

4 DAY LESSON GRADUATE RETREAT AT IGATPURI

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19th Sept 2009. 11a.m.

This is one subject that people keep on asking and dwelling upon in satsangas and in letters. It is a mystery even for long timers as to what is it? Let's go through that. It may take a long time but it is worth it. I am talking about the Lesson on awakening of the kundalini. i.e. Lesson 118 and Lesson 119. We will see it is not very extraordinary. It deals with the unseen body forces.

The word 'sarp' is often used to illustrate 'kundalini power.' (Then Swamiji read Lesson 118 and 119 on 'Awakening Kundalini'.)

The technique doesn't say how many times the word 'Om' must be chanted. You can dwell on each chakra for longer time if you wish. It depends on how much time you would like to allot to the technique. But it should be practiced soon after the Kriya practice when your feeling is still in the spine. The grace of God will take you into the spine. Spine is called the 'altar of God.' When you feel God in the spine it makes you realize He is nearest of the near, dearest of the dear.

I practice the technique with harmonium at times. It can be done without the harmonium too. It is up to each one of you to go up and down the spine chanting 'Om' three times at each chakra starting with coccyx and going up to kutastha. It is then up to each one to do what you want to – and go up and down the spine several times. I hope you will make it a part of your daily meditation. After practicing kriya, never get up and go away. Chant 'Om' at the chakras.

For those practicing higher kriyas practice chanting 'Om' at the chakras to better your practice of the 2nd kriya. Normally the practice of the 2nd kriya is very hectic; the 3rd and 4th kriya are not so hectic. Remember awakening of the kundalini is not awakening of sexual power. On the contrary kundalini awakening also helps in transmutation of the sex impulse. There is however a separate lesson on transmutation of the sex impulse. (Ls. 67 and 68)

On Page 4 of Ls. 119, it is mentioned that **“All forms of relaxation, the study of spiritual books, meditation, worship, silence, moral living, introspection, or anything that keeps the body and mind in spiritual rest, awakens kundalini, or causes the current to flow from the body and sex to the medulla oblongata instead of the current continuously flowing from brain to the body and sex.”** Even going and performing selfless service is breaking down ego consciousness.

If you start imagining that something has to happen to awaken kundalini then it is a misconception. Even if muladhara is awakened it is a very high state of consciousness. Now it means we are ready for a higher state of consciousness. Small, small changes that are experienced in the spine are not kundalini. For that the cells of the body have to be ready.

19th Sept 2009, 3.00 p.m.

Just now I was reading in the Yogoda Magazine (July – Sept 2009 issue) an article on the scientific research on **Improving the Faculty of Attention**. It speaks about the attention deficit disorder, on the working of the mind, and how to focus the mind, on whether meditation helps to focus the mind or not. Experiments were carried on with the help of Tibetan monks on whether one can control the mind or not. They found interesting results and I am glad that science is now taking an interest in how Yoga can help in focusing the mind.

Long ago when Guruji went to the west he explained how Yoga is scientific and he tried to get the scientific community to work on Yoga. At that time he faced a lot of resistance. Material science did not know how to tackle the subject of the mind. The scientists therefore thought it better not to get involved. Even in the film ‘The Secret’ they have said that the next frontier will be ‘The mind’ and not ‘Space.’ Very soon it will be proved that science is coming closer to Yoga and Yoga to science.

Guruji himself had said that all churches should become laboratories and subject themselves to experimentation. At one time I had wanted to do that with Guruji’s teachings. It is materially easy to show to the world what Guruji’s teachings can do to the mind. But just as the Buddhist monks are subjecting themselves to scientific tests, in your life time and the life time of you youngsters, YSS-SRF will also allow themselves to be subjected to such tests. Take it from me, if I have the least bit of attunement with Guruji then it will happen. Effect of 15 minutes or ½ hr. of Hong Sau or Kriya can be seen on your MRI. I am making predictions; I may not live to see it.

Experiments have been done to see how attention span can be measured. I recently received an email which showed a dancing girl rotating first in one direction and then suddenly in the opposite direction. The challenge is whether you can control its rotation by directing your will, with the help of your mind. Under normal conditions man will not be able to control its rotation. The monks were trained in some of these things. There is brain switching that happens, switching on and switching off of the left and right sides of the brain. This control perception gives that controlling ability. Refer to the **technique of Super concentration** given in **Lesson 37 Pg. 3**. We will practice it during the long meditation. It tremendously increases your concentration.

