karma-yogin* in action." Furthermore "... the law of karma does not intrinsically encourage fatalism ... On the contrary, it is a call to assume responsibility for one's destiny. This call is made in all the psycho-spiritual traditions of India, which, as liberation teachings, insist on the freedom of the will." Though free action is defined in *karma yoga* as *naishkarmya* or 'non-action', its essential meaning is *aware action*, a "freedom in action" (Feuerstein) that comes from transcendental *awareness* - an awareness of action that transcends any given act, pattern or dimension of action, even whilst engaging in it.

ACTION, IDENTITY AND THE EGO

The so-called 'law of karma' does not refer to a linear relation of *cause and effect* but to a 'non-linear' or *reciprocal* relation – the way in which every *action* automatically and instantaneously *reacts upon* the very agent of that action, either reinforcing their current identity or pattern of action, or altering it. Western philosophy and psychology on the other hand, are bound up with the notion that the agent or 'subject' of both awareness and action is an unchanging 'ego' or 'I', one whose identity remains permanently *immune* from alteration by its own actions. In simple terms, the 'I' that washes the dishes is no different from the 'I' that lies ill in bed. This reduction of identity to an unchanging *ego-identity* is reflected in language itself, where the word 'I' is used as an unchanging grammatical 'subject' of any verb or action. Here language itself contradicts our everyday experience of feeling different in ourselves – experiencing a different self - when engaged in different types of action.

The ego is that portion of our identity that regards itself as an initiator of action and as independent of action – unchanged by its own actions. In this sense ego-identity is essentially an illusion, for all aspects of our identity, including the ego-identity, are *a part of action* and not separate or *apart from it*. They themselves are patterns of action emerging from and within awareness. The ego is also that portion of our experienced self or identity that regards awareness itself as its private property.

The aim of yoga is to not to destroy the ego but to undo the experienced illusion of ego-identity, the idea that we are unchanging centres, subjects or sources of awareness. We undo this illusion by learning to experience the ego as just one aspect of our experienced identity among others - one which we can be *aware of* in the same way we are aware of other aspects of our experienced self. For all aspects of our identity emerge within the awareness field of our inner self – that self which does not 'possess' but *is* awareness. There simply is no ultimate *agent* of action outside of SHIVA - awareness itself. As awareness itself, SHIVA is not some divine super-ego which engages in action but that which *releases* action from within itself. The action it releases is SHAKTI – the *autonomous self-actualisation* of all the *potential* forms and shapes *of* awareness latent *within* awareness.

AWARE EXPERIENCING AND AWARE ACTION

All experience and all action spring from awareness – giving expression to different patterns and qualities of awareness. *Unaware experiencing* leads to identification with particular, fixed or limiting ways of experiencing ourselves, other people and the world. *Unaware action* is action that is driven by and in turn reinforces such limiting identifications. It is action that comes from unaware experiencing. Such action is purely *reactive* – a reaction *from* our own unaware experience of ourselves and *to* our own *unaware experience* of other people and the world.

Unaware experiencing thus goes together with *unaware action*. To ‘free’ oneself from accumulated *karma* means to free oneself of the accumulated *identifications* that result from and reinforce *unaware action* – all forms of *reactive relating*. To not ‘accumulate’ *karma* in the first place however, means to cease to engage in *unaware action* – to cease to act and relate at any moment in a way that is *purely reactive*. For whenever we hastily *react* to or react from a particular experience without first giving ourselves time to become *aware* of what we are experiencing we reinforce the *karmic* vicious circle linking *unaware action* with unaware experiencing.

Aware experiencing thus goes together with *aware action*. You can be *aware* of how you are experiencing another person (for example as hostile, hurtful etc) and of the way it affects you (for example making you feel hurt) without *reacting to* that particular way of experiencing the other, and without *reacting from* the particular way it makes you feel or experience yourself.

Every action implies other possible actions. Reactive, unaware action is *unfree* action – for it excludes other possible actions. Without giving ourselves time to become aware of what we are experiencing therefore we can neither dis-identify from our experience nor *freely choose* our actions from within a broader field of awareness - one that embraces and includes the alternative possible actions. Whenever we simply *react* in an unaware way on the other hand, we contract our awareness to one line of action alone – as if there were no possible alternatives, nothing else we could do or say. That is the true meaning of *karma* as bondage or unfreedom.

Aware experiencing leads to aware action – for only through awareness of experience can we act in a way that does not spring from unaware identification with our experience of ourselves, other people and the world. Only *aware action* is truly *free action* – for only awareness of the way we act allows us to freely choose our actions with awareness, rather than just ‘acting out’ our identifications. *Kriya yoga*, as the yoga of action, is therefore the essence of *karma yoga*, freeing us, through new ways of acting, from our ‘karmic’ accumulation of unaware identifications and patterns of action (*samskaras*).

The smallest bodily action (*kriya*) or sequence of actions (*krama*), from the raising of an eyebrow to a particular way of walking or talking, is itself an *act of identification* – reinforcing one identity or pattern of action as opposed to other, possible ones. Identity is a pattern of action. *Karma* in the negative sense is simply action (*kriya*) understood as *unaware acts of identification* which *confine* our awareness to a particular identity or *pattern of action*. Through such actions we can act or play out *parts* of ourselves or ‘part selves’, but we do so in such a way as to lose awareness of our whole self or soul. This whole self or soul is ultimately the ‘awareness self’ - the self that *is* awareness in all its incarnations, identities and dimensions. If we limit our sense of who we *are* to what we *do* then we allow those actions to *define* and *confine* our identity and we lose touch with our awareness self. Unaware action is action in which awareness loses itself in unaware identifications - thus becoming ‘karmically’ bound to particular identities or patterns of action.

You are not what you do but the way that you do it. Every aspect of your *experienced identity* is not a ‘what’ but a ‘how’ – a specific *way* of acting or *pattern* of action. An identity is a *pattern of action*. A new identity is a new pattern of action, one which lends a new quality to our awareness. Any *aware alteration* in the way we act *alters both our identity and our awareness* – lending it new qualities and a new pattern. But action that is not itself *aware* cannot lead to an *alteration* in awareness. We cannot *alter* our awareness through the way we act if we are not *aware* of how we act.

KARIKA

What is any 'being' except its *way* of be-ing?

What is any 'body' except a way of bodying?

What are the senses except ways of sensing?

What is this life except a way of living?

What is this 'human being' before you except their ways of being – of sensing and breathing, looking and listening, moving and speaking, living and dying?

What is that voice you hear from them except a way of sounding?

What are those words they utter except a way of saying something?

What is that look on their face except a way of looking at things?

What is that face except a way of facing things - facing themselves, facing their world and facing other beings and facing their own feelings and those of others?

What are feelings themselves except ways of feeling things?

What are the 'things' or 'beings' we face and feel except other ways of be-ing? What is this single 'tree' I see except its way of treeing – of branching and leafing, flowering and fruiting?

What is this single branch except its singular way of branching? What is this single leaf except its singular way of leafing?

What is this single flower except its singular way of flowering?

What are its unique tones of red, yellow or blue except its unique ways of reddening, yellowing or bluing? What is this green blade of grass except its way of greening, and of standing and quivering in the breeze?

What is any 'thing' or 'being' that exists except a way of *ex-isting* - of 'standing out' within our field of awareness, and comporting itself towards us?

What is 'light' except the way in which things are illuminated for us in awareness and in doing so, radiate or illuminate their own qualities of awareness?

What is that majestic tree, mountain or outcrop of rock, except a seemingly motionless but deeply moving compartment – a *way* of comporting itself in the landscape around it, and one that can move us and every other being in all manner of ways, even as we move around or upon it?

What is any being's 'identity' except a *pattern of action* that is at the same time a pattern of interaction – of dynamic relation?

ACTION, SPACE AND PERCEPTION

Experience too, is no ‘thing’ but an ‘-ing’. For what we call ‘experiencing’ is the presencing or *actualisation* of specific experiences within a space of awareness. Thus experience too is also *action* occurring or unfolding within that space. All spaces are spaces of awareness. All that we experience actualises itself or comes to presence itself in these spaces of awareness, inner or outer. That means also that all spaces are not only spaces of awareness but spaces of *potential experience*, and *potential action*. All space is what Winnicott called “potential space”.

Perception is a primary mode of experiencing. But what we perceive, for example, as a doorknob is not just a visual object in the spatial field of our awareness. We perceive it *as* a ‘doorknob’ only because we do not simply ‘see’ some round object but sense what it would feel like to grasp and turn in the act of opening the door. Similarly we perceive the door as a door, and not just as a piece of painted wood, because we sense what it would feel like to open and go through it. Even the *potential* action and experience of opening the door is no mere act of mental imagination, but something we sense in a *bodily way* just looking at the door. Door and knob, perceived as a doorknob are already an invitation to act with our whole body. Even without actually opening the door the doorknob is already experienced in our field of awareness as the expression of the potential *pattern of bodily action* that constitutes ‘opening the door’. Before we can actually go and open the door however, that pattern of *potential action* in space needs to have *already been enacted*, not in our mental imagination, but as “virtual action” (Shapiro), one anticipated through our already existing *bodily* sense of it. In addition “The simple act of opening the door reveals and describes a relation between the doorknob and the door, or the door and the next room.” The movement of actually opening the door with our *physical body* is but the enactment of a *potential pattern of action* already sensed with our *felt body* and based on its sense of a *pattern of interrelatedness* in space. It is with our felt body or awareness body that we first sense patterns of relatedness in space and give them form as virtual patterns of action – not only before but *in order* to then enact them with our physical body.

MEDITATION, STRESS AND BODILY ACTION

According to Karl Marx, the essence of human being is “sensuous human activity”, in particular the bodily activity of creative human labour. It was Marx’s understanding that when workers no longer own and sell the products of their labour but instead are forced to sell their labour power itself, they become alienated from their bodies and from the sensuous and creative bodily activity that makes them most human. Instead, they become wage slaves - disposable ‘employees’ whose labour time, as well as its products, are both the property of the modern capitalist employer. In the inexorable drive for the maximisation of profit through increased productivity, both labour *time* and the *pace* of labour in the workplace is continually increased. Hence the ubiquitous phenomenon of ‘stress’. The felt need to ‘reduce stress’ and ‘slow down’ resulting from the pace of ‘modern life’ is itself turned into a source of profit by the entertainment and leisure industries – not to mention the alternative health industry. Yet taking the occasional holiday and lying on the beach, sitting oneself in front of the TV or computer screen after work – even attending so-called yoga classes and spending the odd hour meditating in a fixed bodily position are not ‘slowing down’. Like illness, they simply offer odd periods of total *immobility and non-action*. To really ‘slow down’ means just that – slowing the *pace* of our everyday bodily movements and thereby also slowing our mental activity. It means breathing and moving more slowly, dressing and eating more slowly, walking and talking more slowly. Above all, it means *working* more slowly. This includes slowing the pace of meetings and discussions by *speaking* more slowly - thus giving more time to *listen* to ourselves and others. But *working* more slowly – including speaking and thinking more slowly - is subversive anathema to *capitalism*, which values only speed and ‘quick thinking’. Managers and political bosses still fail to recognise that slower thinking is deeper thinking - leading to better decision taking. Meditation should not be used as a *compensation for the stresses of everyday life and work*. It should be understood as a slowing down of our bodily actions *in the course of our everyday life and work*. This is not achieved through temporary escapes into stasis - aided by what passes as ‘yoga’ today. It is slowing down and not stasis that creates *breathing space for awareness* - thus deepening the *quality* of the time we give to our life and work, and allowing for wiser, more *aware* action, communication and decision-taking.

ACTION, NON-ACTION AND 'WILL-POWER'

In tantric teaching, the five principal powers or SHAKTIS of the divine are *cit* (awareness), *ananda* (bliss), *iccha* (will or intent), *jnana* (knowing) and *kriya* (action). Central to this pentad of powers is *icchashakti* – the power of will or ‘will-power’. Its secret lies in the unity of action and non-action. In both Western and Eastern cultures *non-action* has been falsely identified with mere *inaction* – with idle passivity, apathy or lethargy. In reality however, *aware, freely chosen, knowing and intentional non-action* is *the highest form of action* – indeed it is *the very condition of all action*.

The secret of ‘willpower’ is not ‘wilfulness’ but *free will*. That is why in essence there is no such thing as ‘acting against one’s own will’. For the very essence of will or intent is free will – action that is freely chosen or intended. Free will finds expression in *aware* action – action that is both freely chosen and *knowingly* intended. By its very nature however, every act is a choice. Every choice is a choice of *alternative* possible actions – at the very least the choice *whether* to act or not. Therefore the very condition for choosing to act in a particular way is choosing *not to act* in any number of alternative ways. The greater the range of potential actions we are aware of in any situation, the freer our choice of action is – the freer our ‘will’ is. By limiting the number of alternative actions we diminish our freedom of will. Restricting our awareness to black and white choices, or to single choices, gives only the illusion of ‘strength of will’.

Even if all we are considering is a single course of action however, only if we can freely choose *not to act* in a given way is our choice to act in that way truly free. Without the power to choose *not to*, there can be no true *choosing* to. Free will and free action therefore begins with *restraint* – the power of *non-action*. True ‘strength of will’ is embodied in restraint - the strength required to *restrain* from action. Thus we cannot freely choose to listen to another unless we first of all actively restrain our own acts of speech. Restraining from action is itself a form of action. It is the unity of action and non-action. The more our *not speaking* is an aware and intentional *act* of restraint or *non-action*, the more actively we can listen - and the greater the awareness with which we can speak when we choose to.

Choosing *not* to act in any way is itself a form of speech. It means saying 'No' to an action - not in words or through some *defensive reaction* or aggressive *counter-action* but through the restraint of intentional *non-action*. Every freely chosen act, since it involves the restraint of other possible acts, simultaneously says 'No' and 'Yes'. Aware and free action is *never* merely 'Yes' saying or 'affirmative action'. It is always grounded in an act of saying 'No', in the active restraint of non-action. The Yes-saying of action is grounded in the No-saying of non-action. Unless we feel free to say 'No' to an action therefore, we cannot freely say 'Yes' to it. Action that is not rooted in this restraint, in the capacity to say 'No' to itself, is not *free* action. And action that is not felt by an individual to be fully *free* tends, by its nature, to be *blocked*. Illness has its roots not in blocked 'energy' but in *blocked action*. *Blocked* action however is not the same thing as *restrained* action. On the contrary, action becomes blocked when a person feels *bound or constrained* to act in a certain way, and therefore *powerless to restrain from action*. In place of this aware self-restraint of action therefore, some alien counter-impulse seems to 'constrain' or 'block' the individual's actions whether from within or without - in the form of an inwardly felt 'lack of will' or through circumstances or events which serve to preclude action.

