

Merging with Śiva

HINDUISM'S CONTEMPORARY METAPHYSICS

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami



A pocketbook of enlightenment lessons from a mystical master, revealing the depths of raja yoga, the clear white light and the ultimate spiritual destiny of every seeker





Merging With Siva

शिव सायुज्य

சிவனோடு சாயுச்சியம்



Abridged Pocketbook Edition

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Published by
Himalayan Academy
India • USA

PRINTED IN MALAYSIA BY SAMPOORNA PRINTERS SDN BHD
BY ARRANGEMENT WITH UMA PUBLICATIONS

Library of Congress Control Number 2004116685
ISBN-13: 978-0-945497-20-2
ISBN-10: 0-945497-20-2

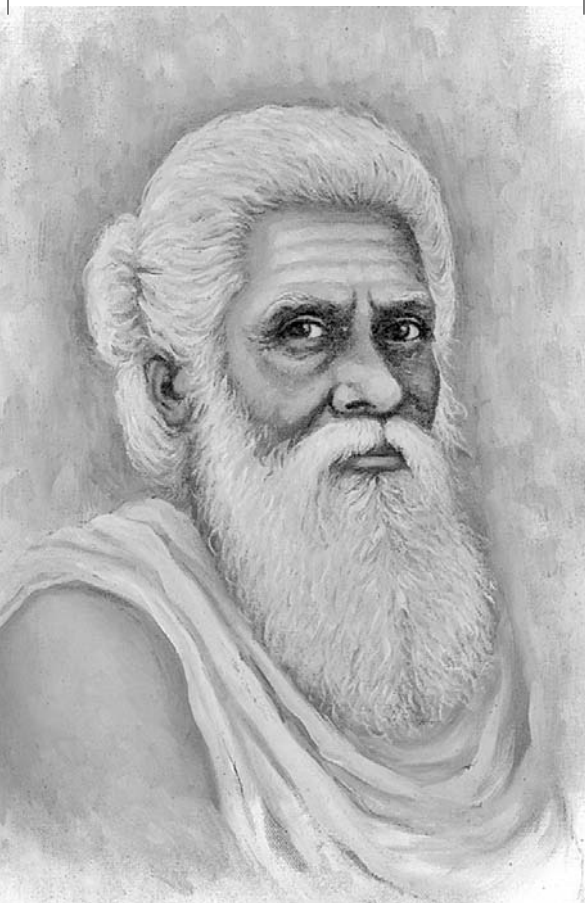
Merging With Siva

Hinduism's
Contemporary Metaphysics

शिव सायुज्य
हिन्दुधर्म समकालीन अतिविज्ञानविदग्ध

சிவனோடு சாயுச்சியம்
இந்து சமயத்தின் தற்கால மெய்நானம்

Satguru Sivaya
Subramuniaswami



Dedication

Samarpaṇam

समर्पणम्

TO WHOM SHALL WE DEDICATE *MERGING WITH ŚIVA*? TO ŚIVA HIMSELF? WELL, ŚIVA IS WITHIN EVERYONE. ACTUALLY, IT IS NOT possible for Him to withdraw Himself from us. So, *Merging with Śiva* truly must be dedicated to Sadāśiva in the form of my *satguru*, Siva Yogaswami of Sri Lanka, and to all whom I have encountered on the path through this and my many past lives. This dedication honors those mature souls who have guided me into what to do, how to live, think and feel, and those not-so-evolved souls who have taught me by their example, words and actions how not to live for a productive, joyous life. Yes, “All are our teachers: some teach us what to do, others teach us what not to do.” ¶ In this birth I have experienced a rare time on Earth. I wouldn’t have missed it for anything. All in a few decades, the age of the farmer merged into the age of the technician, then into the age of space exploration, and now the information age. We have seen religion give way to science and now science giving way to religion—just a little, but it’s a good omen. Hopefully, a new breed of souls will mature on this planet who, inspired by the eternal Vedic truths, will blend the best of science with the best of religion.



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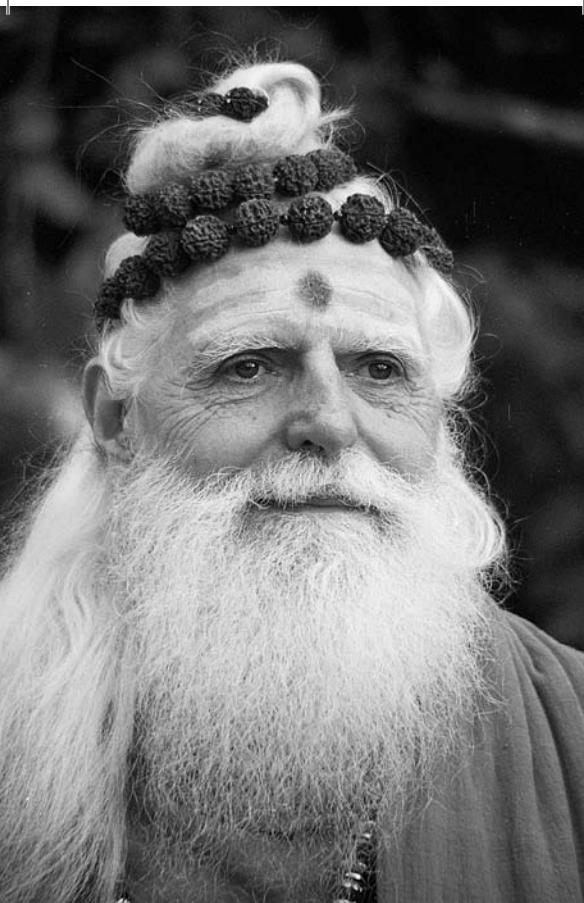
ART DESCRIPTIONS

Cover Art: Artist S. Rajam depicts the soul's merger with the divine, a vision in which Lord Śiva, in His loving grace, unites with a purified *yogī* seated on a tiger skin in a temple compound.

Gaṇeśa Dancing: Indian artist Indra Sharma paints an agile dancing Gaṇeśa, Remover of Obstacles and Lord of Dharma, who blesses the start of all worthy enterprises.

Half Title Page: S. Rajam takes us high into the Himalayas, where Lord Śiva performs *tapas*, covered by frozen ice, with Parvatī and sons Gaṇeśa and Murugaṇ. Devas, humans and various creatures have climbed to Śiva's feet to worship, dance, sing, offer music and seek His grace.

Chapter Title Page Art: Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami painted with holy ash on black paper the art that appears on the title page of each chapter.



Author's Introduction

Granthakāra Bhūmikā

ग्रन्थकार भूमिका

AN OVERWHELMING INFLUX OF EASTERN THOUGHT HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO THE WESTERN COUNTRIES THIS PAST CENTURY. THERE, NEEDLESS TO SAY, have been innumerable approaches made to psychology, philosophy and the *yogic* science from all states of consciousness. Some excellent, highly recommended works have been published, written by the illuminati—those rare beings inspired by the superconscious mind. Others have compiled comparative intellectual studies, and still others have written purely instinctively. Inspired, perhaps, by brief flashes from the great beyond, they write only to clarify their own minds on various points relative to the unfoldment of the mind and spirit. It is of the greatest importance to note from what state of consciousness an author has written his works. This is an easy task for the “old timer,” but exceedingly difficult for the beginner who finds himself faced with an array of books to choose from. Though eager to know himself and unfold into deeper realms of thought, the problem of knowing what to choose and how to study what has been chosen is a great one.

Merging with Śiva is a collection of a lifetime of realization. Realization is knowing, the aftermath of experience, having proven to oneself, from the inside of oneself, the deeper knowing. It also means “what has been seen.” This no one

can take away, change or alter.

It all started in 1949 when I had certain great realizations of Truth, Self, Paraśiva, Absolute Reality, in the Caves of Jalani in Sri Lanka, followed by meeting my *satguru*, receiving initiation into the order of *sannyāsa* and returning to America.

What you are about to study will be a progressive, mind-changing experience. Read and reread them as a book. Or, as a *sādhana*, take one lesson a day and contemplate it as a beautiful gem. The discourses or inspired talks which make up the lessons have been brought together in this remarkable collection from half a century of teaching and guiding devotees. In assembling *Merging with Śiva*, I personally reviewed each word, sentence and paragraph from the original texts. You may be assured that you now hold in your hands a lifetime of realization and transformation which should stimulate you into pursuing some of the same realizations. Many of these inspired talks were given and recorded twenty, thirty or forty years ago. I endeavored to keep with the original wording as much as possible, often taking subsequently published versions back to their earlier form, while making virtually no, or only slight, changes when I felt such changes were needed to be effective in the present era. Hence they maintain their conversational style, which I call “Talkenese,” having not been reedited in a more book-like manner. I say this to avoid any possible disputes in the future that might arise: “I read aloud, edited and revalidated every word in this treasure-trove during a three-year retreat from 1996 to

1999, making a mature evaluation, at age 72, of what stands as true and trustworthy, rock solid, worthy to pass on to the future.” There is much power in these words because of the combined *brahmacharya* force, the divine spiritual energy of the *tapas* and *sādhana*, of our Nandinātha order of *āchāryas*, *swāmīs*, *yogīs* and *sādhakas*.

Merging with Śiva is a book that has your potential woven into it. It is not the typical book expounding the techniques of *yoga* or various methods of improving the physical body. It does not offer six dozen kinds of breath control or 108 postures. Instead, it reveals the *yoga* of life, *jñāna yoga*, of self-understanding and relationship, of who you are deep inside. This is the *yoga* of change, of unfolding new perspectives. It is, indeed, the discovery of your own true, divine identity—the I Am, the Being within, the Watcher, the Seer. Discover various areas of your inner and outer mind through carefully observing your reactions to intuitive flashes as you read. You may find yourself thinking, “I have always known that,” or “Yes, that is truly what I have experienced.” Then mentally build on the acknowledgment of these tiny realizations, and the bigger ones will naturally come at the right time and in the right way.

Each lesson is to be absorbed into the subconscious mind, to be experienced, sometimes immediately, such as the lessons on affirmation and the numerous lessons on awareness flowing through the mind as a traveler journeys from city to city. This anyone of any background can experience. Inner light is also described in many lessons. It has been experienced by many, many—the light within a darkened

room shining within the body. You do not have to be a saint, sage, philosopher or anything but an ordinary person to experience inner light. This experience makes you an extraordinary person.

Read and absorb each chapter as a complete concept. Don't belabor each point. This is not a rigorous philosophical treatise, but a free-flowing *upadeśa* of a *guru* seeing things as they are and responding to questions of devotees at the time, explaining situations that had arisen in the group around him, from an inner perspective. These spontaneous spoken essays describe the strivings of tens of thousands of seekers over a period of fifty years. Their questions are, no doubt, your questions, and my answers given here would no doubt be your answers, because these eternal matters don't change all that much through the millennia. This is not an intellectual study.

Remember that there are two books that precede *Merging with Śiva* for a full and deepening transformation. They are *Dancing with Śiva* and *Living with Śiva*. Both envision a complete change in philosophy and lifestyle. *Dancing with Śiva*, *Living with Śiva* and *Merging with Śiva* form a trilogy, my legacy. In philosophical terms relating to the path of attainment, the *charyā mārga* is *Dancing with Śiva*, the *kriyā mārga* is *Living with Śiva* and *Merging with Śiva* outlines the *yoga* and *jñāna mārgas*. Here, in our trilogy, we have a complete study for a lifetime or two, or possibly more.

The quotations on the title page of each chapter are verses from the *Tirumantiram*, the Nandinātha Sampradāya's oldest Tamil scripture; written ca 200 BCE by Rishi Tiru-

mular. It is a vast storehouse of esoteric *yogic* and *tantric* knowledge, the tenth book of the *Tirumurai*, which is a collection of celebrated Tamil scriptures by the South Indian saints of Śaiva Siddhānta. The *Tirumantiram's* 3,047 verses contain the mystical essence of *rāja yoga* and *siddha yoga*, and the fundamental doctrines of the twenty-eight Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas, which along with the *Vedas* form the basis of our tradition.

The Hindu View of Liberation

Merging with Śiva is all about liberation, the earning of freedom from the body, mind and emotions through union with the Divine, ultimately in total inextricable merger of the soul in God. Having lived many lives, each soul seeks release from mortality, experiences the Divine directly through Self Realization and ultimately attains *moksha*, liberation from the round of births and deaths.

The religions of India are unique in their knowledge of the soul's spiritual evolution through a multitude of physical incarnations. Scripture tells us this evolution culminates in Self Realization, which, once sufficient *karma* is resolved, confers *moksha*, release from the cycle of birth and death. *Moksha*, from the root *much* or *moksh*, has many denotations: to loose, to free, release, let loose, let go and thus also to spare, to let live, to allow to depart, to dispatch, to dismiss and even to relax, to spend, bestow, give away and open. Thus it means "release from worldly existence or

transmigration; final or eternal emancipation.”

Moksha is not a state of extinction of the soul, nor of nonexistence, nor of nonconsciousness. It is perfect freedom, an indescribable state of nondifferentiation, a proximity to the Divine within. *Moksha* marks an end to the Earthly sojourn, but it may also be understood as a beginning, not unlike graduation from the university. *Kaivalya* is another apt term for this ineffable condition of perfect detachment, freedom and oneness.

To reach this emancipation beyond all joy and sorrow, all difference and decay, the soul must remove, in order, the three fetters: *karma*, which is “the power of cause and effect, action and reaction;” *māyā*, which is “the power of manifestation” sometimes called illusion; and *āṇava*, “the power of egoity or veil of duality.” Once freed by God’s grace from these bonds—which do not cease to exist, but no longer have the power to bind—the soul experiences *nirvikalpa samādhi*. This is the realization of the Self, Atatva Parabrahman—timeless, formless, spaceless—a oneness beyond all change or diversity. Self Realization is man’s natural state, which each soul eventually comes to. While the ultimate goal of earthly life is the experience (or more precisely the nonexperience) of Self Realization, the by-product of that realization is *moksha*. Theicḥāse two are not synonymous.

While some sects of Hinduism teach that liberation comes only upon death, most embrace the state of *jīvanmukti*, liberation in which the advanced soul unfolds its inherent perfection while alive. It is said of such a great

one that “He died before he died,” indicating the totally real, not merely symbolic, demise of the ego. It is possible to realize the Self and still not reach the emancipated state. If this happens, the soul would return and in its next birth easily become a *jīvanmukta* by virtue of the past realization. What distinguishes the *mukta* from the nonliberated is his total freedom from all selfishness and attachments, his permanent abidance in the all-pervading Divine Presence, his lucid, witnessing consciousness and his *jñāna*, revealed in spontaneous utterances.

To attain liberation while living, the realization of the Self has to be brought through into every aspect of life, every atom of one's body. This occurs after many encounters with *nirvikalpa samādhi*. Through harnessing the power of *sādhana* and *tapas*, the adept advances his evolution, moving ahead ten lives or more. Only great *tapasvins* achieve *jīvanmukti*, for to catalyze the death of the astral body and then revive the life forces, one must be proficient in *brahmacharya*, *yoga*, *prāṇāyāma* and the varied *sādhana*s. It is a grace, made possible by guidance of a living *satguru*, attained by single-minded and strong-willed efforts of *yoga*, worship, detachment and purification. Non-*yogīs* may be freed at death, provided all *karmas* have been worked out and the Self is realized as the body is released.

Even having attained perfect liberation, a soul may consciously choose to be reborn to help others on the path. Such a one is called an *upadeśī*—exemplified by the benevolent *satguru*—as distinguished from a *nirvāṇī*, the silent ascetic who abides at the pinnacle of consciousness, shun-

ning all worldly involvement. The concept of *moksha* for every Hindu sect is informed and modified by its understanding of the soul and its relationship to God. Most Hindus believe that after release from birth and death the soul will exist in the higher regions of the inner worlds where the Gods and mature beings live. Some sects contend the soul continues to evolve in these realms until it attains perfect union and merger with God. Others teach that the highest end is to abide eternally and separately in God's glorious presence. Four distinct views are explored below.

Smārta Hinduism

Smārtism is an ancient *brāhmanical* tradition reformed by Adī Sankara in the ninth century. Worshiping six forms of God, this liberal Hindu path is monistic, nonsectarian, meditative and philosophical. Īśvara and man are in reality Absolute Brahman. Within *māyā*, the soul and Īśvara appear as two. *Jñāna*, spiritual wisdom, dispels the illusion.

Most Smārtas believe that *moksha* is achieved through *jñāna yoga* alone—defined as an intellectual and meditative but non-*kuṇḍalinī yoga* path. Guided by a realized *guru* and avowed to the unreality of the world, the initiate meditates on himself as Brahman to break through the illusion of *māyā*. The ultimate goal of Smārtas is to realize oneself as Brahman—the Absolute and only Reality. For this, one must conquer the state of *avidyā*, or ignorance, which causes the world to appear as real. All illusion has vanished for the realized being, *jīvanmukta*, even as he lives out life in the physical body. If the sun were cold or

the moon hot or fire burned downward, he would show no wonder. The *jīvanmukta* teaches, blesses and sets an example for the welfare of the world. At death, his inner and outer bodies are extinguished. Brahman alone exists and he is That forever, all in All.

Liberation depends on self-culture, which leads to spiritual insight. It does not come from the recitation of hymns, sacrificial worship or a hundred fasts. Man is liberated not by effort, not by *yoga*, not by any self-transformation, but only by the knowledge gained from scripture and self-reflection that he himself is Brahman. *Jñāna yoga's* progressive stages are scriptural study (*śravaṇa*), reflection (*manana*) and sustained meditation (*dhyāna*). Devotees may also choose from three other nonsuccessive paths to cultivate devotion, accrue good *karma* and purify the mind. These are *bhakti yoga*, *karma yoga* and *rāja yoga*, which, Smārtas teach, can also bring enlightenment.

Scripture teaches, "For the great-souled, the surest way to liberation is the conviction that 'I am Brahman'" (*Śukla Yajur Veda, Paiṅgala Upanishad* 4.19 UPR, p.923). Sri Jayendra Saraswathi of Kanchi Peedam, Tamil Nadu, India, affirms, "That state where one transcends all feelings is liberation. Nothing affects this state of being. You may call it 'transcendental bliss,' purified intuition that enables one to see the Supreme as one's own Self. One attains to Brahman, utterly liberated."

Vaiṣṇava Hinduism

The primary goal of Vaiṣṇavites is *videhamukti*, disem-

bodied liberation—attainable only after death—when the small self realizes union with God Vishṇu’s body as a part of Him, yet maintains its pure individual personality. God’s transcendent Being is a celestial form residing in the city of Vaikuntha, the home of all eternal values and perfection, where the soul joins Him when liberated. Souls do not share in God’s all-pervasiveness or power to create.

Most Vaishṇavites believe that religion is the performance of *bhakti sādhanas*, and that man can communicate with and receive the grace of Lord Vishṇu who manifests through the temple Deity, or idol. The path of *karma yoga* and *jnāna yoga* leads to *bhakti yoga*. Through total self-surrender, called *prapatti*, to Lord Vishṇu, liberation from *saṁsāra* is attained. Vaishṇavites consider the *moksha* of the *advaita* philosophies a lesser attainment, preferring instead the bliss of eternal devotion. There are differing categories of souls which attain to different levels of permanent release, called *sālokya*, “sharing the world” of God; *sāmīpya*, “nearness” to God; *sārūpya*, “likeness” to God; and *sāyujya*, “union” with God. *Jīvanmukti* exists only in the case of great souls who leave their place in heaven to take a human birth and later return.

There is one school of Vaishṇavism, founded by Vallabhacharya, which takes an entirely different view of *moksha*. It teaches that, upon liberation, the soul, through its insight into truth revealed by virtue of perfect devotion, recovers divine qualities suppressed previously and becomes one with God, in identical essence, though the soul remains a part, and God the whole. This is described by the analogy

of sparks issuing from a fire.

Swami Prakasanand Saraswati of the International Society of Divine Love, Texas, offers a Vaishṇava view, “Liberation from *māyā* and the *karmas* is only possible after the divine vision of God. Thus, sincere longing for His vision is the only way to receive His grace and liberation.”

Śākta Hinduism

Śāktas believe the soul is one with God Śiva. Emphasis is given to the Feminine Manifest by which the Masculine Unmanifest is ultimately reached. The Divine Mother, Śakti, is mediatrix, bestowing this *advaitic moksha* on those who worship Her. *Moksha* is complete identification with the transcendent God Śiva, achieved when the *kuṇḍalinī śakti* power is raised through the *sushumṇā* current of the spine to the top of the head to unite with Śiva. Alternatively, *moksha* may be conceived of as union with Devī, or with Brahman. The spiritual practices in Śāktism are similar to those in Śaivism, though there is more emphasis in Śāktism on God's Power as opposed to Being, on *mantras* and *yantras*, and on embracing apparent opposites: male-female, absolute-relative, pleasure-pain, cause-effect, mind-body. Shamanistic Śāktism employs magic, trance mediumship, firewalking and animal sacrifice for healing, fertility, prophecy and power. “Left hand” *tantric* rites transcend traditional ethical codes.

The state of *jīvanmukti* in Śāktism is called *kulāchāra*, “the divine way of life,” attained through *sādhana* and grace. The liberated soul is known as *kaula*, to whom wood and

gold, life and death are the same. The *kaula* can move about in the world at will, even returning to earthly duties such as kingship, but nevertheless remaining liberated from rebirth, as his actions can no longer bind him.

The Goddess, Devī, gives both *mukti* and *bhukti*—liberation and worldly enjoyment. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan explained one view, “The *jīva* under the influence of *māyā* looks upon itself as an independent agent and enjoyer until release is gained. Knowledge of Śakti is the road to salvation, which is dissolution in the bliss effulgence of the Supreme.” Sri Sri Sri Sivaratnapuri Swami of Kailas Ashram, Bangalore, India, declares, “My message to mankind is ‘Right thought, right living and unremitting devotion to the Divine Mother.’ Faith is the most important thing that you should cultivate. By faith does one obtain knowledge.”

Śaivite Hinduism

The path for Śaivites is divided into four progressive stages of belief and practice called *charyā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna*. The soul evolves through *karma* and reincarnation from the instinctive-intellectual sphere into virtuous and moral living, then into temple worship and devotion, followed by internalized worship or *yoga* and its meditative disciplines. Union with God Śiva comes through the grace of the *satguru* and culminates in the soul’s maturity in the state of *jñāna*, or wisdom. Śaivism values both *bhakti* and *yoga*, devotional and contemplative *sādhanas*. *Moksha* is defined differently in Śaivism’s six schools.

Pāśupata Śaivism emphasizes Śiva as supreme cause and

personal ruler of the soul and world. It teaches that the liberated soul retains its individuality in a state of complete union with Śiva. Vīra Śaivism holds that after liberation the soul experiences a true union and identity of Śiva and soul, called Liṅga and *aṅga*. The soul ultimately merges in a state of Śūnya, or Nothingness, which is not an empty void. Kashmīr Śaivism teaches that liberation comes through a sustained recognition, called *pratyabhijñā*, of one's true Self as nothing but Śiva. After liberation, the soul has no merger in God, as God and soul are eternally nondifferent. In Gorakhnāth Śaivism, or Siddha Siddhānta, *moksha* leads to a complete sameness of Śiva and soul, described as "bubbles arising and returning to water." In Śiva Advaita, liberation leads to the "*ākāśa* within the heart." Upon death, the soul goes to Śiva along the path of the Gods, continuing to exist on the spiritual plane, enjoying the bliss of knowing all as Śiva, and attaining all powers except creation.

Śaiva Siddhānta has two sub-sects. Meykandar's pluralistic realism teaches that God, soul and world are eternally coexistent. Liberation leads to a state of oneness with Śiva, in which the soul retains its individuality, like salt added to water. Tirumular's monistic theism, or Advaita Īśvaravāda, reflected in *Merging with Śiva*, holds that evolution continues after earthly births until *jīva* becomes Śiva, the soul merges in perfect oneness with God, like a drop of water returning to the sea. Scriptures teach, "Having realized the Self, the *ṛishis*, perfected souls, satisfied with their knowledge, passion-free, tranquil—those wise beings, having attained the Omnipresent on all sides—enter into the All itself"

(*Atharva Veda, Muṇḍaka Upanishad* 3.2.5 BO UPH. P. 376).

Monistic Śaiva Siddhānta

The primary goal of this form of monistic Śaivism is realizing one's identity with God Śiva, in perfect union and nondifferentiation. This is termed *nirvikalpa samādhi*, Self Realization, and may be attained in this life, granting *moksha*, permanent liberation from the cycles of birth and death. A secondary goal is *savikalpa samādhi*, the realization of *Satchidānanda*, a unitive experience within super-consciousness in which perfect Truth, knowledge and bliss are known.

Moksha does not mean death, as some misunderstand it. It means freedom from rebirth before or after death, after which souls continue evolving in the Antarloka and Śivaloka, and finally merge with Lord Śiva as does river water when returning to the ocean. *Moksha* comes when all earthly *karmas* have been fully resolved. The *Vedas* promise, "If here one is able to realize Him before the death of the body, he will be liberated from the bondage of the world." All embodied souls—whatever be their faith or convictions, Hindu or not—are destined to achieve *moksha*, but not necessarily in this life. Śaivites know this and do not delude themselves that this life is the last. Old souls renounce worldly ambitions and take up *sannyāsa* in quest of Paraśiva even at a young age. Younger souls desire to seek lessons from the experiences of worldly life which is rewarded by many, many births on Earth. After *moksha* has been attained—and it is an attainment resulting from

much *sādhana*, self-reflection and realization—subtle *kar-mas* are made and swiftly resolved, like writing on water. Finally, at the end of each soul's evolution comes *viśvagrāsa*, total absorption in Śiva. “Even as a shadow disappears with the body, even as a bubble returns into water, even as a flame of camphor leaves no trace, so it is when *jīva* into Param unites” (*Tirumantiram*, 2587).

“But who is Śiva?” one might well ask. Our Hindu Catechism, *Dancing with Śiva*, explains, “God Śiva is all and in all, one without a second, the Supreme Being and only Absolute Reality. He is Pati, our Lord, immanent and transcendent. To create, preserve, destroy, conceal and reveal are His five powers. Aum. God Śiva is a one being, yet we understand Him in three perfections: Absolute Reality, Pure Consciousness and Primal Soul. As Absolute Reality, Śiva is unmanifest, unchanging and transcendent, the Self God, timeless, formless and spaceless. As Pure Consciousness, Śiva is the manifest primal substance, pure love and light flowing through all form, existing everywhere in time and space as infinite intelligence and power. As Primal Soul, Śiva is the five-fold manifestation: Brahmā, the Creator; Viṣṇu, the Preserver; Rudra, the Destroyer; Maheśvara, the Veiling Lord, and Sadāśiva, the Revealer. He is our personal Lord, source of all three worlds. Our divine Father-Mother protects, nurtures and guides us, veiling Truth as we evolve, revealing it when we are mature enough to receive God's bountiful grace. God Śiva is all and in all, great beyond our conception, a sacred mystery that can be known in direct communion. Yea, when Śiva is known, all is known. The

Vedas state: ‘That part of Him which is characterized by *tamas* is called Rudra. That part of Him which belongs to *rajas* is Brahmā. That part of Him which belongs to *sattva* is Vishṇu.’” (*Kṛishṇa Yajur Veda, Maitrī Upanishad* 5.2 BO UPH).

Nine Ways of Merging with Śiva

Merger—that is what this book, the third book in the trilogy of *Dancing with Śiva*, *Living with Śiva* and *Merging with Śiva*, is all about. Some of the big questions about something as wonderful as becoming one with the universe or with God are: Is merger something to accomplish in this lifetime, or shall we put it off to another round? Is merger something that can be achieved even in future lives, or should we consider that it might never happen, or that it just might happen unexpectedly? Is merger with Śiva complete annihilation, an undesirable nothingness that we should delay as long as possible? Shall we cease all striving for realization and wait for *mahāpralaya*, the end of the universe, the Great Dissolution commanded by Lord Śiva, when every soul, young or old, merges in the All of the All—no exceptions, no one left behind, the ultimate perk of the Divine Cosmic Drama, the guarantee of final merger of every soul? Fortunately, the next Big Bang may happen after Śiva gets lonely dancing by Himself and starts His creation all over again.