In the ashram training, one is expected to do interesting duties with concentration and uninteresting duties with deep attention. They try to see if you have any preferences; whether you like to do what you like to do? I will tell you two stories; one of them is related to my mentor Br. Premamoy and the other is related to my life. Brother Premamoy was born in a princely rich family of Yugoslavia in the prewar days before the 1st World War. He could afford anything that he desired. When he asked his father for a motor cycle his father gave him a --- car. He was a genius, a person with a golden touch, versatile in every field be it arts, science, music, painting, sports; he could shine anywhere.

When he first read the Autobiography of a Yogi, he came to the conviction: This is it. This is the road to my life. He came to Los Angeles after he migrated to USA. He had reached the age of 45

– not very young. In my days the age limit to become a monk was 35 years. He asked Ma if he could join as a monastic. Ma said, “Okay.” But he said, he did not want to join immediately. He said he had to learn to overcome two problems. He had been brought up in a royal family and he did not like menial work. And since he had seen the World War, he had an aversion to the sight of blood. To overcome his aversion to menial labour work he became a motor mechanics assistant for six months getting accustomed to dirty hands, listening to abuses, dealing with rough and tough people till he became humble. To overcome his aversion to blood he worked for six months as a janitor in a surgical ward where he had to clean up the dirty bloody bandages. This gave him enough time to overcome his aversion to blood. He donated his car to SRF and the first job he got was to clean the very car. That’s the e.g. of what kind of training one gets when one is serious about finding God.

In my case I myself came from a similar kind of background. I was teaching science in the US, and had tasted success. After entering as a postulant in the SRF for some definite reason which I myself could not fathom the monk in whose charge I was did not assign me to a definite job. All other monks were given some responsibility working on a patch of the garden or watering a patch or weeding out another patch. I didn’t get any definite job. That was the way of testing me. What do I do? After breakfast time notes would be put up and the monk in charge would go through those notes and allot work to other monks. Some monk would want help. Twice a week postulants were required to work in the gardens. SRF had 25 acres under cultivation – growing vegetables and fruits. We had to pick them, pack them and then distribute them to different ashrams. Volunteers were required for all these services. Every single time anyone would ask for help I would put up my hand. If they wanted someone to pick the vegetables I would say, “Here I am.” In those days people were also required to work in the retreats. 20 – 30 people regularly came for retreats in those days and the monks were required to serve. Every single dish would have to be removed before the next dish could be served. Even the forks and spoons had to be removed every time. Piles of dishes would have to be cleared. I would be doing it behind. For nearly a year he would assign me to some area and later I would have to go and tell him what is happening in my heart and mind. I am thankful I passed his tests. In ashram training one is supposed to perform interesting duties with concentration and uninteresting ones with deep attention. That is monastic life. **"Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."** (Autobiography of a Yogi, Chp. 27)

You can practice the technique in the morning, during lunch hour and before falling asleep. It is to be practiced lying in bed. In the morning session of meditation also I recruit it as part of the techniques, only you will practice it without lying down. Difference between lying down and sitting up and practicing, is that when you are lying down you don’t have to work against gravity. When you are sitting up gravity pulls the consciousness, blood flow and currents downwards. Physically I am trying to concentrate on kutastha, but my consciousness and attention is working against gravity. When lying flat gravity works equally all over the body, therefore Guruji has given the technique to be practiced lying down.

Instead of straight away practicing the technique, perform 24 kriya, put your whole mind on the kriya, work on the spine, then lie down and practice this technique of Super concentration.

Through kriya you will magnetize the spine with Muladhara as the –ve pole and kutastha as the +ve pole. Put your mind on the spine. I will not be surprised if God's grace will descend upon you then and there. When the current will go up an intensely blissful experience will be felt. It may not last long. It may be frightening in the beginning; but nothing to worry. You are taking God's name, so it doesn't matter, if you are gone, you will go to God alone. Chant 'Om Tat Sat' as much as your breath allows. If you can chant just 3 – 4 times also it is okay.