In patriarchal cultures, masculinity is identified with agency - the *power of action*. The feminine is seen as the *passive object* of action. Even the identification of the Earth with the feminine ('Mother Earth') is not simply a recognition of Nature as a matriarchal source of nourishment and life. It is also a patriarchal reduction of the earth and all its resources to a passive object of violation and exploitation. But when the Earth has had enough of human exploitation it knows exactly how to say 'No'. The same cannot be said either of women or men who are reduced to objects of exploitation or violation. Saying 'No' in word or deed is one thing - difficult enough for many. Saying 'No' through non-action, through steadfast restraint of both word and deed - is even more of a challenge for most. The spiritual principles of 'pacifism' and 'non-violence' can only be effectively practiced when they are *embodied* as that power of will (*icchashakti*) that is rooted in aware restraint or 'non-action'. Christ did not 'turn the other cheek' in order for it too to be slapped - thus passively *surrendering* to the aggressive act of another. His turning of the cheek was an embodied act of self-restraint, one that in turn effectively restrained further acts of aggression - through *refusing* the black-and-white choice of *fight versus flight*.

Just as we can only freely do what we are capable of *not-doing*, so also does the converse principle hold. We can only restrain from doing something if we are *capable* of doing it. A person simply and purely *incapable* of violence cannot practice ‘non-violence’ as an ethical principle. Were Jesus to have been a meek sheep who *could not* strike back in anger, his turning of the cheek would have no meaning as restraint or non-action and also carry no power as an action. Religious moralities – as prescribed ways of acting - offer a mix of different, often mixed-up positions on the question of ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ action - simply in order to give recognition to the intrinsic unity of action and non-action. Thus *restraint* from action may be turned into a one-sided principle of non-action - for example through total abstinence from action (asceticism) or moralistic constraint on action (prohibitionism).

Religious principles of prohibition and practices of restraint have served the purpose of emphasising the intrinsically active nature of restraint or non-action. Yet, unlike the *tantric practitioner*, neither the Vedic ascetic nor the Christian ascetic-cum-celibate understand that the true purpose of restraining from acts that bring sensual or sexual pleasure is to *relish* such pleasure more sublimely and spiritually, to experience ‘awareness-bliss’ (*citanananda*) in all its innately sensual and sexual dimensions. Similarly, neither Buddhism nor Christianity affirm the *aggressive nature* of all truly free action. Simply moving to greet or hug someone, is, in the root sense of the word - an *a(d)-ggressive act* – ‘a step or movement to or towards’. If we are incapable of *feeling* intense aggressive or sexual impulses of a sort that *move or impel* our actions in a particular direction, neither can we learn true restraint of impulse and action. What is restrained is not repressed but *felt* all the more intensely. Violence is ‘unfeeling’ action as well as unfree action because it arises out of fear of feeling intense aggressive impulses - out of which fear comes the need to evacuate them by acting them out. Violence therefore, is not an ‘extreme’ form of aggression but the result of an incapacity to bear intense aggressive feelings and impulses – which are *enacted* in order to *evacuate* and *pacify* them. Violence is simply taken up as an alternative to and release of *blocked action* and *blocked aggression* – both of which come from a sense of *powerlessness* to *restrain* action. The violent individual feels *bound* to act in a violent way, and violence is therefore unfree as well as unfeeling action. It is *wrong action* not simply because of its *consequences* but because it is not right action – *free and aware action*. All its dire consequences spring from this.

MACROMEDITATION

This macromeditation is a sequence of successive pair exercises designed to practice the basic and decisive acts of ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ saying - both as *speech acts* and through silently embodied speech or ‘non-action’.

Warm-up exercise:

Spend a minute exploring how many different ways and with how many different intensities and nuances, tones and undertones, you can utter the word ‘Yes’. Then let your partner do the same. Repeat the exercise with the word ‘No’, seeing how many intensities and nuances of meaning both you and your partner can convey with it.

Pair exercise (a)

Stand facing a partner.

Seek to impose your will on your partner simply by saying ‘Yes’ in different ways - whilst your partner seeks to block your will by saying ‘No’ with matching intent and intensity. Allow pauses between each repeated ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ to ensure that your next ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ is a *response* to the intensity, nuancing and tone of your partner’s last ‘Yes’ or ‘No’.

Reverse roles.

Pair exercise (b)

Stand facing a partner.

Take it in turns for one partner to repeatedly say ‘Yes’ verbally, whilst the other says ‘No’ silently – with their *body* – using their face, eyes and body as a whole to firmly and fully *embody* their ‘No’ without need for speech or action. Again, allow intervals between each act of verbal ‘Yes’ saying to feel your partner’s silent, bodily No-saying, so that your next ‘Yes’ is a response to it.

Reverse roles.

Pair exercise (c)

Making and sustaining eye-contact with your partner, take it in turns for one of you to silently say ‘Yes’ with their body whilst the other says ‘No’ with theirs. This time however, do not intend the ‘Yes’ you say with your *body* as one that seeks to impose your will on your partner. Instead feel it as a ‘Yes’ through which you fully affirm both yourself *and* your partner - affirming your own being, that of your partner and affirming *All That Is* without need of speech or action. Feel your bodily ‘No’ saying on the other hand, as a determined bounding of your being and awareness.

Reverse roles.

THE ABSOLUTE AS AWARENESS AND ACTION

The absolute can be conceived both as awareness (SHIVA) and as action (SHAKTI). As a result, within the various Kashmiri schools of tantric metaphysics and meditation there were those of a SHAKTA orientation that emphasised the absolute character of action, and those of a SHAIVA orientation that emphasised the absolute character of awareness. Among these schools were those of KRAMA and KULA tantra. KRAMA metaphysics focused on the nature of the absolute as constant and inexhaustible *action*, both in its temporal character as sequence or succession (*krama*) and in its trans-temporal and trans-sequential character (*akrama*). KULA metaphysics on the other hand, focused on the nature of the absolute as awareness, both in its spatially bounded and bodied character (*kula*) and on its unbounded spatial character (*akula*). In essence *akrama* and *akula* constitute distinct but inseparable aspects of the same absolute – specifically in its relation to time and space respectively. For if ‘space’ is the *co-presence* of experienced phenomena within fields of awareness, then time is the continuous *presencing* or actualisation of those phenomena.

We tend to speak of time in spatial terms, talking of shorter or longer periods of time, or of events getting closer or more distant. The KRAMA school understood reality as something in *constant creation*, not merely within the contracted space of our immediate ‘now’ but in an absolute *time-space* embracing all ‘nows’ - past, present and future. *Akrama*, as the *trans-temporal* character of the absolute is not a static realm of ‘eternity’ but a realm of eternally unfolding *action* – the constant and continuous *co-presencing* of All That Is within a boundless *time-space* or “spacious present” (Seth). If *space-time* is the active *presencing* of particular phenomena within the awareness space or ‘here’ of our limited present or ‘now’, then *akrama* is the *co-presencing* of all phenomena within that unlimited *time-space* which also embraces all past and future ‘nows’. *Akula* and *akrama* are inseparable aspects of this *absolute time-space* of awareness and action, which has both a *temporally trans-spatial* and a *spatially trans-temporal* character - transcending both the spatial ‘here’ we experience in our limited ‘now’ and the temporal ‘now’ we experience in our limited ‘here’. *Awareness*, as ‘non-action’, is this transcendental time-space, and yet ‘at the same time’ the latter is nothing but a time-space of eternally unfolding *action*.

MICROMEDITATIONS 1

- Feel the way you are breathing.
- Choose to breathe in a different way.
- Feel the difference in the way you feel when you breathe differently.

- Feel the way you are sitting.
- Choose to sit in a different way.
- Feel the difference in the way you feel when you sit differently.

- Feel the way you are walking.
- Choose to walk in a different way.
- Feel the difference in the way you feel when you walk differently.

- Feel the way you are speaking.
- Choose to speak in a different way.
- Feel the difference in the way you feel when you speak differently.

- Feel the way you intone your voice.
- Choose to tone your voice in a different way.
- Feel the difference in the way you feel when your voice tone is different.

- Feel your facial expression.
- Choose to express yourself facially in a different way or different ways.
- Feel the difference in the way you feel when you face the world differently.

- Feel the look in your eyes.
- Choose to look in a different way.
- Feel the difference in the way you feel when your eyes look differently.

MICROMEDITATIONS 2

1. Feel the way you are currently breathing, moving, speaking or doing anything.
 2. Be aware of the pace of your speech, movement or actions.
 3. Choose to slow down your bodily action.
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1. Sense the muscles in different regions of your body – head, neck, chest, abdomen, arms, upper and lower legs etc.
 2. Be aware of any muscular impulse to imminent action or movement (*samskara*), without identifying with it or acting on it.
 3. Attend purely to your awareness of the activating impulse, not focusing your awareness on it, but letting it dissipate in your larger awareness *field*.
-
1. Be aware of any thoughts that you sense are prompting certain *emotions* and feel the muscular impulses that serve to turn them into acts of speech or bodily *motion*.
 2. Attend to your awareness of those mental activators without *acting on them*.
 3. Do not *focus* on them, but let them dissipate in your larger awareness *field*.
-
1. Be aware of any felt impulse to speech or action whatsoever – mental, emotional or felt in your muscles.
 2. Attend to your awareness of the action impulse without acting on it.
 3. Instead let *alternative potential actions* come into your awareness and choose to embody or enact one of these.
-
1. Be aware of any felt impulse to speech or action.
 2. Choose *not to* follow that impulse for some time but instead to actively restrain from action.
 3. Feeling free to restrain from action rather than impelled to act, use that freedom to then follow the impulse and act with full freedom and awareness.

1. If you feel there is something you just *cannot* do, actively *choose* not to do it.
 2. Empowered by the free exercise of your will in *not* doing something, await a spontaneous impulse to do it.
 3. If and when this spontaneous impulse arises, then *choose* to follow it. If your choice not to act has been strong enough, you will now have the power to act.
-
1. Feel the way you are currently acting with your body – the way you are sitting, standing or walking, breathing or speaking, holding your head, the look on your face and in your eyes etc.
 2. Feel the particular sense of yourself and of your body as a whole that accompanies this way of acting.
 3. Feel for *alternate or modified* ways of acting with your body that allow you feel more of yourself or to feel yourself in a different way, and enact one of these.
-
1. When you feel under time stress through having *countless* things to do, imagine time itself not as a line but as a three-dimensional space so vast and expansive as to embrace every possible action - past, present or future - within it.
 2. Let the imagination evoke a bodily sense of an expanded time-space of awareness in which no action whatsoever is needed because all possible actions are already being enacted within it.
 3. Rest in the state of quiescent awareness and non-action that comes out of this sense of expanded time-space until there arises within it a spontaneous impulse to act - to do *one* specific thing – and engage in that action from a place of quiescent awareness and non-action.
-
1. Imagine you have been invited to go on stage and act *yourself* – as many ‘parts’ or aspects of your self that you can feel and in whatever dramatic sequence – but without using any words.
 2. Stand in front of a full-length mirror and, feeling yourself on stage in front of an audience, begin to act yourself without words – using your face, eyes, and whole bodily movements and gestures to *mime* different emotions and parts of your self.
 3. Seeing your image in the mirror, see how expressively you can silently mime yourself, how broad your expressive range of bodily movements, gestures and faces is, and how many different ways of feeling yourself you can give expression to with your body and actively communicate to your mirror image.

LESSON 5 – SUMMARY

Guiding Words:

...from awareness *of* action to awareness *in* action

Questions to ask oneself:

Are my actions aware actions or unaware reactions?

Do my actions reinforce or transcend my existing patterns of action?

Do I sustain awareness in my actions or let them consume my awareness?

Will a given action constrict my awareness and delimit my sense of self or expand it?

Summary of Principles:

Awareness is non-action.

Action emerges from and within awareness.

Identity is a pattern of action – a way of acting.

Aware action is action in which awareness does not lose itself.

Karma is the way action reacts upon and alters the agent of action.

True freedom of action comes from aware restraint of action – from non-action.

Summary of Practices:

Resting in awareness or non-action.

Cultivating awareness of one's way of acting.

Sustaining awareness in action, rather than losing awareness in action.

Feeling how the smallest bodily action alters one's sense of self – of the 'I' that acts.

Sensing impulses without acting on them, or first restraining actions before acting.

Mantra:

If you cannot choose *not to* act in a certain way, your action will not be a free action.

If you feel *bound* to follow an impulse, choose *first* of all to restrain the impulse.

If you don't feel *capable* of acting in a certain way, then actively *choose* not to.

LESSON 5 – GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT TERMS

AHAMKARA – ‘ego’, illusion of an agent or doer separate from action

ASANAS – yogic postures

ATMAN – the awareness self, the self that is universal awareness

HATHA YOGA – the practice of yogic postures or ASANAS

NATHAS – lineage of tantric adepts from whom HATHA YOGA derives

KARMA – action in relation to its consequences

KAYA SADHANA – ‘practice of the body’/‘bodying’

KRAMA/AKRAMA – sequential (temporal) and trans-sequential action

KRIYA – action

KRIYA YOGA – the yoga of action as first delineated by Patanjali

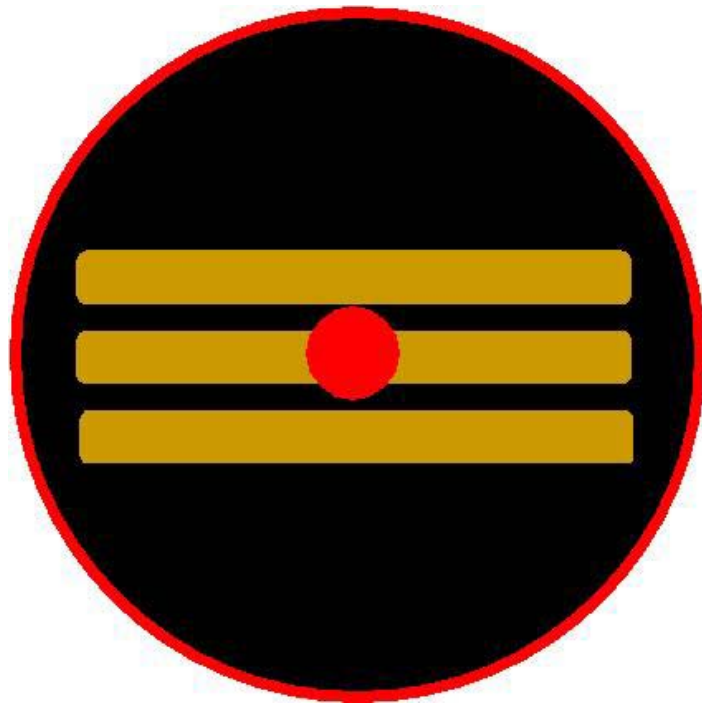
NAISHKARMYA – quiescent awareness as non-action

SAMSKARAS – action pattern latent in awareness

SPANDA – ‘slight motion’ or subtle vibration

VRITTI – any experienced motion or fluctuation in awareness

MANUAL OF THE NEW YOGA



LESSON 6:

THE NEW YOGA OF BODYING

(MUDRA YOGA)

**...from awareness of the body
to the bodying of awareness**

We know by now a great deal – almost more than we can encompass – about what we call the body, without having seriously thought about what *bodying* is. It is something more and different from merely ‘carrying a body around with one’.