Merger on the great inner path described in this book is already happening in your life and in the life of every soul on the planet, in the natural course of evolution. In

Sanskrit, we express “Merging with Śiva” as Śivasāyujya, “Intimate union with the Divine.” Nine progressive ways of merging with Śiva are possible today, in fact impossible to avoid. Shall we now explore these nine ways, the wonderful ways of merging with Śiva as we walk the San Mārga, the straight path of *dharma*?

A *jīva*, or soul, merges with his potential mother who gives a physical body to which his astral body is attached. This is the first merger. Then, when his first *guru*, the parents, train him to quell the instinctive mind and become a producing member of the family and the social and global communities, the second merger occurs. Why should these two developments be related to merging with the Supreme? It is because Śiva is the life of our lives, as the venerable saints teach. Śiva is the life of the life of all sentient and insentient beings, the sea of *prāṇa*, ever emanating, mysteriously, from the All of the Allness of His mystery Being, by which all life exists and all happenings happen. Therefore to merge energies with all other humans without making differences is to find Śivaness in all and within all.

Having merged with the biological and social worlds, it then is for the young *jīva*, embodied soul, to be introduced by the parents to the family *guru* for spiritual training. Obedience and devotion to the *guru* is again another merger into Śivaness, for the *satguru* is Sadāśiva, or Śiva in form, having realized Śiva in Formlessness. It is from the *satguru*'s constant, silent emanation that the *śishya* thrives, as do flowering trees, bushes and vines thrive and grow from the sun's silent rays and the occasional show-

ers of rain. No words need be spoken, for both *śishya* and *guru* know the same—the *śishya* having had his training in scripture, divine inspiration of song, meaning and dance from his first *guru*, the parents.

Having walked the San Mārga through the *charyā* and *kriyā mārgas*, and having disciplined mind and emotions, the *śishya* is ready for the fourth merger into Śivaness. This is accomplished through art, calligraphy, drawing divine forms, writing out scripture in one's own hand and depicting through drama, by learning and playing music, by having all bodily currents move into the rhythm of the sounds of nature, for nature is *nāda* in the external. It has its own choreography, and this merger is with Naṭarāja, Lord of the Dance. It is also the merger with knowledge of all kinds, of language and mathematics, of the many sciences and arts.

The fifth merger is deeper: endeavoring to penetrate the intuitive world, communing with nature, encountering the many dreams, visions and other mystical experiences that await the seeker of Truth. It is merger with the selfless life, of seeing oneself in others, and others in oneself, of losing the barriers that divide one from another, and the internal world from the external world. It is living a harmonious life with a heart filled with love, trust and understanding for all, desiring to give rather than wanting only to receive. The light that lights each thought picture when traced to its source is the sixth merger—the *yoga* of detaching awareness from that which it is aware of and being the light that lights the thoughts, rather than claiming identity as being

the thoughts, then tracing this light of the mind out of the mind into the beyond of the beyond. Yea, this is the sixth way we merge into the Divine. The Lord of the Dance emanates His own lighting effects, does His own choreography, creates His own music and enjoys, as the audience, His own performance.

The seventh merger is into the *nāda-nāḍī śakti*, that unrelenting sound heard as an unexplainable “eee,” of a thousand *vīṇās* being played simultaneously by Viṇādhāra, another form of Lord Śiva, the maker of sound, the composer of the symphony. The *nāda* is traced to its source, deep within the within, the city of a thousand lights and sounds, for sound is light and light is sound in this sphere of Satchidānanda, all-pervasive oneness with all form, the Self flowing through the mind, untouched by it, yet sustaining it in a mightily mysterious way.

The eighth merger with Śiva is Paraśiva. Becoming and being timeless, formless, spaceless is the total transformation of the soul body, the mental body, the astral body, the *prāṇic* body and the physical body. It is the breaking of seals which subsequently makes changes never to be repaired. A new, an entirely new, process begins. It is the ultimate healing of all *karmas*, the ultimate knowing of *dharma*.

And now, lastly, once the soul evolves out of the physical, *prāṇic*, emotional, mental and causal sheaths—*annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijñānamaya* and *ānandamaya kośas*—and they are needed no more, it evolves into *viśvagrāsa*, the ninth and final merger with Śiva, as an infant effortlessly becomes a child, a child a youth and a

youth an adult. Yes, the soul, *jīva*, encased in five bodies, is indeed merged into the emanator, preserver and absorber of the inner and outer universes as simply as a drop of water merges into the ocean, never to be found again. This is the timeless path the holy *Vedas* of the Sanātana Dharma proclaim. As a seed becomes a bud, and a bud becomes a flower, these nine steps of spiritual unfoldment are inevitable for all humankind. A parallel analysis known as *dasakariyam*, “ten attainments,” is found in ancient Tamil texts.

My First Encounters with Hinduism

Having been orphaned in 1938 at eleven years of age and raised by a family friend who had lived five or more years as a guest of the Mahārāja of Mysore, where she explored Indian art, dance and culture, it was in the path of my natural evolution to come to know Śiva Naṭarāja, the God of the Dance. During those early days, I was taught to drape a *dhotī*, wrap a turban, dance the *tāṇḍava* of Lord Śiva, and much more. Indian culture was no stranger then, nor is it now.

In the teenage years, I was much exposed to Swami Vivekananda’s writings and lectures by other *swāmīs* who preached the Smārta philosophy. Everything was there for me, except for one philosophical glitch. That was Paraśiva or Parabrahman, the timeless, spaceless, causeless Śivam. Knowledge about this aspect of philosophy must have been a carry-over from a past life, for it came up ever so strong in my mind at the time. More exposure to the Smārta sect

followed near the end of the 1930s when the *Bhagavad Gītā* was introduced to the West as the Holy Bible of the Hindus. The metaphysical and philosophical circles and intelligentsia in America could not believe that an excerpted episode of the *Mahābhārata* preaching violence could be anything but detrimental to future generations in the West. This has proven to be true in many, some bitter, contests, right up to the Supreme Court level. The *swāmīs* in those early years tried to justify God Kṛishṇa's urging his devotee to kill his relatives and his *guru*, that all would be well in the end because the soul never dies, and those who were killed would reincarnate. Western people were at that time, and still are, innocent and believing—having never been taught the notion of divine deception, or a manner of writing where one thing actually means another (they were of the opinion that it was the duty of the wise to make themselves clear)—when Lord Kṛishṇa was seen to tell the warrior Arjuna to fight and slay his own clan and then have a good night's sleep, free from conscience, that did not go over well at all. Contemporary *swāmīs* made fruitless efforts to philosophically justify the *Gītā*, but their arguments and explanations were not convincing. This was before the West experienced the Second World War, when people were still very religious, moral and thoughtful about these matters. Eventually, the *Gītā* was rejected for the lofty *Upanishads* of the *Vedas*, which scholars discovered and made available in English.

Yet, in this century the Smārtas, along with many Vaishnavas, have taken the *Bhagavad Gītā* as their prime scrip-

ture, a text which is not a revealed scripture at all. It is *smṛiti*, specifically Itihāsa, meaning history, a poem excerpted from the *Mahābhārata* epic. Whereas, the *Vedas*—the four divinely revealed and most revered scriptures, *śruti*, of all Hindus, the most ancient of all books in the world, the bible of the Sanātana Dharma—promoted *ahimsā*, nonviolence, the *Gītā* condoned war and has thus been critically called *kolai nul* by eminent *swāmīs*, “the book of carnage,” a book that gives divine sanction to violence.

At age twenty-one I arrived in India, off the ship that had carried me across the seas, walking through the massive Gateway to India, in Mumbai, which was Bombay in those days. Later I would travel South, to Madras, now Chennai, finally coming to Colombo in Sri Lanka. It was the Śaivite elders and *pandits* of Jaffna, Sri Lanka—one of whom adopted me into his extended family of the Chettiar caste and initiated me into temple worship—who augmented my already mature knowledge of Vedānta. I was happy to find a complete culture that accepted the monistic *advaita* of Vedānta and yet cherished and practiced the many other dimensions of life, celebrated festivals, valued the great *yoga* called *bhakti*, honored those who performed *sādhanas*, understood the way of *kuṇḍalinī yoga*, knew the mysteries of penance or *prāyaścitta*, including rolling around the temple in the hot noonday sun, and lost itself—or should I say found itself?—in the chambers of the hallowed temples where *darshan* was sought out and the Gods were seen and felt as real beings when invoked by the magical priests to enter the temple at the height of the ceremony.

So, then, not long after I had discovered this richness, Śaiva Siddhānta—a happy, contented blend of Siddhānta (worship) and Vedānta (philosophical teachings)—became a vital part of my daily life. After this I became aware of a problem within Śaiva Siddhānta, which was loosely translated to mean “the final conclusions of the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*.” The problem was monism and pluralism, which had been a subject of popular debate for about two thousand years, I was told. It seemed strange to me that it persisted that long and still was not satisfactorily concluded. Of course, I was in my early twenties and had a lot to learn about the way of *pandits* and their conundrums.

I first became involved in this ongoing debate in 1948 while staying and performing *sādhana* in Jaffna, living with my adopted family in a humble mud hut, prior to my initiation from the great sage, Jnanaguru Yogaswami. I learned that pluralist adherents in the village were not at all pleased with this modern mystic's monistic statements and conclusions. At my very first meeting with this extraordinary Nātha *siddha*, whom I had traveled halfway around the world to seek out, Satguru Yogaswami tested me by asking, “What do you think about monism and pluralism? Explain it to me.” He obviously knew I had been exposed to both sides of the debate through village discussions with elders and *pandits*. I said, “Swāmī, both are true. It is totally dependent upon how one is looking at the mountain. The pluralist looks at the mountain from the foothills and feels separate from its lofty peak. The monist sits in oneness on that lofty peak.” He smiled, nodded and was pleased.

In my life, the issue again came into prominence in the early '80s after my recognition by the world community of Śaivites and all of the other three Hindu denominations as Guru Mahāsannidhānam of Kauai Aadheenam and 162nd Jagadāchārya of the Nandinātha Sampradāya's Kailāsa Paramparā. By that time, our small but dynamic Hindu church had distributed thousands of copies of our Hindu Catechism, *Dancing with Śiva*, boldly proclaiming the monistic truths of Śaiva Siddhānta and bravely claiming the term as our own. This did not go unnoticed by pluralist scholars and *pandits*, who for generations had faced little opposition to their claim that Śaiva Siddhānta is pluralistic by definition. I was challenged and rose to the occasion, thinking that if the debate had not been settled for two or more thousand years, then giving it a little fire and a few challenges might, just might, make a difference, and it did.

The debate goes on even to this day and will continue into the future of futures because, honestly, in every denomination there is this dichotomy, this discussion of how man and God and world relate. Each generation will confront the matter, and each way of looking at the Ultimate is from where the the perceiver is sitting, at the bottom of the mountain or at the top.

Having lived a fairly long time on planet Earth—through the '30s financial crash, orphaned at eleven, through World War II, through an international emergency ending in incarceration in Algeria with guns at our back when we innocently arrived in 1968 in a nation in turmoil, through innumerable earthquakes in California, three devastating

hurricanes on my beloved island of Kauai, several riots in India, an ethnic war in Sri Lanka, the economic roller coaster of America including 1987 Black Monday, winter snowstorms in Nevada and freezing days in Russia with Gorbachev and 2,500 political and spiritual leaders and media huddled in the Kremlin chanting "Aum" three times together, through the banning of our international magazine, *HINDUISM TODAY*, in Malaysia, the 1993 Parliament of World's Religions in Chicago, elected one among 23 religious presidents, the 1995 controversial incident of the Great Last Papers of Gandhi in the UK, through a million phone calls from every corner of the Earth on every issue known to mankind, through the opposition of great men and the support of greater men, having been honored and paraded six miles on chariots in Kilinochi, Sri Lanka, pulled by old men and young boys, the showering of baskets of flowers tossed from the rooftops of the town of Tuticorin in South India, received at airports with music and songs and garlands from crowds, as they had received Swami Vivekananda nearly a century before, in Madurai at the Mīnākshī Sundaram Temple paraded with five elephants, umbrellas, several camels in holy processions, the guest of the governments, meeting with Presidents, Prime Ministers, Ministers and religious leaders of all faiths and leaders in all walks of life, establishing temples in the USA, Fiji, Mauritius, Canada, Denmark, Germany, England, Switzerland and several other countries, often by establishing Lord Gaṇeśa icons to begin the worship, and later presiding over the completion of some of them, then to endure the issues of the '80s

and the '90s—yes, having gone through all this and more, I was prepared for the challenges of guiding several hundred families in missions in eight countries and, not the least of it, raising and training 30 *āchāryas*, *swāmīs*, *yogīs* and *sādhakas* from six nations and being there for the flood of visitors and pilgrims to our remote island from all parts of the world, not to mention the struggle to unite all of the world's Hindus through HINDUISM TODAY, a monthly effort that reaches to all corners of the Earth, teaching the core Vedic philosophy accepted by all four of the denominations of Sanātana Dharma. Why did all this happen to me? Well, it was from three words from my *satguru*: “Follow inner orders.” I thought the orders would never stop, and indeed they continue until this day. Have I been through it all? You might say that! But, it's not over yet!

When I decided to launch HINDUISM TODAY in 1979, my thinking was: to make Śaivism strong, we have to make all the other three main denominations strong. Because our philosophy is being devoted to Śiva in everyone, we support every Hindu sect equally. Our strength is in having oneness with all the Hindus around the world, even though our philosophical, doctrinal and cultural approaches may differ somewhat. This is for the benefit of the overall Hindu renaissance, which is gaining in power as the century turns, for as each becomes strong, that strength benefits the overall body of Hinduism, giving pride, stability and courage to proceed with confidence. This is Hindu solidarity, one of our heartfelt commitments. The other is monistic theism—Advaita Īśvaravāda—of Śaiva Siddhānta. Now that uniting

all the Hindus is being accomplished through HINDUISM TODAY, at the simultaneous turn of the century and the millennium, new challenges are to be faced. The experiences and accomplishments of the past are the foundation for the accomplishments of the future. Having lived this long in this life, and having had many, many lives preceding it, especially at this time on our planet, when controversy, distrust and intrigue are marketable commodities, I can truly say without any dissembling, "I would not have wanted to miss this birth for anything. It has been a fun time, but it would not have been without home base, 'the Self,' as you shall discover and come to know and love and become as you read on in *Merging with Śiva*."

Self Realization

When the knowledge of the Self first became commonly planted into English and other European languages at the turn of the twentieth century, brought by the Vedic *Upanishads*, it was an event of the time. Mystically inclined people were enthralled and elated. All began striving for the high goal before even preparing for the lower ones that lead up to it. No one thought much about their nonattainment at that time, but went on into other "-isms" and "-asms," such as Druidism, which was big at that time.

Then came Theosophy and the various sciences of the mind. It was not until the 1960s, after two world wars, that the search for the Self became popular in the mass

consciousness. It was talked about, sought for and even touched into by various striving souls. Psychedelic drugs promised ‘the Self’ with a capital S. But alas, these drugs wreaked havoc and became illegal, and there was no way in promoting chemical Self Realization any more. So, the spelling changed. The S, in caps, became lower case s. This psychological seeking caught on like a wildfire. “Find your self;” “Explore your ego (with the small e of course);” “Discover your identity;” “Be your own person;” “Realize your highest potential”—these were the mottos then, and this has carried into the ’90s.

Well, that is not all that happened in the European-based languages, which began to expand to encompass the myriad terms of Earth’s peoples for the highest of the high. The Buddhists have their interpretation of the Self, as do the native American Indian tribes. African tribal religions have theirs, as do the ever-more-popular Pagans of Europe, and even the existentialists and materialists have theirs. The *Self*—known in Vedic Sanskrit as ātman, Parabrahman and Paraśiva—meant one thing to the *yogīs* of India and soon meant many things to the uninitiated. *Self Realization* can, and does today, have a conscribed meaning of realizing sexuality through *tantra*, or independence from parents and authority figures. It is, in fact, still a money-making proposition, having a small s or a big S, widely sold on the open market as a highly viable product.

But back to the beginning—the Self is all-pervasive energy, within and through all creation, and transcends even that as being timeless, formless and spaceless. This cannot be sold,

bought or mass-produced. Vedicly speaking, it is for those souls who have prepared for the journey and is attained only at the cost of egolessness. Nevertheless, it is also sold in many other s's: symposiums, seminars, *sādhanas*, secret *mantras*, seclusive initiations and seductive sex *tantras*.

In today's world there are many institutions and teachers presenting *kuṇḍalinī yoga* as an elixir of life. True, it can be stimulated upward, but it then goes downward because of the lack of control of the emotions, lower instinctive nature and lack of philosophical background. As a thermometer reacts to heat and cold, so does the *kuṇḍalinī* when tampered with by the novice under the guidance of commercialization. It is an age where money is a product. It is an age where very little is sacred if it can be sold. The wear and tear on the vital forces of physical, astral and mental bodies is severe when *kuṇḍalinī*, the holy of holies, is stimulated in the unholy of unholies, those who lack remorse and do not seek penance, those who see themselves as the beginning and end of all, those who are devoid of conscience, who anger and jealously retort, who are self-centered, taking care of me, mine and I first. They are in the lower-nature chakras. In today's world, some are even paying multi-money for the "kuṇḍalinī experience."

Some groups, like Transcendental Meditation, have given out techniques too freely to those who are unprepared and unsuited to sustain the consequences of the disciplines. If the lower is not closed off, no one should be introduced into deep meditation, intense *prāṇāyāma* and occult arts, such as Reiki. These are well-known examples of digression

from established protocols for the metaphysical teachings.

In the early 1900s, *yogīs* came to America and taught so much—all high-powered teachings and techniques—without traditional preparations, that they put many, impressionable women especially, into our mental institutions. During my early ministry, I visited mental institutions and released back to their families a few such people who had gone over the edge because of occult practices. In those days when one went into a mental institution he often never came out. A man whose wife began practicing *yoga* would have her committed. This cycle is repeating itself. The problem is that certain *siddhis* arise which are just a by-product of the practices, not a development of *sādhana*, and the repercussions could be disastrous as far as society is concerned.

Sri Chinmoy, Bengali mystic and *yogī*, world renowned expert on *kunḍalīnī yoga* and United Nations peace emissary, has this to say about enlightenment in his book, *Samādhi and Siddhi*: “To realize the highest Absolute as one’s very own and to constantly feel that this realization is not something you have actually achieved, but something you eternally are—that is called realization.... *Nirvikalpa samādhi* and the other *samādhis* are all high stages. But there is a stage which is superior to *nirvikalpa samādhi*. That is the stage of divine transformation, absolute transformation. You can be in *samādhi*, but *samādhi* does not give you transformation. While you are in your trance, you become exalted, for you are one with God. But when you come back into the material plane, you become an ordinary man. But

if you have transformed your outer and inner consciousness, then you are no more affected by the ignorance of the world.... To reach liberation is no easy matter. It is very, very difficult to become freed from ignorance. Out of the millions and billions of human beings on Earth, there may be ten or twenty or even a hundred liberated souls. But God alone knows how many realized souls exist.”

There are many concepts as to what happens to the soul after Self Realization and many concepts as to what Self Realization is. There are many concepts as to eventual attainment, and there are many concepts as to whether it is an intellectual understanding that means the end or the goal of the path, and there is nothing beyond that, or experiencing all-pervasiveness, and that is the end of the path, and there is nothing beyond that, or experiencing the void, becoming nothing, and there is nothing beyond that. These concepts are spin-offs of the realizations of various masters who have attained and explained to their disciples the results of their attainments. But actually, realization by understanding the *Vedas* is basically an intellectual realization of the Self, based on reason, memory, deduction and certain internal perceptions of what this experience must be like. It is, in fact, a realization, and probably a very great one before the days of science and technology. But it is not Self Realization in the truest sense, for there is no transformation as an aftermath. The person is the same person before and after, with the same desires, outlook on life, motivations, temptations, trepidations, stress levels and day-to-day habits.

The experience of Satchidānanda, the all-pervasive essence of *prāṇa*, can be had through *bhakti yoga*, total *prapatti*. In prostrating the physical body before the icons of God, Gods and *guru*, energy goes into the head. It goes up from the *mūlādhāra*. It goes up from the soles of the feet. That is total surrender, and in the aftermath one feels a oneness with the universe. Oneness is a captivation of the soul. The same experience can be had through an opposite force. The husband or wife leaves, moves out of the house or dies, or disaster strikes the family, the house burns down, all possessions are destroyed—the soul turns to God and experiences oneness; temporarily becomes as a renunciate. The soul seeks something more than attachments to people, places and things, and when released from people, places and things through inharmonious disasters becomes its own essence, its all-pervasiveness. This, truly, is a superconscious realization of a superconscious identity, often called the Self, just as an intellectual understanding of what others say the Self is is often called the realization of the Self.

Our scriptures tell us the Self is timeless, causeless, spaceless, beyond mind, form and causation. It is what it is, to be realized to be known. It is the fullness of everything and the absence of nothing. Therefore, it is not a void. Therefore, it is not an intellectual understanding, and therefore it is not all-pervasive, for there is nothing to pervade.

Five, six, eight thousand years ago, Indian society developed over long centuries to a maturity sufficient to bring forth from the inner of the inner, the core of knowledge

itself, the *Vedas*, four in number, called *śruti*, meaning revealed by God, not composed by man. Meditate upon the following verse and revel in its deep, deep meaning: “He who knows God as the Life of life, the Eye of the eye, the Ear of the ear, the Mind of the mind, he indeed comprehends fully the Cause of all causes” (*Śukla Yajur Veda, Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad* 4.4.18, UPP). Yet another verse explains closeness leading to merging into oneness. Need we say more? It was already said in the so long ago and is alive and potent today as it was then. “As water poured into water, milk poured into milk, *ghee* into *ghee* become one without differentiation, even so the individual soul and the Supreme Self become one” (*Śukla Yajur Veda, Paiṅgala Upanishad* 4.10 UPR, p. 921).

On the *rāja* and *jñāna yoga* path, in attempts to realize Paraśiva, we go to the brink of the Absolute, hover there like a hummingbird over a flower, listening to the *nāda*, at the brink of where the *nāda* comes from, being the light at the brink of where the light that lights the images of the mind comes from, and this is all we can do—our one step. The Self realizes you—its nine steps. This is why Śaiva Siddhānta is so great—you move toward God; God moves toward you. You look at God; God looks toward you more graciously, more intently. The Divine comes quickly when the carnal is transmuted into its essence. His *darshan* of you. You take one step toward God, and He immediately, in the flash of a blink, takes nine toward you. In Śaiva Siddhānta, God is the devotee, and He experiences Himself within Himself in His devotee. The devotee is the devotee

of Śiva, endeavoring to experience himself in his God. This process is called *yoga*, *rāja yoga*, of which *jñāna yoga* is a by-product of the results and accomplishments along the way.

This is to explain that the mind cannot realize the Self. Awareness cannot realize the Self. Consciousness cannot realize the Self. There can be no name for the Self. To name it is to disqualify it into form. This is why in the incomparable Shūm language it has no name, only *īmkaīf*, awareness aware of itself dissolving. Like any other realization, it does have its aftermath and impact on all five states of the mind.

The Self God

On October 3, 1959, at our temple in San Francisco, just before flying to the island of Oahu in Hawaii, I sat with a small group of initiates in a discussion of the mind and the mind's essence. We attempted to penetrate in consciousness the realms attained when an individual leaves the actinodic causal body, becoming a pure state of consciousness, a pure state of actinicity, and finally merging into the Absolute, the Self God. And though no one has been able to explain adequately this experience, which is beyond the mind, I was overly inspired to explain the unexplainable. It is just as fresh and relevant today. Inner truths never change. On the following pages you will find *The Self God*.

From this inspired explanation, we learn that man is not man, man is God, and that the inherent nature of his soul is divine, existing in perfect oneness with God. This

identity of the soul with God always exists and awaits man's awakening into realization. In the years that followed, tens of thousands of copies of the little booklet called *The Self God* were printed in America and in Asia and have been widely distributed. To show just how widely, one day our car experienced a flat tire on a road outside a remote village in South India. As it was being repaired, we wandered about. People were passing by now and again. After a while, an elderly villager noticed us and inquired as to our "native place." I handed him a little pamphlet to be polite. He looked at us, refused my offer and pulled a little booklet from his shirt pocket, saying, "I am in need of nothing more. I have all I need right here." He held up my *The Self God* booklet. Having made his point to these strangers, he walked on, not knowing he had been speaking to the author. In India and Sri Lanka, it is often referred to as "the little gem," and is highly regarded as an explanation of the inexplicable *nirvikalpa samādhi*. As you read this unedited talk, don't think about it, feel it. Try to feel the vibration of the room in which it was given. Try to feel it in the innermost depths of your being.

The Self: you can't explain it. You can sense its existence through the refined state of your senses, but you can't explain it. To know it, you have to experience it. And the best you could say about it is that it is the depth of your Being, it's the very core of you. It is you.

If you visualize above you nothing; below you nothing; to the right of you nothing; to the left of you nothing; in

front of you nothing; in back of you nothing; and dissolve yourself into that nothingness, that would be the best way you could explain the realization of the Self. And yet that nothingness would not be the absence of something, like the nothingness inside an empty box, which would be like a void. That nothingness is the fullness of everything: the power, the sustaining power, of the existence of what appears to be everything.

But after you realize the Self, you see the mind for what it is—a self-created principle. That is the mind ever creating itself. The mind is form ever creating form, preserving form, creating new forms and destroying old forms. That's the mind, the illusion, the great unreality, the part of you that in your thinking mind you dare to think is real. What gives the mind that power? Does the mind have power if it is unreal? What difference whether it has power or hasn't power, or the very words that I am saying when the Self exists because of itself?

You could live in the dream and become disturbed by it. Or you can seek and desire with a burning desire to cognize reality and be blissful because of it. Man's destiny leads him back to himself. Man's destiny leads him into the cognition of his own Being; leads him further into the realization of his True Being.

They say you must step onto the spiritual path to realize the Self. You only step on the spiritual path when you and you alone are ready, when what appears real to you loses its appearance of reality. Then and only then are you able to detach yourself enough to seek to find a new and

permanent reality.

Have you ever noticed that something you think is permanent, you and you alone give permanence to that thing through your protection of it?

Have you ever stopped to even think and get a clear intellectual concept that the Spirit within you is the only permanent thing? That everything else is changing? That everything else has a direct wire connecting it to the realms of joy and sorrow? That is the mind.

As the Self, your Effulgent Being, comes to life in you, joy and sorrow become a study to you. You do not have to think to tell yourself that each in its own place is unreal. You know from the inmost depth of your being that form itself is not real.

The subtlety of the joys that you experience as you come into your Effulgent Being cannot be described. They can only be projected to you if you are refined enough to pick up the subtlety of vibration. If you are in harmony enough, you can sense the great joy, the subtlety of the bliss that you will feel as you come closer and closer to your real Self.

If you strive to find the Self by using your mind, you will strive and strive in vain, because the mind cannot give you Truth; a lie cannot give you the truth. A lie can only entangle you in a web of deceit. But if you sensitize yourself, awaken your true, fine, beautiful qualities that all of you have, then you become a channel, a chalice in which your Effulgent Being will begin to shine.

You will first think that a light is shining within you. You will seek to find that light. You will seek to hold it, like you

cherish and hold a beautiful gem. You will later find that the light that you found within you is in every pore, every cell of your being. You will later find that that light permeates every atom of the universe. And you will later find that you are that light and what it permeates is the unreal illusion created by the mind.

How strong you must be to find this Truth. You must become very, very strong. How do you become strong? Exercise. You must exercise every muscle and sinew of your nature by obeying the dictates of the law, of the spiritual laws. It will be very difficult. A weak muscle is very difficult to make strong, but if you exercise over a period of time and do what you should do, it will respond. Your nature will respond, too. But you must work at it. You must try. You must try. You must try very, very hard, very diligently. How often? Ten minutes a day? No. Two hours a day? No. Twenty-four hours a day! Every day! You must try very, very hard. Preparing you for the realization of the Self is like tuning up a violin, tightening up each string so it harmonizes with every other string. The more sensitive you are to tone, the better you can tune a violin, and the better the violin is tuned, the better the music. The stronger you are in your nature, the more you can bring through your real nature, the more you can enjoy the bliss of your true being. It is well worth working for. It is well worth craving for. It is well worth denying yourself many, many things for—to curb your nature. It is well worth struggling with your mind, to bring your mind under the dominion of your will.