Go back to Lesson 12. In the Hong-sau practice one thing that generally everyone neglects including me, is at the end of Hong-sau practice, **“After practicing these techniques deeply for ten minutes to half an hour, exhale slowly and completely. Blow out of the lungs all the breath that you possible can and enjoy the breathless state as long as you can without discomfort. Repeat three times. Then forget the breath and pray, or sit in silence.”**

Why did Guruji suggest this? If you have practiced Hong-sau with deep sincerity breath will slow down and stay out for longer time. The pause after exhalation becomes longer before breath is inhaled again. Breathlessness is lengthened by Hong-sau. See how far the breath stays out. There is no controlled breathing in Hong-sau as it is in Super concentration technique. There is natural breathing. It is good practice to include Hong-sau before kriya. Retired people may want to include the technique of Super concentration. Busy people can include it once in a week during the period of long meditation. First exhalation should be double. Other exhalations should not be double. Do not force breath, do not force chants. May be you chant 2 ½ times and the breath wants to come in then you allow the breath to come in. If you force the breath out forcibly it will want to come in very fast. If you have had a full meal then the body will not let you stay without breath for a very long time.

In Lesson 139, Pg. 3 is the Technique for Attaining Ecstasy at Will. Guruji sets goals on how far a yogi can go. Guruji has explained in Lesson 139, on 'Learn to go to sleep at will,' and on the next page is 'How to wake at will.' Swamiji read a part of the lesson on how to go into ecstasy at will. See the video clipping showing how Guruji is going to sleep at will. It was a part of the interview with BBC. For that interview, they filmed him, not just recorded his voice. He is lying on the couch and demonstrates the different positions of the eyes producing different states of consciousness. Guruji says, "I can stay awake for days together by staring straight. Looking down causes me to go into sleep for days together. With eyes looking up at the kutastha, I can enter into the state of super consciousness and be there for days together. In this film he gives a glimpse of how he does it.

There is a funny story of Dr. Lewis enumerated in the book – 'Treasures Against Time.' For Dr. Lewis, Guruji was more like a friend not as a great personality. Dr. Lewis was one of the closest ones who helped Guruji in umpteenth number of ways to settle down in the early years. So Dr. Lewis took several liberties with Guruji. Once Guruji was snoring deeply. Dr. Lewis tied Guruji's toe with a string to the door. While still snoring, Guruji said, "Doctor, it won't work."

My favourite picture is one in which Guruji is looking straight into your eyes. It is just a bust. Why is it my favourite picture? When the photographer wanted to take the picture of Guruji, Guruji said, "Wait a minute, let me get into Samadhi." It took Guruji just one second to go into Samadhi and he is yet speaking. In Nirbikalpa Samadhi, people can be in ecstasy and yet talk. One cannot even go to sleep while standing. There is one person I know in Calcutta who can go to sleep while holding on to the handles overhead – that too in a Calcutta bus.

I have felt great blessings when journeying to Kailas Mansarovar some time back – all the way up there to a height of 14 to 15000 feet. Mind has a tremendous effect on the body at such height. For 10 days or so I did not sleep. It was very difficult to fall asleep. About 100 of us had similar problems – diarrhea, vomiting, headache, mouth bleeding – signs of altitude sickness. My main problem was sleeplessness. As time passed day after day with no sleep I felt disorientation. The mind will start playing own tricks. Logical thinking may go off. That even happens to mountaineers when they get stuck at great heights. They face hallucinations. Lack of sleep was catching up on me. At the end of the trip on the banks of the Mansarovar on the last day I was in a special tent by myself. I was in the sleeping bag with a zipper. I put myself in the sleeping bag, pulled on the zipper; I could hear the fierce winds blowing outside. I was sleepless. I was trying to meditate; the mind was not allowing me to meditate. It wanted to sleep. I was almost coming to the point of sleep. But suddenly the fear would come – “No, I don’t want to sleep.” Just when I was going into the subconscious state, the mind would say, “No, don’t go to sleep.” Then I said forget meditation, forget sleep, and started walking up and down. Fierce cold winds were blowing. Looking up at the sky it looked crystal clear – it was a magnificent experience. The stars looked so low I felt I could touch the stars. For the next 3 – 4 months my mind goes to Kailas Mansarovar every now and then. It keeps drifting about here and there and in my free time it goes off to Mount Kailas.

For those who want to go to sleep consciously apart from what is given in Guruji’s lessons – after lying down on your back practice Shavasan or Yognidrasan. Relax each of the 20 body parts. Then reverse the direction from top to lower parts of the body. Keep on telling yourself. First the left foot is relaxed, it is becoming heavy. Now the right foot is relaxing and becoming heavy. Go up the body and then go down. Keep eyes looking downwards at your own toes. When the eyes are lowered you go into the subconscious state of sleep. (When the eyes are looking straight ahead you are in the conscious state and when you are looking up at the kutastha you are in the super conscious state). And before you know it, you will be asleep.