The bodying of life is nothing separate by itself, encapsulated in the ‘physical mass’ in which the body can appear to us...

Every feeling is an embodiment attuned in this or that way, a mood that bodies in this or that way.

A disposition can confine man in his corporeality as in a prison. Yet it can also carry him through corporeality as one of the paths leading out of it.

Martin Heidegger

Helping us to enter into the continuum of the field of motility, *mudra* teaches us that there could be no gesture which does not recognise a primordial kinship already entrusted with a binding value ... Even at a distance we can touch others with our compassion. Even at a distance, all beings are bound together, sealed by *mudra* into the weaving of Being.

David Michael Levin

...physical actions are the ‘key’ that lets the actor penetrate to the inner world of the character.

Constantin Stanislavski

The outer shape of a person reflects his inner mood. Changing that shape can change his mood.

David Boadella

... if I were speaking to you in person, you could see my body moving in synchrony with the voicing of my utterances, my hands in synchrony with my intoning of my words, my eye movements with my pauses, and my facial expressions with certain of my linguistic emphases. I shall use the word ‘orchestration’ to denote the unfolding structuring of these intricately timed, creative intertwinings and interweavings of the many inter-related participant parts or ‘bodily strands’ of our responsive-expressions ... [the] *expressive-responsiveness of our bodily movements* ...

John Shotter

It is one's own spiritual nature in enlightenment that responds to the 'external' world, comes into contact with objects, raises the eyebrow, winks the eyelids and moves the hand and legs.

D.T. Suzuki

The yogin who stands in the embodied cosmos (*kula*) quivering and vibrating ... whatsoever bodily position he may adopt is considered a *mudra*.

Salutations to You which are transcendent and immanent ... Becoming your devotee, I became of your form ... You appear like an actor in all respects, taking the casts of waking, dream and sound sleep. As a matter of fact, you are without form.

Abhinavagupta

Whatever is done with the *siddha-rupa* [psychical body] takes place in the *sadhaka-rupa* [physical body], and whatever is done with the *sadhaka-rupa* takes place in the *siddha-rupa* ... The *siddha-rupa* and the *sadhaka-rupa* are similar to a *vinya* and a *vinya* player. Even though the two are distinct, there is a oneness of their melody.

Rupa Kaviraja

The physical body or 'organism' (*sadhaka-rupa*) is the musical instrument or *organon* with which we can learn to become adept in amplifying, modulating and orchestrating the music of our psychical body (*siddha-rupa*).

Giving expressive bodily form (*morphe*) to feelings – bodying them - amplifies our awareness of them through resonance. The amplification of feelings through "morphic resonance" automatically leads those feelings to transform into *other* feelings. This is the essential principle of *metamorphic resonance*.

Only by expanding the expressive mobility of our body language can mobility of awareness be expanded, expressed and embodied. Any immobility of posture and body language constricts mobility of awareness.

***Mudra* is any way of intentionally giving expression to or imparting a quality of awareness by *embodying* it. The smallest movement can body and transform our awareness and that of others – that is the principle of *mudra*.**

The word *mudra* means 'seal'. A *mudra* is the 'sealing' of an inner mood or 'disposition' of our awarenesses – literally setting a seal on it through a *change* or *dis-position* of our outer bodily bearing or posture, our way of 'posing' ourselves.

Peter Wilberg

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ACTION AS THE BODYING OF AWARENESS

Awareness – SHIVA - is essentially *formless*. That formlessness however, is not an emptiness but a fullness of latent or potential forms – of ‘form-giving’ or ‘formative potentialities’. Action - SHAKTI - is essentially *formative*. Action is the actualisation of the formative potentials of awareness. All action is *formative action* or “forming” (Shapiro) - action which *gives form to* and *transforms* awareness, thereby giving rise to infinite shapes or forms *of* awareness. ‘Formative action’ is also the root meaning of ‘energy’ (*energein*). Being the very action *through* which all things are formed and transformed, ‘energy’ cannot be considered a ‘thing’ in itself. Action is formative. Bodyhood is *form* - the countless forms, material and non-material, taken *by and within* awareness through formative or *cre-ative* action (*kriya*). The essence of action is therefore the action of *bodying* awareness by giving it expressive bodily form. *Kriya* is both formative and *performative* action - expressive *bodily* action. Identity or selfhood too is *form* or *bodyhood* – all identities being *patterns* of action.

Action gives form to awareness in the form of somebody or something. Since all forms are essentially forms *of* awareness however, there is no such thing as an insentient or unaware ‘thing’ or ‘being’. Instead all ‘things’ are *aware beings* – manifest forms of awareness. Since the formative *potentials* of awareness are inexhaustible however, action possesses an innate tendency not only to form but also to *transform* all bodies and identities so as to actualise these potentials. All action, once having actualised a given form, multiplies the possibilities of action – facilitating the actualisation of new potential forms. Thus in the activity of writing a book, every sentence, paragraph or chapter not only gives *form* to the awareness it conveys but facilitates the formation of further potential sentences, paragraphs and chapters. At the same time each sentence, paragraph and chapter, once formed, implies other possible sentences, paragraphs and chapters. Like each line of a poem, once formed, it can be *reformulated* in countless ways – thus opening up potentialities for the *transformation* not only of that particular line, sentence, paragraph or chapter but of the poem or book *as a whole*. There is an inherent *tension* then, between *action* on the one hand and *form* or identity on the other – identity being nothing but an already *formed* pattern of action, but action tending to *transform* identity. For the very act of giving expressive

form to awareness makes one aware of new potential forms of expression – whether in the form of words or bodily actions. There is also an inherent *paradox* in the relation of action and identity. For both speech acts and bodily movements are not only actions which give expressive form to awareness. They are also highly specific *forms of action* with their own *already-formed patterns*. Such patterns of *action* are essentially ‘languages’ - *expressive patterns of awareness*. These not only form *within* awareness but also *give form* to awareness – shaping and patterning it. As a result, they can either expand or contract awareness. Every action then, can either *reinforce* an existing identity or pattern of action, or facilitate the formation of new patterns which transform both identity and awareness. For by giving new expressive forms *to* awareness, action also *transforms* awareness – imbuing it with new, previously latent patterns and qualities. This applies particularly to bodily actions – such as speech and movement – for action as such is essentially a means of giving *bodily form* to awareness. What we call ‘energy’ is both *the active bodying* of awareness in different forms and its expression through different patterns or languages of *bodily action*. ‘Energy’ therefore is no actual ‘thing’ but power and potential for action - the capacity for formative and expressive action, for the bodying of awareness.

Kriya yoga, as ‘the yoga of action’, belongs to the very essence of yoga *as* action – as a life-long practice of meditational disciplines, all of which are themselves understood as life-practices, practices central to the *art* of living. Yet since bodying belongs to the very essence of action, ‘The New Yoga of Action’ (*kriya yoga*) leads directly to *mudra yoga* in the form of ‘The New Yoga of Bodying’ - this being a yoga of aware and expressive *bodily action*. This yoga embraces every mode of bodily action and every medium or expressive language of the body - from facial expression and communication through the eyes to expressive and communicative posture and gesture, speech and movement.

BODILY IDENTITY AND BODILY ACTION

Every aspect of our larger identity, our whole self or soul, is not a ‘what’ or ‘who’ but a ‘how’ – a specific *way* of bodying our being, whether through our way of breathing and speaking, looking and listening, or our way of voicing and giving a face (verbal and bodily) to our soul. We do not merely act in accordance with the way we ‘are’ or how we feel. Instead, altering any aspect of the way we act with our bodies alters our bodily sense of identity - of who we are and how we feel. The same arts that enable an actor or actress to use their body to embody or “incarnate” a part (Stanislavski) can also enable each and every one of us to feel and embody countless different aspects of our soul. It is only through habitual ways of bodying our being - acquired modes of *bodily action* - that we maintain a fixed *bodily identity* - a habitual sense of self. Conversely however, it is through learning to adopt different ways of acting with their bodies – characteristic ways of standing and moving, speaking and gesturing, that the actor embodies the part or ‘character’, and that we can each learn to ‘shapeshift’ our bodily identity in such a way as to incarnate whole new aspects or dimensions of our soul, whole new shapes, tones and qualities of awareness.

On all levels and in all realities action is intimately related to *identity* – to what a ‘thing’ or ‘being’ *is*. What ‘is’ a painting by Picasso, for example, except the expression of one of his idiomatic *ways* of painting? The painting as an object or thing – a ‘what’ – is the expression of this ‘way’. The same can be said of anything – whether a painting, person, or a piece of literature or music. Identity, quite simply, is *idiom*. What *is* a Beethoven symphony except the expression of an idiomatic *way* of composing? And is there any such ‘thing’ as ‘Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony’ outside of the countless different *ways* of conducting and performing it? Indeed was there even some ‘person’ we call ‘Beethoven’ – except as an idiomatic way of *embodying* and *personifying* the music of the soul, a music composed of infinite *tonalities and qualities of awareness*?

Per-sonare – to ‘sound through’. *Persona* – a dramatic ‘mask’, the face through which the voice of the actor speaks and ‘sounds through’. What is the inner relation between ‘persons’, ways of ‘personifying’ and facial masks or ‘personae’, living or

sculpted? Is there anything that could be *heard* in the music of a Beethoven or Bruckner that was not already *embodied* in their whole way of being; borne in their gestures, revealed in their looks, expressed in their faces and inscribed – almost in its entirety - in their death masks? Is there ultimately any ‘thing’ or ‘person’, any ‘being’ or ‘body’ that is *not* a ‘what’ or ‘who’ but rather a ‘how’ – the expression of a unique way of being - of bodying awareness? For if ‘Being’ itself is a verb rather than a noun, an ‘-ing’ rather than a ‘thing’ - what is that activity of *be-ing* except an activity of *body-ing*? Not the bodying of some pre-existing being or identity, someone or something, some ‘who’ or some ‘what’, but the bodying of *awareness*, and through it the bodily experience of awareness in all its infinite qualities, all its infinite shapes and tones and patterns and textures.

You *are* and live *in* a world of power, a world of “ing”: *being, doing, acting, thinking, hiding, identifying, exploding, -inging...* and any “it” is actually a phase of self-differentiating *activity* of this world of “ing” which, *by its very paradoxical nature can appear either as self-opposition or self-integration — either as power fighting itself or releasing itself...*

Michael Kosok

... we can immediately note here the *chiasmically organized nature* of the expressive-responsiveness of our bodies ... I shall use the word ‘orchestration’ to denote the unfolding structuring of these intricately timed, creative intertwinings and interweavings of the many inter-related participant parts or ‘bodily strands’ of our responsive-expressions.

John Shotter

What is action except inter-action – our “expressive-response” to all that we experience within and around us? And what is this *interactive experiencing* except that which went by the name of *chiasm* (Greek) or *tantra* (Sanskrit), an *interweave* of different *ways* of giving expression to countless tones, textures and qualities of awareness? Not just ‘through sound’ but through every medium or language of *sensory* experiencing - *all* of which are tinged and toned by each other, and *each* of which (not *just* that which we bracket as ‘body language’) are *bodily languages* - languages of bodily action and interaction, bodily experiencing and bodily expression, bodily response and communication. *Mudra* belongs to the essence of *tantra* as the art and discipline – the ‘yoga’ - of aware *bodily* expression and responsiveness.

MIND, BODY & THE MEANING OF ‘MUDRA’

As the British child psychoanalyst Winnicott recognised, the key to the infant’s sense of *going on being* was an on-going and uninterrupted sense of *somatic in-dwelling* – the ability to feel at ease and at home in its own body. Without an ongoing sense of *somatic in-dwelling*, the growing child begins to substitute their own mental and emotional processes or *mind-psyche* for a deep sense of contact with their *psyche-soma* or ‘soul body’ – their own inwardly felt body. As a result, both child and adult individuals come to experience themselves as essentially alone – unable to feel an intimate bodily sense of connectedness and communion either with their own deeper self or that of others. Their immediate bodily sense of themselves, the world and other people is instead replaced by a sense of self entirely *mediated* by the mind-psyche, and their sense of *somatic in-dwelling* is attained, if at all, only through sensations of pleasure and pain, or through somatic symptoms and processes of ‘somatisation’.

Lacking a sense of somatic in-dwelling, physical pleasure seeking through sex, sport and drugs becomes an addictive substitute, and harmful medication for somatic disease has become humanity’s substitute for meditation. Indeed the very *symptoms* of both bodily disease and so-called ‘mental illness’ - whether in the form of anxiety, depression and other so-called ‘mood disorders’, ‘psychosomatic’ symptoms or ‘psychosis’ – are all substitutes for meditation. In The New Yoga, meditation is understood not as an activity of the mind, brain or physical body but as *mindfulness of our inwardly felt body*. It is only through continuous meditation in this sense - continuous mindfulness of our inwardly felt body - that we can regain a sense of what Winnicott called *going on being*. This is why the *essential aim and meaning* of ‘meditation’ in The New Yoga is such mindfulness of our inwardly felt body as a whole. For without feeling our *body* as a whole we cannot feel our own *self* as a whole – our soul. Neither can we extend our *feeling awareness* beyond the boundaries of our own flesh so as to *meditate the other* – using our own felt body to feel both the *sensory outwardness* of another person’s body and their own *inwardness of soul*. As a result, we cannot feel a deep bodily sense of connectedness to our own souls and those of others – something that we nevertheless each need and seek.