Those of you who have experienced contemplation know the depth from which I am speaking. You have had a taste of your true Self. It has tasted like nothing that you have ever come in contact with before. It has filled and thrilled and permeated your whole being, even if you have only remained in that state of contemplation not longer than sixty seconds. Out of it you have gained a great knowing, a knowing that you could refer back to, a knowing that will bear the fruit of wisdom if you relate future life experiences to that knowing, a knowing greater than you could acquire at any university or institute of higher learning. Can you only try to gain a clear intellectual concept of realizing this Self that you felt permeating through you and through all form in your state of contemplation? That is your next step.

Those of you who are wrestling with the mind in your many endeavors to try to concentrate the mind, to try to meditate, to try to become quiet, to try to relax, keep trying. Every positive effort that you make is not in vain. Every single brick added to a temple made of brick brings that temple closer to completion. So keep trying and one day, all of a sudden, you will pierce the lower realms of your mind and enter into contemplation. Then you will be able to say: "Yes, I know, I have seen. Now I know fully the path that I am on." Keep trying. You have to start somewhere.

The Self you cannot speak of. You can only try to think about it, if you care to, in one way: feel your mind, body and emotions, and know that you are the Spirit permeating through mind, which is all form; body, which you inhabit;

and emotions, which you either control or are controlled by. Think on that, ponder on that, and you will find you are the light within your eyes. You are the feel within your fingers. “You are more radiant than the sun, purer than the snow, more subtle than the ether.” Keep trying. Each time you try you are one step closer to your true Effulgent Being.

Love and blessings to you from this and inner worlds,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sivaya Subramuniyaswami', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami

162nd Jagadāchārya of the Nandinātha

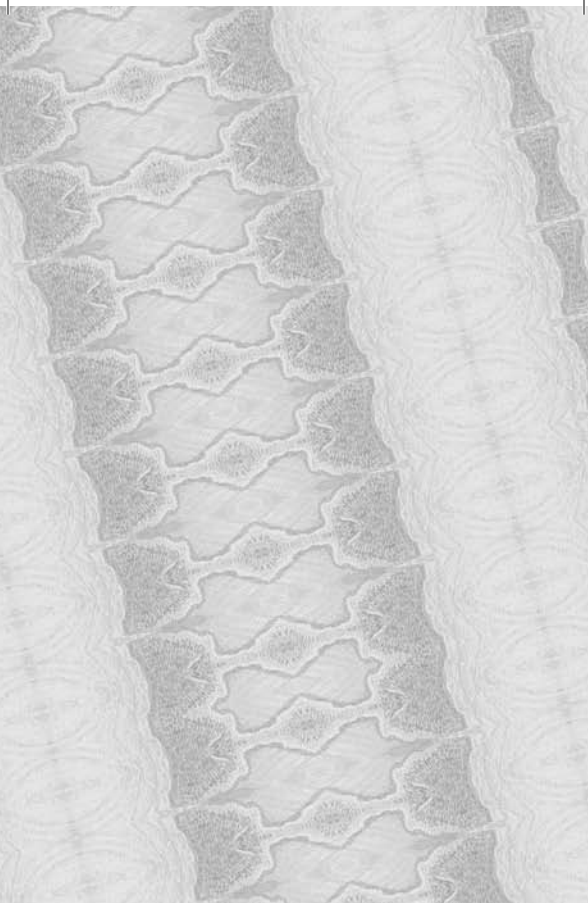
Sampradāya's Kailāsa Paramparā

Guru Mahāsannidhānam

Kauai Aadheenam, Hawaii

Satguru Pūrṇimā, July 4, 2001

Hindu year of Vṛisha, 5103



Śivadarśanam Katham

शिवदर्शनं कथम्



How to Realize God

Bereft of distracting thoughts, ascending the way of *kuṇḍalinī*, seeking the Creator that created all, Him that is beautiful light, reaching the mystic moon in union, he becomes one with the Uncreated Being. That, in truth, is *samādhi*'s tranquility.

Tirumantiram 628

MONDAY**Paraśiva, Life's
Ultimate Goal**

Never have there been so many people living on the planet wondering, “What is the real goal, the final purpose, of life?” However, man is blinded by his ignorance and his concern with the externalities of the world. He is caught, enthralled, bound by *karma*. The ultimate realizations available are beyond his understanding and remain to him obscure, even intellectually. Man’s ultimate quest, the final evolutionary frontier, is within man himself. It is the Truth spoken by Vedic *rishis* as the Self within man, attainable through control of the mind and purification. ¶It is *karma* that keeps us from knowing of and reaching life’s final goal, yet it is wrong to even call it a goal. It is what is known by the knower to have always existed. It is not a matter of becoming the Self, but of realizing that you never were not the Self. And what is that Self? It is Paraśiva. It is God. It is That which is beyond the mind, beyond thought, feeling and emotion, beyond time, form and space. That is what all men are seeking, looking for, longing for. When *karma* is controlled through *yoga* and *dharma* well performed, and the energies are transmuted to their ultimate state, the Vedic Truth of life discovered by the *rishis* so long ago becomes obvious. ¶That goal is to realize God Śiva in His absolute, or transcendent, state, which when realized is your own ultimate state—timeless, formless, spaceless Truth. That Truth lies beyond the thinking mind, beyond the feeling nature, beyond action or any movement of the *vrittis*, the waves of the mind. Being, seeing, this Truth then gives the correct

perspective, brings the external realities into perspective. They then are seen as truly unrealities, yet not discarded as such. ¶This intimate experience must be experienced while in the physical body. One comes back and back again into flesh simply to realize Paraśiva. Nothing more. Yet, the Self, or Paraśiva, is an experience only after it has been experienced. Yet, it is not an experience at all, but the only possible nonexperience, which registers in its aftermath upon the mind of man. Prior to that, it is a goal. After realization, one thing is lost, the desire for the Self.

TUESDAY

Like a Child's Self-Discovery

Look at a child standing before a mirror for the first time, feeling its nose and ears, eyes and mouth, looking at itself reflected in the glass. Feeling and seeing what has always been there is a discovery in experience. Paraśiva is the same. It is always there in each and every human being on the planet. But involvement in the externalities of material existence inhibits their turning inward. The clouding of the mirror of the mind—that reflective pond of awareness which when calm sees clearly—or the ripples of disturbance on the mind's surface distort seeing and confuse understanding. Without a clear mirror, the child lacks the seeing of what has always been there—its own face. Paraśiva is an experience that can be likened to the hand feeling and the eyes seeing one's own face for the first time. But it is not experience of one thing discovering another, as in the discovery of one's face. It is the Self experiencing itself. Experience, experienced and experiencer are one and the same. This is why it is only

registered on the external mind in retrospect. ¶ Most people try to experience God through other people. Disciples see a *guru* as God. Wives see their husband as God. Devotees see the Deity in the temple as God. But all the time, behind the eyes of their seeing, is God. The Self, Paraśiva, can be realized only when the devotee turns away from the world and enters the cave within as a way of life through initiation and under vows. We know the Self within ourself only when we fully turn into ourselves through concentration, meditation and contemplation and then sustain the resulting *samādhi* of Satchidānanda, pure consciousness, in hopes of finding, determined to find, That which cannot be described, That which was spoken about by the *ṛishis*, Paraśiva, beyond a stilled mind, Paraśiva that has stopped time, transcended space and dissolved all form.

WEDNESDAY
Defining the
Destination

How can we know when we're ready to know the Self? How do we know when the soul is spiritually mature? When we begin a journey and clearly define our destination, then we must begin from where we are, not elsewhere. Clearly defining our destination requires knowing where we are, requires determining whether or not we want to go there at this time. We must ask whether we have the means, the willpower, to get there. Are we ready to leave the world, or must we fulfill further obligations in the world and to the world? Have we paid all of our debts? We cannot leave the world with *karmas* still unresolved. Perhaps we desire something more, some further human fulfillment of affection, creativity, wealth,

professional accomplishment, name and fame. In other words, do we still have worldly involvements and attachments? Are we ready for the final journey life has to offer? Are we prepared to endure the hardships of *sādhana*, to suffer the death of the ego? Or would we prefer more pleasures in the world of “I” and “mine”? It is a matter of evolution, of what stage of life we have entered in this incarnation—is it *charyā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* or *jñāna*? When the soul is spiritually mature, we know when we’re ready to know the Self. ¶When one is bound down by his past *karmas*, unhappy, confused and not performing with enthusiasm his *dharma*—be it born or chosen—making new *karmas* as a result, his lethargy results in despair. The camel walks slower with a heavy burden and stops if the burden is still heavier. The burdened have no sense of urgency, no expression of joy. They have stopped. They are standing on the path holding their troubles in their hands, unwilling and unable to let go. ¶Worship of Lord Gaṇeśa sets the path of *dharma*. Go to His Feet. He alone can perform this miracle for you. He will release the mental and emotional obstructions to spiritual progress. He will remove the burdens of worldliness. To live the perfect life of the *grihastha dharma*, of family life, brings as its fulfillment the all-knowing bliss of Satchidānanda, realizing ourself not as formless Paraśiva but as the pure consciousness that sustains and pervades all forms in the universe. Yes, there is a sense of urgency on the path of enlightenment, but only when we are unburdened of *karma*, only when we are walking the path of *dharma*. Only then can true *yoga* be practiced and

perfected. ¶All Hindus without exception believe in reincarnation. In each birth we must fulfill more goals leading to the one ultimate goal which after many births well lived will loom before us as the only goal worthy of striving for in this lifetime. All other desires, all other aims and ambitions pale under the brilliance of even the thought of realization of Satchidānanda and Paraśiva. ¶In fulfillment of our duties to parents, relations and the community at large, become a good householder, be a good citizen, live a rewarding physical, emotional and intellectual existence. These are the natural goals of many. Once this is accomplished in a lifetime, it is easy in future lives to perpetuate this pattern and evolve toward more refined and more difficult goals, such as gaining a clear intellectual knowledge of the truths of the *Āgamas* and *Vedas*, most especially the *Upanishads*, and establishing a personal contact with Lord Śiva within His great temples through the fervor of worship.

THURSDAY
Harnessing
The Energies

Still other goals must be met: quieting the energies, the *prāṇas*, through *prāṇāyāma*, purifying or refining mind and emotion, quelling the ever-constant movement of the restless, external mind and its immediate subconscious, where memories are stored, preserved memories which give rise to fear, anger, hatred and jealousy. It is our past that colors and conditions, actually creates, the future. We purge the past in the present, and we fashion the future in the present. ¶All of these emotions are the powerful force that bursts the seals of the psychic *chakras*, four, five, six and

seven. Once harnessed, turned inward and transmuted, this life force drives the spiritual process forward. Ours is the path of not only endeavoring to awaken the higher nature, but at the same time and toward the same end dealing positively and consciously with the remnants of the lower nature, replacing charity for greed and dealing with, rather than merely suppressing, jealousy, hatred and anger. ¶Most people do not understand that they have a mind, that they have a body and emotions, that what they are is something far more lasting and profound. They think they are a mind, they presume they are a body and they feel they are a given set of emotions, positive and negative. To progress on the spiritual path, they must learn they are not these things but are, in fact, a radiant, conscious soul that never dies, that can control the mind and directs the emotion toward fulfillment of *dharma* and resolution of *karma*. While living in a normal agitated state of fears, worries and doubts, seeing the deeper truths is impossible. To such a person, there is no doubt about it: “I am fearful. I am worried. I am confused. I am sick.” He says such things daily, thinking of himself in a very limited way. ¶This wrong identification of who we are must be unlearned. Before we actually begin serious *sādhana*, we must understand ourselves better, understand the three phases of the mind: instinctive, intellectual and superconscious. This takes time, meditation and study—study that must culminate in actual experience of the instinctive mind, the intellectual mind and the transcendent subsuperconscious state of the mind. Seeing the mind in its totality convinces the seeker

that he is something else, he is the witness who observes the mind and cannot, therefore, be the mind itself. Then we realize that the mind in its superconsciousness is pure. We do not have to purify it, except to carry out its native purity into life, into the intellect by obtaining right knowledge and transmuting the instinctive or animal qualities. This is accomplished from within out. It is not as difficult as it may seem.

FRIDAY
Preparations
For True Yoga

We must live in the now to follow the path to enlightenment. In the lower realms of the mind, where time and space seem very real, we are worried about the past or concerned about the future. These two intermingle and limit conscious awareness. Living in the past or the future obstructs us in this way: the past, by reliving old experiences—mainly the negative ones, for they are vividly remembered—clouds our vision of the future. Living in the future overactivates the intellect, the emotion and the desires. The future is little more than another form of mental fantasy. Past and future are equally unreal and a hindrance to spiritual unfoldment. A person functioning in the now is in control of his own mind. He is naturally happier, more successful. He is performing every task with his fullest attention, and the rewards are to be seen equally in the quality of his work and the radiance of his face. He cannot be bored with anything he does, however simple or mundane. Everything is interesting, challenging, fulfilling. A person living fully in the now is a content person. ¶To attain even the per-

mission to perform *yoga* one must have the grace of Lord Gaṇeśa and the grace of Lord Murugan. Lord Murugan is the God of the *kuṇḍalinī*, of the advanced *yogic* practices. Unfoldment all happens within the *kuṇḍalinī* and the *chakras* within our subtle bodies. Once a profound relationship is developed with Lord Murugan, then, with the *guru's* permission and guidance, true *yoga* may commence. Otherwise, no matter how long one sits in meditation, no matter how hard one tries, it is just sitting, it is just trying. There is no fire there, no *śakti*, no power, no change. It is the Gods who control the fire and at this stage help the devotee immensely, bringing him closer and closer to the supreme God, Śiva. Quite often the *yogī* in his deep internalized state may see in vision the feet or form of God Śiva before he begins to blend into the mind of God Śiva, called Satchidānanda. It is God and Gods in form that help us to find the formless God.

SATURDAY

The Perspective Of the Knower

Most people have not realized that they are and were Śiva before they search for Śiva. They are confined to their own individual *āṇava*, their personal ego and ignorance. When we realize that we have come from Śiva, the way back to Śiva is clearly defined. That is half the battle, to realize we came from Śiva, live in Śiva and are returning to Śiva. Knowing only this much makes the path clear and impels us to return to Him, to our Source, to our Self. We only see opposites when our vision is limited, when we have not experienced totally. There is a point of view which resolves all contradictions

and answers all questions. Yet to be experienced is yet to be understood. Once experienced and understood, the Quiet comes. ¶The only change that occurs is the awakening of the *sahasrāra chakra* and the perspective that a mind has which has undone itself, transcended itself in formless Being and Non-Being, and then returned to the experiences of form. The experiences are all still there, but never again are they binding. The fire or life energy, which rises in the normal person high enough to merely digest the food eaten, rises to the top of the enlightened man's head, burns through a seal there, and his consciousness has gone with it. He is definitely different from an ordinary person. He died. He was reborn. He is able and capable of knowing many things without having to read books or listen to others speak their knowledge at him. His perceptions are correct, unclouded and clear. His thoughts manifest properly in all planes of consciousness—instinctive, intellectual and superconscious or spiritual. He lives now, fully present in all he does. ¶The internal difference that makes a soul a *jñānī* is that he knows who he is and who you are. He knows Truth, and he knows the lie. Another difference is that he knows his way around within the inner workings of the mind. He can travel here and there with his own 747, without extraneous external conveyances. He knows the goings-on in far-off places. He is consciously conscious of his own *karma* and *dharma* and that of others. For him there is no apartness, due to his attainment within the *chakras* previously described. His only gift to others, to the world, would be blessings, an outpouring of energy to all

beings from the higher planes where he resides. It is the *jñānī*, the enlightened being, who sees beyond duality and knows the oneness of all. He is the illumined one, filled with light, filled with love. He sees God everywhere, in all men. He is the one who simply is and who sees no differences. That is his difference.

SUNDAY
A Path
Of Love

We have been walking through the path of the many Śaiva saints on our garden temple lands. Together we have looked back through history and seen real people living real lives, doing pragmatic things, sometimes foolish things, some even hurtful. There were workers among them, royalty, housewives, *yogīs*, businessmen, a spiritual community divided by caste but with one thing only in common. They all loved Śiva. That is their heritage. That is their message: that there is hope for all of us on this path to Śiva, hope of attaining His grace. These men and women will be remembered as they were for thousands of years. On this path, you don't have to be a great *rishi* or a highly trained *yogī*. You don't have to be a great philosopher. You don't have to know Sanskrit. Just love God, which is the Life of the life within everyone. And to realize that God is the Light of the light within everyone, you have to be very simple, very uncomplicated, so that obvious realization can manifest through your conscious mind, through your subconscious mind, through your superconscious mind. ¶It's very simple: the energy within our body is the same energy that pervades the universe, and it's all emanating right out of Lord Śiva.

It's very simple: the light that lights our thoughts, that light doesn't care—it has no preferences—whether it's a good thought or not a good thought. That light is illuminating every thought. Take away the thoughts, and you realize that you are just light. ¶The path of Śaiva Siddhānta, as you all know, is a very simple path. It's the path of love, a path of devotion, which makes you want to be self-disciplined, because to maintain a feeling of love all the time, you have to be self-disciplined. You don't discipline yourself to attain the feeling of love. You attain the feeling of love and then you want to discipline yourself because you love the discipline, because it brings more love. ¶The path of Śaiva Siddhānta is worshiping God on the outside and realizing God on the inside, and when the two come together—transformation! That means that you're different than you were. You have different desires. You have different motivations, different goals in life, because you've been transformed. You look at your previous life and you say, "That's another person." Why? Because you have found something real on the inside of you. Thoughts on the inside of you—they're not real, they're always changing. Feelings on the inside of you—they're not real, they're always changing. Śiva on the inside of you is right there—never changes. Those of you who hear the *nāda*, it's the same inner sound, morning, noon and night, 365 days a year. The light that lights your thoughts, 365 days a year, twenty-four hours a day, is the same. It lights up your dreams also. And the energy of your body—all coming from Śiva. ¶Śiva is so close to you. The Nayanars, the saints of Tamil Śaivism, teach us a

great lesson. They did so much wrong, but they survived with just the love of Śiva and maintained that love without anything getting in the way of it. Of course, if you love Śiva, obviously you have to love everyone else. Love brings forgiveness. Love brings understanding. Love brings feeling. ¶All Śaivites of the world love Śiva. They all love each other, and they love the Vaishṇavites, the Śāktas, the Smārtas, the tribal Hindus and everyone in the world, because Śiva's energy is working through everyone in the entire world—plants, trees, animals, fish, birds. It's so simple. The object of the lesson is to make yourself a very simple, uncomplicated person. Aum Namaḥ Śivāya.

Jivana Nāḍi
जीवन णाडी



The River of Life

The black-footed Garuda bird flies across the sky; a black-hued serpent dies in a deep well, all unseen. So, stop bragging of your greatness, O heart! Be like the river that merges into the wavy ocean.

Tirumantiram 2513

MONDAY**The River, a
Symbol of Life**

You have all heard about the sacred river Ganges, but have you ever wondered why this river is sacred? Why has this river become personified among all the rivers of the world? Let us meditate on this and let the river tell its own story to us. The river is the esoteric symbol of life's force, and as it flows it tells us how those cosmic currents flow through the physical body, quieting the emotions and awakening the willpower so that we can keep the mind under our control. This all happens, of course, providing we are in tune and flow with that life force, that illimitable power within us. ¶The birth of this river high in the Himalayas we can liken to our own conception and entrance into physical consciousness. As the river flows to meet the sea, it drops off many disturbances, just as our life absorbs many of its hindrances. The rapids smooth out, the waterfalls become smaller, the mouth of the river broadens, and as the river flows into the ocean we can see this esoteric symbol of life ending its manifest physical form. ¶Let us relate that symbol to our own consciousness, holding it within our mind, the river as a symbol of life. Now look at yourself and see what stops that river from flowing. What stops you from flowing with cosmic forces and becoming one with life's ocean of eternal bliss? Is it not attachment that keeps us clinging to the bank of the river? Is it not fear that we are attached to? All of the personalities we know and the various material objects we are clinging to keep us holding tightly to the banks of life's cosmic river. The river still flows on, but we do not flow with it. We are

fighting against life's currents when we allow ourselves to become attached. ¶Think today about the personal experiences in your lifetime and clearly view just how often you cling to the banks of life's river by attaching yourself to personalities and possessions. Have you ever stopped to think that we even become attached to things that we do not like and to the things that we have done against our better judgment? We are attached to objects, values, schedules, habits, memories, even likes and dislikes. We become attached because we do not stop to understand that each of those experiences that conceived the attachment was just a boulder, a waterfall or an old tree trunk blocking one of the little rivulets as it tried to merge with the great stream ever merging itself into the ocean.

TUESDAY

Affectionate Detachment

Meditate on a river. Follow it as a visual image from its source to the end where it merges into the sea. You can now clearly see where you have been clinging to the bank of life's river. You will plainly see just how long you have been clinging to various attachments by holding on to fears, worries, doubts of the future and regrets about the past. Looking at attachment, we see how it holds the mind down, how it submerges personality. Attachment is a stationary thing. Attachment creates the personality. The popular concept of the intellect at this point would be to say, "Well, then, according to this, we are not supposed to be attached to anything, or even have a personality." ¶But I take this one step farther and tell you, become affectionately detached, for by becoming affection-

ately detached you absorb all the power of the spiritual force within you. When you absorb the power of the spirit through the body, you will be able to feel it flowing through your most subtle nerves. This vibrant spiritual force within you, vibrating through every cell of the body, quieting the emotions and bringing the mind into effortless concentration, is born of affectionate detachment. ¶ Affectionate detachment is stronger than any attachment could possibly be, because attachment is created through unfulfilled desire, salted and peppered with fear. Fear of loss, fear of the unexpected, fear that life may not have much more to offer than what has already been offered, fear of old age, fear of harm, fear of accident—these are the fears which salt and pepper the unfulfilled desires. This is attachment. ¶ To be affectionately detached—that is a power. That is a wisdom. That is a love greater than any emotional love, a love born of understanding, a love that merges you into the river of life and allows actinic force to flow within you so that you realize God. We all still have those little attachments—the good ones, the need for love, acceptance and security. These attachments form the positive aspects of the subconscious. We want to free ourselves of all negative attachments, then use the subconscious positively, as a powerhouse directed by our superconsciousness. ¶ There is a great wisdom in cultivated affectionate detachment. Let go of the past. Let go of the future. Be a being right now. Being detached does not mean running away from life or being insensitive. It makes us extremely sensitive. When we have the ability to let go, we are warmer, more friendly, more whole-

some, more human and closer to our family and friends.

WEDNESDAY
Subconscious
Basement

I liken the subconscious mind to a basement. Those of you who have lived in the same house for a number of years have observed the following: as life progresses in the home, old things

make way for the new, and the old things invariably are put into the basement. The basement is likened to the subconscious mind; the main floor, to the conscious mind. If one is putting too many things too fast into the basement and is too busy enjoying the new things passing through the conscious mind into the subconscious basement, there is no time to keep the basement in order. Suppose there is an earthquake, an emotional upheaval in life, and the entire house shakes. The lamp shades of the big lamps get mixed up with the shades of the small ones; the pillows of the old sofa get mixed up with the pillows of the armchairs. Should we enter the basement, it may take us several hours to find the articles we're looking for. That is the subconscious mind. It gets all mixed up if we do not look into ourselves constantly and put our subconscious basement in order. ¶ Our subconscious basement is created first through association with our immediate friends and family and the interrelated strains, tensions, misunderstandings, joys, pleasures, happy memories and sorrows. In a lesser degree it is created in the outside world through the people to whom we have become attached. These attachments are reflections of what is already in the subconscious basement. In other words, we bring out of these people qualities similar to the qualities

in our own subconscious. However, if every day at a certain time we meditate, go down into that basement and put a few things in order, pretty soon our basement is orderly and clean. We begin to understand the subconscious, seeing it as transparent, and we have no attachment to anything in it. We are not holding on to any old hates, fears or ancient misunderstandings within ourselves. ¶When we are not harboring negative attachments to anything that happened twenty or thirty years ago, thus creating tensions in our body and confusion in our mind, the subconscious becomes a powerhouse. The superconscious energies flood easily through you, bringing into your life an abundance of creativity, intuition, perception and bliss. The subconscious in this pure state is of great benefit to you both inwardly and outwardly when properly programmed.

THURSDAY

“Nobody Understands Me”

In practicing affectionate detachment, we are learning to live in the here and now, right in the moment. We are awakening the power of direct cognition, the power that enables us to understand what happens, when it happens and why it happens. We are tuning into the river of life, the great actinic flow. This river flows directly from the essence of being through the subconscious basement and the conscious-mind main floor, creating life’s experiences. Along the way, our cognition of these experiences completes the cycle of its continual flow. That is what we have to learn to tune into. All of our higher teachings give us that wisdom. It is a great step to learn it intellectually and to be able to talk about it, but once that

step has been taken, it is not a great step anymore. ¶ This wisdom must first be applied at home, then at work. Then it has to be applied among all of your acquaintances and friends. Everyone should understand you and about you, and if you feel there is someone close to you who does not understand you, that signifies that the part of yourself that this person represents does not understand what you think they do not understand. If someone who is close to you does not understand your inner nature, you do not understand your inner subconscious yourself. Why? Because you have only intellectually grasped certain things; you have not fully realized these concepts. He, the friend, as a reflection of yourself, therefore, will not quite grasp your studies or your concepts. As soon as you understand yourself, by having purified yourself, you can explain your realization to your friends in a way they will understand. ¶ When explaining *yoga* teachings, use common examples like the following: “If you plant a seed and water it, you will eventually give birth to the flower.” That is simple and complete. Anyone can understand it. Use little examples and stay away from big terms, mysterious words, for little examples of life are powerful. Talk about trees and how they grow. Talk about children and how they mature into adulthood. Talk about flowers and how they bloom, and relate these to the laws of life. Talk about the mind and how it can be opened up through *yoga* techniques of concentration and meditation, and you’ll become a great missionary of Hindu Dharma and do much for yourself as well as others. ¶ Those who say “Well, nobody understands me. I feel

all alone on the path” are going through a period in which they have memorized everything but understand very little and therefore cannot explain or convince their fellow man of these great truths due to the fact that their subconscious basement is still full. When we only learn intellectually and have not put *dharma* into practice, our subconscious is still cluttered by uncognized memories.

FRIDAY
Be Like the
River Water

You can plainly see that we have to go into the subconscious basement and straighten it out, if need be, by letting go and becoming free. That’s easy to say. It’s a little more difficult to do. Why?

Because the basement took time to fill, and it takes time to clean. If we were to straighten out the subconscious basement too fast, that would not be good. It would be going against a natural law. It would be like pouring hot water on plants, as they do commercially, to make them bloom quickly. We must not force natural laws, so we take time in our spiritual unfoldment. The more time you are willing to take, the less pressure you have on yourself and the faster you will attain a permanent enlightenment. ¶Let’s look again at the river of life as it flows into the sea, and again relate that to ourselves and see ourselves letting go of the river banks, merging ourselves into this river, flowing with it and realizing ourselves as the essence of life. Let us not worry about the past ever again. Do not even think about the past. Face everything that comes up in the light of the present, not in the darkness of the past. ¶Be like the river water. Water flows freely anywhere, easily finding its

way around rocks and trees. Be pliable in your life, moving in rhythm with life. Let go of everything that blocks the river of life's energy. Watch your thinking and be careful of your thoughts. Judge every action that you make, judge every word you speak, with this law: "Is it true? Is it kind? Is it helpful? Is it necessary?" Become your own kind judge and make each second a day of judgment, for each second is really a day if you live life fully. If you live completely each second, you will experience many days inside each twenty-four hours. ¶Be free from life's attachments and don't allow any more negative attachments to occur in your life. Loosen yourself—be free. Attachments bring all sorts of complications. Freedom brings no complications at all. So, that is what we have to do, recreate our lives each second. Become affectionately detached and manifest a greater love through action. Selfless service to mankind makes you free in the world of mortals. Measure yourself objectively with the river of life and merge with it into the sea of life. Let your service to mankind begin at home and radiate out to the world. Begin at home, with those closest to you, before venturing out among friends and strangers. Let your example be your first teaching. Be free from the past; abide in the present; detach yourself from the future; and live in the eternal now.

