

Essence of Kriya Yoga Sadhana

Recently, an organisation in the disciplic lineage made a request to send them a write up on Kriya Sadhana (Practice) as taught by Shibendu Lahiri in the dynastic lineage. The write up was sent. It was then thought that the teaching therein may also be shared with his disciples as they are applicable to all Kriyabans. The following Message is from that write up.

The only yoga mentioned in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras is Kriya Yoga where he writes, *Swadhyay, Tapas, Ishwara Pranidhan - Iti Kriya Yoga*, meaning that the three aspects, *Swadhyay, Tapas* and *Ishwara Pranidhan*, describe what Kriya Yoga is.

The purpose of Kriya Yoga is to enable humans to be in their natural state (*Swaroopa avasthanam* or, as Lahiri Mahashaya used to say, *Sahajavastha*). In this natural state thought moves in discontinuity. Thought arises as response to perform some necessary task. Once the task is done thought falls into complete silence. Divinity is in the discontinuity of thought and not in constant chattering of thought. This can be understood thus: Life, which is all that is around us, cannot be understood because of our constant preoccupation with ourselves. It is Life that is Whole, the Divinity. It is what we are and what everything and everyone is, but this simple fact cannot be understood because of the continuity of thought which has its origin in the consciousness of a separateness. This separative consciousness ("I"-ness) corrupts the sensory inputs we receive thus preventing us from perceiving What IS. Therefore, just as the rat is at the feet of Ganesha, thoughts (rat) should be at our feet for mere performance of practical tasks so that the body is available to pure energy of understanding as symbolised by the elephant head of Ganesha.

When one lives in a house with dirty windows one sees the world distorted and this, in turn, distorts the understanding of what is seen. The windows have to be cleaned from inside and outside, the doors have to be opened for fresh air to flow. When we talk of windows and doors, this is possible for us to do easily as the cleaner (we) is different from the cleaned (the window) and we can open the door because the door is distinct from 'we'.

But when it comes to removing the dirt and corruption of the mind the cleaner (we, the mind-ego complex) and the cleaned (we, the same mind-ego complex) are the same and hence any attempt to *DO* meditation, or *ANALYSE* oneself in an effort to cleanse the mind, in fact *ANY* effort of any kind is futile. The mind ("I") to be cleaned and the mind ("I") cleaning, being one and the same, the only thing that happens is that a new "I" forms and this "I" is somehow conceived to be a "Higher I". It is rather like standing inside a bucket and trying to lift it and that is impossible because then the bucket and the lifter are one. The "I" (separative consciousness) in fact cannot be fully cleaned. The only solution is for it to cease to exist - to drop. When the energy of understanding enables one to see that the Corruption, the Corruptor and the Corrupted are one and the same ALL three end - instantly!

This is where the Kriya Sadhana is important as, through some simple **PHYSICAL** techniques, one works to still the mind and its constant activity of thought. When that happens there is a gap between thoughts that allows penetration of the energy of understanding. *Sadhana* in Kriya Yoga which, in the first initiation, are *kriya pranayam, Talabya kriya, Nabhi Kriya* and *Mahamudra* all work on different aspects of this. Thus, while *Pranayam* helps to still the mind, *Talabya* works on some important glands that help the body work naturally. *Nabhi kriya* and *Mahamudra* work on fear and passion characteristics of the mind-ego complex that tend to hinder the stilling of the mind. Intensive practice with attention leads to a state of stillness of thought which then makes the body available to that blast of Understanding that eventually may lead to *Ishwara Pranidhan* which, literally translated, is the direct perception (*Pranidhan*) of Wholeness, the Holiness, the Divinity (*Ishwara*).

The first stage of Kriya Sadhana is so important, that if it is done with sincerity, patience and diligence, accompanied by *Swadhyay* the results are seen and the body becomes available to the energy of understanding. The Kriya Sadhana is a tool (a holy tool, but still a tool) to enable the body be available to the Natural state. It is not the end, but merely a bridge to get from here (our current state of division with its separative consciousness) to there (the state of one-ness, holiness). It is important that this aspect is understood well. *Swadhyay* **must** accompany *Sadhana*. Too often, the **experience** of the kriya practice so enamours the kriyaban, that he forgets to get off the bridge and move on to *Ishwara Pranidhan*. That is why *Swadhyay* is so important.

Jai Kriya Sadhana, Jai Kriya Swadhyay