Meditation is a constant *mindfulness* of one's inwardly felt *body* as a whole. But that inwardly felt body – our 'inner body' - is not simply the physical body as we feel it from within. It is a field body unbounded by the flesh – the field or 'feel-d' of our own *feeling awareness* of ourselves, the world and other people. Whole body awareness brings with it a transformed sense of our own bodies as a *unified field of awareness* - one that unites our own *sensed inwardness of soul* with the field of our *outer sensory awareness* of the world and other people. The boundary of our inner body – its psychical surface or 'skin' – is nothing more or less than a *field-boundary* of awareness. This is not the *fleshly boundary* of our own skin but our own *felt boundary*. It is this boundary of our own feeling awareness - one that can either *divide or unite* the way we feel the space of our own 'insiderness' with the way we feel the things and people around us in physical space.

We cannot *feel our bodies* without *bodying how we feel*. More specifically, we cannot feel our own *body as a whole* without *bodying the way we feel as a whole* - giving physical form to the whole overall feeling tone of our soul. Our physical bodies do not simply 'have' a language. They *are* a language. A living biological language of our own souls. But if we do not use 'body language' to authentically embody our own souls - giving physical form to the soul's inner feeling tones - then the soul will use the biological language that 'is' the body to *somatise* what we feel in our souls. Bodying and somatisation are quite distinct. Somatisation is *involuntary* bodying. Bodying is voluntary somatisation - intentionally expressive and communicative use of the body as a language.

Our physical body language is comparable to a musical instrument through which we can consciously give form to inner feeling tones – thereby not only amplifying those tones but allowing us to modulate them, and to lend them a different bodily shape and texture. Through the musical instrument or *organon* of our own physical body organism therefore, we can also learn to shift the shape and alter the tone of our inner body – our soul body or psychical organism. That body is not some 'second' pseudo-physical body that we can only become aware of through 'out of body' experiences. Instead it *is* the felt bodily shape, tone and texture of our soul – something we can sense at any time through awareness of our felt body as a whole.

Before we speak, for example we can use whole-body awareness to check out if the words we are about to utter – and the tone we are about to utter them with – are in resonance with our wordless felt sense of what we mean to say. Similarly, before we decide to physically act or react in any way, we can use whole-body awareness to check out whether or which of our potential movements are in resonance with our underlying bodily sense of what we feel moved to do.

Maintaining constant *awareness of our body* through continuously *bodying our awareness* is the fundamental meditational practice (*sadhana*) of The New Yoga – understood as an *ongoing life practice* and not just a way of practising ‘meditation’. Only through whole-body awareness can we achieve ‘right action’ – action that springs from our self as a whole. Conversely, only through ‘right action’ can we truly act ourselves – bodying our awareness self. That means ensuring that our words and deeds, our speech and bodily action are not simply *reactions* springing from localised bodily sensations, emotions and impulses – for these can reflect only a part of ourselves – but instead are fully in resonance with our self as a whole, our soul.

Mudra means ‘seal’. In traditional yogas, *mudras* have been identified primarily with outward symbolic hand gestures (*hasta-mudras*) or with outward physical postures (*asanas*) of hatha yoga. In The New Yoga *mudra* is understood as the ‘sealing’ of an *inner* soul-mood, comportment, or ‘disposition’ through the aware activity of bodying it - giving it outer physical form in our posture or ‘position’. Yet it is also important to understand that the sealing and ‘holding’ in awareness of an outward bodily posture or ‘disposition’ through *mudra* is quite literally the sealing or ‘holding’ of a shift or change of position - a ‘dis-position’. Every *mudra* therefore begins with such a shift in position, or posture, countenance or facial expression – it begins, in other words with bodily movement. Such movements are necessarily *aware* movements, for only as such can they serve to ‘seal’ and sustain a shift in the felt mood or tone of awareness they serve to seal and embody. “A disposition can confine man in his corporeality as in a prison. Yet it can also carry him through corporeality as one of the paths leading out of it.” (Martin Heidegger) *Mudra* is what brings the outer bearing, comportment or ‘position’ of our *physical* body into alignment or resonance with that of our inwardly *felt* body or awareness body, an intentional *dis-position* or shift in our bodily comportment. Everyday examples of *mudra* are such things as intentionally

standing up in a social situation in order to (a) embody one's disposition to leave and (b) to communicate this disposition to others. In contrast to this, unaware and unintended movements such as fidgeting or shifting restlessly in one's chair, or looking bored and tired without *intending* to do so, *are not* 'mudra'. Having a certain look on one's face or in one's eyes is not an example of *mudra* unless the look is *intended* and *in-formed* in an aware way by the way one feels – as when one gives a person a 'nod' or 'wink', greets, smiles or frowns at them, or in any way gives them a 'knowing look' – one intended to embody and impart a message. Every bodily act of an actor is a *mudra* in this sense - an aware and intentional act of bodily communication. A *mudra* then, is any manner of intentionally and expressively *bodying* a change or dis-position in our inner mood, bearing or disposition. It is also any way of actively giving outer physical form to the countless different shapes, tones and qualities of awareness that make up our awareness body. The essential principle of *mudra* is a principle of "morphic resonance" (Sheldrake). By giving outer form (*morphe*) to inner feeling tones or patterns of action we reinforce those patterns and amplify those feeling tones through resonance. *Resonation* is the very activity that leads to this state of morphic resonance with our own feeling tones or those of others. It is the very process of resonating back and forth between how we feel in our souls and the physical body language with which we express it - until they are in full and precise resonance. This is rather like finding the exact tone or chord on a musical instrument that gives expression to an inner tone of feeling.

We do not have a body. We body. Morphic resonance is the essence of *mudra* as a natural and continuous process of *bodying* how we feel and who we are. It is the art of using all the fine muscles of our physical body – of the mouth, face, eyes and limbs – as a subtle musical instrument or *organon* by which to enter into deeper resonance with our psychical organism or awareness body. Through it we can learn to freely *shape-shift* that body *in resonance* with how we or others feel - or wish to feel. As a new and comprehensive understanding of the true essence of *mudra yoga*, The New Yoga of Bodying embraces many different types of *mudra* - *mudra* of the body as a whole and all its limbs, of the mouth, face and eyes - as well as those of the fingers and hands (*hasta-mudra*). The practice of each of these different types of *mudra* is a distinct *yoga* in itself. The New Yoga of Bodying therefore embraces all these *yogas* - every 'alphabet' of our body's many languages.

MACROMEDITATION 1

At all times, every minute and moment of every day, be continuously *mindful* of the following basic questions, whilst feeling both question and answer with your *body*:

1. *How much* of my body am I feeling right now?
2. *Where* is my feeling awareness of myself concentrated or centred in my body?
3. *Which* regions of my body am I not feeling – and thus not feeling as a part of me?
4. *How far* does my feeling awareness descend into and fill the inner spaces of my body, not just the inner space of my head, but of my chest, belly and abdomen?
5. *How much* free awareness space do I feel in the hollow of my head, chest and abdomen?
6. *How far* does my feeling awareness extend into the outer space around my body?
7. *What* is the fundamental mood that underlies my current mental-emotional state, permeating my body as a whole and lending it a particular overall feeling tone?
8. *Who* is the self that feels the way I do in my body – how do I feel *the me* that is permeated by this underlying mood and overall feeling tone?
9. *To what extent* is the language of my *physical body* - the look on my face and in my eyes, the way I breathe and speak, walk and talk, sit or stand, my tone of voice – in resonance with the underlying tone of my inwardly *felt body* and *felt self*?
10. *What aspect(s)* of my physical posture and comportment can I actively alter so that they fit and give form to the way I feel myself and feel my body from within – allowing me to *authentically embody* the me I currently feel myself to be?
11. *Which regions* of my body do I need to *feel more* in order to feel more ‘myself’ – to feel more of my body and self *as a whole* – to feel my soul?

MUDRA MEDITATION AS 'BODY POETRY'

All bodily action is innately creative and meaningful. Hence the meaningfulness of *mudra yoga*. Your smallest bodily action – a mere glance of the eyes - is a meaningful and creative act. It is - and can be experienced as an *enactment* of your relation to the *entire cosmos* - acting on, communicating to and instantaneously *altering* All That Is. That is because all action is interaction – an expressive and communicative response to the interactive context in which it takes place.

The interactive context of every action is constituted by countless actual and potential patterns of interrelatedness. It does not just include the immediate current context or 'situation' with its established patterns of interaction and interrelatedness. For the immediate con-text is itself but a smaller text within the inter-weaving and ever-changing patterns of interrelatedness that make up the entire cosmos.

Every act of speech or writing (each line of a *poem* for example) *explicates* a previously *implicit* bodily sense of meaning – of actual and potential patterns of interrelatedness. So also is every *bodily act* a *speech act*, one more line that is written or inscribed in a *bodily poem*, a line that also explicates an implicit *bodily* sense of meaning, but does so by *enacting* an actual or potential pattern of interrelatedness.

If a person's 'body language' is impoverished, so is their *body speech*. They will lack the *bodily words* to articulate feelings and felt meanings through bodily action. Indeed they will not even be able to feel those feelings and meanings fully. Yet if they were to add so much as a *single new letter* to the alphabet and vocabulary of their bodily actions, this would allow them to feel and give form to entirely *new* feelings and meanings, to form *new* bodily words and sentences, and speak freely and fluently with their bodies.

Our bodies *imply* every next bit of our further living. An action can *explicate* this implicit further living and carry it forward.

Eugene Gendlin

Our bodily expressiveness can be muted or used to produce the equivalent of an endless and unreflective stream of speech. Alternatively we can use whole body awareness to turn our body speech into *body poetry*. We write a poem one line at a time, pausing to listen for the precise words that fit our felt sense of what we wish to express in the next line. Each new line we write makes an implicit or felt meaning explicit. This in turn allows us to feel new implicit meanings that the words of the next line can make explicit.

Body poetry is like writing a poem, except that each line is not articulated in words but through a precise articulation of our body language into new expressive ‘comportments’ or *mudras*, each of which can express and make explicit a new way of feeling ourselves, and be a source of new insights into our lives. For any feeling, once followed and given form through a new expressive bodily comportment or *mudra*, naturally transforms into another feeling, thereby also giving rise to new thoughts.

MICROMEDITATION 1

1. At any moment in time, *freeze* your bodily posture and facial expression and *feel* it in every detail, including the tilt of your head, shape of your mouth and the exact look in your eyes.
2. Sense the particular way in which holding that posture and facial expression makes *you* feel - the particular quality or shade of awareness it expresses and embodies, and the particular ‘you’ you feel through it.
3. Now choose to alter just one or two features of your posture and facial expression – for example the tilt of your head, the shape of your mouth, the openness of your eyes. Freezing and holding that new bodily posture and facial expression for some time, notice how it *alters* your entire sense of your body and self.

MACROMEDITATION 2

1. *Whatever is going on within or around you*, maintain awareness of your immediate *sensory* experience of your environment and immediate *bodily* experience of yourself.
2. *Let your awareness feel itself into every part of your body* in turn, until you reach a point of feeling your body as a whole and can sustain that whole-body awareness.
3. *Now feel the exact way you are currently bodying* this sense of yourself through your physical comportment – feel your way of sitting, the positioning of your arms and legs, your way of breathing, the tilt of your head, the shape of your mouth, your facial expression, the direction of your gaze and the look in your eyes.
4. *Now adjust your bodily comportment* to your sense of yourself, altering any or every aspect of it until it exactly expresses and bodies the way you are feeling yourself.
5. *Hold yourself completely still in this comportment* - freezing every aspect of it, from your way of sitting to the look in your eyes. Notice how this amplifies your bodily sense of the self, allowing you to feel the basic tone and quality of your awareness.
6. *Still freezing your bodily comportment* in all its aspects, and staying with the specific way of feeling yourself that it embodies, attend to all the different thoughts that arise from this specific sense of yourself, your situation and your life.
7. *Attending to all that comes up in your mind* remain aware of your felt body as a whole, and sense how your thoughts start to alter your feelings and your bodily sense of self.
8. *As you become aware of a felt shift in your bodily sense of self*, once again adjust the different aspects of your comportment until it exactly expresses the new sense of self, and once again hold yourself still in the new comportment – freezing it in every aspect and seeing what new thoughts arise from it.
9. *Continue the process of forming and freezing a comportment* that gives exact expression to your felt sense of yourself, holding yourself still in that comportment, feeling the self it expresses more fully, waiting to see what new thoughts arise from it, and altering it in any aspect whenever it no longer *exactly expresses* the way you feel.

MUDRAS OF THE MOUTH, FACE AND EYES

Of the many different yogas of bodily action – it is specific expressive gestures or *mudras* of the mouth, face and eyes that are the most central. For except when flirting or frowning in anger, few people except trained actors know how to intentionally form a face to express a feeling, let alone intentionally communicate the feeling it expresses through their eyes. Yet it is the eyes that *communicate* what the face *expresses* - and thus the face and eyes are the chief instrument with which we can actively give form to and transform our entire bodily tone of feeling and sense of self. Bodying means using specific parts of one's body to give form to soul qualities - those qualities of awareness that permeate one's experience of oneself and the world. These include *emotional qualities* such as sadness and joy, hope and fear; *elemental qualities* such as fieriness, airiness, fluidity and solidity, *sensuous qualities* such as warmth and coolness, softness and hardness, brightness and darkness, lightness and heaviness, clarity and dullness, and related *spatial qualities* such as closeness and distance, expansion and contraction. Learning to actively body such qualities involves learning to form expressions or *mudra* of the mouth, face and eyes in particular. The meditation below focuses on an *emotional* quality – in this case 'sadness'. But the stages of the meditation can apply to any quality of awareness (Q) whatsoever - whether emotional or elemental, sensuous or spatial, animal or divine.

MACROMEDITATION 3

Part 1

1. Feel Q (for example – feel 'sad').
2. Feel the Q more (for example – feel more sad or feel the sadness more).
3. Feel the sadness in your body.
4. Feel where and how you feel the sadness in your body.
5. Feel how the sadness makes your body feel to you.
6. Feel how the sadness makes you feel in your body.
7. Sense the basic feeling tone and quality of the sadness as you feel it in your body.
8. Let that basic feeling tone and quality permeate your whole body and whole self.
9. Find a bodily posture that fully embodies the felt tone and quality of the sadness.