SATURDAY

Performing

Gaṅgā Sādhana

Close your eyes and visualize a river flowing into the sea, and see yourself holding on to the bank of the river, and the river flowing on past you. Now let go of the bank of the river and flow

down with the river and merge into the sea of life. Feel yourself, right at this instant, living in the here and now. Holding on to the river bank, we hold the consciousness of time and space. Holding on to the banks of the river of life is to recreate within you fear, worry, doubt, anxiety and nervousness. Detach yourself from the banks of the river and again be free. Love the banks as you pass, with a love born of understanding, and if you have no understanding of the bank, study your attachments until you do. ¶ Learn to concentrate the mind so that you can study not from books, but from observation, which is the first awakening of the soul. Learn to study by practice. Learn to study by application. Become a student of life and live life fully, and as you merge into the sea of actinic life, you will realize that you are not your mind, your body or your emotions. You will realize that you are the complete master of your mind, your body and your emotions. ¶ There is a sacred practice you should perform to keep flowing beautifully with the river of life. It will be a challenge to discipline yourself to set aside the time, but it will benefit you. You must sit by a rolling river and listen to the river saying “Aum Namaḥ Śivāya, Śivāya Namaḥ Aum,” as its water runs over the rocks. Listen closely to the water connecting to the rocks, and you will hear the sacred *mantra* of life, “Aum Namaḥ Śivāya.” Relax into the sounds the river is chanting and try to be in tune with the perfect universe. The cosmos is perfect, you know. Its laws are divine, its timing flawless, its design unique. ¶ While you are sitting alone by the side of the river being one with the perfect universe—the earth,

the air, the fire, the water and the *ākāśa*, the mind—when a thought arises from your subconscious, something about your daily life, a problem or difficulty, pluck a leaf from a tree or bush, mentally put the problem into the leaf and place it into the river. The river will carry the leaf away along with the thought you placed into it. Then pluck a flower and humbly offer it into the river with both hands in loving appreciation for doing this great service for you. Perform this Gaṅgā Sādhana each month, and you will advance on the spiritual path.

SUNDAY

Śiva's Perfect Universe

Slowly, slowly, by performing Gaṅgā Sādhana you will blend your external consciousness with our most perfect universal consciousness. While sitting by the river, close enough to touch the

water, on a rock or tree limb, you are truly uninvolved with everything but yourself. You are now in tune with nature itself. Earth is there. Water is there. Fire is there. Air is there. *Ākāśa* is there. All the five elements are there. They are outside of you to see and feel, as well as inside of you to see and feel. The goal is to release that part of your subconscious mind that doesn't blend the within of you with that which is outside of you. You perform this blending by listening to the river murmur, "Aum Namaḥ Śivāya, Śivāya Namaḥ Aum," the sounds of Śiva's perfect universe. ¶ Now the challenge. This will not be an easy task. The quiet of the noise of nature will release thought after thought from your subconscious mind. So, when each new thought arises—a mental argument or something which has not been settled

in your past, an appointment missed or an image of a loved one—gather up the *prāṇic* energy of the thought and put its vibrations into a leaf. To do this, hold the leaf in your right hand and project your *prāṇa* into it along with the thought form that distracted you. Then release the leaf and with it the thought patterns into the river. Let the river take them away, while you listen to “Aum Namaḥ Śivāya, Śivāya Namaḥ Aum” of the river as it does. Each time this happens, thank the river by humbly offering a flower with the right hand into the river in appreciation of its having absorbed the worldly thought. To show appreciation is a quality of the soul, something not to be ignored, and, therefore, a vital part of this *sādhana*. ¶ *Sādhana* is performing the same discipline over and over and over again. Just as we methodically exercise the physical body to build up its muscles, we perform spiritual disciplines over and over again to strengthen our spiritual, inner bodies. Perform Gaṅgā Sādhana time and time again. You will rapidly advance. Remember, the outer river is symbolically representing the inner river of your own nerve system, life force and consciousness that flows through you night and day. So, even as you sit on this rock and look upon the water, in a mystical way, see it as your own superconscious energies, taking away these problems, worries, doubts, ill-conceived and unresolved experiences of the past. Flow with the river of life and merge in Śiva’s ocean of oneness.

Sākshi Kathā
साक्षि कथा



The Story of Awareness

Coursing the *śakti kuṇḍalinī*, transcend the successive gates of awareness. Reduce the perishable body to its elemental constituents and then discard them. Then do you enter the grace of the Holy One, and there you abide and adore. That, indeed, is the fitting worship of Sadāśiva.

Tirumantiram 1854

MONDAY
Awareness, a
Ball of Light

The average person who is not a mystic lives two-thirds in the external area of the mind and one-third within himself. The within of himself can be, and sometimes is, very foreboding. He doesn't understand it. He is a little afraid of it and prefers to involve himself with external things. Possibly he's had some inner experiences, some emotional unhappinesses, and he shuns anything that is inner. The mystic lives, and is taught to live, two-thirds within himself and only one-third in the external. In learning how to do this, the mystic is taught to become consciously conscious, or aware that he is aware. He learns to separate awareness from that which he is aware of. The person who is not a mystic, living two-thirds in the external mind, says, "I am happy," meaning, "I am aware of a state of mind called happiness, and I am in that state, so that is me." Or, "I am unhappy. Unhappiness is me." The mystic living two-thirds within says to himself, "I am flowing through the area of the mind that's always unhappy." He doesn't change; he is a pure state of awareness. ¶ Visualize a little ball of light. We'll call that man's individual awareness, and that light is shining right out from his eyes, and this little ball of light is going through the mind. It's going through the area of the mind that's always unhappy. It's going through the area of the mind that's always dreaming, the area of the mind that's delightfully happy, the area of the mind that's in absolute bliss, the area of the mind that's absolutely in jealousy all the time, the area that's in fear all

the time—many people live in this area of the mind; it's quite crowded with lots of balls of light there. This ball of light flows through the area of the mind that's in resentment. It's like a churning ocean. It's a delightful place to be in, especially if you're a little ball. You get bounced all around. Then there's the area of the mind that is completely peaceful and has always been peaceful. No mood or emotion has ever been in it to ruffle it, because that's the peaceful area of the mind. The one who meditates seeks out this area to become aware in. Man's individual awareness is just like this little ball of light, and it's like a camera. It photographs. It registers. It understands. It is pure intelligence. Man knows where he is in the mind, but the first step in awakening on the path of enlightenment is to separate awareness from that which it is aware of.

TUESDAY

**Claim the Being
Of Yourself**

We say, "I am sick," and in the English language that means my body is sick, or I am aware of this body not being in a perfect state of health. The mystic knows he is not this body. He can even remember dropping off the body many, many different times, getting new bodies through the process of reincarnation. We are not what we are aware of. We are separate from that which we are aware of. We are only flowing through these areas of the mind. If we live in San Francisco, we are not San Francisco. If we live in unhappiness, we are not unhappiness. That's only one of the cities of the mind. This is a great meditation. You can grasp this awakening in thirty seconds. You can grasp this awakening in thirty

hours, or thirty minutes. You can grasp this awakening and have it come to you vibrantly in thirty weeks, thirty months, or thirty years or thirty lifetimes. It just depends upon your willpower. ¶As soon as we can understand awareness detached from that which it is aware of, we have a vibrant energy, a tremendous drive. A tremendous willpower is released from within us, and we live with the feeling that we can do anything that we want to do, almost as quickly as we want to do it. We want things to happen now, for we vividly see the area where they already exist within the force fields of the mind itself. ¶How do we live our life from this point? We begin to apply this philosophy in every department of our life. There are some habit patterns in our subconscious mind that have not caught up with this new perspective as yet, and you'll be running up against them. As soon as you find awareness totally identified with a subconscious area that has become conscious, immediately turn inward, detach awareness from that which it is aware of and just be pure energy. ¶You can expect a beautiful life, a beautiful relationship with the being of yourself. Claim the being of yourself as you. You have enough knowledge now. You don't have to discover the being of yourself and keep looking for it. Just be the being of yourself and travel through the mind as the traveler travels around the globe. The wonderful story of awareness, I could go on and on talking about it, because it is so very basic and so very, very important. This then makes an infinite intelligence and everyone the same. Only, they are living in different areas of the mind, or different houses.

WEDNESDAY
The Mechanics
Of Attachment

Have you ever had people come to you and tell you all of their problems? What did they do? As a pure state of awareness, they came to you as a pure state of awareness. You were not identified in the area of the mind that they are living in. So, they came to you, because they want to get out of the area of the mind that they're living in. They've been living in it so long, they think they are that area of the mind, like somebody that has lived in a house so long and is so attached to it that they would rather die than move from the house. So then, they come to you and start telling all the problems. First they start with the little ones, and then they start with the big ones, and all their complaints, heartaches and everything that that area of the mind involves. Now, you can do one of two things. You can gently talk with them and bring them out of that area of the mind into your area of the mind, or they can move your awareness right into that area of the mind, too. And when they go away, you are feeling terrible. You're feeling just awful. ¶You've gone to a movie. The movie screen is just a screen. The film is just film. And the light is just light. And yet the combination of the three can move your awareness into areas of the mind that can upset your nerve system, make you cry, make you laugh, make you have bad dreams for a week, change your whole, entire perspective of life—the combination of these three physical elements can do this, if it can attract your attention. ¶Now, if we are sitting in a movie, and we are realizing that we are going through moods and emotions but we are not

the moods and emotions that we are going through—all we are doing is being entertained by our senses—then that's the mystic. He is enjoying life and what life has to offer. He is even remembering in past lives when he had similar experiences that the players are portraying on the screen, and he has empathy with them. He is living a full and a vibrant life, and yet when he walks out of the movie house, or walks away from the TV, he has forgotten the whole thing. He doesn't carry it with him. His awareness is immediately right where he is currently. That's the power of the great eternity of the moment.

THURSDAY

Living Two-Thirds Within

Living two-thirds within oneself and one-third in the external world—how do we do it? As soon as we live within ourselves, we become conscious of all of our various secret thoughts, all of our various emotions, that we would just as soon be without. Therefore, we distract ourselves and endeavor to live two-thirds in the external world and only one-third within ourselves. As aspirants on the path, you have to live your life two-thirds within yourself. When you are conscious of the thoughts that you don't want to think, the emotions that you don't want to feel, go deep within where they don't exist. Take awareness to the central source of energy, right within the spine itself. Feel that energy flowing through the body, moving the muscles, enlivening the cells. Then you are two-thirds within yourself, and the world looks bright and cheery all the time; the sun is always shining. Immediately, when we begin to identify totally

with our thoughts as being reality, then we begin to make mistakes. We are living two-thirds in the external world. ¶How to strike the balance? Regulate the breath throughout the day. Keep the spine always straight. Always sit up straight. As soon as the spine is bent, awareness is externalized. We are living two-thirds in the external area of the mind and only one-third within. As soon as the spine is straight, our awareness is internalized. We are living two-thirds within and only one-third out. ¶What's the biggest barrier? Fear. Afraid of our secret thoughts, afraid of our secret feelings. What's the biggest escape from fear? Go to the center, where energy exists, the energy that moves the life through the body. The simplest way is move your spine back and forth. Feel the power that moves that spine. Feel the power that moves that spine back and forth. Feel that energy going out through the physical body. Open your eyes and look at the world again, and you will see it bright and shiny. You're two-thirds in and one-third out in awareness. You're balanced. "Be renewed by a change of your mind." Be renewed by releasing awareness from one area of the vast universe of the mind, drawing it back into its source and releasing it again, sending it to another of the vast areas of the mind.

FRIDAY

**The Great Study
Of Awareness**

The study of awareness is a great study. "I am aware." The key to this entire study is the discovery of who or what is the "I am." It is the key to the totality of your progress on the path of enlightenment.

What is awareness? As you open your physical eyes, what

is it that is aware of what you see? When you look within, deep within, and feel energy, you almost begin to see energy. A little more perception comes, and you do actually see energy, as clearly as you see chairs and tables with your physical eyes open. ¶But what is it that is aware? When awareness moves through superconsciousness, it seems to expand, for it looks out into the vastness of superconsciousness from within and identifies with that vastness. This is what is meant by an expanded state of awareness. What is awareness? Discover that. Go deep within it. Make it a great study. You have to discover what awareness is before you can realize the Self God. Otherwise, realization of the Self God is only a philosophy to you. It is a good philosophy, however, a satisfying and stable philosophy. But philosophies of life are not to be intellectually learned, memorized and repeated and nothing more. They are to be experienced, step by step by step. Get acquainted with yourself as being awareness. Say to yourself, “I am awareness. I am aware. I am not the body. I am not the emotions. I am not the thinking mind. I am pure awareness.” ¶It will help for us to make a mental picture. Let us now try to visualize awareness as a round, white ball of light, like one single eye. This ball is being propelled through many areas of the mind, inner and outer, and it is registering all the various pictures. It has, in fact, four eyes, one on each side of it. It is not reacting. The reaction comes when awareness is aware of the astral body and the physical body. It is in those bodies that reaction occurs. We are aware of the reactions in these bodies, for the physical body and the

astral body are also part of the vast, vast universe of the mind. ¶Each individual awareness, ball of light, is encased in many bodies. The first and nearest encasement is the body of the soul. The second encasement is the astral, or intellectual-emotional, body. The third encasement is the physical body. The radiation from awareness, this ball of light, is the aura. Awareness is an extension of *prāṇa* from the central source, issuing energy. ¶Energy goes where awareness flows. When awareness focuses on relationships, relationships flow. When awareness focuses on philosophy, that unfolds itself. Ultimately, when awareness focuses on itself, it dissolves into its own essence. Energy flows where awareness goes. I was always taught that if one foot was injured, for example, to focus on the other foot and transfer the healthy *prāṇa* from that foot to the ailing foot.

SATURDAY

Awareness and Consciousness

Consciousness and awareness are the same when awareness is totally identified with and attached to that which it is aware of. To separate the two is the artful practice of yoga. Naturally, the Shūm-Tyeif language is needed to accomplish this. When awareness is detached from that which it is aware of, it flows freely in consciousness. A tree has consciousness. Awareness can flow into the tree and become aware of the consciousness of the tree. Consciousness and mind are totally equated as a one thing when awareness and consciousness are a one thing to the individual. But when awareness is detached from that which it is aware of, it can flow freely through all five states of mind and all areas

of consciousness, such as plants and the Earth itself, elements and various other aspects of matter. Here we find awareness separate from consciousness and consciousness separate from the five states of mind attributed to the human being. In Sanskrit we have the word *chaitanya* for consciousness, and for *awareness* it is *sākshin*, meaning witness, and for *mind* the word is *chitta*. Consciousness, mind, matter and awareness experience a oneness in being for those who think that they are their physical body, who are convinced that when the body ends, they end and are no more. ¶ We have three eyes. We see with our physical eyes and then we think about what we have seen. Going into meditation, we see with our third eye our thoughts. Then we choose one or two of them and think about them and lose the value of the meditation. It is the control of the breath that controls the thoughts that emerge from the subconscious memory patterns. Once this is accomplished, and the *idā*, *piṅgalā* and *sushumṇā* merge, we are seeing with the third eye, which is the eye of awareness, wherever we travel through the mind, inside or outside of our own self. ¶ The minute awareness is attached to that which it is aware of, we begin thinking about what we were aware of. Controlling the breath again detaches awareness, and it flows to another area of the mind, as directed by our innate intelligence, this intangible superconscious, intelligent being of ourselves that looks out through the eye of awareness in a similar way as do the two eyes of the physical body. This then divides what we are aware of and thinking of what we were aware of, or distinguishes the

process of thinking from that of seeing during meditation. ¶Awareness travels into the wonderful strata of thought, where thought actually exists in all of its refined states. First in these strata of thought is an area where ideas are only in a partial, overall, conceptual stage. Deeper into this stratum, they, as concepts, become stronger and stronger until finally they almost take physical form. Finally, they do take physical form. But you are the pure, individual awareness, the ball of seeing light that is seeing all of this occur within these strata of mind and not identifying too closely with them. The quest is to keep traveling through the mind to the ultimate goal, merging with Śiva. When you are conscious that you are awareness, you are a free awareness, a liberated soul. You can go anyplace in the mind that you wish. ¶The mission is: don't go anyplace. Turn awareness back in on itself and simply be aware that you are aware. Try to penetrate the core of existence. Become conscious of energy within the physical body and the inner bodies, flowing out through the nerve system and drawing forth energy from the central source of the universe itself. Now try to throw awareness into this central source of energy and dive deeper and deeper in. Each time you become aware of something in the energy realm, be aware of being aware. Finally, you go beyond light. Finally, you go into the core of existence itself, the Self God, beyond the stillness of the inner areas of mind. That is the mission and that is what humanity is seeking—total Self-God Realization.

SUNDAY**Awareness Finds
A New Home**

Needless to say, the Self does not mean the realization of your personality. Some people think that this is what Self Realization means. “I want Self Realization,” they say, thinking all the time it means, “I want to realize that I am an individual and not dependent upon my parents. I want Self Realization.” Other people feel it means, “I want to realize my artistic abilities and be able to create.” It does not mean that at all. All this is of external consciousness, the intellectual area of the mind. It is a lesser form of self realization. Self Realization is finding That which is beyond even superconsciousness itself, beyond the mind—timeless, causeless, spaceless. ¶After Self Realization, awareness has a new home. It does not relate to the external mind anymore in the same way. It relates to the Self God, Paraśiva, as home base and flows out into the various layers of the mind, and in again. Before Self Realization, awareness was in the external mind trying to penetrate the inner depths. Then it would return to the external mind and again try to penetrate the within through the processes of meditation. After Self Realization, the whole process of the flow of awareness is reversed. ¶Mind and consciousness are synonymous. Awareness is man’s individual spiritual being, the pure intelligence of his spiritual body, flowing through this vast universe of the mind. We want to be able to flow awareness through any area of the mind consciously, at will, as we go in and in and in toward our great realization of the Self God, which is beyond mind, beyond time, beyond consciousness, beyond

all form. Yet, it is not an unconscious state. It is the essence of all being, the power which makes the electricity that flows through the wire that lights the light that illumines the room. When we sit, simply being aware of being aware, the currents of the body harmonized, the aura turns to streaks of light dashing out into the room, and we are sitting in our own perfect bliss, simply aware, intensely aware, of being aware. Awareness itself then turns in on itself enough to experience, to become, the Self God—That which everyone is seeking. ¶ That is the sum total of the path. That is the path that you are on. That is the experience that if you keep striving you will have in this life, even if it is at the point of death. It is then you will reincarnate as a great teacher on the planet and help many others through to the same goal. For there is no death and there is no birth for the immortal body of the soul that you are, that pure intelligence that goes on and on and on and on and on and on. So go in and in and in and in and in and in. Arrive at the ultimate goal. Make it your journey, your quest. Want it more than life itself. ¶ Generally our greatest fear is death. Why? Because it is the most dramatic experience we have ever had in any one lifetime. Therefore we fear it. We are in awe of death. It is so dramatic that we do not remember, really, what happened during part of the experience, though occasionally some people do. However, the body of the soul knows no birth, knows no death. It goes on and on and on, and its awareness goes in and in and in to its ultimate goal—awareness of itself turned so much in on itself that it dissolves in the very essence of

Being, as it merges in Śiva. You cannot say anything more about the Self, because to describe the Self adequately there are no words. It is beyond time, form, cause, mind. And words only describe time, cause and mind consciousness, which is form. You have to experience It to know It. And by experiencing It, you do know It.

Saṅkalpa Śaktiḥ

सङ्कल्प शक्तिः



Willpower

When you seek to reach the Lord and miss your goal, take it as the work of your past evil *karmas* and fervently persevere in your devotion. You shall, at last, reach the Primal Lord.

Tirumantiram 2668

MONDAY
Finish What
You Start

We are not always sitting down concentrating on a flower in the search for the Self. Once you have decided that Self Realization is the ultimate goal for you, go on living your normal life.

Everything that you do in life can collectively be channeled toward the ultimate goal, for what you need is a dynamic will. You need a strong willpower. Willpower is the channeling of all energies toward one given point for a given length of time. This will can be brought out from within in everything that we do through the day. It's a powerful will. It's available to everyone. It is channeling the rarefied energies of the body, of awareness itself, into attention and concentration upon everything that we do through the day. ¶How do we cultivate the willpower? What do we mean by will? Will means that if you're going to complete something, you complete it. Finish that which you begin. Finish it well, beyond your expectations, no matter how long it takes. If you are going to do something, do it well, no matter if it is a simple task or a complicated one. If you're going to read a book and intend to finish the book, then read the book, finish the book, and understand what it had to offer you, for that was the purpose for reading it. ¶It is not developing a strong will by having a lot of half-finished jobs. It is not developing a strong will by starting out with a bang on a project and then fizzling out. These only attach awareness to that which it is aware of and lead us into the distraction of thinking the external mind is real. Then we forget our inner goal of Self Realization because

the subconscious becomes too ramified with, basically, our being disappointed in ourselves, or the willpower being so diversified, or awareness being so divided in many different ways that whatever we want to do never works out because there is not enough will, or shove, or centralization of energy, or awareness is not at attention over the project enough, to make it come into completion. A tremendous will is needed on the path of Self Realization, of drawing the forces of energy together, of drawing awareness away from that which it is aware of constantly, of finishing each job that we begin in the material world, and doing it well, so that we are content within ourselves. Make everything that you do satisfy the inner scrutiny of your inner being. Do a little more than you think that you are able to do. That brings forth just a little more will.

TUESDAY
Willpower
Is the Fuel

You need a tremendous, indomitable will to make a reality of your quest of realizing the Being within. Unfoldment doesn't take a lot of time. It just takes a lot of willpower. Someone can go along and sit at attention, and concentrate and meditate for years and years and years and, with a minimal amount of willpower, constantly be distracted, constantly be complaining and constantly be unsuccessful. Another person can have the exact same approach and over a short period of time be extremely successful, because he has will. The previous way he lived his life, the previous things that he did, he handled in such a way that that willpower was there, or his awareness is a manifestation of willpower, and he

goes soaring within on this will. ¶ Will is the fuel which carries awareness through all areas of the mind, that spirit, that spiritual quality, which makes all inner goals a reality. Unfoldment does not take time. It takes a tremendous will. That will has to be cultivated, just as you would cultivate a garden. It has to be cultivated. Those energies have to all be flowing through, in a sense, one channel, so that everything that you do is satisfying, is complete, beautiful. ¶ Discover the will. Back to the spine. Feel the energy in the spine. There is no lack of it, is there? The more you use of it, the more you have to use of it. It is tuned right into the central source. When you become aware of the energy within your spine and within your head, you have separated awareness from that which it is aware of, for that is awareness itself, and that is will. We are playing with words a little. After awhile we will gain a new vocabulary for this kind of talk, but right now we are using our old-words' way of looking at it, because our subconscious mind is more familiar with these words. Energy, awareness and willpower are one and the same. When we are subconsciously conscious that we are a superconscious being, and the subconscious mind has accepted the new programming that energy, willpower and awareness are one and the same thing, when the subconscious mind has accepted the fact that the mind was all finished long ago in all its phases of manifestation, from the refined to the gross—then the subconscious begins working as a pure channel, so to speak, for superconsciousness. Awareness can then flow in a very positive, in a very direct, way. ¶ You want awareness to be renewed. The first

step is—don't try to go to the Self; you haven't realized it yet—go to the spine. Feel the spine. After you realize the Self, you go deeper than the spine, you go into the Self and come back. Before you realize the Self and have that *samā-dhi*—attention, concentration. Concentrate on the energy within the spine. Go in. Awareness, energy and will are all one. Come slowly out again and you have all the willpower you need to finish any job that you've ever started, to make decisions, to do things and handle your external life in a very positive way, so that it does not capture awareness and hold it steadfast for a period of time, deterring you on the path of enlightenment.

WEDNESDAY

Realization

Requires Will

Work with willpower, awareness and energy as three separate items first. Feel awareness and discover what it is. Use willpower and discover what it is. Feel energy and analyze energy and discover what it is. Then separate the three of them in your intellectual mind and experiential pattern. Then, after you've gotten that done, you will begin to see inside yourself that the three are one and the same. And it is actually the beautiful, pure intelligence of the immortal soul body, that body of light of you, on its path inward into its last phase of maturity on this planet. This inner body of light has been maturing through many, many different lives. ¶If you would like to know how it came along, for instance if you had ninety lives on this planet, each life the body of light matured one year. So your body of light would be ninety years old, so to speak. You can look at it that way. That's

not quite the way it actually is, but looking at it that way gives you an idea of the maturing of this body of light. The pure intelligence of it is your awareness—which is energy and which is willpower—that life after life becomes stronger, more steadfast. Finally, in your last incarnation on the Earth, you merge into its final experience, that great *samādhi*, the Self, beyond the complete, still area of consciousness. You go in not knowing what you are getting into, and you come out wise. Your complete perspective is changed, and you only talk about it to those that are on the path of enlightenment, as they are the only ones steady enough or free enough to understand the depth of this realization. ¶ Here are the ingredients: attention, concentration, meditation, contemplation, *samādhi*. Willpower is the fuel. It does not take time. Someone asked me, “Do you think I can have this *samādhi*, realize the Self, in ten years?” I said, “I certainly don’t. I don’t think you have enough willpower to realize it in a hundred years, because it doesn’t take time. It takes will. If you had the will, you wouldn’t add ten years on it. You would simply be telling me, ‘I am going to have this realization.’ And I would believe you because I would feel your will moving out of every atom of your body. But the mere fact that you take an intellectual approach, I have to say no, because whatever I did think wouldn’t make any difference one way or the other. You are not going to get it with an attitude like that, because it’s not something you go out and buy. It’s not another getting, like ‘I have a car. I have clothes. I have a little money. And now, after I get my television paid for, I think I’ll get the Self, because that is

the next thing to get. It's really great. I read about it. I heard about it. I heard a speaker speak about it. I'm all fired up to get this Self, and it's next in the line of getting, so I'm going to get it!' It doesn't work like that. You don't get that which you have. You can't get that which you have. It's there. You have to give up the consciousness of the television, the money, the clothes, the people that you know, the personality that you thought you were, the physical body. You have to go into the elements of the physical body, into the elements of that, and into the energy of that, and into the vast inner space of that, and into the core of that, and into the that of that, and into the that of that, and finally you realize that you have realized the Self. And you've lost something. You lost your goal of Self Realization. And you come back into the fullness of everything, and you are no longer looking, and you are no longer asking, and you are no longer wanting. You just are. When you get tired of the external area of the mind that you are flowing through, you simply dive in again.

THURSDAY

Progress Takes Discipline

When you go into a meditation, decide first what you are going to meditate upon and then stick with it. It is not advisable to habitually sit for meditation with no particular goal or direction, for we often end up walking in mental or subconscious circles. We have to avoid going into a meditation and then taking off into random or unintended directions, for this then can lend new vigor and strength to uncomely states of mind. You have to be very firm with yourself in

meditation sessions. They are serious, not ponderous, but serious applications of life's force. They are moments of transformation and discovery, and the same care and earnestness of a mountain climber must be observed constantly if real progress and not mere entertainment is the goal. In the very same way, in the external world, if you begin something, you finish it. If you are working on a project creatively, you maintain your efforts until you bring it to a conclusion. It is such people who become truly successful in meditation. ¶You can learn to meditate extremely well, but will be unsuccessful if you don't approach it in an extremely positive way, if you allow yourself to get sidetracked on the inside once the inside opens up and you can really become aware of inner states. Care must be taken not to wander around in inner states of consciousness. You can wander in extraneous, unproductive areas for a long, long time. ¶So, you have to be very, very firm with yourself when you begin a meditation so that you stay with it the way you originally intended to do and perform each meditation the way you intended to perform it. This brings us into discipline. Undisciplined people are generally people whom nobody can tell what to do. They won't listen. They can't tell themselves what to do, and nobody else is going to tell them either! If you sincerely want to make headway in meditation and continue to do so year after year after year, you have to approach it in a very positive, systematic way. By not seeking or responding to discipline, you can learn to meditate fairly well, just as you can learn to play the *vīṇā* fairly well, but you will never go much farther than that.