Part 2

10. Now simply feel your own mouth, lips and lower jaw.
11. Now let yourself feel the tone of sadness with and in your mouth, lips and jaw.
12. Now feel for a way of shaping your lips, mouth and jaws that precisely gives form to or 'mimes' the tone of sadness you feel with and in them.

Part 3

13. Now simply feel the entire surface of your face.
14. Form a face that fully expresses the tone of the sadness as you feel it in your body.
15. Feel how showing the sadness in your face helps you feel it more in your body.

Part 4

16. Finally - simply feel your brow and eyes.
17. Feel the tone of sadness in your brow and let it shape your brow.
18. Now feel for and form a look in your eyes that fully shows that tone of sadness.
19. Be aware of how letting the sadness into your eyes allows you to fully identify ('I'-dentify and 'eye-dentify') with and reveal the sadness as you feel it with your body, mouth and face as a whole.

Part 5

20. Feeling and revealing the sadness in your eyes, intend to not just show but *communicate* it to the eyes of another, or to your eyes seen in the mirror.
21. Ask a partner to seek to precisely mirror the look of sadness in your mouth, face and eyes - directly or in the mirror - and to seek to feel in their body as a whole what they see in your face and eyes.

KARIKA

Aware of every limb,
Every part of my body,
Aware of feeling it from within;
Aware of my face and eyes, feeling them from within,
Aware of my bodily posture, feeling it from within,
Aware of my way of sitting, standing or moving
The inclination of my body, the tilt of my head
The tension in each and every muscle,
The openness of my eyes,
The direction of my gaze,
The shape of my mouth;
Aware of how my body
Gives outer form to my
Inner mood or disposition,
I choose to dispose myself in a new way:
To alter my comportment in one or other way.
In this way, I evoke a new mood or disposition,
A new way of feeling my self and body as a whole.
In this way too, my every bodily movement becomes 'mudra'
A dis-position which seals a new inner mood or disposition,
Letting me experience a whole new quality of awareness
With and within
Awareness.

THE THREE BASIC TANTRIC MUDRA

There are three basic *mudra* which, in traditional tantric philosophy and practice, were historically recognised as keys to the liberation (*moksha*) and expansion (*tan*) of awareness. These *mudra* were *not* identified with the fixed postures or *asanas* or simple *hasta mudra* of the fingers and hands that are taught in today's historically ignorant 'yoga' classes. Instead they were understood as fundamental *inner* postures, dispositions or comportments - each of which had the power to fill the adept with the bliss (*mud*) of pure awareness, and to dissolve away (*dra*) the karmic bondage that, in terms of The New Yoga, comes from identifying with anything we are aware of. Another root meaning of *mudra* is 'seal'. In essence the three tantric *mudra* are three different *relationships* that can be intended and maintained - 'sealed' - between the inner and outer *spaces* of awareness within and around our bodies. Their common aim was identification with the divine as a singular space or 'unified field' of awareness.

1. KHECARI MUDRA

Khecari mudra is that inner comportment in which, by attending to and identifying with our *awareness of space* we come to experience all spaces as *spaces of awareness*.

2. KRAMA MUDRA

Krama mudra is an inner comportment, by which, through feeling the surface boundary of one's body, one can sequentially alternate between introspective identification with the inner awareness spaces of one's body - of head, chest, belly and abdomen - and the awareness space of our outer sensory experiencing of the world around us.

3. BHAIRAVA MUDRA

Bhairava mudra was regarded in the tantras as the ultimate mudra. It is that inner comportment through which, by *simultaneous* identification with outer *and* inner spaces of awareness, one comes to experience awareness itself as one singular space of awareness – a unified field of awareness embracing everything we can experience within it, both inwardly and outwardly – including both thoughts and things, emotions and material bodies, sensual qualities of awareness and the sensory qualities of objects.

The following quotations from the tantras reveal both the distinctiveness and the subtle inner connectedness between Khecari, Krama and Bhairava *mudra*, all of which do indeed come to bodily expression as *mudra of the eyes*, revealing through the adept's *gaze* their inner and/or outer direction and expansiveness of awareness.

KHECARI MUDRA

Meditate on space as omnipresent and free of all limitations.
Think 'I am not my own body. I exist everywhere'.
Meditate on one's own body as the universe and as having the nature of awareness.
Meditate on the skin as being like an outer wall with nothing within it.
Meditate on the void in one's body extending in all directions simultaneously.
Meditate on one's own self as a vast unlimited expanse.
Meditate on a bottomless well or as standing in a very high place.
Meditate on the void above and the void below.
Meditate on the bodily elements as pervaded with voidness.
Contemplate that the same awareness exists in all bodies.
Whether outside or inside *Shiva* is omnipresent.

Vijananabhairavatantra

KRAMA MUDRA

Initially he turns inward from the outside world and [then] from within he exits into the outer world under the influence of his absorption. Thus the sequence (*krama*) in this comportment ranges through both inner and outer.

Kramasutra

BHAIRAVA MUDRA

With one's aim [gaze] turned inwards, whilst looking outwards, eyes neither opening nor closing – this is Bhairava's Mudra kept secret in all the Tantras.

By penetrating into *Bhairavamudra*, the yogi observes the vast totality of beings ... like a series of reflections arising and disappearing inside a mirror.

Ksemaraja

If you project the vision and all the other powers [of the senses] simultaneously, everywhere ... by the power of awareness, whilst remaining firmly established in the centre like a pillar of gold, you shine as the One, the foundation of the universe.

Kakshyasotra

LESSON 6 – SUMMARY

Guiding Words:

...from awareness of our bodies to the bodying of awareness

Questions to ask oneself:

How aware am I of my physical form in all its features – posture, facial expression, the tilt of my head, shape of my mouth, the look on my face and in my eyes?

Can I let every feature of my outer bodily comportment and countenance *be informed* by how I feel myself inside, and in this way fully embody my sense of self?

Can I allow myself to alter one or more features of my bodily comportment and feel how doing so transforms my entire bodily sense of self?

Summary of Principles

All action (*kriya*) is an expressive, formative activity of bodying (*mudra*).

Enlarging the expressive range and mobility of our body language enlarges our range and mobility of awareness.

Giving outer bodily form (*morphe*) to the way we feel ourselves and others amplifies that feeling through *resonance* – the principle of “morphic resonance”.

Altering any expressive feature of our physical body can *transform* the way we feel ourselves and others – the principle of *metamorphosis* or “metamorphic resonance”.

We cannot maintain awareness of our body and self as a whole without continuously and expressively *bodying* our self-awareness.

Summary of Practices:

1. Sustaining a particular posture and facial expression and being aware of the sense of self it gives form to and embodies.
2. Intentionally shifting one’s posture and facial expression and being aware of how this transforms our sense of self

Mantra

“The outer shape of a person reflects his inner mood.
Changing that shape can change his mood.”

LESSON 6 – GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT TERMS

BHAIRAVA – The divine (SHIVA) understood as that unbounded bodiless and formless awareness which expresses itself in countless bodily forms and is immanent within them all as their ‘juice’.

BHAIRAVA MUDRA – the foundational mudra of Tantra and of The New Yoga. Bhairava mudra is that compartment in which one can simultaneously identify with the inner awareness space of one’s body and also with the space of one’s outer sensory experience of the world.

HASTA MUDRA – mudras of the fingers and hands.

KHECARI MUDRA – the identification with and experience of awareness as boundless space, extending in all directions.

KULA – awareness in all its bodily forms, the “embodied cosmos”.

KRAMA MUDRA – alternating between identification with the inner and outer awareness spaces of one’s body.

KRIYA – action, understood as form-giving or formative action.

MUDRA – aware bodily acts which give bodily form to states of being.

RUPA – form/bodyhood.

SADHAKA – practitioner or aspirant.

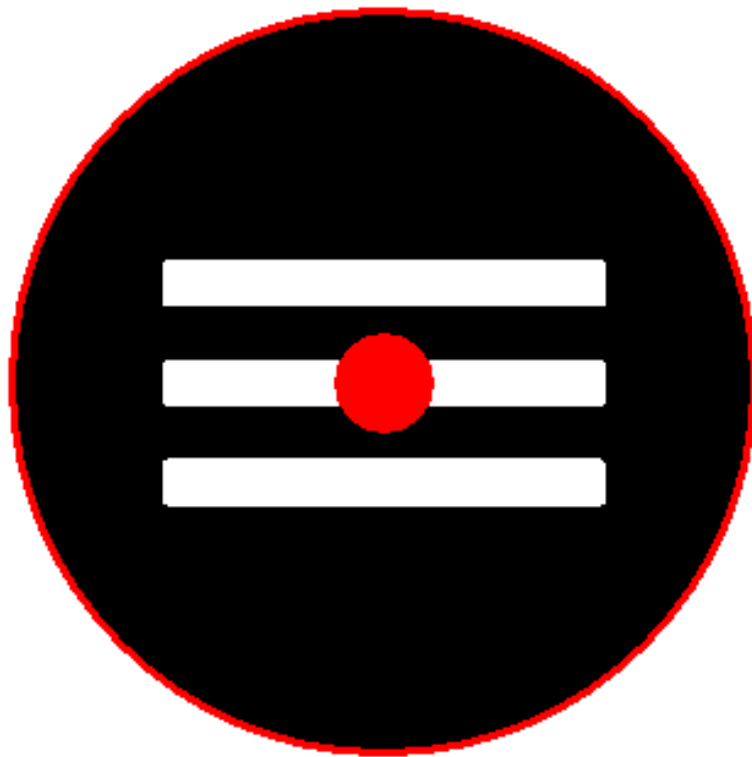
SADHANA – meditational practice.

SIDDHA – adept.

SADHAKA-RUPA – outer physical body or form/physical organism.

SIDDHA-RUPA – felt inner body or inner form/psychical organism.

MANUAL OF THE NEW YOGA



LESSON 7:

THE NEW YOGA OF THE FACE

(Mukha Yoga)

Consciousness in another's face. Look into someone else's face, and see the consciousness in it, and a particular *shade* of consciousness.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

It [the face] speaks, [and] it is in this that it renders possible and begins all discourse....

[The face of the other] is the way in which the other presents himself, exceeding the idea of the other in me.

Emmanuel Levinas

What does the baby see when he or she looks at the mother's face. I am suggesting that, ordinarily, what the baby sees is himself or herself. In other words, the mother is looking at the baby and *what she looks like is related to what she sees there.*

Donald Winnicott

Without ... willingness to read the secret expression and to nurse it into life, any therapeutic encounter is gravely weakened.

Facing is concerned with recognition, with how we see people, with the qualities of lamination that develop when people really face each other and with the forms of illumination that flash out of such contact. Insight develops in step with outlook. If a person can let his inner self be seen by another, he begins to become recognisable to himself and can then look within, not in the sense of any sterile introspection, but in the sense of learning to love and accept who he is, and so recognise himself.

David Boadella

The Sumari word "shambalina" connotes the changing faces that the inner self adopts through its various experiences. Now this is a word that hints of relationships for which you have no word.

Seth

Every individual is a unique and ever-changing *human face of the divine*. Each of us can also allow the divine awareness to shine through our face - revealing the *divine face of our humanity*.

Peter Wilberg

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

In 1975 I had a profound experience of the countless different *faces* of my own soul. In the course of a spontaneous but prolonged meditation lasting over an hour, I experienced wave after wave of powerful but distinct and unique coloured feeling tones welling up within my soul. I allowed each of these feeling tones in turn to fully permeate my body, transform my sense of self - and to form itself into a distinct *face*. Following and giving form to each feeling tone through my facial expression, allowed me to feel it more intensely. This in turn led each feeling tone to slowly but surely transform into another. As one feeling tone transformed into another I allowed the features of my facial expression too, to alter incrementally - thus slowly but surely allowing one face of the self I was revealing I to transform, metamorphose or “morph” into another. I became aware that not only individual faces but whole sequences of faces, had their own distinct underlying feeling tone. Following the transformation of these underlying feeling tones allowed whole new families of faces to surface, each with their own unique and distinct feeling tone but all united by underlying tonal “chords” of feeling. As I became aware of deeper and deeper chords, I became aware of ever-deeper levels of my awareness, experiencing its ultimate depths as a ‘fundamental tone’ or ‘ground-tone’ underlying all others and each of its faces or families of faces. An ‘aspect’ is both an ‘objective’ side, face or facet of something or someone – and an subjective ‘angle’ through which that thing or person is viewed and seen, felt and perceived. Every face of the self gives form to a particular tonality or tone-colour of awareness, one which, by newly toning and colouring our entire experience of the world and other people brings different faces of ‘aspects’ of them. When two people meet each other through the mutual gaze, they literally can look into each other’s souls and perceive its different faces. At the same time they can learn to feel new tones, and reveal new faces of their own soul. The New Yoga of the Face teaches us to reveal new inner faces of the self by giving facial expression to all the different feeling tones or tonalities of awareness we can sense within us. It also teaches us how search the face and eyes of the other for feeling tones which *resonates* in our own soul, and to precisely mirror these in our own facial expression. By doing we enter into resonance with new aspects of *both* self and other – revealing and discovering new faces of both.

THE NEW YOGA OF THE FACE

The soul has inner countless ‘facets’ - inner *faces*. We can only truly come to know those faces by having the courage and ability to show and reveal them. The Yoga of the Face is the psychic art of feeling for and outwardly revealing those inner faces - and also feeling for and seeing the inner faces of others. It is the art of searching within our own soul for what finds expression in the face of the other - and searching the face of the other for that which resonates within our own soul. The Yoga of the Face is also about *facing up* to the fundamental nature of the soul - not only inwardly but through the *outer face* we show to the world, not only within ourselves but through the inner depths of soul that can reveal themselves through *face-to-face* encounter. The questions that The New Yoga of the Face challenges us with are:

Can I *face* the ultimate truth that the entire universe is itself but one ‘objective’ face of subjective awareness as such – that ultimate, multifaceted reality we call ‘soul’?

To what degree can I allow myself to not only *feel* the inner depths of my own soul but reveal its many inner *faces* to others?

In what way will I face my personal reality today? What face will I adopt towards it, and what faces of my soul will I show to the other people that form part of it?

There is more - much more - to the phrase ‘I can’t face it’ than meets the eye. The phrase is no mere metaphor. In the terms of The New Yoga, the question ‘Can I face it?’ is taken at face value, meaning ‘Can I form a face that fully expresses my feelings towards whatever or whoever faces me in my reality?’ ‘Can I face those feelings in myself or others, not just inwardly, but in the immediacy of ‘face-to-face’ encounter – showing them in my face, revealing them through my eyes, and ‘meeting them in the eye’ through the face and eyes of the other? Many people wear a mask or adopt a ‘persona’ that conceals the way they are feeling. Under pressure of intense emotions the mask may crumble. But how can we ‘face’ our own feelings or face others with them - if we cannot *show* them in our faces? Indeed how can we fully feel our own feelings if we cannot give them form in our facial expression? Facial expressions such

as smiles or frowns not only give form to our feelings. They help us to *feel* those feelings more fully – to truly ‘face’ them – in the same way that giving them verbal expression does.

Both words and body language are ways of giving form (Greek *morphe*) to feelings in a way that puts us into greater *resonance* with them. This principle of ‘morphic resonance’ is also the principle of authentic acting. In the past, actors wore masks designed to symbolise and give a face to the figures, human or divine, that they portrayed. The word *persona* originally meant a dramatic ‘mask’. For a modern actor to authentically embody a part, that mask must be carved from his or her own facial flesh and muscle. The actor must have a face mobile enough to give form to every quality of feeling belonging to the part, from the most subtle to the most intense.

Many people see their only choice in life as a choice between adopting a social mask with others, or, if they dare, dropping that mask in therapy or with a trusted friend or partner. This shows that whilst people may be more or less emotionally literate - able to *say* what they feel in words, the majority are *physiognomically* illiterate – unable to *show* their feelings in their face and eyes. They identify showing their ‘true’ feelings with dropping their social mask and ‘losing face’ rather than using the language of the body to ‘morph’ their mask – to form and transform their facial expression and the look in their eyes in a way that is fully in resonance with the felt bodily tone and texture of their emotional life in all its *manifoldness and complexity*. They may consult with physicians, counsellors or psychotherapists in a desperate search to find out *what* they might *do* to help them feel better, but in doing so they forget that their principal medium of *action* is not a ‘what’ but a ‘how’ – the particular *way* in which they embody – or do not embody – different aspects of themselves. Lacking this *physiognomic* literacy - an adequate *bodily* alphabet and vocabulary to reveal the face of different felt aspects of themselves – they take recourse to ‘acting out’ or ‘somatising’ the mental-emotional states associated with them. The only alternative that seems available is to either *reflect* on these states or resort to ‘talking’ cures – forms of counselling, dialogue or therapy in which they are encouraged to *reflect on*, *express* and *say* what they feel, taught new psychological and emotional vocabularies, - but not *given a new bodily vocabulary* with which to *embody* and *show* what they feel through the languages of the body.

Again, every aspect of our identity or sense of self is not a ‘what’ or ‘who’ but a ‘how’ – a specific *way* of being a body and acting with our bodies – whether a way of sitting or moving, a way of breathing and speaking, a way of looking and listening or of expressing ourselves through facial expression and the look in our eyes. We do not merely act in accordance with the way we ‘are’ or how we feel. Instead, altering any aspect of the way we act with our body alters our bodily sense of who we are and how we feel. The same arts that enable an actor or actress to use their bodies to identify with or “incarnate” a part (Stanislavski) can also enable each and every one of us to feel and embody countless different aspects or ‘parts’ of our soul identity. These part identities are *patterns of bodily action* of which most people are unaware. It is through these habitual modes of bodily action that they maintain a fixed bodily identity – a habitual sense of self. Conversely however, it is through learning to adopt *different* modes of bodily action – extending and enriching the range of their ‘body language’ – that the actor embodies the part or ‘character’, and that we can each learn to ‘shapeshift’ our *bodily identity* in such a way as to incarnate whole new aspects or dimensions of our soul, whole new shapes, tones and qualities of awareness.

Forms of bodily action that are ‘defensive’ – designed to protect a person from feeling particular feelings – cannot simply be dropped or un-done. One cannot *stop* doing something – for example adopting a defensive body language - except by doing something else. Acquired modes of bodily action that are unhelpful or defensive can only be replaced by alternate actions – by new and different ways of actively bodying or ‘acting’ our state of being.

The yoga of the face is one way of learning to authentically *act* yourself using your body as a whole – rather than *either* putting on an act and false face for others or ‘acting out’ emotions in unaware ways – through involuntary and unaware ‘fight or flight’ responses. The alternative to fight and flight is facing what we feel in the most literal sense – giving our feelings a face. To do so it can be helpful to imagine that whatever feelings you are feeling at whatever time, you have been asked to go on stage and to *act* them in the most authentic and truthful way possible – not by expressing them in words but by silently *miming* them. This means using all the muscles of your face, mouth and eyes to quite literally *personify* the part of you that feels the way you do – to forge from your very flesh the exact facial mask that fits it.

A muscularly mobile and expressive-responsive face – one that can ‘morph’ in resonance with every nuance, intensity and metamorphosis of feeling – is quite different from a rigid or fixed facial mask. It is also quite different from a fixed *repertoire* of habitual facial expressions – one that can only give expression to a limited range of feelings, indeed only allows one to fully feel a limited range of feelings. Learning to find the true face of one’s feelings is the very opposite of attempting to hide one’s feelings in order to ‘save face’. Nor is it the same as ‘putting on a face’ that merely *represents* something one is feeling but does not truly and authentically *reveal* what one is feeling in all its depth, complexity, nuances and intensity.

If, as Shakespeare suggested, the world itself can be likened to a dramatic stage, then ‘acting’ is not something for professional actors alone. Nor is it simply a way of giving fuller expression to feelings. Instead life *is* acting, and it is the *way* we act in our everyday lives that not only ‘expresses’ who we are and how we feel but actually shapes our self-experience. An actor portrays a part by a particular *way* of standing or sitting, moving and breathing, walking and talking, looking and sounding. The very identity of the part is not a ‘thing’ but an ‘-ing’, a particular way of *bodying* one’s being. But identity and action are no less intimately related on the stage of everyday life as they are on the dramatic stage. Every ‘part-self’ within our larger *soul-identity* or ‘whole self’ finds expression in a particular *bodily* way of doing things. “It is not what you do but the way that you do it.” Indeed it is the *way* that you act that defines both what you are essentially doing and the very ‘you’ that is acting that way. Doing even the simplest things in a *different way* (just breathing, speaking or moving in a different way for example) can immediately alter not just the way you feel but *who* you feel you are – your felt identity or sense of self. Our every action – above all our every bodily action – affects both how we feel and who we feel ourselves to be, our bodily *identity*. The less *aware* we are of our bodily actions, the less aspects of our being – our soul – can we embody and ‘incarnate’, feel and ‘act’ with our bodies. Conversely, the greater the range and subtlety of our bodily actions, the greater is the range of part-selves, of soul aspects and soul qualities, that we can embody through our *way* of acting with our bodies. Put in other terms, your ‘body language’ is not just a way of ‘expressing’ yourself. It *defines* the very ‘self’ you are expressing – for the smallest change in your body language *is* a change in your body identity, altering as it

will, your entire bodily sense of self. A language is a *way* of speaking – of *meaning* something. Similarly, ‘body language’ is a way of *being* someone, of *bodying* your soul and showing its faces.

In truth, the body does not ‘have’ a language. It *is* a language. Nor is the body and its language a property of a person or persons. Instead it is through the language that is our body that we first become persons – that we learn to *personify* our souls. Like each soul, each language is something *trans-finite* – being built up from a finite number of letters - but allowing for the formation of an *infinite* number of sentences and offering infinite potentialities for the expression of *meaning*. So too, does the language that *is* our body offer infinite potentialities for the embodiment of our *being* – infinite different ways of *bodying* and *personifying* our soul. A letter of the alphabet is the silent outer face of a sound. So too is every face we show a letter, the face of a silent inner sound. When someone looks as if they could laugh, scream, sigh or cry their face *is* already a silent expression of that laugh, scream, sigh or cry.

Persona – facial mask. *Per-sonare*: ‘to sound through’. A laugh, scream, sigh or cry *sounds through* the face even before it is uttered. And the face in turn – including not only the shape of a person’s mouth but the look in their eyes – is what gives meaningful shape and tone to the sound to be uttered.

What is it about a face? ... The initial and continuing encounter of an infant with the mother’s face is a powerful force in human existence ... Her face is like the face of God for the baby. Looking into her face the infant comes to understand that the world outside the womb is a reliable and trustworthy place. Looking into a baby’s face makes parents and others marvel and wonder about the myriad possibilities in every newly-formed life.

Elder Lindahl

Only a mother capable of *mirroring* her baby’s facial expressions and *echoing* its babbling sounds will begin to give that baby the sense of being seen and heard as a *person* – a soul in the process of *personifying* itself by forming faces (*personae*) through which it can sound its own feeling tones (*per-sonare*).

When a baby cries, chuckles or babbles using wordless sounds it is not indirectly representing or 'coding' meanings in these sounds. Its soul is literally and directly 'through sounding' – personifying itself in sound. Responding *personally* to the baby, the mother will not only attune to the feeling tones expressed by her baby's sounds but *give them a face*, using the look on her own face and eyes to give them expressive form, and shaping her own mouth to echo back the baby's babblings in the form of basic phonemic speech sounds such as 'Aaah' or 'Oooh'.

What does the baby see when he or she looks at the mother's face. I am suggesting that, ordinarily, what the baby sees is himself or herself. In other words, the mother is looking at the baby and *what she looks like is related to what she sees there.*

Donald Winnicott

The looks on the mother's face and in her eyes express her way of looking at and *seeing* the baby. If she is in resonance with her baby they will also mirror back the feeling tones communicated by the baby's babblings and personified in its own facial expressions. Winnicott calls this perceptual interaction of mother and baby 'apperception' – to distinguish it from a way of looking at the baby that turns it's body into a mere soul-less object of *perception*. But what happens, Winnicott asks, if the mother is not attuned to her baby, if the mother's face and eyes merely reflects her own mood, or 'worse still, the rigidity of her own defences'?

....the baby gets settled into the idea that when he or she looks, what is seen is the mother's face ... perception takes the place of apperception, of that which might have been the beginning of a significant exchange with the world, a two-way process in which self-enrichment alternates with the discovery of meaning in the world of seen things.

Some babies do not quite give up hope and they study the object and do all that is possible to see in the object some meaning that ought to be there if only it could be felt. (Others) study the maternal visage in an attempt to predict the mother's mood, just exactly as we all study the weather.

This, in a nutshell, is the viewpoint of 'natural science', which perceives the face of nature like that of an unattuned and unresponsive mother - as an unpredictable face to be objectively studied, examined, tested, interpreted and predicted; a face that offers

no mirror of the soul of the perceiver, and is thus regarded as a mere perceptual surface, lacking any inwardness of soul itself.

The Greek word for ‘the flesh’ (*sarx*) did not mean body (*soma*) but simply ‘skin’. Our face is part of our fleshly skin *sur-face* as a whole. It is also the link between this *fleshly* surface and our *felt* body surface as a whole. Freud saw the ego as a “mental projection of the surface of the body” – by which he can only have meant its felt surface. The Kleinian psychoanalyst Esther Bick has proposed that a satisfactory infantile experience of touch and skin contact provides a necessary foundation for the feeling of ‘being comfortable in one’s own skin’ – in other words for the development of that ‘psychic envelope’ or ‘tissue capsule’ which analysts call the ‘ego skin’ or ‘skin ego’. This, in the terms of The New Yoga, is that psychic skin which constitutes our awareness body or soul body – both bounding and uniting the inner and outer spaces of our awareness. That is why when we speak of someone being ‘touchy’, ‘sensitive’, ‘irritable’, ‘thick-skinned’ or easily ‘flushed’ we are *neither* speaking of their physical skin, *nor* merely using the latter as a metaphor for psychological traits, but referring quite literally to their ‘soul skin’ or “psychic envelope” (Anzieu).

As part of our *fleshly* skin (*sarx*), the face has another most important function – that of linking our felt *psychic* skin or ‘skin ego’ with our ‘motoric ego’ – the musculature of our physical body as a whole (*soma*). For it is with the fine musculature of our face that we not only *shape or shape-shift* our felt body as a whole but also *tone* our entire *physical* body and its musculature. Imagine trying to make passionate love to someone, to scream or shout, sing a touching song, or simply say something to another person with a moving and resonant voice – whilst at the same time maintaining a ‘poker face’ that is totally flat and expressionless. Or else imagine a professional weightlifter deliberately putting a look of weakness or exhaustion on their face - and then attempting a heavy lift. Impossible – for the weakness given form in the fine muscles of their face would prevent them from feeling sufficient intensity of intent to imbue their lifting muscles with the necessary ‘tonus’.

The face is the finest and most important instrument we have for transforming *feeling tone* into *muscle tone* and thereby into bodily action – speech, gesture and movement. Our face as a whole (and not just our mouth, lips and tongue) is also our most

important instrument for shaping inner feeling tones and giving them the form of sounds - a necessary precondition for uttering the most elementary cries or sounds of speech. What shapes and tones the very muscles of our *outer fleshly face* however, is our *felt inner face*. That in turn is a face we first learn to feel and make mobile ‘through sound’ (*per-sonare*) and ‘morphic resonance’ – that is to say, by miming and impersonating the outer form (*morphe*) or ‘face’ of others (to begin with that of our mothers) thereby sensing and resonating with the *feeling tones* they give form to and learning to give form to them in like manner.

Consciousness in another’s face. Look into someone else’s face, and see the consciousness in it, and a particular *shade* of consciousness.

Ludwig Wittgenstein

If, in face-to-face encounters with others, our awareness is entirely concentrated on the face we show to others and how this is seen by others, we leave ourselves no room to *see the other*. The face of the other becomes a mere object to be studied for signs of how *we* are seen – rather than being seen as an expression of *their* consciousness in all its *shades*. The self that feels in constant danger of being ‘seen’ leaves the other feeling entirely *unseen*. For some people this is OK – for their sole interest is in superficial social contact in which both partners maintain a social mask. For others it is not OK, for they seek a deeper level of *inner* contact with both themselves and others, and yet they fear to show their own inwardness on the outside – *physiognomically*. Again, this is because they identify ‘showing’ with passive surrender to inner feelings and consequent ‘loss of face’ – rather than with actively feeling their feelings and giving an outer face to them. As a result, nor can they use their own face to mirror and feel those shades of consciousness that reveal themselves in the face of the other. Their own face becomes like that of the unseeing, unfeeling and unresponsive mother – a face that cannot reveal their feelings or expressively mirror the feelings of others but asks to be ignored or studied for the feelings it may conceal. Thus it is that in face-to-face encounter in adult life too, “perception takes the place ... of a two-way process in which self-enrichment alternates with the discovery of meaning in the world of seen things.” Dialogue is reduced to the *verbal face* that people show to one another, an intercourse of ‘talking heads’ in which neither is seen or felt – by themselves or by

the other – as *some-body*. Awareness is entirely focussed on what is said in words and not what is shown and communicated *physiognomically*. The world itself is not really *seen* as the living and mobile face of the Divine, with both nature and the human body as its physiognomy. Instead it is perceived in a paranoid, panicky or persecutory way, as the scrutinising eye of a parental ‘God’, peering out through the concealed but potentially piercing gaze of the human other. The other – human and divine – becomes a face that cannot be truly faced and is therefore never truly seen and felt.