¶For many years I've seen hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people come and go, each one firmly determined to go in and realize the Self, firmly determined to meditate and meditate well. Many did, up to a point. Then they lost interest, became involved in the next social fad or just reached the depth equal to their ability to be constant and well disciplined. They are not anyplace today, inside or outside, for they undoubtedly reached the same barriers in their next pursuit and were compelled to seek another and yet another. I want to impress on you: if you start a meditation, stay with it. Attack it positively. Go on and on and in and in and in.

FRIDAY

Hold Awareness Firmly

Now, what do you do if during meditation the power becomes very strong and carries you into refined but unanticipated areas of superconsciousness?

It is not unusual for a good meditator to go in a different direction when the inner forces or energies become so intense that awareness itself becomes all energy. That's fine. That's what you want. That's also part of your meditation. Go right in and become aware of being aware and enjoy that intensity of inner power. Hold it steady. It won't sidetrack you or disturb your meditation in the least, but you have to come right back when that power begins to wane to the original meditation that you intended to work with. Work with it in a very positive way. Stay with it and don't get sidetracked in another area, no matter how interesting it is. ¶Only in this way are you going to really go on past the point of being able to medi-

tate only adequately well. Only in this way, once you are unfolded spiritually to a certain degree, can you go on with your unfoldment. This is a difficult practice, because you will go in for a very fine meditation and get into profound depths and burst into new and interesting areas. This will happen, and the sidetrack will be fascinating, perhaps much more than your meditation subject. That is the time you must hold awareness firmly and fulfill your original intent. ¶The potter is a good example. He is going to make a beautiful planter pot, and it turns out to be a milk pot instead, simply because he was sidetracked. Then he says, “Oh, an impulse told me I should make a milk pot, right in the middle of making a planter pot.” This example tells you that you have to fulfill your original intent. Then you get confidence. You build a whole layer of subconscious confidence because you know where you are going to go on the inside. ¶Think about this and work with it, because it’s very important to get a grip on awareness in all areas of the mind. Start out with a very firm foundation. This principle will carry through everything that you do. You will become more and more precise. Your physical body will become firm and energetic. Your personal habits will become precise. The way you handle your thinking will be precise. You will pay more attention to details. You won’t assume so much, and you will follow intricate lines of thought through to their conclusion. ¶Someone who meditates well also thinks well. He can flow through that thinking area of the mind and work out things through the thought processes. Someone who meditates has confidence

in all departments of life. You can build that confidence. If you sit down to meditate, meditate! Don't get sidetracked on anything else, no matter how attractive it may be. If the power builds within you, sit for a long time afterwards and let the energy absorb into the cells of your external body. Great energy is released from within. Don't get up after your meditation and immediately run off to do something. Sit in silent stillness until that power subsides in a gradual and refined way.

SATURDAY

Don't Get Sidetracked

The mystic seeks to gain the conscious control of his own willpower, to awaken knowledge of the primal force through the direct experience of it and to claim conscious control of his own individual awareness. In the beginning stages on the path, you will surely experience your mind wandering—when awareness is totally identified with everything that it is aware of. This gives us the sense, the feeling, that we are the mind or that we are the emotion or the body. And when sitting in meditation, myriad thoughts bounce through the brain and it becomes difficult to even concentrate upon what is supposed to be meditated upon, in some cases even to remember what it was. That is why the *sādhana* of the practices of *yoga* given in these lessons must be mastered to some extent in order to gain enough control over the willpower and sense organs to cause the meditation to become introverted rather than extroverted. The grace of the *guru* can cause this to happen, because he stabilizes the willpower, the awareness, within his devotees

as a harmonious father and mother stabilize the home for their offspring. If one has no *guru* or has one and is only a part-time devotee, then he must struggle in his efforts as an orphan in the institution of external life, for the world is your *guru*. His name is Śrī Śrī Viśvaguru Mahā Mahārāj, the most august universal teacher, grand master and sovereign. ¶ Even before we sit down to meditate, one of the first steps is to acquire a conscious mastery of awareness in the conscious mind itself. Learn attention and concentration. Apply them in everything that you do. As soon as we bring awareness to attention and train awareness in the art of concentration, the great power of observation comes to us naturally. We find that we are in a state of observation all the time. All awakened souls have keen observation. They do not miss very much that happens around them on the physical plane or on the inner planes. They are constantly in a state of observation. ¶ For instance, we take a flower and begin to think only about the flower. We put it in front of us and look at it. This flower can now represent the conscious mind. Our physical eyes are also of the conscious mind. Examine the flower, become aware of the flower and cease being aware of all other things and thoughts. It is just the flower now and our awareness. The practice now is: each time we forget about the flower and become aware of something else, we use the power of our will to bring awareness right back to that little flower and think about it. Each time we become aware of any other thoughts, we excuse awareness from those thoughts. Gently, on the in-breath, we pull awareness back to the world of the flower.

This is an initial step in unraveling awareness from the bondages of the conscious mind.

SUNDAY

Gaining Self-Control

Perhaps the biggest battle in the beginning stages of practicing attention and concentration is the control of breath.

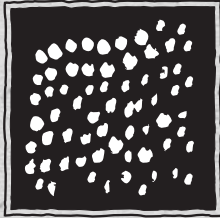
The beginner will not want to sit long enough, or not be able to become quiet enough to have a deep, controlled flow of breath. After five minutes, the physical elements of the subconscious mind will become restless. He will want to squirm about. He will sit down to concentrate on the flower and begin thinking of many other things that he should be doing instead: "I should have done my washing first." "I may be staying here for a half an hour. What if I get hungry? Perhaps I should have eaten first." The telephone may ring, and he will wonder who is calling. "Maybe I should get up and answer it," he thinks and then mentally says, "Let it ring. I'm here to concentrate on the flower." If he does not succeed immediately, he will rationalize, "How important can breathing rhythmically be, anyway? I'm breathing all right. This is far too simple to be very important." He will go through all of this within himself, for this is how he has been accustomed to living in the conscious mind, jumping from one thing to the next. ¶When you sit at attention, view all of the distractions that come as you endeavor to concentrate on one single object, such as a flower. This will show you exactly how the conscious and subconscious mind operate. All of the same distractions come in everyday life. If you are a disciplined person, you handle them

systematically through the day. If you are undisciplined, you are sporadic in your approach and allow your awareness to become distracted by them haphazardly instead of concentrating on one at a time. Such concerns have been there life after life, year after year. The habit of becoming constantly distracted makes it impossible for you to truly concentrate the mind or to realize anything other than distractions and the desires of the conscious mind itself. ¶Even the poor subconscious has a time keeping up with the new programming flowing into it from the experiences our awareness goes through as it travels quickly through the conscious mind in an undisciplined way. When the subconscious mind becomes overloaded in recording all that goes into it from the conscious mind, we experience frustration, anxiety, nervousness, insecurity and neuroses. These are some of the subconscious ailments that are so widespread in the world today. ¶There comes a time in man's life when he has to put an end to it all. He sits down. He begins to breathe, to ponder and be aware of only one pleasant thing. As he does this, he becomes dynamic and his will becomes strong. His concentration continues on that flow. As his breath becomes more and more regulated, his body becomes quiet and the one great faculty of the soul becomes predominant—observation, the first faculty of the unfoldment of the soul. ¶We as the soul see out through the physical eyes. As we look through the physical eyes at the flower and meditate deeply upon the flower, we tune into the soul's vast well of knowing and begin to observe previously unknown facts about the flower. We

see where it came from. We see how one little flower has enough memory locked up within its tiny seed to come up again and again in the very same way. A rose does not forget and come up as a tulip. Nor does a tulip forget and come up as a lily. Nor does a lily forget and come up as a peach tree. There is enough memory resident in the genes of the seeds of each that they come up as the same species every season. As we observe this single law and pierce into the inner realms of the mind, we see the flower as large as a house, or as small as the point of a pin, because the eyes of the superconscious mind, the spiritual body, can magnify or diminish any object in order to study it and understand it. To know this, to experience this, is to develop willpower to transform oneself into the knower of what is to be known. Yes, willpower is the key, the must, the most needed faculty for spiritual unfoldment on this path. Work hard, strive to accomplish, strengthen the will by using the will. But remember, "With love in the will, the spirit is free." This means that willpower can be used wrongly without the binding softening of love, simple love. Say in your mind to everyone you meet, "I like you. You like me, I really do like you. I love you. I truly love you."

Prasanna Śukla Jyotiḥ

प्रसन्न शुक्ल ज्योतिः



The Clear White Light

The luminaries, fire, sun and moon, receive their
luminosity by the grace of divine inner Light.
The Light that gives light to those is a mighty
effulgence. That Light, dispelling my darkness,
stood within me, suffused in oneness.

Tirumantiram 2683

MONDAY
Beyond Past
And Future

Whenever man comes to the point in his evolution where he has sufficient mastery in the mind to produce “things,” he suffers for the lack of peace, for in his activity on the mental spheres in conceiving, planning, gathering the forces together and finally viewing the outcome as a physical manifestation, he has exercised an intricate control over the nerve fibers of his mind. Thus caught in this pattern, he must go on producing to insure his mental security, for should he stop for a moment, the whiplash upon his senses as the generative functions ceased to be active would cause paranoiac depressions, at times almost beyond repair. ¶The man looking into the “where and when” of the future, blending his energies with those who are also striving to evolve into a more ramified state of mind, can suffer well if he keeps going, producing, acquiring and believing that materiality is reality. Evolution of the species takes its toll, for as man’s mind evolves, he is no longer content projecting into the “where and when” of the material consciousness, and as he seeks some reward of peace for his efforts, he begins to look into the past for solutions, the “there and then” of it all. Thus, finding himself born into a cross-section of awareness between past and future, having experienced both of these tendencies of the mind, causes him to reflect. Philosophy holds few answers for him. Its congested mass of “shoulds” and “don’ts” he knows has proved more to the philosopher who cleared his mind on paper than to the reader who has yet to complement with inner knowing its indicated depths.

Occultism is intriguing to him, for it shows that there are possibilities of expression beyond the senses he has become well accustomed to using. But again, evolution rounding his vision causes him to discard the occult symbolism, laws and practices as another look into the past or future of the mind's depths. The idea of *yoga*, union through perceptive control of the flow of thought, and of the generative processes of a perceptive idea before thought is formed, is most satisfying. The cognition of the actinic process of life currents intrigues him, and he looks further into the practice of *yoga* techniques and finds that peace is gained through a conscious government first of the life currents through the body and second of the realm of ideas as they flow into thought. And while remaining the observer of it all in the eternity of the here and now, the seeker fully realizes that time, space and causation are only indicated through holding an off-balanced consciousness of past and future.

TUESDAY

Capturing the Here and Now

The feeling and the realization of the here-and-now intensity of consciousness becomes intriguing to him, and he works daily on *yoga* techniques to strengthen psychic nerve fibers and perfect his artistry of maintaining this awareness. Many things fall away from him as he expands his consciousness through the classical practices of meditation. He loosens the odic bonds of family and former friends. Magnetic ties to possessions and places fade out until he is alone, involved with the refined realms of mind and in the actinic flow of energies. Occasionally his awareness is brought out into a

habit pattern or a concept of himself as he used to be, but viewed with his new stability in his recently found inner security of being whole, this too quickly fades. ¶Whenever darkness comes into the material world, this centered man is light. He sees light within his head and body as clearly as he did in former states of materialistic consciousness when looking at a glowing light bulb. While involved in innersearching some hidden laws of existence or unraveling the solution to a problem of the outer mind, he sits viewing the inner light, and the light shines through the knitted law of existence, clearly showing it in all its ramifications, as well as shining out upon the snarled problem, burning it back into proportionate component parts. ¶Thus becoming adept in using his newly found faculties, he begins to study the findings of others and compare them to his own. This educational play-back process elucidates to his still-doubting intellect the “all-rightness” of the happenings that occur within him. He finds that for six thousand years men have, from time to time, walked the classical *yoga* path and attained enlightenment, and he begins to see that he has yet far to go, as his light often is dimmed by the pulling he experiences of the past, by the exuberance he shares with the future and by the yet fawn-like instability of the “here-and-now eternity” he has most recently experienced. ¶Now, in the dawn of a new age, when many men are being drawn within, it is eminently easier to attain and maintain clarity of perception through the actinic light within the body. Through the classical *yoga* techniques, perfecting the conscious use of the actinic willpower, the energies can

be drawn inward from the outer mind, and the awareness can bask in the actinic light, coming into the outer mind only at will, and positively. ¶Occasionally young aspirants burst into inner experience indicating a balance of intense light at a still-higher rate of vibration of here-and-now awareness than their almost daily experience of a moon-glow inner light: the dynamic vision of seeing the head, and at times the body, filled with a brilliant clear white light. When this intensity can be attained at will, more than often man will identify himself as actinic force flowing through the odic externalities of the outer mind and identify it as a force of life more real and infinitely more permanent than the external mind itself.

WEDNESDAY

Psychic Sounds

Occasionally, through his newly exercised extrasensory perception, he may hear the seven sounds he previously studied about in occult lore. The sounds of the atomic structure of his nerve system, his cells, register as voices singing, the *vīṇā* or *sitār*, *tambūra*, or as symphonies of music. Instruments to duplicate these sounds for the outer ears were carefully tooled by the *ṛishis* of classical *yoga* thousands of years ago, including the *mṛidaṅga* or *tabla*, and the flute. He will hear the shrill note, likened to a nightingale singing, as psychic centers in his cranium burst open, and then an inner voice indicating to his external consciousness—like a breath of air—direction, elucidation. This inner voice remains with him as a permanent *yoga* of the external, with the internal consciousness an ever-ready guide to the unraveling of

complexities of daily life. ¶Occasionally, in a cross-section of the inner mind, when light merges into transcendental form, the young aspirant may view the golden actinic face of a master peering into his, kindly and all-knowing. He is looking at his own great potential. As the clear white light becomes more of a friend to his external mind than an experience or vision and can be basked in during contemplative periods of the day, the nourishment to the entirety of the nerve system, as ambrosia, bursts forth from the crown *chakra*. This is identified inadequately as “the peace that passeth understanding,” for he who reaches this state can never seem to explain it. ¶The highly trained classical *yoga* adept intensifies, through techniques imparted to him from his *guru*, the clear white light to the brink of God Realization, the void. His entire body is faded into a sea of blue-white light, the *ākāśa*, where now, past and future are recorded in the linear depths or layers, sometimes seeing himself seated or standing on a lotus flower of shimmering light in an actinodic clear, transparent, neon, plastic-like-body outline as his consciousness touches, in tune with a heart’s beat, into the Self, God Realization. ¶Keeping this continuity alive and not allowing the external consciousness to reign, the young aspirant lives daily in the clear white light, having occasionally more intense experiences as just described, while meeting daily chores here and now, until he attains the maturity of the nerve fiber essential to burst his consciousness beyond itself into the pure non-conscious state, *nirvikalpa samādhi*, the Self. Only known and identified by him as an experience experienced, only

recognized by others as he maintains his point of reference: that mind is only illusion, ever changing and perpetuating itself by mingling concepts of past and future into the present; that the only reality is the timeless, formless, causeless, spaceless Self beyond the mind. He knows that the mind, which is made from a consciousness of time, creates, maintains and defabricates form, and exists in a relative concept of space. The Self is the only reality and is an intensity far greater than that of any phase of the mind.

THURSDAY

Cardinal Signposts

The young aspirant just becoming acquainted with the path to enlightenment may wonder where he is, how much he has achieved so far. There are a few cardinal signposts he may identify with to know he has touched into the inner realms of his mind. Should he ever have experienced a “here-and-now” consciousness, causing him to fight the “where and when” of the future and the “there and then” of the past afterwards, he can fully impart to himself an award of having achieved some attainment by striving even more diligently than before. The ability to see the external world as transparent, a game, a dream, encourages the aspirant to seek deeper. The moon-like light within the center of his head appears during his tries at meditation, sometimes giving him the perceptive ability to cognize the intricate workings of another’s external and subconscious states of mind, as well as his own, intimately. The ability of the ardent soul to recognize his *guru* and identify himself in the actinic flow from whence the master infuses knowl-

edge by causing inner doors to open is another signpost that the aspirant has become an experienter and is touching in on the fringe or perimeter of transcendental states of mind. ¶ Many on the path to enlightenment will be able to identify, through their personal experience, some of these signposts and recall many happenings that occurred during their awakenings. But remember, the recall and the experience are quite different. The experience is “here and now;” the recall is “there and then.” However, by identifying the experience and relating it to a solid intellectual knowledge, the ability will be awakened to utilize and live consciously in inner states of superconsciousness. After acquiring this ability to consciously live superconsciously comes the ability to work accurately and enthusiastically in the material world while holding the intensity of the inner light, giving perceptive awareness of its mechanical structure. There also comes the ability to work out quickly in meditation experiences of the external mind or worldly happenings through finding their “innerversity” aspects rather than being drawn out into the swirl of them. In doing so, the cause-and-effect *karmic* experiential patterns of the aspirant’s life that tend to lower his consciousness into congested areas of the mind will clear up as, more and more, the actinic flow of superconsciousness is maintained as the bursts of clear white light become frequent.

FRIDAY
The Leaders
Of Tomorrow

Those among the youth of today who have had some measure of attainment, of which there are many, will be the leaders, businessmen, politicians

and educators of tomorrow. As the New Age comes more into fulfillment, they will be able to work effectively in all states of the mind, consciously identified with the overshadowing power of the clearness of perceptive vision of visible white light within the body and through the mind. Still others—disciplined beings of a vaster vision and more profound purpose—will become the mendicant *sannyāsin*, the sage, the catalyst teacher, the *pandit* philosopher, all working as individuals together to keep the teaching of the classical *yoga* path to enlightenment alive and vibrant on planet Earth yet another six thousand years. ¶Remember, when the seal is broken and clear white light has flooded the mind, there is no more a gap between the inner and the outer. Even uncomplimentary states of consciousness can be dissolved through meditation and seeking again the light. The aspirant can be aware that in having a newfound freedom internally and externally there will be a strong tendency for the mind to reconstruct for itself a new congested subconscious by reacting strongly to happenings during daily experiences. Even though one plays the game, having once seen it as a game, there is a tendency of the instinctive phases of nature to fall prey to the accumulative reactions caused by entering into the game. ¶Therefore, an experience of inner light is not a solution; one or two bursts of clear white light are only a door-opener to transcendental possibilities. The young aspirant must become the experiencer, not the one who has experienced and basks in the memory patterns it caused. This is where the not-too-sought-after word *discipline* enters into the

life and vocabulary of this blooming flower, accounting for the reason why *ashrams* house students apart for a time. Under discipline, they become experiencers, fragmenting their entanglements before their vision daily while doing some mundane chore and mastering each test and task their *guru* sets before them. The *chela* is taught to dissolve his reactionary habit patterns in the clear white light each evening in contemplative states. Reactionary conditions that inevitably occur during the day he clears with actinic love and understanding so that they do not congest or condense in his subconscious mind, building a new set of confused, congested forces that would propel him into outer states of consciousness, leaving his vision of the clear white light as an experience in memory patterns retreating into the past. ¶The young aspirant can use this elementary classical *yoga* technique of going back over the day at the end of the day in an internal concentration period, holding the thought flow on just the current daily experience, not allowing unrelated thoughts from other days to enter. When a reactionary condition appears that was not resolved during the day with love and understanding, in turning to the inner light it will melt away, usually under the power of a perceptive flash of understanding.

SATURDAY

Turning to the Inner Light

Thousands of young aspirants who have had bursts of inner light have evolved quickly. Assuredly, this has been their natural evolutionary flow.

This over-sensitization of their entire mind structure, so suddenly intensified into transcendental realms, caused

the materialistic states to decentralize attachments to their present life-pattern, school interests and plans for the future. A springboard is needed. A new balance must be attained in relating to the materialistic world, for the physical body still must be cared for to unfold further into the human destiny of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, the realization of the Self beyond the states of mind. Enlightened seers are turning inward to unravel solutions in building new models to bring forth new knowledge from inner realms to creatively meet man's basic needs, and to bring through to the external spheres beauty and culture found only on inner planes, thus heralding the Golden Age of tomorrow and the illuminated beings of the future who, through the use of their disciplined third eye and other faculties, can remain "within" the clear white light while working accurately and enthusiastically in the obvious dream world. ¶Should he come out too far into materialism in consciousness, the inner voice may be falsely identified as an unseen master or a God talking into his right inner ear, but when in the clarity of white light, he knows that it is his very self. Realizing he is the force that propels him onward, the aspirant will welcome discipline as an intricate part of his internal government, so necessary to being clear white light. ¶It is a great new world of the mind that is entered into when first the clear white light dawns, birthing a new actinic race, immediately causing him to become the parent to his parents and forefathers. When living in an expanded inner state of mind, he must not expect those living in materialistic consciousness to understand him. On this new path of "the

lonely one,” wisdom must be invoked to cause him to be able to look through the eyes of those who believe the world is real, and see and relate to that limited world in playing the game as if it were real, thus maintaining the harmony so necessary for future unfoldments. To try to convince those imbedded in materialism of the inner realities only causes a breach in relationship, as it represents a positive threat to the security they have worked so hard to attain. ¶First we had the instinctive age, of valuing physical strength and manly prowess, followed by the intellectual age, facts for the sake of facts, resulting in the progress of science. Now we are in an age of new values, new governing laws, an actinic age, with new understanding of the world, the mind, but most of all, the Self. Understanding is preparation for travel, for it is an age of the mind, and in the mind, much more intense than the speed of light, exist spheres which seers are only willing to speak of to those who have the inner ear with which to listen. ¶The mind of man tends either toward light or toward darkness, expanded awareness or materialistic values. Depending upon the self-created condition of the mind, man lives either within the clear white light of the higher consciousness, or in the external mind structure which reflects darkness to his inner vision.

SUNDAY

Springboard To Eternity

The uninitiated might ask: “What is it like to be in the clear white light?” The young aspirant may reply, “It is as simple as sitting in a darkened room, closing the eyes in deep concentration and finding the entire inside of the cranium turning into light.” At first it may be

only a dim, moon-like glow, a pale flicker of several different colors, but then it becomes as bright and intense as the radiance of the noonday sun, then crystal clear and white. It all depends upon the composition of the mind states of reactionary patterns as to how the light in the cranium will first appear. ¶Of course, clear white light is not absolute, for light invariably implies the existence of shadow. The shadows that sometimes fade out inner light are the instinctive functions that hold the physical body intact. These are represented as attributes in the external mind and character of man. ¶Attachment, for instance, holds our cells together; it is also the root of much suffering, for attachment to material objects or people keeps man's awareness externalized, incapable of expressing itself in full freedom. Man who is caught in the magnetic forces is prone to resentment. Not being able to cognize various fears as they occur, he stores them up into a conscious resentment of all threats to the false securities found in attachment. Resentment burrows deeply into the outer mind's layers, undermining much of a person's creative endeavor. The reactionary conditions resentment is capable of agitating are subconscious and cast many shadows over clarity of perception for long periods of time. ¶Those who resent are often jealous, another shadow or character weakness which stems from feelings of inferiority, a limited view of one's real Self. After one burst of clear white light has occurred, the force fields of attachment, resentment and jealousy are shattered. An increased control of the mind, an expanded consciousness, is maintained which frees man, little by little, from ever

again generating the magnetic holds consuming his consciousness in these shadows. When man allows himself to routine his external thinking and action to settle into uncreative, static conditions, pressures of various sorts build up, and the undisciplined mind releases itself to the emotion of anger, a state of consciousness which renders a man blind to the existence of inner light in any degree. ¶Fear is another shadow which causes man to have an inability to face a critical moment, even in the intimacy of his deepest meditation. But fear is a protective process of the instinctive mind, allowing time to temporarily avoid what must later be faced. Fear, being an intense force in the mind's, as well as the body's, structure, must be handled positively, for when man thinks under the shadow of fear, he causes his fears to manifest. The flickering shadows of worry brought on by allowing the mind to irrationally jump from one subject to another, never centralizing on any one point long enough to complete it, must be handled through disciplining the flow of thought force, for worry provokes a darker shadow—fear. Fear when disturbed causes anger, submerged anger, resentment, causing a jealous nature. Hence the constant play of the clear white light versus its shadows. ¶By becoming conscious of the way in which the mind operates in even a small degree, the young aspirant to light finds it easy to fold back the shadows into shafts of clear white light.

Hṛidaya Padman

हृदय पद्मन्



The Lotus Of the Heart

Pervading all nature, Śiva blesses all. But they know not the Truth and adore Him not. To them who adore Him Who is immanent, He is the golden stem of the lotus of the heart deep within.

Tirumantiram 1717

MONDAY
Emanations
From Within

Man is like an egg. He lives and moves within the shell of his own concepts; and within a certain area of the mind that is comfortable to him he finds security. Within this area of the mind there are certain strata of thought flow with which he becomes familiar, emotional stresses that he has adjusted to as he matured. Within the eggshell he finds the pressures of his maturing pressing upon the boundaries of his accustomed area of mind and emotion. One day the shell breaks, and man steps out in all his glory. ¶ In this new area of expanded consciousness, he feels insecure. At this time, the mystical teachings that have come down through the ages are of value to him. These mystical teachings become the new circumference of mind, thought and feeling in which he lives. After each new experience that he encounters, he turns toward the teachings of wisdom for confirmation, encouragement and renewed understanding of the path. He unfolds naturally into a new philosophy, a new outlook on life, and seeks to put into practice all he has learned from within himself. To sharpen his sense perception, he turns to the practices of monistic Śaiva Siddhānta and finds that his own individual willpower plays a part in maturing and stabilizing the force fields around him. Previously, when he was unfolding inside the eggshell and experiencing the breaking of the eggshell, his individual will had no part to play. Now, as a more unfolded being, he discovers his inner willpower and, through the perspective of monistic Śaiva Siddhānta, he is able to use it to move

his individual awareness into a greater enlightenment and thus intensify life. ¶ This then begins a series of inner experiences that become so vibrant and vital to him that he recognizes them even more strongly than the experiences of everyday life in the external areas of the mind known as the world. We speak here of some of these experiences man encounters after the eggshell that surrounded him in his infancy on the path has broken. Relate this to yourself personally. In doing so, you will note areas where you have been in the inner mind. ¶ Visualize within yourself a lotus. Have you ever seen a lotus flower? I am sure you have. Now visualize this lotus flower centered right within the center of your chest, right within your heart. You have read in the Hindu scriptures that the Self God dwells in the lotus within the heart. Let's think about that. We all know what the heart is, and we know what happens when the heart stops. Try to mentally feel and see the heart as a lotus flower right within you. Within the center of the lotus, try to see a small light. Doubtless you have read in the Hindu scriptures that the Self God within the heart looks like a brilliant light about the size of your thumb—just a small light. This light we shall call an emanation of your effulgent being. We could also call it your atomic power, the power that motivates, permeates, makes the mind self-luminous. It is dwelling right within. The Self God is deeper than that. The lotus is within the heart, and the Self God dwells deep within that lotus of light. ¶ The subconscious area of the mind consumes many different things. Begin now to think about all the things that you own in your home and all

of your personal possessions. The subconscious area of the mind is attached magnetically to each of them. They not only exist in the external world, they also exist, quite alive, within the subconscious area of your mind, along with all the ramifications connected to them. Each item that you own has a story attached to it which, of course, you remember. This story, too, dwells within the subconscious mind and is carried along with you all of the time. ¶But it is easy to rid yourself of the attachments to material things by going within, once you know how. The light which emanates from the lotus of the heart knows nothing about what the subconscious area of the mind consumes, because the total area of the mind in which we are aware is a composite of many things.