... if I were speaking to you in person, you could see my body moving in synchrony with the voicing of my utterances, my hands in synchrony with my intoning of my words, my eye movements with my pauses, and my facial expressions with certain of my linguistic emphases. I shall use the word ‘orchestration’ to denote the unfolding structuring of these intricately timed, creative intertwinings and interweavings of the many inter-related participant parts or ‘bodily strands’ of our responsive-expressions ... [the] organized expressive-responsiveness of our bodily movements.

John Shotter

Beyond, behind or beneath these intertwined, interweaving and inter-related participant parts, ‘bodily strands’ or *languages* of our “expressive-responsiveness” is there any ‘master language’? If there is, it can only be described as what Seth called “the language of love”. By this he meant the capacity to lovingly *identify* with other ways of bodily expression and experiencing besides those that we take as our ‘own’ fixed *identity* - ways which we tend to see only in the form of *other identities* – a ‘what’ or a ‘who’ that is simply an external ‘it’ or ‘you’. Ways which we therefore think we cannot experience and give expression to as ‘me’. The myth of identity, the myth of a world made up of ‘whats’ and ‘whos’, is *given the lie* by the most important medium of all true *learning* – which is not an accumulation of knowledge but of ways of being acquired through bodily identification - imitation or *mimesis*. We could *learn* more about Picasso’s art by observing and *imitating* his actual bodily manner of painting – his postures, movements and faces - than by staring at any of his pictures and interpreting their ‘style’. For the ‘style’ of a painter’s paintings, like that of a composer’s compositions, is itself a ‘how’ and not a ‘what’, an individual language or ‘idiom’, not only of their expression but of their experiencing. It is only through direct *bodily imitation* of an individual’s unique language or ‘idiom’, mode or manner of

bodily expression that we can become aware of their whole mode of *bodily experiencing*. Through the New Yoga of facial and whole-bodily identification with others we can learn that art of “Becoming Other” (Deleuze) that Seth defined as the primordial “language of love”. For as Wittgenstein recognised “The human body is the best picture of the human soul.” The face must therefore play a central role in any form of psychotherapy in which the therapist takes the client seriously as ‘some-body’ – not just a ‘talking head’ – being capable of bodily imitation and identification with the outer and inner faces of the client. As David Boadella puts it:

Without ... willingness to read the secret expression and to nurse it into life, any therapeutic encounter is gravely weakened.

Facing is concerned with recognition, with how we see people, with the qualities of lumination that develop when people really face each other and with the forms of illumination that flash out of such contact. Insight develops in step with outlook. If a person can let his inner self be seen by another, he begins to become recognisable to himself and can then look within, not in the sense of any sterile introspection, but in the sense of learning to love and accept who he is, and so recognise himself.

In his book *Lifestreams*, Boadella quotes an account of Reich’s work with a patient who suddenly began “seeing the world with new eyes”, the fear and hate having gone out of them. As a result he also saw his therapist differently. The process began with Reich noticing a new gleam in the patient’s eyes, which...

.... together with the shifting of the eyes and head, had brought up a new expression out of the depths of his eyes and being. It was a flirtatious, come-hither look, a sort of wink, with a raising of the eyelids, eyebrows and forehead and a moving of the eyeballs to one side, accompanied by a suggestive tilting of the head, in the same direction. As the therapist began to imitate this expression and the patient began to make better contact with it, the whole face participated in it, at first with a blushing shame-facedness, and then to the tune of a hearty laugh.

Reich did not merely “face” the patient with a *verbal* account of what he had seen and felt in the face and eyes of the patient but used his own body to mirror it back thus helping the patient to feel it more fully. As a result a “miracle” happens:

Suddenly the patient was startled and opened his eyes wide with astonishment. While he was looking at the therapist the latter’s face had suddenly become soft, and glowed with light...He saw the world differently, as a good and pleasurable place to be in and as a future place of ‘heaven’ and not the ‘hell’ it had been before.

Bodily identification is involved even in the understanding of verbal and philosophical thinking itself. Wittgenstein again:

I begin to understand a philosophy by feeling my way into its existential manner, by reproducing the tone and accent of the philosopher.

The verbal face of an individual is part of their overall face. “Its not what you say but the way that you say it.” Every word a person utters is, like a face, not merely a symbol of something, but a way of *showing* something. Like a written text, it has a face and a physiognomy of its own.

A theme, no less than a face, wears an expression ... Yet there is no paradigm apart from the theme itself. And yet again there is a paradigm apart from the theme: namely the rhythm of our language, of our thinking and feeling. And the theme, moreover, is a new part of our language; it becomes incorporated into it; we learn a new *gesture*.

Conversely, *the face speaks*. “**It speaks, [and] it is in this that it renders possible and begins all discourse...**” (Emmanuel Levinas). Finally, the soul shows its inner faces and not just in this life but above all in the afterlife. Here the face of the human soul does not ‘speak’ words. It *is* a word:

...at the first stage after death the human being moves among the spirit-physiognomies of those who are connected with him by destiny: he beholds these physiognomies ... But at this first stage it is a beholding only, a seeing; although it means that the souls come into intimate connection. Then begins ... the growth of mutual understanding. The one begins to understand the other; he gazes deeply upon him and looks into his inner nature ... And here we come to something that is more than understanding; the one human being is able to speak to the other his own warmth-filled creative word ... The human souls are themselves words, their symphony is the symphony of the spoken Cosmic Word in its very being – communion ... The word which is one human being merges into the word which is the other human being.

Rudolf Steiner

MICROMEDITATIONS

FACIAL MICROMOTIONS (1) – ALTERING THE TILT OF YOUR HEAD

Tilt your head slightly backward whilst still looking at yourself. Feel how that backward tilt alters your whole facial expression and how it affects the entire way you feel yourself and feel your body.

Now tilt your head forward, bringing your jaw down close to your chest. Holding this new tilt of the head and the facial expression that goes with it, feel how it alters the entire way you feel yourself and feel your body.

Adjust the tilt of your head so that it now rests comfortably and weightlessly in upright alignment with your body. Form a look and facial expression that fits this feeling, and feel how it affects the entire way you feel your body and self.

FACIAL MICROMOTIONS (2) – MUDRAS OF THE BROW AND SCALP

Use the muscles of your scalp and brow to *frown*. Be aware of how the frown makes you feel – how it affects your entire feeling of yourself and of your body. Feel this feeling in your eyes, let it show in your eyes and intend to communicate it with your eyes.

Now form a facial expression that is the very opposite of a frown, stretching the scalp backward with the muscles of your temple, ears and forehead, and in this way raising your eyebrows to the utmost without creasing your forehead. Sense how stretching your scalp backward and raising your brow in this way makes you feel, and communicate this feeling with your eyes.

Finally, keeping your mouth closed, just fully relax your scalp, brow and all the muscles of your eyes and head. Sense how this makes you feel, and communicate this feeling through your eyes.

FACIAL MICROMOTIONS (3) – MUDRAS OF THE EYES

Feel yourself fully *in* your eyes and open them as wide as can – so wide that your eyelids are invisible. Sensing the entire ball of each eye, feel your awareness coming to the surface of both your eyes and your sensed body surface as a whole. Use your eyes to communicate a sense of vitality – as if your awareness was radiating from your eyes and expanding into the sensed space around your body like the light of the sun. Thus attain a felt sense of the light of awareness through this ‘sun’ *mudra* of the eyes.

Lower your eyelids until they cover half your eyes and maintain them in that half-lidded position. Feel how this allows you to simultaneously turn your gaze inwards and to sense the inner awareness space of your body whilst still looking outward. Now

actively communicate a warm sense of deep relaxation – like that which you might feel relaxing in a warm bath and feeling the boundary between the inside and outside of your body dissolve in the feeling of warmth. Feel the warmth of your own inwardly felt body as having its own fluid and mobile substantiality, moving freely between the felt space within and around your body. Thus attain and communicate a sense of *consciousness bliss* through the half-lidded or ‘half-moon’ *mudra* of the eyes.

Lower your eyelids as far as you can. As you do so, let your awareness descend down through your lower body to the ground and below, feeling both your body and self as firmly and deeply rooted in the dark depths of this underground awareness space. Do not look blankly, but communicate this sense of the deepest, darkest depths of your own soul, using this ‘new-moon’ *mudra* of the eyes.

FACIAL MICROMOTIONS (4) – MUDRAS OF THE MOUTH

Face yourself in a mirror with your lips *firmly* sealed. Feel how this gives you a sense of being more firmly bounded and contained by your body surface as a whole, and communicate this feeling through your eyes to your mirror images.

Now relax your entire face and lips and let your lower jaw drop and hang loose. Feel how this *mudra* of the mouth completely alters your sense of your body as a whole, reducing its muscle tonus throughout and enabling you to ‘let go’ - and communicate *this* feeling through your eyes to your mirror image.

Still facing yourself in the mirror, open your mouth as wide as you can, as if you had been asked by a throat doctor to ‘say Ah’. Even without making any audible sound, hear yourself *inwardly* sounding a *continuous* ‘Ah’ sound. Now imbue this continuously insounded ‘Ah’ with a feeling tone of wonder and delight and let this feeling tone shape your entire facial expression, show itself in your eyes and communicate to your mirror image. As you do so, notice how the *mudra* of the Ah sound also alters your sense of your body as a whole, allowing you to feel it brightening, lightening and enlarging in space – and use your eyes to show and communicate this feeling of expansion too.

FACIAL MICROMOTIONS (5) – HEAD, HEART AND HARA MUDRAS

Facing yourself in the mirror, feel your nostrils and take a few sharp intakes of breath through them. At the same time, sense the solidity of your *head* as a whole, and identify entirely with your inner ‘head space’, feeling it as a space of light-filled awareness that is intensified with each nasal in-breath. Now let a facial expression form that shows the face of your ‘head self’ alone - expressing your sense of its outer solidity and letting your sense of light-filled awareness that fills its inner space beam out through your eyes and communicate to the eyes of your mirror image.

Facing yourself in the mirror, feel your ribcage and expand it with awareness as you breathe. Sense the surface of your chest as a porous or entirely open surface and identify this openness with a feeling of open-heartedness – having a fully open heart.

Identifying entirely with your chest self or ‘heart self’, feel yourself quite literally taking the ‘you’ you see in the mirror ‘into your heart’ - breathing your awareness of them into the open inner heart space of your chest. Let the feeling of open-heartedness – of loving openness and receptivity – find exact expression in your face and communicate itself through your eyes to those of your mirror image. Without opening your mouth, feeling each in-breath as an inhaled ‘Ah’ sound of openness and delight.

Facing yourself in the mirror, feel the surface of your abdomen and breathe using only your abdominal muscles. Without closing your eyes, let your gaze turn inwards towards the sensed inner space of your abdomen and let your awareness sink down completely into inwardness. Identify fully with your abdominal or ‘hara self’ and with your entire lower body below the waist – feeling your legs and the contact of your feet with the ground. Let a face form that expresses a sense of groundedness and of centeredness in ‘hara’. Form a look in your eyes through which you can feel yourself looking out from a core of awareness in the dark, warm and womb-like interiority of your abdomen, and feel the eye-contact you establish with your mirror image as a contact that comes from your core.

PRACTICING FACIAL MUDRAS IN PAIRS (1)

Stand or sit side-by-side with a meditational partner in front of a mirror, if possible using stools or cushions to ensure that your heads are roughly level.

Go through each stage of the facial micromeditations above, facing your own mirror images and then facing and gazing directly at the mirror image of your partner, feeling the resonance that is established when you both adopt a similar face and look.

Take it in turns to go through each stage of the micromeditations above, this time with one partner forming a particular expression and look with their own face and eyes and the other using their own eyes and face only to precisely observe and exactly mirror the face and look of their partner in every individual detail.

PRACTICING FACIAL MUDRAS IN PAIRS (2)

Stand or sit in such a way as to be directly facing your meditational partner, if possible using stools or cushions to ensure that your heads are roughly level.

Take it in turns to practice the micromotions of the face in direct eye-contact with one another, using your eyes to not only show but communicate the different senses of self evoked by each micromotion.

Go through the head, heart and hara *mudras* individually – but this making direct eye-contact with your partner as you do so, both showing each other the face and eyes of your ‘head self’, ‘heart self’ and ‘hara self’ respectively.

Practice the head, heart and hara *mudras* again, but this time doing so together and at the same time – making contact with each other from your head self, heart self and *hara* self in turn.

Practice the following exercises in different way – without facing yourself in the mirror, facing yourself in the mirror, facing a partner in the mirror, mirroring your partner’s face in the mirror, mirroring your partner face directly, or both showing the same type of face to each other – either directly or in the mirror.

1. Use the muscles of your face and eyes *soften* your facial expression and the look in your eyes.
2. Now use the muscles of your face and eyes to *harden* your expression and look.
3. Relax your face and eyes.

1. Facing the mirror, form a *cold and detached* look in your face and eyes.
2. Now form a *warm* expression in your face and eyes.
3. Relax your face and eyes.

1. Facing the mirror, radically *darken* the look in your face and eyes.
2. Now brighten the look in your face and eyes, so that they shine with radiance.
3. Relax your face and eyes.

1. Sense every physical feature of the current look in your face and eyes.
2. Use the muscles of your face and eyes to *firm* this look - giving firmer definition to every feature of it.
3. Sense how firming the look in your face and eyes allows you to feel and affirm the feeling(s) and way of looking at things that it expresses

ADOPTING THE FACE OF THE OTHER:

1. Look closely at every feature of another person’s ‘look’ – the look on their face, the look in their eyes, and the way of looking out at the world it expresses.
 1. Seek to mirror as many features of their look with your own face and eyes.
 2. Sense how this mirroring helps you to *feel* with your own face and eyes what you *see* in theirs.

2. Look closely at every feature of another person’s ‘look’ – the look on their face, the look in their eyes, and the way of looking out at the world it expresses.
 3. Use mirroring to *feel* in your own body what you *see* in the look of the other.
 4. Intend what you feel in the other person’s ‘look’ to show itself in your own face and communicate through your own eyes.

1. Turn to glance or look at another person.
 2. Observe in as much detail as possible the look on their face and in their eyes.
 3. Turn away and, keep your own eyes open, hold an exact after-image or ‘snapshot’ of the other person’s look in your ‘mind’s eye’.

1. Glance at another person and take a mental ‘snapshot’ of their face and eyes.
 2. Turning away, hold this ‘snapshot’ of their look in your mind’s eye.
 3. Holding the ‘snapshot’ image of the other in your mind’s eye, give yourself time to feel with your own face and eyes what you see in their face and eyes.

1. Glancing at any person, in any situation, at any time - take a mental snapshot of the exact expression in their face and eyes at that exact moment in time,

2. Looking away and keeping your eyes open, hold the mental snapshot and continue to *see* the exact look in their face and eyes with your mind's eye.
3. *Feeling* in yourself what you *see* in the other person's face and eyes, use this feeling to sense with your whole body the way in which the other person is *feeling themselves* at that moment in time.

EYE AND FACE READING

For this meditation you will need a reasonably large photograph of an adult individual (portrait photographs in which the subject faces the camera directly are ideal).

Alternatively, study the face and eyes of a partner seeking an inner 'reading' of their face and eyes – or else, look in a mirror.

1. Take as much time as you need to closely observe and meditate the face and eyes, write down *every* word that comes to mind in describing the psychological characteristics and emotions you can see in the eyes. Do not worry if some of the words and emotions appear to be quite contradictory – for the eyes can reveal countless emotions and psychological characteristics at the same time, even seemingly opposite ones. If two or more people are studying the same face, then compare and contrast your lists, and describe to one another exactly what features of the individual's eyes led you to identify a particular emotional quality in it. If there are differences in your lists you might find that you are just using slightly different words to describe the same emotional quality or feature of the eyes, or else that one person is seeing an opposite emotional quality in the very same feature of a particular eye. Alternatively, each person's list might complement the other's – with further emotional and psychological qualities and their expression in different features of the eyes.

Examples of emotional description words: *fear or vulnerability, sadness, disappointment or resignation, anger or rage, naughtiness, humour, shyness or reservedness, ambivalence or uncertainty, hope or despair etc.*

2. Do the same thing again as in stage 1, but this time observing and meditating *one eye at a time* and writing a *separate list* of emotion words for *each eye* respectively. Again compare and contrast your lists with that of another person.
3. Now meditate the eyes again but this time with an awareness of other features of the individual's face, such as expressive features of their mouth, brows and facial hair, and asymmetries in the face.
4. Now look at the face or facial image again, but this time imagining that you are not looking at the face and eyes of a mature adult, but rather *those of a child*. See what new emotional qualities reveal themselves in each eye of the face and write down words for them. Here it will help considerably if you imagine that the individual whose face you are studying is *looking at a parent figure* and is showing through the different features and emotional qualities of their eyes their own felt *relation* to that parent - which may have many different and ambivalent aspects (for example desire for love or affirmation, sadness or disappointment at

not receiving it, uncertainty at how the child will be seen and responded to or what the adult will do, anger or rebelliousness. Do not restrict yourself to single words but let a feeling awareness arise of what the child's eyes are essentially *saying* to the parent and let phrases or sentences come to mind that express this. Remember also that the outer 'look' in a person's eyes is nothing purely objective, but reveals their way of subjectively *looking out at* and seeing the world – or another person in particular.

5. Now choose just *one* particularly strong emotional quality that you see in just *one* eye of the individual, and again, find words to express both its emotional quality and/or what it is saying. If this quality reveals itself in the right-hand eye of the individual, use your own *left* eye to duplicate it (or your own *right* eye to mirror some emotional quality in the left eye of the individual). Begin by simply feeling your own eye, right or left, then feeling the emotional quality within it, and seeking to subtly shape your eye so that it mirrors and rays back this same quality – in the same way and through the same features that you see it doing in the eye you are mirroring. Initially you may wish to alternate between looking at that eye and then looking away from it – but holding its image in your mind's eye and seeking to feel and duplicate its emotional quality within and with your own eye. Pay particular attention to the degree of openness of the eye (for example whether wide open, slightly or half-lidded), the extent to which you feel it is outward looking or introspective, whether the surface of the cornea seems glazed or clear, and the corresponding degree to which the individual's *gaze* appears held back at the surface of the eye – or rays out through it towards the other. Take as much time as you need to feel and shape the look in your own eye in corresponding way – for example feeling and giving it a clear or glazed or look, or feeling and intending its 'gaze light' to stream out. At the same time, imbue both the outer look and inner gaze of your eye with whatever emotional quality you see and feel in the eye of the other – whether warmth or coldness, sadness or anger etc.

Summary: mirroring the look in a person's eye requires time to go through four stages: firstly, time to simply and fully feel your own eye, then time to fully feel the feeling you wish to imbue its look and gaze with, then feeling that feeling with and within your own eye – and finally finding a way to shape its features in such a way that it *shows* that feeling through both its outer look and the quality of its inner gaze.

6. Whether you are working with a photograph or a living face, now face it and actively mirror the look you have identified in one eye with your own corresponding eye (remember that this is the eye that directly faces the eye you seek to mirror).
7. If you are mirroring the eye of a person actually present before you, move from simply mirroring the emotional quality of the look in one of their eyes to affirming and transforming that quality. For example if you are mirroring a look of sadness or rage, intend, by doing so, to fully and unconditionally *affirm* the sadness or anger you see in the other's eye. If you are successful in your mirroring you will be aware that the other person knows that they have been fully seen and fully felt and you will feel a tangible sense of resonant eye-contact with them.

8. Begin to sense with and within your whole body the purely *sensual* rather than *emotional* aspect of what it is you are mirroring - feeling it as a purely sensual tone and quality of feeling that can't be reduced to any emotional labels such as 'sadness' or 'anger'.

Examples of trans-emotional qualities of the look in a person's face and eye and in the tone of their gaze: *liveliness or deadness, fieriness or iciness, warmth or coolness of feeling, radiant luminosity or darkness, lightness or heaviness, sharpness or dullness, translucency or glazed opaqueness.*

9. Now gradually move from mirroring an emotional feeling to mirroring it as such a purely sensual quality or 'tone' of feeling. Examples: mirroring an emotion of 'rage' as a purely sensual quality of burning (or icy) intensity, strength or power; mirroring an emotion of quivering anxiety as a quality of vibrating excitement; mirroring an emotion of 'sadness' purely as a felt sense of profound depth and inwardness of soul.

FROM FACE AND EYE READING TO TRANSFORMATIVE RESONANCE

The capacity to precisely mirror and 'resonate' with, unconditionally affirm and then gradually *transform* an emotion seen in another person's eyes and face as a whole is central to 'The New Yoga of the Face and Eyes' – in particular its use of close-up, face-to-face pair meditation as a powerful medium of wordless therapy conducted through a process of 'transformative resonance' i.e. first mirroring, affirming and 'resonating' the emotions we see and feel in the face and eye(s) of another, and then gradually *transforming* the way we see and feel those emotions – no longer mirroring them back *as* nameable emotions but as pure tones and qualities of feeling. This difference is like the difference between hearing a tone, chord or phrase of music as the expression of a nameable emotion or emotional feeling – or sensing it as pure quality or 'tone' of feeling that transcends words, a 'feeling tone' rather than an emotion. 'Transformative resonance' then, begins with the mirroring and affirmation of *emotional feelings* and ends with mirroring them in a transformed way as purely sensual qualities of *feeling tone*.

PRACTICING DEEP INNER EYE CONTACT AND TOUCH

The partners should be seated at eye-level with one another, straight-backed, but with one partner's legs wrapped around the knees of the other to ensure sufficient closeness and intensity of the bi-personal field. Partners should take it in turns to give each other and follow each of the instruction below, as summarised in the headings - but to be spoken *exactly* as written out in full in the sentences in quotation marks:

1. Neutral: look at my eyes and place one of your hands on mine

"To begin with I'm simply going to ask you to look at my eyes, without blinking, and then place one of your hands on mine ... Fine, now you can take you hand away."

2. Intending to really see and touch the other ('I see and touch you)

“Now I’m going to ask you to do the same thing again - to look at my eyes and place one of your hands on mine - but this time with the intent to really see ME, and not just my eyes, and to really touch ME and not just my hand.”

3. Intending to really see and touch from the self (I see and touch you)

“Now I’m going to ask you to do the same thing again, but this time with the intent to make me feel that it is really YOU looking at me and not just your eyes, really YOU touching me and not just your hand.”

4. Making ‘core contact’

“I’m going to ask you to do the same thing again. But this time, before you look at me and touch me, close your eyes and take time to feel and identify with your entire lower body below the waist. To begin with, be aware of the contact of your feet with the ground, be aware of both your lower and upper legs, your seat and hips, and then begin to feel a hollow, warm and womb-like space of awareness in your abdomen. Breathing only with your abdominal muscles begin to centre both your awareness and your breathing awareness in your abdomen. When you are ready, open your eyes and look at me from that centre or core self in your abdomen, and, in your own time, touch me from that same core.”

4. Seeing and touching from whole-body and whole-self awareness

“I’m going to do the same thing again now, but this time, before you look at my eyes and place your hand on mine, close your eyes, and take all the time you need to feel your whole body from within and, with it, your whole self. When you feel ready, open your eyes with the intent to simply SHOW me that sense of your whole self and body through your eyes, and then, when you feel ready, touch me with and from your whole body and self.”

5. Intensifying contact from your core and whole self

“Once again take time until you feel able to make contact with me with your whole-body self and from its innermost core. As you feel the contact you are making between us intensifying, intensify the pressure of your hand on mine to the same degree.”

6. Sustaining inner contact

“Repeat exercise 5, but at the end gradually relax the pressure of your hand, and, when you are ready, remove your hand entirely and gradually turn your gaze away from me - whilst still sustaining a feeling of inner contact between us.”

Variations:

7. Making contact from the head self alone ('Feel your head, be 'all head' and no body, and look at me solely from you head self')

“Without either looking at me or closing your eyes, take time to feel the entire surface of your head, feeling all the muscles of your face, mouth and eyes, feeling the surface of your scalp, feeling the sides and back of your head. Sensing your head as a whole, begin to feel it as a hollow vessel filled with light. Take a few sharp in-breaths through your nose and feel that light intensifying, entering your eyes and radiating from them. When you are ready, turn to me, and - without blinking - look at me entirely from your head self, letting the light that fills it stream out through your gaze.”

8. Making contact from the chest and heart self

“Feel your chest as a hollow vessel, be all chest, and not head or lower body, and look out at me from your heart.”

9. Making contact from the 'hara'

“Feel your womb/abdomen, be all lower body, headless and chestless, and look out at me from a centre in your lower abdomen or 'hara'.”

10. Sequence of stand up exercises with partners facing one another:

Note: give time for each stage in the sequence of exercises and for an adequate interval of time between them.

- a) “Feel your head, chest and upper body as a whole.”
- b) “Feel your feet, legs and entire lower body below the waist.”
- c) “Now centre both your breathing and awareness entirely in your abdomen.”
- d) “Now turn to me and look out at me from a centre of awareness in your abdomen.”
- e) “Now bring your awareness to your body surface as a whole, feeling the front and back surfaces of your head and chest in particular.”
- f) “From your body surface, now intensify your awareness of the entire space around your body. Feel that space around your body as a larger, more spacious field of awareness that extends beyond the boundaries of your own body.”
- g) “Now be aware of an object in that space and sense how the empty space that surrounds and embraces it is the very field or space of awareness that makes it visible.”
- h) “Finally, turn to face me and feel yourself embracing my whole body in the same spacious awareness field that surrounds your body.”

TANTRIC PAIR MEDITATION

The instructions to be given by one partner to the other or followed by both:

Preliminary meditations:

“Feel your body from within. Feel it as if it were a completely hollow vessel, filled with nothing but space.”

“Feel your body from without, sensing the space surrounding it.”

“Feel the spaces within and around your body surface as a single space.”

“Feel how that same space surrounds my body and sense its inner space as hollow too.”

“Feel the spaces within, around and between your body and mine.”

Before commencing pair meditation:

“When we begin our pair meditation, freely alternate between:

1. *Observing and mirroring* the exact look in my face and eyes.
2. *Sensing and feeling* what they are showing inside your body.
2. *Sensing* how you yourself are feeling from inside your body.
4. *Showing* this to me through the look in your face and eyes.”

FACES AT BRAGA

by David Whyte

In monastery darkness
by the light of one flashlight
the old shrine room waits in silence.

While above the door
we see the terrible figure
fierce eyes demanding: Will you step through?

And the old monk leads us,
bent back nudging blackness
prayer beads in the hand that beckons.

We light the butter lamps
and bow, eyes blinking in the
pungent smoke, look up without a word,

see faces in meditation,
a hundred faces carved above,
eye lines wrinkled in the hand held light.

Such depth in solid wood!
Taken from the hillsides and carved in silence
they have the vibrant stillness
of those who made them.

Engulfed by past
they have been neglected, but through
smoke and darkness they are like the flowers

we have seen growing
through the dust of eroded slopes,
their slowly opening faces turned toward the mountain.

Carved in devotion
their eyes have softened through age
and their mouths curve through delight
of the carvers hand.

If only our own faces
would allow the invisible carver's hand
to bring the deep grain of love to the surface

if only we knew
as the carver knew, how the flaws
in the wood led his searching chisel to the very core

we would smile too
and not need faces immobilized
by fear and the weight of things undone.

When we fight with our failing
we ignore the entrance to the shrine itself
and wrestle with the guardian, fierce figure
on the side of good

and as we fight
our eyes are hooded with grief
and our mouths are dry with pain.

If only we could give ourselves
to the blows of the carvers hands,
the lines in our faces would be the trace lines of rivers

feeding the sea
where voices meet, praising the features
of the mountain the cloud and sky.

Our faces would fall away
until we, growing younger toward death
every day, would gather all our flaws in celebration

to merge with them perfectly,
impossibly, wedded to our essence,
full of silence from the carver's hands.