TUESDAY

The Subtlety Within You

Everyone who functions in external and inner life lives in a slightly different area of the mind and consumes within his conscious and subconscious areas many thousands of concepts. No person is exactly the same as another in this respect. The Self within knows nothing of this, because it exists of itself. Wherever awareness flows through the totality of the mind, the Self is always the same. When individual awareness turns inward, it is possible to contact the light radiations within the lotus of the heart; it then is possible to fully realize Satchidānanda. ¶It is useless to think about the Self, because it does not exist in the area of the mind where thoughts are. If you were to think about it, you would only become aware of concepts within the mind, and that

would take you away from it. It is also useless to talk about the Self, really, in your efforts to realize it, because when you do, again you take awareness deep into the conceptual area of the mind, which is further away from your real, self-effulgent being. ¶The first step is to try to feel the subtlety within you. The light within the lotus of the heart comes from someplace, doesn't it? Let us think about it in this way. Each time you take a breath, you bring yourself a little closer, you turn yourself within just a little bit more and release a little bit of actinic energy emanating from the self-effulgent being residing within your heart. This energy is called life. We say, "This is my life." If you stop breathing, the life in your body stops. We have to use willpower to control the breath. When we do control the breath, we begin to have an immense control, and awareness begins to become detached from that which it is aware of. This means that we are consciously conscious of what we are aware of—that we are aware. We control our individual awareness more than we realize when we practice the regulation and control of breath. For instance, as we breathe, *prāṇāyāma*—in on nine counts, hold one, out on nine counts, hold one—we find that we begin to become more alert, more alive. Our awareness is more subtle and refined.

WEDNESDAY
The Evolution
Of Awareness

The emanation of the light that wells from within the lotus of the heart is always there, regardless of what you do. You may not be aware of the existence of it, but it does exist. You may not care to realize it, but it still exists. When man does not

wish to look for the Self God, it is only because his awareness is busy in other areas of the mind, concerned with desires, and he is on the road to fulfill them. The fulfillment of desires causes reactionary conditions within the subconscious mind itself and clouds vision. This causes what is known as the darkness of the mind. When man wishes and desires to find his true Self, his external desires fall in line with basic religious codes for living, and he then is on the path. He is able to realize the essence of each desire on the path of enlightenment, and is able to sense Reality within himself. ¶A beautiful practice is to try to sit quietly, visualizing within the lotus within the heart a light, a strong light emanating clearly, a light that is always there. This light is radiating at a higher vibration than any form with which you are familiar. Let us say, if you were to have this light in your hand and were able to use it in the external world, each form you turned it upon would disappear under the vibration of the light itself. That is as powerful as the effulgent light emanating from the Self, the Śivaness, which you will see within the lotus of the heart. ¶The mind, or consciousness, is form with intense vibrations and lesser vibrations, all interrelating. When we are happy and joyous, we are aware of the refined states of consciousness. But when we are not happy or joyous, we are living in the grosser, darker areas of consciousness. We have all lived in the gross area of consciousness, and we have all lived in the happy, joyous areas of consciousness. This is the evolution of man's individual awareness.

THURSDAY
The Pendulum
Of Emotion

Man, awareness, seeks happiness, and when he finds happiness, he often finds fault with it, and then he becomes aware in unhappy areas of the mind.

This gives him the power to seek happiness again. Man finds fault with happiness and begins to look for something better. In looking for something better, he becomes selfish, greedy, unhappy, and finally he attains what he thinks will make him happy. He finds that it does not, and this makes him again unhappy, and he goes on through life like this. That is the cycle of awareness traveling through the instinctive-intellectual areas of the mind. Therefore, when you are unhappy, don't feel unhappy about it! And when you become happy, know that the pendulum of awareness will eventually swing to its counter side. This is the natural and the normal cycle of awareness. ¶ When you are feeling unhappy and you feel unhappy because you are unhappy, and you feel rather ill all over, sit down and breathe deeply. Try to control your individual awareness and become aware of an area of the mind that is always buoyant and happy. Be gentle with your awareness. Realize that you are not the unhappy area of the mind that you are aware of. Whatever was the cause of your unhappiness doesn't really matter, because the powerful radiance within the lotus of the heart knows nothing of this unhappy area of the mind. You will be surprised at how quickly your awareness will move from the unhappy area of the mind, seemingly rejuvenate itself and become joyous again at the very thought of the Self God within the lotus of your heart.

FRIDAY
**The Cycles of
Experience**

There are many things in life which endeavor to keep us away from our true being. These are the cycles of life. We must watch and be careful of these recurring cycles in our life. These joyous and sorrowful occurrences that awareness experiences, sometimes each day, sometimes each week, sometimes each month, are totally dependent upon the positive control that we have of awareness. But then there are greater experiences that have even longer cycles—perhaps a three-year cycle, a five-year cycle, a ten-year cycle or a fifteen-year cycle. ¶The subconscious area of the mind is something like the sacred cow of India. It relives what it takes in. The cow will take in grass and chew it, and then she will chew her food all over again at a later time. The subconscious area of the mind does the same thing. You will find yourself aware of reliving your life, or getting back into the same cycle of the same pattern of life that you experienced many years ago. This you want to avoid, naturally. It is easy. Ponder over what you are doing now, how you are living, and then go back and find out within yourself how that compares to a previous time in your life when you were living more or less in the same way. In this way, you will come to know what area of the mind you will become aware in next. ¶If something good happened to you after a series of events in the past, you can expect something good to happen to you again. If something happened that was not as good or joyous as you would like it to have been, then you can know that you will become aware in this area

of the mind in the future. This you can avoid. You have the power to control your cause and effect.

SATURDAY

The Diamond Of Light

How do you avoid unhappy states of mind? By consciously flowing awareness into the radiance, the light emanating from the self-effulgent being within the lotus of the heart. Direct awareness through controlled breathing. Remembering this basic principle, tell yourself that it is there, and soon you will begin to feel it. You will actually cause to grow within yourself a subtle nerve force that will turn awareness into the inner being so that consciously you can feel the Self God, your Śivaness, and its emanation that even now exists within you. In this way you can experience true bliss, true happiness, blissful happiness that does not cycle or fade. ¶ One moment of contact with your inner being that resides within the lotus of the heart, that is always there—one moment—will clear up a whole situation in the external area of the mind for you. It will give you clear insight into how you should live your life, how to meet your circumstances, how to avoid whatever you do not want to find yourself involved in as the cycles of your life begin to repeat themselves. ¶ This self-luminous emanation is like a diamond that is filled with light. Think about it in that way. It is filled with light, this diamond that resides within the lotus of your heart. Try to visualize this clearly and precisely as you read. Visualization of inner things is the same as opening an inner door for awareness to flow through to gain the experience that is already

there. Visualization helps to pinpoint awareness and hold awareness concentrated in one certain area of the mind and gently move it to another. With this shining diamond constantly within the body, how could you become aware of an unhappy area of the mind? How could you become selfish? How could you hold resentment? How would it be possible for you to dislike another? This diamond within the lotus is within others, too.

SUNDAY

Ardent Striving On the Path

How are we going to master awareness so that it does not feel that it is what it is aware of? We have to pull awareness within, to the more refined areas of the mind. This is called going within yourself. You have to temporarily gain enough composure, enough control over awareness, so that in thirty seconds you can pull within yourself and, in a sense, light up because you become a little bit aware of the existence of the inner light. Now, of course, if we are pressured by desires that conflict with basic religious principles, it will be difficult even to become aware of or to even think about the inner light. It's easy, though, to find the darkness of the mind. ¶But if desires are flowing in accordance with the proper, basic action-and-reaction patterns of life, and one is living up to what he knows he should be living up to and allows the awareness to flow through unwholesome areas of the mind, he begins to hurt deeply on the inside. That is the so-called conscience hurting, because the light shines through the conscience, too, and makes the conscience self-luminous to us. We cannot see the light, but we

can feel it. And when awareness flows into the consciousness of bliss and peace, you won't hurt anymore on the inside. The nerve system will be filled with a new energy, an actinic energy radiating out of the light from the lotus within the heart. Then you will be happy and joyous until awareness wanders again and brings up other emotional or desire temptations. Then you will hurt again. This is what is meant by the statement "constant striving on the path"—staying mentally healthy so that the conscience does not hurt. ¶ The Self God is within you. The light emanating from your effulgent being is within you, too, within the lotus of your heart. The Self God is. It simply is. We do not have to awaken the light within the lotus of the heart, because it is always there, always has been, and always will be. We just have to become aware of it. Then go in and in and in to it until awareness, aware only of itself, dissolves, and be the Self. Be That.

Dṛiḍhavākśaktiḥ

दृढवाक्शक्तिः



The Power of Affirmation

Let all your thoughts be thoughts of Śiva, and the Lord by His grace will reveal all. If your thoughts are Śiva-saturated, He will abide ever so closely in you.

Tirumantiram 1582

MONDAY
Affirmation
Is a Power

The power of affirmation changes and remolds the putty-like substance that makes up the subconscious areas of the mind. For years we have repeated sayings and statements, attached meaning to them in our thoughts and through listening to ourselves speak. This has helped form our life as we know it today, for the subconscious brings into manifestation the impressions we put into it. Therefore, to change the subconscious pattern and increase the spinning velocity of it, we must remold with new ideas and new concepts its magnetic forces. This can be done through the power of affirmation. ¶Affirmation, when used in wisdom for spiritual reasons, is a power, and should be understood through meditation. Before beginning to work with an affirmation, we must understand completely from within what we are doing, being sure that when our subconscious has been remolded we can take the added responsibilities, the new adventures and challenges that will manifest as a result of breaking out of one force field and entering into another. Only when we face and accept fully the new effects of our effort should we proceed with an affirmation. First we must understand the nature of this power. ¶An affirmation is a series of positive words repeated time and time again in line with a visual concept. Such a statement can be repeated mentally or, preferably, verbally. Words in themselves, without a pictorial understanding, make a very poor affirmation. To choose the affirmation best suited to our needs, first we must realize what we do not want, and then

we must take steps to change it, in the very same way we would discriminate in giving away or throwing away our possessions in order to purchase new ones. Whether one is dealing with home and possessions, thoughts and concepts, self-created inhibitions or blocks and barriers of the subconscious, the principle is basically the same. If one feels, “I can’t,” he cannot. If he is always criticizing himself and lamenting over what he cannot do, then he has to reverse this pattern and change the flow of magnetic mental force, enliven its intensity by saying orally and feeling through all the pores of his body, “I can. I will. I am able to accomplish what I plan.” ¶In applying this *tantra*, begin by repeating the affirmation fifty or a hundred times a day. In watching your reactions, you may find that the subconscious will not accept these three statements, “I can. I will. I am able.” You may still have feelings of “I can’t. I won’t. I am not able.” This then begins a period to live through where the mind’s magnetic forces fight with one another, in a sense. The aggressive forces of your nature are trying to take over and reprogram the passive ones that have been in charge for so many years. Of course, the aggressive forces will win if you will persist with your verbal and visual affirmation. You must not give up saying, “I can. I will. I am able,” until you find the subconscious structure actually creating situations for you in which you can and are able to be successful, happy and acquire what you need, be it temporal goods or unfoldment on the inner path.

TUESDAY**Reprogramming
Old Patterns**

Here is another positive affirmation that might be helpful for you: "I am the complete master of all my forces. My spiritual energies govern and control the force fields wherever I am for the highest good. Through understanding, being pure, full of spirited life, I am filled and thrilled with unlimited power, now and forever. I will be what I will to be. I will do what I will to do." Affirm this affirmation each day this week for seven days. Repeat it three times each morning, three times at noon and three times each evening. ¶ You have perhaps often heard friends repeat the same complaint over and over again. They were not only making an affirmation, perhaps unknowingly, for their own subconscious mind, but for yours as well. Therefore, it behooves us always to be with positive people, spiritual, life-giving people, in order to be positive ourselves. It behooves us to listen to that with which we want to live, and to be the changer rather than the changed. The affirmations which violence sets up in the subconscious reactionary habit patterns in the minds of men cause them to fight and kill by spinning emotional force fields out of control. Fear then holds them in these brackets of mind as they react to what they have done. It takes great courage to go from one force field of the mind to another, for this means tearing up long-accustomed patterns and facing a period of adjustment while new subconscious patterns are created. It all has to do with changing the subconscious patterns. This is a power. You can change the patterns of your mind yourself. Try it. It

is not too difficult. ¶Each day we make affirmations with our thoughts and our feelings—and the very words that we speak stabilize these patterns. But as the inner light begins to dawn its life-giving rays, a new, positive power comes into our words, our thoughts and the feelings that well up from the subconscious, making new manifest patterns in the force fields of the conscious world for us to meet and speedily experience.

WEDNESDAY

Drawing on the Higher Energies

An affirmation can alter your life by creating mentally the patterns and moods of each day through which you will subsequently move. Here is one that can be used to dynamically begin each day. “I am now open to a flow of spiritual energy in which I perceive the most worthy course of action for this day. My service, being selfless, opens new doors of supply, making available all of the tools required so that my work will be beautiful, energetic and influential to the highest degree.” The subconscious mind is like a piece of clay that can be impressed. These impressions go into the subconscious from the conscious mind and remain there vibrating until changed. The intuitive mind, which we call the superconscious, works through the subconscious when the channels of the subconscious are open. Hence, in impressing the subconscious mind, we must be very careful to create positive channels, and not to create a negative block. You can also write your own affirmation, but it must always be positive and carefully worded. ¶The power of thought is very strong, but only strong for a short time. It is the power

of feeling that awakens the knowing consciousness. For example, suppose we repeat an affirmation such as this: “All my needs will always be met.” And we repeat it again, “All my needs will always be met.” In the initial stating of this affirmation, we understand something about it. However, unless we gain a conscious mental picture of what the words mean, they mean little more than nothing, for they do not reach deep enough to make contact with the limitless powers of your inner self. ¶Get into the rhythm of the affirmation. This causes strong feelings and impressions deep in the inner mind. Each word has a certain rate of vibration. Feeling is greater than visualization.

THURSDAY

Use the Power Of Feeling

Although each word of your affirmation may have a certain meaning to you intellectually, the rate of vibration of the word may not impress your mind in the exact same way in which you think it should to produce the result that you desire. An antidote to this is to use affirmations in this way. Repeat the affirmation, “All my needs will always be met,” and feel how it is to feel after all of your needs have been met. Until you find this feeling, you should not expect the affirmation to work. Every time that you have a need and that need is met, a certain feeling is then produced in you. That same feeling you have to feel the very instant you speak the affirmation. You then open a channel that instant to your own intuition, through which all good comes. In this state of mind one has inspiration and will. It is from the intuition that, at the eleventh hour, fifty-ninth min-

ute, fifty-ninth second, every need is met. ¶The next time you have complete feelings from the innermost sources of your being that your every need will be met, quietly repeat that affirmation over again: “All my needs will always be met.” Simultaneously think, visualize and feel deeply with an inner, all-encompassing knowing that each need will be met. This is the esoteric secret of making an affirmation work. ¶People say affirmations work for them but sometimes they do not. Why do affirmations only work sometimes? It is because the subconscious is receiving the affirmation at a psychological moment, and a greater knowing, visualization and feeling has been awakened to some extent. However, at the times when an affirmation did not work, there was no knowing, no visualization or feeling attached to it. Just words. When affirmations are repeated over and over again without feeling or visualization, occasionally negative results are produced, as the vibrations of the words themselves may not register what is intended in the subconscious. ¶Here is another affirmation: “I am the master of my body.” Sit and feel that you are the master of your body. Say to yourself over and over again, “I am the master of my body.” Now, quietly, without thinking, feel and visualize that you are the master of your body. Really know that you are director of your physical vehicle. In repeating this next affirmation, “I am the master of my body, my mind and my emotions,” feel and visualize exactly what these words mean. Then repeat time and time again, “I am the master of my body, my mind and my emotions,” all the while visualizing and feeling exactly

what you eventually want to be like, because what you cause now you cause in your future.

FRIDAY

All Your Needs Will Be Met

This ancient *tantra* is often used in gaining the material things of life. Affirmations do work in this respect, maybe even a little better than in gaining spiritual awakening, because the material desires are often stronger. If you need some material possession, and if it will do only good for yourself, your family and your friends, use the power of affirmation and see how quickly your need is manifested through one external channel or another. Distinguish carefully a material need from a desire. Desires are dangerous, because it is easy to manifest material desires, but it is not as easy to assume responsibility for what the fulfillment of the desire might entail. That is why people sometimes do attract to themselves material possessions through affirmations and suffer the complications produced in their lives. This happened because they did not understand the full responsibility of having the desired possessions. ¶An example of a material need is having sufficient money for necessities. Generate the feeling and the picture that you now have sufficient sums of money to meet every human need, but not necessarily every human desire; just the needs. Then practice this affirmation: “I will always have sufficient money to meet all my needs.” Repeat it once. Now stop affirming. Remain quiet, know, visualize and then feel how it is to be open to a sufficient flow of money to meet your every need. Get that feeling! It is a secure feeling, not a flamboyant,

reckless feeling, not a feeling that now you can go out and have a good time. No, this is a quiet, secure feeling, born of being in a judicious state of mind. ¶Let us look closely at this feeling again: “I will always have sufficient money to meet all my needs.” Now resolve to hold yourself open to ways and means by which you will have money to meet your every need for yourself and for your family. Be open to ways in which you can better budget the money you now have. Live by the ethic, “Waste not, want not.” Soon you will find that you begin to become secure within yourself as the vibrations of your verbal, visual feeling of this affirmation ring through you entirely. Today you will begin handling the funds you have more judiciously, and soon you will begin attracting abundance from unexpected creative sources. Be open to new ideas, new people, new opportunities, expectant and ready to handle the wealth you have proclaimed as yours.

SATURDAY

Consistency

Is Essential

You can write many kinds of affirmations and use them for many different purposes, but remember, they are powerful. They should be carefully worded, and only used in a way which enhances your spiritual life. To be effective, they should be repeated regularly on schedule, five minutes in the morning, at noon and five minutes at night for seven days to begin with. You will surely benefit by the results you cause spiritually, emotionally and materially. The greatest emotional security is brought about through the affirmation, “I’m all right, right now,” which quiets not only the con-

scious but also the subconscious instinctive fears, bringing forth an immediate influx of spiritual energy through the subconscious, giving peace and contentment to the entirety of the mind by expanding consciousness. As we expand our consciousness through the conscious control of spiritual energy, we become aware of new attributes and possibilities within our nature. Also, we become aware of the realms of knowledge within us that can be tapped during meditation, or the conscious use of the intuitive mind, to not only solve problems that confront us in our daily activity, but to derive creative solutions from the inner recesses of our own mind. ¶When you say to yourself, “I am all right, right now,” you immediately bring the forces of the mind together. All fears, worries and doubts cease. An influx of spiritual energy fills the subconscious, and a sense of dynamic security permeates your being. “Tomorrow I shall wake up filled with energy, creatively alive and in tune with the universe.” Say this several times to yourself and feel the spiritual force begin to move, the life force begin to move, within your body. You will wake up in the morning filled with creative energy, with a desire to be productive, to create. Answers to problems will be immediately unfolded from within yourself. You will experience finding solutions to questions that have been unanswered within your subconscious mind perhaps for years. A devotee having thus exercised this control over his mind to the point where when he commands the mind to be instantaneously creative, or puts a time limit on it—“Tomorrow I shall be creative, alive and in tune with the universe”—and his

mind obeys, then has achieved a conscious control of the intuitive forces of mind. He is truly all right, in every now.

SUNDAY

All Knowing Is within You

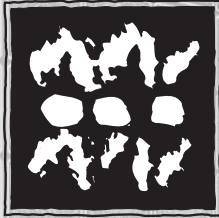
“I will be what I will to be. I will do what I will to do.” You can repeat these two powerful affirmations over time and time again and thus rearrange, restructure, the forces of your subconscious mind and create a great inner peace within yourself.

Become acquainted with the spiritual energies and bring the forces of superconsciousness through your subconscious. This creates feeling, a feeling that you are what you say you are—positive, direct, full of life and energy and creative power. Your intuitive mind proves this through your conscious mind, not only through feeling, but you will find yourself acting out the part in all kindness and security, exercising the positive will of “I will be what I will to be” and “I will do what I will to do.” Feel the spiritual force permeating the entirety of your body. You are the security of your statement, and you accept it into your subconscious mind. As the days go by, you will become more creative and more consciously aware of your spiritual destiny. Find your spiritual destiny for this lifetime. ¶The greatest thing that a devotee must learn is that all knowing is within oneself. Therefore, go to the great superconscious school within you and bring forth knowledge. In order to do this, be confident within yourself. In order to be confident within yourself, have no fear. In order to have no fear, say to yourself, “I am all right, right now.” This will quickly bring you into the here-and-now consciousness. You will

feel spiritual force permeating your body, and your intuitive state of mind will be active. Go ahead in full confidence that you are the knower of all that is known. This does not mean that you know everything that is to be known about the material plane, the emotional world of people, or what goes on within their minds. This means that you are nearing the source of all sources, that you understand the ultimate destiny of all souls—to unequivocally merge with Śiva. ¶Spiritual destiny is manifested in the lives of those who stand out from the masses and actually do something, who live a creative life for the benefit of others. This last affirmation affirms an age-old truth and may be said several times before sleep and upon awakening: “I am not my body, mind or emotions. They are but shells of the infinite energy that flows through them all. I am this energy. I am its source. I am on my way to merge with Śiva.”

Dhyāna Samārambhaṇam

ध्यान समारम्भणम्



Beginning to Meditate

Let your awareness be unswerving, bound to the *mūlādhāra*. Through the spinal shaft within, gaze into the inner void. See and yet see not. Hear and yet hear not. Thus sit in meditation. That is the sure means to bar death's way. When *prāṇāyāma* is practiced in proper time-measure, breath retention will stand harmonized with *prāṇa*. In him who trains breath that is *prāṇa*, time and life remain inseparable.

Tirumantiram 591-592

MONDAY
Unanticipated
Consequences

Desperate states of mind are disturbing many people these days. They are caught in emotional turmoil and entanglement, scarcely knowing how to get themselves out of it, or even fully realizing what state they are in. This condition, which often deteriorates as the years go by until nervous difficulties and mental illnesses set in, can be alleviated by the simple practice of meditation. Those who are content to live in a mesh of mental conflict, which is not only conscious but subconscious, will never get around to meditation, or even the preliminary step: concentration. But a person who is wise enough to struggle with his own mind to try to gain the mastery of his mind will learn the vital practice of meditation. Just a few moments each morning or evening enables him to cut the entangled conditions that creep into the conscious mind during the day. The consistent practice of meditation allows him to live in higher states of consciousness with increasing awareness and perception as the years go by. ¶ There are surprises, many of them, for the beginning meditator, as well as for those who are advanced—unexpected consequences that are often more than either bargained for, because on the road to enlightenment every part of one's nature has to be faced and reconciled. This can be difficult if the experiences of life have been unseemly, or relatively easy if the experiences have been mostly comfortable. What is it that meditation arouses to be dealt with? It is the reactions to life's happenings, recorded in the subconscious mind, both the memory of each experience and the

emotion connected to it. Buried away, normally, waiting to burst forth in the next birth or the one to follow it, these *vāsanās*, or deep-seated impressions, often come forward at the most unexpected moments after serious meditation is begun. It is the *śakti* power of meditation that releases them. There can be no repressed secrets, no memories too woeful to confront for the serious meditator. These experiences can be scary if one is “in denial” about certain embarrassing or disturbing happenings. ¶When this upheaval occurs for you, and it will, combat the paper dragon with the deep, inner knowing that the energy of the body has its source in God, the light of the mind that makes thought pictures recognizable also has its source in God, and nothing can or has happened that is not of one’s own creation in a past life or in this. Thus armed with Vedic wisdom, we are invincible to the emotions connected with the memory of formerly locked-away experiences. When they come rolling out, patiently write down the emotional impressions of hurt feelings and injustices of years gone by and burn the paper. Seeing the fire consume the exposed *vāsanās*, the garbage of yesterday, is in itself a great release.

TUESDAY
Mastery of
The Mind

The experienced meditator seeks out the unwholesome areas within himself, endeavoring to expose and rid himself of each knot of *karma*. The beginning meditator may be shocked and shrink from even continuing the practice of meditation, as his inner mind plays back unhappy thoughts that impose themselves upon his *śānti*. Many stop meditating altogether

at this point and turn instead to the distractions of modern life for solace. But true meditation happens because of soul evolution. We evolve into meditative practices from *bhakti*, the *yoga* of devotion. The transition is earned through past good *karmas*, not chosen as an intellectual or recreational pastime. As the transition of external worship to internal worship is made, the devotee has to face all bad *karmas* cheerfully and honestly in order to resolve them and move forward. ¶Sitting in a state of real meditation, one must be more alive and alert than a tight-rope walker suspended without a net on a taut cable three hundred feet above the Earth. Do you suppose that this man is sleepy, that he allows his mind to wander? No, every muscle and sinew of his body, every thought, every feeling within him, is absolutely under his control. It is the only way he can maintain the balance which keeps him from plunging to the earth beneath. He must be the master of himself, all the while seeking to identify with his pure soul being, not allowing attention to be pulled here and there—to the physical body, to outside sounds, to thoughts of the past or to concerns about the future. ¶In meditation, you will feel the same intensity of purpose as the tight-rope walker. Every atom in your being must be alive, every emotion under control, every thought seeking to impose itself upon your mind set aside until your purpose is accomplished. If the man three hundred feet up in the air feels a gust of wind coming against him, he must exercise perhaps a hundred times more will and concentration to remain poised in his precarious condition. Likewise, in meditation your mind

may be intensely concentrated upon a particular object or thought, and yet you find an opposing thought seeking to divert your attention. The opposing thought may simply be a wind from your subconscious. You must then put more effort into the object of your concentration so that the opposing thoughts will be set aside and not have power to topple your balance. ¶ Upon entering a state of meditation, one may find awareness enmeshed in a struggle between the subconscious of the past and the conscious, external waking state concerned with the present and future. The experienced meditator learns that he is the watcher, pure awareness. When concentration is sustained long enough, he dives into the superconscious, intuitive state of mind. It enables him, in time, to unravel the mystery. An integrated, one-pointed state of being is the goal—a state of inner perception without vacillation, with the ability to move awareness through the mind's various states at will. To become the ruler of the mind is the goal. To then go beyond the mind into the Self is the destiny of all living on this planet, for most in a life to come.

WEDNESDAY

Odic and Actinic Forces

Meditation can be sustained only if one lives a wholesome life, free from emotional entanglements and *adharmic* deeds. Intensive, consistent meditation dispels the antagonistic, selfish, instinctive forces of the mind and converts those channels of energy into uplifted creative action. The same force works to make either the saint or the sinner. The same force animates both love and hate. It is for the devotee to control

and direct that one force so that it works through the highest channels of creative expression. When this soul force is awakened, the refined qualities of love, forgiveness, loyalty and generosity begin to unfold. In this ascended state of concentrated consciousness, the devotee will be able to look down on all the tense conditions and involvements within his own mind from a view far “above” them. As the activity of his thoughts subsides, he begins to feel at home in that pure state of Being, released from his identification with and bondage to lower states of mind. A profound feeling of complete freedom persists. ¶Meditation is similar to watching the play of light and pictures on television. Identify with the pictures, and emotion is experienced. Identify with the light, and peace is experienced. Both light and energy forms have their source in God. Begin this evening, while watching the news on TV, by keeping awareness more within the light than the pictures. By all means, begin this ancient, mystical art, but as you progress, don’t be surprised when regrets, doubts, confusions and fears you hardly knew you remembered loom up one by one to be faced and resolved. Perform the *vāsanā dāha tantra*: simply write down all the regrets, doubts, confusions and fears in as much detail as possible, then burn the paper in a fireplace or garbage can. Claim the release from the past impression that this *tantra* imparts. ¶There are two forces that we become conscious of when we begin to meditate: the odic force and the actinic force. Actinic force is pure life energy emanating from the central source of life itself. Odic force is magnetism that emanates out from

our physical body, attracts and merges with the magnetism of other people. The odic force is what cities are made of, homes are made of. The actinic force, flowing through the physical body, out through the cells and through the skin, eventually becomes odic force. ¶As soon as we begin to meditate, we become conscious of these two forces and must be aware of how to deal with them. The odic forces are warm, sticky. The actinic forces are inspirational, clean, pure, true. We seek in meditation the actinic force.

THURSDAY
Transmuting
The Energies

When we begin to meditate, we have to transmute the energies of the physical body. By sitting up straight, with the spine erect, the energies of the physical body are transmuted. The spine erect, the head balanced at the top of the spine, brings one into a positive mood. In a position such as this we cannot become worried, fretful or depressed or sleepy during our meditation. ¶Slump the shoulders forward and short-circuit the actinic forces that flow through the spine and out through the nerve system. In a position such as this it is easy to become depressed, to have mental arguments with oneself or another, or to experience unhappiness. With the spine erect and head balanced at the top of the spine, we are positive, dynamic. Thoughts race through the mind substance, and we are aware of many, many thoughts. Therefore, the next step is to transmute the energies from the intellectual area of the mind so that we move our awareness into an area of the mind which does not think but conceives, looks at the thinking area. ¶The force of the intellectual area of

the mind is controlled and transmuted through the power of a regulated breath. A beginning *prāṇāyāma* is a method of breathing nine counts as we inhale, holding one; nine counts as we exhale, holding one count. Be very sure to maintain the same number of counts out as in, or that the breath is regulated to the same distance in as the same distance out. This will quickly allow you to become aware of an area of the mind that does not think but is intensely alive, peaceful, blissful, conceives the totality of a concept rather than thinking out the various parts. This perceptive area of the mind is where the actinic forces are most vibrant. *Sushumṇā*, the power of the spine, is felt dynamically, and we are then ready to begin meditation. ¶Meditate on awareness as an individual entity flowing through all areas of the mind, as the free citizen of the world travels through each country, each city, not attaching himself anywhere. ¶In meditation, awareness must be loosened and made free to move vibrantly and buoyantly into the inner depths where peace and bliss remain undisturbed for centuries, or out into the odic force fields of the material world where man is in conflict with his brother, or into the internal depths of the subconscious mind. Meditate, therefore, on awareness traveling freely through all areas of the mind. The dynamic willpower of the meditator in his ability to control his awareness as it flows into its inner depths eventually brings him to a state of bliss where awareness is simply aware of itself. This would be the next area to move into in a meditation. Simply sit, being totally aware that one is aware. New energies will flood the body, flowing out

through the nerve system, out into the exterior world. The nature then becomes refined in meditating in this way.

FRIDAY

The Benefits Of Meditation

After one has finished a powerful meditation—and to meditate for even ten to fifteen minutes takes as much energy as one would use in running one mile—it fills and thrills one with an abundance

of energy to be used creatively in the external world during the activities of daily life. After the meditation is over, work to refine every attribute of the external nature. Learn to give and to give freely without looking for a thank-you or a reward. Learn to work for work's sake, joyfully, for all work is good. Find the "thank-yous" from deep within yourself. Learn to be happy by seeking happiness, not from others, but from the depths of the mind that is happiness itself. ¶ And when in daily life, observe the play of the forces, the odic force as it plays between people and people, and people and their things. When it is flowing nicely between people, it is called harmony. But when the odic force congests itself between people and tugs and pulls and causes unhappiness, it is called contention. And then, when the odic force congests within oneself, we become aware of unhappy, fretful, disturbed states of the mind. The odic force then is called turbulence. It's the same force. The meditator learns to work with the odic forces of the world. He avoids shying away from them. The out-there and the within are his playground. ¶ The finest times to meditate are before dawn, at noon, sunset and midnight. All four of these times could be used, or choose one. The meditation

should be from fifteen minutes to one-half hour to begin with. What to meditate on? The transmutation of the odic forces back to their source, the actinic force. Through perfect posture, *āsana*, we transmute the physical forces and the emotional forces. Through the control of the breath, *prāṇāyāma*, we transmute the intellectual forces and move awareness out of the area of the mind that is always thinking—the great dream. ¶ Then we become vibrant and confident in ourselves, feeling the power of our spine through which the actinic forces flow out through the nerve system. We learn to lean on our own spine more than on any other person, teacher, book, organization or system. Answers begin to become real and vibrant, hooked on to the end of each question. And these and many more are the dynamic rewards of the sincere aspirant who searches within through meditation.

SATURDAY

Becoming Simple

When one begins to meditate, he should approach it dynamically, for it is becoming more alive. He is penetrating his awareness into the very source of life itself, for eventually he hopes to attain the ultimate goal, merger with Śiva, the experience of the Self beyond all time, beyond all form, beyond all cause. The experience of Paraśiva is attained only when one has become very simple, direct, uncomplicated. When a new nerve system has been built within this very body, strong enough to hold awareness within enough so that awareness itself can completely dissolve itself into its own essence, Satchidānanda and Paraśiva are experi-

enced. ¶After that dynamic experience, man's heritage in this lifetime, one enters back into the mind—which is all form, creating, preserving, destroying, completely finished in all areas of manifestation—and moves freely through the mind, seeing it for what it is. ¶Paraśiva is the ultimate goal in merging with Śiva, the realization of the Self in its totality. How does one know that one has experienced such an experience if you cannot speak of it, if it is beyond the mind, thought, cause, time and space? And yet one does know and vibrantly knows. There are various signposts. One is that one could go into Paraśiva an ignorant person and come out wise. Another: the urgency, the goal, the quest, is over. He loses something: the desire for Self Realization. Another signpost is that the Self, the very core of existence, is always his point of reference. He relates to the exterior world only as an adult relates to the children's toys. Paraśiva is to be sought for, worked for and finally attained. But a lot of work must be done first. ¶Choose a time for your meditation. Sit up so straight and strong and dynamic that you feel you are at that very moment the center of the universe. Regulate your breath so precisely that awareness flows freely out of the realm of thought into the perceptive areas of the mind. Then begin meditating on the two forces, odic and actinic. Be like the spaceman high above the surface of the Earth looking at the odic forces of the cities. Look then, too, at the odic forces, the magnetic forces, that motivate your life within yourself and between people and you and things. Feel the actinic force flooding out from the central source of energy itself. And then turn awareness in upon

itself. Simply be aware of being aware. Sit in dynamic bliss. And in coming out of this meditation, next feel the power of the spine, vibrant energy flooding out through the nerve system, the hands, the arms, the legs, the head. Enter back into life joyfully, joyously.

SUNDAY

Discipline And Success

It is very important to decide exactly what you are going to meditate on before beginning. Then stay with the decision throughout the meditation and make every effort to avoid the tendency to become distracted and take off in a new direction. The Shūm language as a tool for guiding the meditator is very helpful, because the individual's awareness is precisely held within the chosen area. This is similar to how we must discipline ourselves to be successful in outer activities. To become distracted is unacceptable. Successful people finish what they begin. It is possible to learn to meditate extremely well but be unsuccessful in practicing it if the meditator allows himself to become sidetracked once the inside of the mind has opened. To be successful, one has to be very, very firm with oneself when beginning a meditation. Each meditation must be performed in the way it was intended to be performed when the meditation was begun. ¶To be successful in meditation, we have to bring the mind into a disciplined state. Undisciplined people can never be told what to do, because they will not listen. Their awareness is wafted around by every little fancy that comes along. Those who really want to make progress in meditation and continue to do so and better themselves year after

year after year have to approach this art in an extremely positive and systematic way. ¶Thousands of devotees have come and gone since the beginning of my mission in 1949. Each one of them was determined to go deep within and realize the Self, but many gave up along the way. This was because at times the *śakti* power became very strong within them and their inner nerve system was not ready to receive the impact. Others were successful because they were more disciplined, and when their inner power came up, they enjoyed its intensity by holding it steady within the spine. They rested in the bliss of awareness aware only of itself. They then continued the meditation as planned after the power began to wane.

Paraśiva Darśana Pādapañchakam

परशिव दर्शन पादपञ्चकम्



Five Steps to Enlightenment

Step by step, practice withdrawal of the mind and look inward. One by one, you will witness the myriad good things within. Now and here below, you may meet the Lord for whom the ancient *Veda* still searches everywhere.

Tirumantiram 578

MONDAY
Step One:
Attention

The grand old man of the East who ordained me, Jnanaguru Yoganathan, Yogaswami of Jaffna, used to say time and time again, "It was all finished long ago."

It's finished already. The whole mind is finished, all complete, in all stages of manifestation. Man's individual awareness flows through the mind as the traveler treads the globe. ¶ Now we come to the real study, and this applies right to you and to you personally: the five steps on the path of enlightenment. What are they? Attention, concentration, meditation, contemplation and Self Realization. Those are the five steps that awareness has to flow through, gaining strength each time, on the path to enlightenment. When we first start, awareness is flowing through many areas of the mind. And if it is a mature awareness, we will say it's a great big ball of light, flowing through the mind. And if it's not a mature awareness, it's like a little ping-pong ball, bouncing around. The little ping-pong ball awareness is not going to walk the path of enlightenment, so to speak. It's going to bobble around in the instinctive mind, incarnation after incarnation, until it grows to a great big ball, like a great big beach ball. Then finally it will have enough experiences flowing through the mind to turn in on itself. When this happens, certain faculties come into being. One of them is willpower. And we learn to hold attention. We learn to hold awareness at attention. Awareness: attention! ¶ What is attention? Attention is the first of the five steps on the path, that is, holding awareness steady, centralized in only

one area of the mind, and the area that we choose it to be in, not the area that someone else has chosen it to be in. Our awareness is moved around by other people through the mind at such a fast rate that we think we are moving awareness ourselves, so to speak. That's a funny way to talk because I'm saying we move awareness as if awareness is something else, other than us. But awareness and energy and willpower are all the same thing. So, we will just call it awareness from here on out. When other people move awareness through one area or another, we call that distraction, or worldly distractions. The mission is to move awareness yourself. How do you learn to do that? By holding it at attention. ¶ How does attention work? Attention is awareness poised like a hummingbird over a flower. It doesn't move. The flower doesn't move, and awareness becomes aware of the flower—poised. The entire nerve system of the physical body and the functions of breath have to be at a certain rhythm in order for awareness to remain poised like a hummingbird over a flower. Now, since the physical body and our breath have never really been disciplined in any way, we have to begin by breathing rhythmically and diaphragmatically, so that we breathe out the same number of counts as we breathe in. After we do this over a long period of time—and you can start now—then the body becomes trained, the external nerve system becomes trained, responds, and awareness is held at attention.

TUESDAY**Step Two:
Concentration**

Then we automatically move into the next step, concentration. The hummingbird, poised over the flower, held at attention, begins to look at the flower, to concentrate on it, to study it, to muse about it, not to be distracted by another flower—that is then awareness moving. Awareness distracted, here, is awareness simply moving to another flower, or moving to another area of the mind. ¶Give up the idea that thoughts come in and out of your mind like visitors come in and out of your house. Hold to the idea that it is awareness that moves, rather than the thoughts that move. Look at awareness as a yo-yo at the end of a string. The string is hooked to the very core of energy itself, and awareness flows out and it flows in. Awareness might flow out toward a tree and in again, and then out toward a flower and then in again, and down toward the ground and then in again. This wonderful yo-yo of awareness—that is a good concept to grasp in order to become more acquainted with awareness. Awareness held at attention can then come into the next vibratory rate and concentrate. ¶Take a flower and place it in front of you. Breathe deeply as you sit before it. Simply look at it. Don't stare at it and strain your eyes. But simply become aware of it. Each time awareness moves to some other area of the mind, with your willpower move awareness back and become aware of the flower again. Keep doing this until you are simply aware of the flower and not aware of your body or your breath. Then begin to concentrate on the flower. That is the second step. Think

about the flower. Move into the area of the mind where all flowers exist in all phases of manifestation, and concentrate on the flower. Move from one area to another—to where all stems exist, to the stem of that particular flower, to the root that that particular flower came from, and to the seed. Concentrate, concentrate, concentrate on the flower. This is what concentration is—remaining in the thought area of the particular item that you are aware of and flowing through the different color and sound vibrations of the thoughts. How does it work? The powers of concentration—it is only a name. Actually, what is happening is you are flowing awareness through the area of the mind which contains the elements which actually made that particular flower, and you are perceiving how all those elements came together.

WEDNESDAY

Step Three: Meditation

After we are able to hold awareness hovering over that which we are concentrating upon, we come into great powers of observation. We are able to look into and almost through that

which we are concentrating upon and observe its various parts and particles, its action and its reaction, because we are not distracted. Even observation in daily life, as a result of regular participation in the practice of concentration, comes naturally. We are able to see more, hear more, feel more. Our senses are more keen and alive. Observation is so necessary to cultivate, to bring awareness fully into the fullness of meditation. ¶ This leads us then into our very next step, meditation. Meditation and concentration are

practically the same thing, though meditation is simply a more intense state of concentration. The state of meditation is careful, close scrutiny of the individual elements and energies which make up that flower. You are scrutinizing the inner layers of the mind, of how a flower grows, how the seed is formed. You are observing it so keenly that you have forgotten that you are a physical body, that you are an emotional unit, that you are breathing. You are in the area of mind where that flower exists, and the bush that it came from, and the roots and the seed and all phases of manifestation, all at the same time. And you are seeing it as it actually is in that area of the mind, where the flower is that you first put awareness at attention upon, then began to concentrate upon. Then you are meditating on the actual inner area of the mind where, in all stages of manifestation, that particular species actually is within the mind.

THURSDAY

Step Four: Contemplation

Out of meditation, we come into contemplation. Contemplation is concentrating so deeply in the inner areas of the mind in which that flower and the species of it and the seed of it and all exist. We go deeper, deeper, deeper within, into the energy and the life within the cells of the flower, and we find that the energy and the life within the cells of the flower is the same as the energy within us, and we are in contemplation upon energy itself. We see the energy as light. We might see the light within our head, if we have a slight body consciousness. In a state of contemplation, we might not even be conscious of light itself, for you are only conscious of

light if you have a slight consciousness of darkness. Otherwise, it is just your natural state, and you are in a deep reverie. In a state of contemplation, you are so intently alive, you can't move. That's why you sit so quietly. ¶Yogaswami once said, "I went in and in and in, so deep within, that a bird was sitting on my head." That is the type of teaching he would give to cause people to think that the physical body was so quiet, and quiet for so long, that a bird was just sitting on his head, didn't even know it was a man sitting there—"I went in and in and in and in so deeply that a bird was sitting on my head." Go in and in and in and in so deeply that a bird could sit on your head, through the stages of attention, concentration, meditation and contemplation of the inner energies of the universe itself. ¶When you are in the mind of energy, in that rarefied consciousness, you are not conscious of the Earth or any planets. You are just conscious of the stratum of energy that runs through Earth, space and planets. It's not even really energy. We are only conscious of energy when we are conscious of something that seems to be not energy. However, this is contemplation, the very source of that which is within and running through form.

FRIDAY

Step Five: Self Realization

This, then, leads to *samādhi*, the very deepest *samādhi*, where we almost, in a sense, go within one atom of that energy and move into the primal source of all. There's really nothing that you can say about it, because you cannot cast that concept of the Self, or that depth of *samādhi*, you cannot cast it out

in words. You cannot throw it out in a concept, because there are no areas of the mind in which the Self exists, and yet, but for the Self the mind, consciousness, would not exist. ¶ You have to realize It to know It; and after you realize It, you know It; and before you realize It, you want It; and after you realize It, you don't want It. You have lost something. You have lost your goal for Self Realization, because you've got it. ¶ I realized, went through that deep *samādhi*, right through these steps. I was taught these steps at a very young age: attention, concentration, meditation and contemplation, and then into the very deepest, deepest *samādhi*. After I went through that, I came out into contemplation, into meditation, into concentration, and thought, "How simple. Where was I, wandering around all this time, not to have been able to perceive and be the obvious?" The *Çhāndogya Upanishad* expresses it so beautifully: "The Infinite is below, above, behind, before, to the right, to the left. I am all this. This Infinite is the Self. The Self is below, above, behind, before, to the right, to the left. I am all this. One who knows, meditates upon and realizes the truth of the Self—such a one delights in the Self, revels in the Self, rejoices in the Self. He becomes master of himself and master of all the worlds. Slaves are they who know not this truth. He who knows, meditates upon and realizes this truth of the Self finds that everything—primal energy, ether, fire, water and all the other elements, mind, will, speech, sacred hymns and scriptures, indeed the whole universe—issues forth from it" (7.25.1-2; 7.26.1, UPP, p. 118).

SATURDAY
Going In and
Coming Out

The Self is so simple. You have to be so simple to realize the Self, not simple-minded, but so unattached. Awareness has to be able to move so nimbly through the mind, like a graceful deer going through the forest, so deftly through the mind, that none of the sticky substance of the mind, so to speak, sticks onto awareness and holds it steadfast for a period of time. And only with that agility can you move awareness in quickly to the Source, in on itself, until you come out having realized the Self. It is an experience you come out of more than go into. ¶If you were to explain Self Realization in another way, look at it in this way. Right out here we have a swimming pool. Beneath the surface of the water, we will call that the Self. The surface of the water, just the surface of it, we will call that the depths of contemplation, that pure consciousness, that most super-rarified area of the mind, the most refined area of the mind of pure consciousness. And we are going to dive through pure consciousness into the Self. We will call the physical body awareness. It's a body of light, and it's going to dive into the Self, into the depths of *samādhi*. But to do that, it has to break the surface, has to break pure consciousness. ¶So, then, we make a preparation. Attention! We take all our clothes off. We put on a bathing suit and walk around the pool. We are getting ready for this great dive. Concentration! We pull our forces together. We don't quite know what is going to happen to us. Meditation! We look over the swimming pool. We look over the whole thing. We are

studying out the philosophy of just what we are going to do. We even try to measure the depth of the Self. We talk to people about it and ask, “Have you jumped in there?” Some say, “No, but I intend to one day,” and others will answer, “Yes.” “Well, can you tell me something about it?” They say, “Uh-uh, no.” Then you go into contemplation. You just stand. And you are completely aware of just standing there, right on the brink of the Absolute, and you are standing—so, so, so much conscious that you’re there; you are just aware of being aware. And then you laugh, and then you jump in. As your hands and head go into the water, they disappear. As the body breaks the surface, it disappears. As the legs go in, they disappear. And we are all looking at the surface of the swimming pool and don’t see you there anymore. You just disappeared, the whole body. ¶As you come out of that *samādhi*, first the hands and head come up and begin to appear again—then the chest, then the entire torso. Then, as you climb out from the pool, the legs reappear, and finally the feet appear again. You are just the same as you were before, but you are all clean on the inside. Awareness has a new center. The center is way down in the bottom of there, someplace that you can’t even talk about. You have realized, when you come out, that you have realized the Self. ¶Before you went in, you knew all sorts of things about it. You could quote a thousand different things about the Self; you knew so much. And when you come out, you don’t know anything about it at all. You know you have had a tremendous experience. You have had an inner bath. Then you go back into just enjoying the

experience—contemplation. Then you begin to meditate, coming out again on the experience. And there is a vastness in you that awareness can no longer penetrate. It's a tremendous vastness; you just can't penetrate it anymore. You go in and in and in, and then all of a sudden you realize that you have realized the Self again. And you go in and in and in, and then all of a sudden you realize that you have realized the Self again. And everything is different. ¶ You look at the world from the inside out. You look at people from the inside out. You look at a person, and immediately you see how he came along through life. You look at his face, and you see what his mother looks like. You look into his subconscious mind; you see what his home looked like. You see what he was like when he was ten years old, fourteen, twenty, twenty-five years old; now he is thirty. And at the same time you are seeing what he is going to look like when he is forty years old, and so forth. You see the whole sequence, all now. Then you really know, after that deep *samādhi*, that the mind, in all phases of manifestation, was all finished long ago. It's already complete. ¶ Before that, you try to believe in that concept. And it's a vast concept to believe in, because at certain times, when awareness is flowing in the external areas of the mind, it certainly doesn't look that way at all. Our perspective is limited.

SUNDAY

After Self Realization

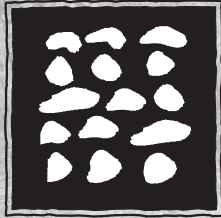
After the deep *samādhi* of Self Realization, our perspective couldn't really be called vast; we simply see things the way they are. And it's as simple as that. We see things the way they are, and

that is the way they are, from the inside out. You look at a tree. You see the energies of the tree all working within the tree. Then, after that, you see the leaves and the bark, and yet you see it all at the same time, all working together. That is Self Realization. ¶ Those are the five steps on the path of enlightenment, five steps that you have to work with. The first one could be the most difficult—attention. It is making a strong, brave soldier that's going on a great mission out of awareness. By calling awareness to attention, awareness immediately has to detach itself from that which it was previously aware of. For when awareness is attached to that which it is aware of, it thinks it is that thing. It doesn't think it is that thing, but seemingly so. When we detach awareness from that which it is aware of, we can move freely through the mind, first in a limited area of the mind, then in a more and more vast area of the mind. ¶ Then we learn to concentrate, which awakens the power of observation. If you have attention and concentration, the other stages come automatically. But for Self Realization, you have to really want it more than your life; for that deep *samādhi*, that's what it is: more than your life. The realization of the Self, beyond the rarefied areas of pure consciousness, is more than your life. You have to want it more than your life. ¶ Memorize these five steps: attention, concentration, meditation, contemplation, *samādhi*. Now, there are various stages of *samādhi*—*savikalpa samādhi*, *nirvikalpa samādhi*—but when I use the word *samādhi*, I refer to Self Realization, the Totality, the Ultimate, which I just described. It is worth seeking for. It is worth striving

for. It is worth making a mission of existence on this planet for. ¶ We are not on this planet to become educated, to get things, to make money, to dress up the physical body, to acquire property, to feed ourselves. We are on this planet for the realization of the Self, for that one thing, to go within ourselves. That is why we have come to this planet, and we will keep coming back through the process of reincarnation, time and time and time again, until that awareness grows up into a great big ball, where it is strong enough to move through the rarefied areas of the mind—if we are comparing awareness to a ball, from a ping-pong ball, to a volleyball, to a beach ball—and finally we are just there.

Jivanam Mahānubhūtiḥ

जीवनं महानुभूतिः



Life, the Great Experience

Though they practice *yoga* for eight thousand years, still men do not see the Lord, sweet as ambrosia and delightful to the eye. But if, illumined, you seek Him within, He is there in you, as a reflection in a mirror.

Tirumantiram 603

MONDAY**Establish Basic Principles**

At one time or another in life, each of us has had similar experiences of temptation. There were times when we went against what we knew to be the better action, did things we knew we would be sorry for later. We knew because the actual knowing of the consequences of our actions or inactions is resident within us. Even the demons of ancient scripture are actually within us, for that is the lower, instinctive nature to which power is given when we go against what we know to be the best for us. Even the greatest souls have temptations. The souls who are the oldest and the strongest have the strongest temptations and desires. Do you often ask, "Why should this happen to me? What did I do to deserve this?" The experience was created and born of your own strength. Any lesser experience would have meant little more than nothing to you because no lesson would have been derived from it. ¶When we go to kindergarten, we are taught gently. When we go to the university, we are taught in the language of the university. The teachings only come to us from life in a way that we can best understand them, in a way that we can best call forth our inner strength. I have been in many situations and expected people to meet certain standards, but I have discovered that there are many basic things people just don't know. ¶If you check back through the pages recording various periods of your life, you will observe that knowing grew from certain experiences which you held memory of in your subconscious mind. You can also look within yourself and observe all that you do not know that you knew. For

example, start with all those things you are not sure about. You must resolve all of these things through understanding before you can clear your subconscious mind. When you have cleared your subconscious mind through understanding the lessons from the experiences you are still reacting to, you will unfold the inner sight of your clear white light and begin to live in your true being. ¶The *yoga* student must establish basic principles in his life. He must try very hard to do this. The knowledge of interrelated action and reaction is within the consciousness of man. To understand the deeper experiences of life, we must analyze them. We must ask ourselves, “What does this experience mean? What lesson have I derived from it? Why did it happen?” ¶We can only find answers to these questions when we have established a foundation of *dharmic* principles, which are the mental laws governing action and reaction. Below are listed thirty-six contemporary *dharmic* principles that stabilize external forces so that a contemplative life may be fully lived. When practiced unrelentingly, they bring the understanding of the external and deeper experiences of life.

1. Simplify life and serve others.
2. Live in spiritual company.
3. Seek fresh air and sunshine.
4. Drink pure water.
5. Eat simple, real foods, not animal flesh.
6. Live in harmony with nature.
7. Consume what you genuinely need rather than desire.
8. Revere the many forms of life.
9. Exercise thirty minutes every day.

10. Make peace, not noise.
11. Make a temple of your home.
12. Develop an art form or craft.
13. Make your own clothing and furniture.
14. Express joy through song and dance.
15. Grow your own food organically.
16. Plant twelve trees a year.
17. Purify your environment.
18. Leave beauty where you pass.
19. Realize God in this life.
20. Be one with your *guru*.
21. Be nonviolent in thought and action.
22. Love your fellow man.
23. Rely on the independent energy in the spine.
24. Observe the mind thinking.
25. Cultivate a contemplative nature by seeking the light.
26. Draw the lesson from each experience of life.
27. Detach awareness from its objects.
28. Identify with infinite intelligence, not body, mind or intellect.
29. Be aware in the eternal now, not in the past or the future.
30. Do not take advantage of trust or abuse credit.
31. Keep promises and confidences.
32. Restrain and direct desire.
33. Seek understanding through meditation.
34. Work with a spiritual discipline.
35. Think and speak only that which is true, kind, helpful and necessary.
36. Create a temple for the next generation by tithing.

TUESDAY
Seeking for
Understanding

If you desire to find the answer to any question intently enough, you can find the answer within yourself, or you can find it in our holy scriptures or books of wisdom. Pick up one of these books, open it, and you will intuitively turn to the page which holds an answer to your question. You have had the experience at one time or another of recognizing your answer as confirmation that all knowing is within you. ¶ There is a state of mind in which the sifting-out process of action and reaction is not possible. This is when the subconscious mind is confused. Too many experiences have gone into the subconscious that have not been resolved through understanding. Balancing the subconscious mind is like keeping accounts or balancing books. ¶ Suppose you have hurriedly put many figures on your ledger. Some of them are correct but a few are not, and others do not belong, so the books don't balance. You may spend hours over these ledgers, but they won't balance because it is human nature that we do not see our own mistakes. It takes someone else to gently point them out to you. As you quietly sit in concentration over your books, trying to balance them with a deeper understanding, your *guru*, teacher or friend may walk in the door and in five minutes find the error. You correct it and, like magic, the darkness lifts, the books balance perfectly and you inwardly see your clear white light. The ledger is your subconscious mind, the figures are your experiences, and until you understand them you will remain in darkness, in a state of imbalance. ¶ You will

not only feel this disharmony, you will be able to see it portrayed as darkness within your body. For just as it is your experience which makes up your subconscious state of mind, so it is your subconscious which creates the physical body and makes it look as it does. There are some people skilled enough to look at your face and your body and thereby read what is in your subconscious mind. My spiritual master, Jnanaguru Yogaswami, could look at another's mind, see and understand the nature and intensity of the darkness or light. It is a science only a few are trained in accurately. He knew that the physical body is really created by the sum total of the conflicts and tranquilities within the subconscious state of mind. As man becomes enlightened through cognition, the conflict lessens, giving birth to the dawn after the darker hours. Hence the statement about the third eye, "When the eye becomes single, the whole body shall be filled with light."

WEDNESDAY
Experience Is
A Classroom

Each experience is a classroom. When the subconscious mind has been fully reconciled to everything that has happened, when you have fully realized that everything you have gone through is nothing more and nothing less than an experience, and that each experience is really a classroom, you will receive from yourself your innerversity personal evaluation report, and it will be covered with the highest grades, denoting excellent cognition. ¶ Each of these higher grades is important, for when you put them together they will unfold a consciousness of understanding, making you eligible for

your graduation certificate of visually seeing the clear white light within your head while sitting in a darkened room. Yet, if you have failed a class, or several classes, not only will the marks show, but it will also take you longer to graduate. If you haven't taken from each experience its sum of understanding, subconsciously you remain in the classroom reacting to the lesson you are learning, even though the experience may have occurred fifteen or twenty years ago. ¶So, we have to end each of these experiences in understanding. We have to be promoted to the next deeper grade of awareness so that, with the universal love born of understanding, we can close the classroom doors behind us and receive our diploma. When we receive this first diploma of the clear white light, we are given the greater knowledge and wisdom of what this great experience of life is all about. How do we realize what life is all about? By having lived it fully we fully realize that the past is nothing more and nothing less than a dream, and a dream is comprised of pleasant experiences and nightmares. Both are just experiences, neither good nor bad, right nor wrong. ¶But you must remember that even the greatest souls have had nightmares, confusions, heartbreaks, disappointments, losses, desires that have been unfulfilled and experiences that they have not been able to cognize. And then they have come to a point in their lives when their inner being started pushing forward to the conscious plane. In other words, they have had just about all the experience necessary to graduate out of the instinctive-intellectual world, or consciousness. The great, intuitive superconscious nature

begins pushing forward to the conscious plane, stirring up within the subconscious the remnants of the past. As those remnants come up, they have to be faced and cognized through meditation, thus creating the foundation for understanding the basic laws and principles of life. Then comes the dawn of the clear white light.

THURSDAY

We Create Our Mind Each Instant

I always try to keep the approach to the study of life and the unfolding of the inner Self very simple by giving examples of the flower that begins as the little seed and grows into a stem forming a bud. We know nothing of the blossom until the bud opens, and we know little of the bud after it has become a blossom. However, each process within that growth to maturity is an experience for the plant. The seed contains within itself its basic laws of growth. The stem will tell its own story as it grows. The bud contains many experiences and has contained within it a complete story of its own. As the blossom unfolds, it tells a radiant autobiography of beauty. ¶In the philosophies of the Orient, the inner mind is often depicted as the lotus flower. That is what the mind would look like if you could see the mind. We can look at things on the material plane. The ugly things tell us how ugly the mind can become. When we look at the beautiful creations of nature, we see how lovely the mind can be. ¶It is up to us to choose how we want to create the mind, conscious and subconscious. I say “how we want to create the mind” because we are creating our mind each instant. There is no past! That dream as it passes before our

vision is right now. We call it the past because we say we remember, but as we are remembering, we are recreating what we are remembering in the present. There is no future! That is also a dream or a vision, just like the past, because when we think of the so-called future we are recreating it before our vision right now. Therefore, there is no past; there is no future. Now is the only apparent reality! Now is the only apparent reality, and it is up to us to decide how we want to create our mind, because we do create our mind each instant. ¶We can make basic decisions. “I would like to be nice to a certain friend of mine. That is the one who has not been too friendly to me lately.” This is a basic decision. Go out today, and if someone does harm to you, or your friend is not kind to you, show your love by doing something kind for him. It is up to us to decide how to face life, be it “love your neighbor,” or “an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” It is up to us to fathom the reaction we are going to cause in ourselves and others by each of our decisions. Since each decision will bring its own reward, it is up to us to determine whether we want to suffer through a reaction as a result of an action that we have not duly considered in the light of *dharmic* principles. ¶Life is a series of decisions. Each instant, as we create the instant, we are creating the decision. We are facing the reaction we caused to come before us, and in facing it with the power of principle we are building the so-called future. So, a man has two paths, and every moment is a moment of judgment. Good judgment comes from concentration—directing the flow of thought. It does not always have to be difficult to choose.

FRIDAY**The Art of
Being Constant**

There is an art which you can learn which will make all of your decisions easier. It is the art of being constant. Consistency wins. Consistency is one of the most important qualities of a devotee. It is only through consistency in your daily life that you gain the awareness which enables you to cognize the experiences of life, taking from them their real lessons. It is only through consistency that you can avoid many of the boulders that lie in your way on the classical *yoga* path to enlightenment. Practice the art of being constant, and you will unfold your destiny, discover what you were born to do and learn how to accomplish it in this life. For in that security you will awaken and fulfill your destiny and realize the Self. Thus having your feet planted firmly on the ground, your consciousness can dwell freely in the spirit born of Self Realization. ¶ Study your approach to life today as you practice this exercise. Take some of the experiences from your subconscious state of mind. Add them up and see how well your life balances out. Visualize a scale before you. Put the total of the experiences understood and the lessons derived from them on one side. Put on the other side of the scale the total number of experiences that you do not fully understand and from which you can still reap lessons. See how they balance. If they balance evenly, you are well on your way to becoming steadfast and constant. If they overbalance on the reactionary side, you are on the right track because you now have the power to balance your scale—your subconscious. If they overbalance on

the understanding side, you should consider dedicating your life to the service of others. ¶ Sit quietly with your eyes closed. Look deep within and trace back to the peak experiences that have happened through your life from your earliest days. Quickly fan through the pages of your life and pinpoint each climax, and know that that climax was the sum total of many experiences, forming one great experience out of which one great lesson of life was born. ¶ Take the experiences that you are not quite sure of—all the ones that you cannot form into a solid stone of understanding. Take those experiences and resolve to trace down each intuitively. Don't analyze. Just look at the sum total of the experiences, and after awhile you will get your clarification in a flash of intuition. This will be of great benefit to you. The great lessons that those experiences offer will become apparent as you progress in your practice of concentration. Do this, and you will do much for yourself.

SATURDAY
Awakening
Willpower

This is why you were born. The one and only reason why you are existing in your material body is first to unfold into your clear white light, then penetrate deeper and deeper, touch into the Self, become a knower of the Self, Satchidānanda, and then deeper still into *nirvikalpa samādhi*, Self Realization, preparing for the next steps on the classical *yoga* path—*moksha*, freedom from rebirth, and *viśvagrāsa*, merging with Śiva. You will soon realize that you create the mind in any way that you want, that you are master of your mind. To become master of your mind, you must realize that under-

standing is fifty percent of control of the mind, and you have to work at it as an accountant would work to balance his books, as a musician has to work to master his instrument. ¶ To know yourself is why you are on Earth. You were born to realize the Self. You are not here to make money, to clothe yourself or to entertain yourself. These are incidentals. You are here on this planet to realize the Self God, and the only way to experience Self Realization is to awaken within you a dynamic, indomitable, actinic will. To do this, the steps are: first, find out what and where the willpower is. Everyone has it. Willpower is that quietness within, that serenity that is likened to a light so bright that you cannot see it with the physical eyes. Second, learn to use this actinic will. Begin with little things that you do. Become satisfied with everything that you do. To you, it must be a work of art, even if it is just drying a dish, cleaning a floor or painting a picture. Your work must satisfy you, and if it does not satisfy the inner you one hundred percent, you must use your indomitable willpower and keep striving until it does. ¶ You must become a perfectionist unto yourself, but first decide what your standard for perfection is. You must control the quality of your work. Take on no responsibility that you cannot handle. By doing this, you will find that you have much more control over the physical body and emotions than you ever thought possible. You will begin to demonstrate to yourself your powers of control over material creations, the physical body and the emotions of the instinctive area of the mind. Demonstration comes as you use your indomitable willpower.

SUNDAY
To Live a
Radiant Life

It is one thing to talk; it is another thing to demonstrate what is declared. Demonstration is a result of your awareness flowing through the superconscious area of the mind. The superconscious mind is actinic or radiant force, whereas the conscious and subconscious states of mind are manifestations of odic force, or magnetism. Excessive talk arises out of confused conscious and subconscious states of mind. ¶ Find your actinic spiritual destiny in this life. Learn to live fully each instant, completely in the eternity of the moment. Become refined by constructive, rather than abusive, practices. Become positive through the generation of good deeds, rather than those uncomplimentary experiences we react to and reenact. Yours is a new and positive destiny, one that is true, constant and free from want or dangers. Life ahead for you can only become one of fulfillment and radiance as you adjust to *dharmic* principles. Follow these thirty-six gentle guidelines for living and meditate regularly in the morning when you awaken and just before sleep each night. That is all that is needed by the beginner on the eternal path to those enlightened heights of superconsciousness to which the subtle, individual, intelligent awareness of man aspires. ¶ On and on through the mind we travel daily, once awareness has become detached from the limited area of mind it has been trapped in. The journey seems endless! It is. Seek on, seek on. Look in, look in. And on that solid foundation of good character, move into that place in the mind and live there, seeing no difference between

the inner and the outer states of fluctuating awareness. Be that now for which you have been striving. The search is within. Go within the mind. Go in and in and in and in and make fathomable the unfathomable depth of Being. You can do it. It has been done countless times over the past several thousand years. Give yourself the great benefit of believing in yourself and flow inward, inward—to the totality of it all.

Kuśalyaham Sāmpratameva

कुशल्यहं सांप्रतमेव



I'm All Right, Right Now

Faces drawn in distress, hearts stricken with grief, the *devas* all together rushed and cried, "Lord! We bow to You." Thus they prayed, prostrating low. And He of unsurpassing renown said, "Arise; fear not."

Tirumantiram 352

MONDAY
Everything
Is Perfect!

Nowadays meditation is becoming very popular. Everyone is talking about being centered. If you're right in the *center* of yourself, you don't hear any of the noise or activity. You're just peaceful within yourself. It's only when we come into the cross-section, the cross-fire of life, that we feel we're not all right. Then we begin living in the great lie of the universe, the great fear that if we die we might be gone forever. We forget all of the wonderful philosophy and beautiful teachings that we've been studying, and we're just not all right. ¶My *satguru*, Yogaswami, made the very bold statement once, "There is not even one thing in this world that is not perfect!" You have to take a master like that very seriously. He was *satguru* for over fifty years in a very orthodox area of the world. "There is not even one thing in this world that is not perfect," he said. Some of us look around at the world, and we find plenty of things that are wrong with it. I never have. I have always thought this is a wonderful planet—wouldn't have missed it for anything. It is a great time now to be alive, even though some of us don't think so, even though the planet is somewhat polluted, and some people have myriad complaints. ¶Meditation is not an escape from the exterior world. We have to straighten ourselves out in the exterior world first before meditation and inner life can really be successful. Sometimes we worry about our job, our business, our family or even that we are not living as spiritually as we think we should. ¶This is my advice: gain the perspective first that it is a wonderful world, that there

is nothing wrong in the world at all. Then ask yourself this question: “Am I not all right, right now, right this instant?” And answer, “I’m all right, right now.” Declare that. Then a minute later in another now ask again, “Am I all right, right now?” Just keep asking this one question for the rest of your life, and you will always feel positive, self-assured and fine. This attitude eliminates fear, worry and doubt. ¶I discovered this formula when I was seven years of age. It came to me from the inside one day when I was worried about missing my favorite radio program. We were on our way home in a snow storm at Lake Tahoe, and I was afraid we might get stuck and I’d miss the program. I saw my mind, awareness, go off into the future, and I brought it back by telling myself, “I’m all right, right now. It hasn’t happened yet.” As it turned out, we didn’t get stuck in the snow and I did get to listen to Captain Midnight. After that, I would say to myself, “I’m all right, right now,” every time something came up that stretched my imagination into the future, into worry, or into the past when something disturbing lingered in my memory patterns that I did yesterday that maybe I shouldn’t have done. Each time that happened I would say, “I’m all right, right now, am I not?” And I would have to always answer, “Of course, yes.” I started doing this at the age of seven, and still today I am convinced that I am all right, right now!

TUESDAY**Lean on Your
Own Spine**

How can we stabilize the path on those days when it's just plain rough? The first thing to do on the path is to change our perspective of looking at life. Initially, as we come onto the inner path, we look at the map of the journey—we read books. A book is a map. We then make up our mind whether or not we want to make a change in our lifestyle and our perspective. Once we decide that we do wish to go on, a good way to begin is to reprogram the clay-like subconscious mind. Reprogram the negative habit patterns by firmly believing that you're really all right. ¶The second thing to accomplish is to learn to lean on your own spine. Everyone nowadays wants to lean on someone else. We lean on our families until they push us out into the world. Then we lean on our friends until they can't help us anymore. But still we keep on leaning. Then we lean on our therapist until we run out of money. This attitude of leaning on another is not the foundation needed for the delicate states of deep meditation to be sustained. ¶We have to lean on our own spine. But first we have to claim our spiritual heritage and feel "I'm all right, right now." By saying this and believing it, we pull the energies in just a little and become centered again. When we ask ourselves point blank, "Am I all right, right now?" we have to come up with a "Yes." Lean on your own spine. Feel the power in the spine. Feel the energy in the spine. The energy in the spine is not concerned with any fear or worry or doubt—not at all. It is a pure, powerful, blissful energy. Lean on it, and you will go

crashing through into inner states of meditation. Things in the world will also work out right for you. You will be in the flow of life. You will have perfect timing. Beautiful things will begin to happen to you in the exterior world. Opportunities will open up for you where there were no opportunities before. People will become nice to you who ordinarily would not. All this and more begins to happen because mentally you are leaning on yourself, and people in general like you to do this. ¶ Don't lean on a philosophy. Don't lean on a *guru*. Don't lean on a teacher. Lean on your own spine and that power within it. Then the *guru* can be some help to you, for you will obey his directions when he speaks. The philosophy begins to come alive in you, for you can complement it with your own inner knowing.

WEDNESDAY

Realization Is the Key

What does it mean to “get centered” and to “be centered”? Actually, what it means is to feel the primal source within, to feel so centered that you are the center. And we always are something of what we feel, our hands or our legs or our bodies or our emotions or our desires. Most people on the path have the desire to get rid of their desires. It's an impossible battle. Have you ever tried to get rid of your desires? If you would stop trying to get rid of your desires, then you would be centered, because you then take the energy out of desire. You take awareness away from that world of desire, and you get right in the primal source of the energy which flows through the physical body. It flows through the emotional network, right through the intellectual

mind. That primal source of energy is flowing through the spine in each and every one of us this very moment. Feel it? ¶The entire spiritual unfoldment process, oddly enough, is designed to throw you off center so that you have to work to pull yourself on center. First life throws you off center. You have all kinds of experiences. You make mistakes and, with your indomitable will, have to control that fluctuating awareness to get it right on center and be all right, right now. Feel that powerful energy flowing through every nerve current and be that energy rather than the fluctuating nerve current. Then, one day, when you really get good at it, you find a *guru*. You are firmly on center, and he tries to throw you off. ¶My *guru*, Yogaswami, would always throw his disciples off center and set them spinning. They had to work hard with themselves to get on center again. That strengthens the sinews and the muscles of man's becoming himself, becoming totally aware that he is aware and then controlling his mind by not allowing his awareness to get caught up in the vast illusion of the externalities of the mind. How's that? That's a good one—the vast illusion of the externalities of the mind! ¶What is this center? Well, it's like the inside of an empty glass. You know something is there, and when you're aware of it, you know that you're aware inside that empty glass. However, when you're aware of the glass itself, that's something else. When you're aware of the outside of the glass, that's something else again. When you're aware of the table the glass is sitting on, again that's something else. Now imagine you are like the glass. Become aware of the space inside. That is the tan-

gible intangible you have to grasp. ¶The best way to work this is a very simple way. Let's try it now. Just open and close your hands and feel the muscles and the bones. Now feel an intangible something, an intangible energy, which is that life force, and soon you will feel a force within that. That is your force of awareness that gives the command to the life forces, to the muscles and sinews which open and close your hand. So, be that intangible force rather than the hand. Be the commander who commands the muscles to relax and tense, to open and close. It's an intangible reality. This you realize. You don't think about it. Your intellect cannot give it to you. Your instinct and emotions cannot give it to you. It's something you have to realize. When you grasp it, you start to unfold and awaken spiritually. It comes from the deeper *chakras*, the higher *chakras*. And it's very easy. You either have grasped it or you haven't grasped it. So, work with that and grasp that. Then the unfoldment process begins. Finally you begin to see light within the head, light within the body. You begin to have beautiful, beautiful inner experiences. Everybody these days wants to have profound inner experiences without the use of drugs, or without the use of anything but their own positive will-power. That's the goal of the unfoldment of the people of all nations today, according to my own poll. And it is the right and mature goal.

THURSDAY
The Meditative
Perspective

Someone asked, “What happens in a person’s daily life when he first starts to meditate?” Many things can and do happen to you when you first start to meditate. For instance, your friends may think that you’re withdrawing from them. They’ll say you’re afraid of the world so you’re trying to get away from it all by meditating. Other people will quickly congratulate you and say, “You’re finally on the path. We’ve waited a long time for you to find the path.” Then you’re taken into a certain social group who are also on the path, who have long since stopped meditating but do appreciate it when you do! They will talk to you so much about the path, they will finally get you to stop meditating, too. All sorts of things will happen to you. ¶The best thing to do when you begin meditation is to live in a good environment, among good people. Meditate alone and don’t talk about it to anyone except the person who is helping you on the path. Do it inconspicuously, privately. It’s an inner process, so it should be performed alone. Then only inner things will happen to you, and your outer life will become better and better and better. You’ll get into a blissful flow with life—a perfect timing in your outer life. You will find yourself standing in the right place at the right time, every day. You will be in the energy flow with life, guided by your intuition. All the wonderful things that you should be experiencing on this planet will begin to come to you. ¶By changing yourself, you don’t necessarily outwardly alter world events. But you do find where the world is and

that it is functioning just as it should be, in a perfect balance of adjusting forces. From his position at the pinnacle of consciousness, my *guru*, Yogaswami, saw the harmony of life. From the top of the mountain looking down, you see the natural role of a raging ocean and the steep cliffs below—they are beautiful. From the bottom of the mountain, the ocean can appear ominous and the cliffs treacherous. Yogaswami looked at the universe from the inside out and saw that there is not one thing out of place or wrong. You can gain that perspective through meditation, which releases the human concepts of right and wrong, good and bad, easy and difficult. This is the perspective you find on the inside of yourself. ¶Man is in a perfect state of being right now. The great sages and *rishis* found this truth. They were not more perfect than their contemporaries, just more aware. You are perfect this very moment. You are all that you will ever be. If you don't see it that way, then you live in a difficult state of affairs, striving toward perfection and being imperfect along the way. ¶Awareness of perfection is attained by sitting down and arriving at the state of expanded cosmic consciousness inside yourself. It's there, only to be discovered. You can do that in nine minutes, nine hours, nine days or nine years. Take as long as you like. The fact remains that deep inside you is perfection. So, you see, you have a choice. You can remain in the valley, live in fear of the stormy ocean of life and death, or you can scale the nearby mountain and see from the top how it is from that perspective. Either way, you and everyone in the world are all right in the now.

FRIDAY
Living
Positively

The mystic lives within himself and deals positively with the events and forces outside himself. He is always consciously striving to realize that limitless Reality within him. That is his practice. Yet he welcomes the challenges of the world, not as a *karma* forced upon him against his will but as his own self-created *dharma*. If he is really a mystic, he doesn't run away from these challenges. He inwardly knows that life's daily difficulties bring forth his inner strength in response to them. He sees the underlying purpose of life. He accepts and doesn't reject. He searches for understanding, for the lesson that lies behind each experience instead of resenting the experience, which then creates another subconscious barrier for him. He knows that most problems are with man and the way he looks at things. ¶So, the mystic doesn't need to retreat from the world. The same process continues regardless of where he goes. He can be as peaceful or as disturbed in New York City as in a secluded Himalayan valley. It all depends on what goes on within him. Nor should he be emotionally concerned with the problems of the world in which he finds himself. A concert *sitārist* is doing himself and his fellow man no good by saying, "How can I play so beautifully when everyone else plays so poorly?" Similarly, the mystic cannot take the attitude, "How can I be peaceful and content when the world is in such a mess?" We need beautiful music and we need beautiful, peaceful beings. ¶Actually, the mystic sees the world as a conglomerate of adjusting forces, and through this perspective he is not

emotionally involved in these forces. The world is a mirror of ourselves and is perfectly all right to the man who is content within himself. But you have to find this out for yourself, because unless you experience it, nothing I say will convince you that everything you have been through and are going through is wonderful and a fulfillment of the great pattern of your life. ¶ Even a great soul faces difficulties, but he does not take them personally. Generally people take problems too personally by identifying closely with them. When they experience anger, they are angry. When they experience bliss, they are blissful. The mystic identifies with the experiencer instead of the experience. He sees himself as pure awareness that travels in the mind. When he is in San Francisco, he is not San Francisco. Similarly, when he is in anger, he is not anger. He says to himself, "I am pure energy. I am the spiritual energy that floods through mind and body. I am not the body, the mind or the emotions. I am not the thoughts I think or the experiences I experience." Thus, he molds a new identity of himself as a free being who can travel anywhere in the mind. Such a person is always at the top of the mountain. ¶ We have to examine this concept of who we are. When we begin to totally feel all right about ourself, the meaning of the word *I* begins to change. *I* no longer means the body of us. *I* means energy, awareness and willpower. Soon we gain the total truth that we are living in the body, but we are not the body we live in. Examine the word *I* and honestly see what it means to you. Does it mean the physical body? Does it mean the emotions? Does it mean the intellect? Does it mean the spiritual energy?

SATURDAY**Abiding in the
Eternal Now**

When we forget who we are, who we really are, we live in a consciousness of time and space, and we relate to the future, to the external us, to the past, and to our subconscious internal us.

This can be rather confusing. Most people are therefore confused and seek to distract themselves in an effort to find peace. A conscious awareness of now only comes when we remember who we really are. This doesn't mean we cannot plan for the future or benefit ourselves by reviewing experiences of the past. It simply means that we always remember that we are the essence of all energy, the source. ¶Return to the source. Merge with Śiva. At the source there is always peace. The key to this entire practice is to become consciously aware of energy. In this constant remembering we have the feeling of being the center of the universe, with the whole world functioning around us. To be fully anchored in the knowledge of the source of our being, the eternal now can and must be a constant experience. It's easy to live in the now if you work with yourself a little every day and concentrate on what you are doing each moment. To begin to work toward establishing yourself in the eternal now, first limit time and space by not thinking about or discussing events that happened more than four days past or will happen more than four days in the future. This keeps awareness reined in, focused. Be aware. Ask yourself, "Am I fully aware of myself and what I'm doing right now?" ¶Once you have gained a little control of awareness in this way, try to sit quietly each day

and just be. Don't think. Don't plan. Don't remember. Just sit and be in the now. That's not as simple as it sounds, for we are accustomed to novelty and constant activity in the mind and not to the simplicity of being. Just sit and be the energy in your spine and head. Feel the simplicity of this energy in every atom of yourself. Think energy. Don't think body. Don't think about yesterday or tomorrow. They don't exist, except in your ability to reconstruct the yesterdays and to create the tomorrows. Now is the only time. This simple exercise of sitting and being is a wonderful way to wash away the past, but it requires a little discipline. You have to discipline every fiber of your nerve system, work with yourself to keep the power of awareness expanded. Regular practice of meditation will bring you intensely into the eternity of the moment. Practice supersedes philosophy, advice, psychology and all pacifiers of the intellect. We have to practice to keep awareness here and now. If you find yourself disturbed, sit down and consciously quiet the forces in yourself. Don't get up until you have completely quieted your mind and emotions through regulating the breath, through looking out at a peaceful landscape, through seeking and finding understanding of the situation. This is the real work of meditation that is not written much about in books. If you can live in the eternity of now, your life will be one of peace and fulfillment. ¶ Visualize yourself sitting on top of a mountain. There is no place to go except inside yourself. If you were to go down the northern side of the mountain, you would be going into the future and its ramifications, which are only conceptual.

If you were to go down the southern side, you would be going into the past and its similar recorded ramifications. So, you stay where you are, at the pinnacle of consciousness, well balanced between past and future. Everything is in its rightful place in the master plan of evolution, so you sit, just watching, sensing the clarity of your own perfect being, learning to live in spiritual consciousness every day. That is your heritage on this Earth.

SUNDAY

Anticipated Reactions

Last night we drove past Lake Tahoe and the lake was calm. That calmness is what you see within your mind when your problems are solved within you. If you were to look down in the bottom of the lake, you would see old tree trunks, tin cans, garbage and other things, which can be compared to unsolved problems. When the bottom of the lake is sandy, that is like the lake of your consciousness after all your problems are solved. As you know, there are three types of people: the ignorant man laughs and makes fun of things he does not understand; the intellectual man smiles condescendingly and criticizes, using other's opinions he has read or heard in the past; the wise man will look at what he understands, try to understand it further and later explain it so others can understand it. ¶As you evolve spiritually, you go through these various states of unfoldment. You never know what state of consciousness you will come into next, since you have never evolved spiritually before. In schooling yourself to live in the eternal now, you overcome anticipated reactions of the subconscious mind, the

mind of feeling and habit patterns. Many people have two conflicting approaches to the same problem: one a state of understanding, and the other born of habits of the past. Clear that situation, so that when it comes up you will not have an anticipated reaction; you will cancel it ahead of time. Remain quiet and do not allow your emotional mind to talk to you. You are lost if it does, from reactionary habit patterns of the past, if you listen. As you pray each day, learn to concentrate, meditate and demonstrate your will over your mind. Demonstrate to yourself, and everybody else will see the result. Subdue ancient habit patterns latent in the subconscious mind. Then you will react not from anticipated reaction but from an action born of your intuitive nature. That is how to accomplish understanding. ¶Let us watch an anticipated reaction—an example of how we think we are going to react. “I am going to be tired tonight,” we say, for instance, after a hard day’s work. You are anticipating a reaction. What are you doing? You are setting up a vibration to be tired when you get home. Instead, you can forget about being tired and jump into a very interesting situation without getting tired by living in the inspiration of the moment. ¶Remember one thing, we have to get our joy out of the doing, not the result. That is the difference between the Oriental and the Occidental. The Oriental receives his joy in the doing, not the result. The American rushes through his doing, thinking he will get his joy from the result, so is in a state of tension all the time. Life is a constant state of joy in doing. We will have mixed results if we look for joy in results, and our subcon-

scious mind will be frustrated. Receive joy in everything you do. ¶You have a greater understanding to apply to your life today. In application you set up new habit patterns—the clear, calm sort which allow you to look in the lake and see the sandy bottom. Don't look for your reactions experienced in the past, and life will hold continuous, joyous surprises. You will hold yourself in sufficient control so that you can concentrate, meditate and contemplate. The study of *yoga* is a full-time job, started on Monday and carried out twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, to see results. ¶If you are not peaceful, you are still reacting to past habit patterns. If you don't feel peaceful, pretend that you do. Feel peace. Feel everybody feeling that same calmness right now. Feelings rub off on other people. If you can demonstrate a constant, consistent peace, get acquainted with peace, the chemical ingredients carried with you all day long, and make others feel peaceful, you will be doing something very fine for world peace, because the world starts with you. The little that you do is important, and it will ramify and expand your consciousness and the consciousness of everybody around you. Try it and see. Hold the consciousness of peace within you. The instinctive nature of man does not want to do that. Conquer that, and that promotes peace in itself.

Mahādevānām Prema

महादेवानां प्रेम



Love of the Gods

My God is the melter of my heart of love. Let all adore my God, the Lord of primal love, first of beings, my Śiva, who again and again melts my heart. May He render me His love in foremost measure! Praise Him but once, the Pure and Holy One, and He will be your escort to heaven. He, Lord Śiva, decked in honeyed *konrai* blooms, sits enthroned in my love, steadfast and free.

Tirumantiram 274-275

MONDAY
The Nature
Of Devotion

Devotion in Hinduism is known as *bhakti*. It is an entire realm of knowledge and practice unto itself, ranging from the child-like wonder of the unknown and the mysterious to the deep reverence which comes with understanding of the esoteric interworkings of the three worlds. Hinduism views existence as composed of three worlds. The First World is the physical universe, the Second World is the subtle astral or mental plane of existence in which the *devas*, or angels, and spirits live, and the Third World is the spiritual sphere of the Mahādevas, the Deities, the Gods. Hinduism is the harmonious working together of these three worlds. Religion blossoms for the Hindu as he awakens to the existence of the Second and Third Worlds. These inner worlds naturally inspire in man responses of love and devotion and even awe. They are that wonderful. ¶ Devotion in Hinduism occurs on many levels and at different cycles of time in the evolution of the soul. All forms of devotion are equally valid, and none claims itself as the only proper form of worship. There is devotion to the tribal Deities, to the scriptures, to the saints and to the *satguru*. But the most prevalent expression of worship for the Hindu comes as devotion to God and the Gods. In the Hindu pantheon there are said to be 330 million Gods. Even so, all Hindus believe in one Supreme Being who pervades the entire universe. ¶ The many Gods are perceived as divine creations of that one Being. These Gods, or Mahādevas, are real beings, capable of thought and feeling beyond the lim-

ited thought and feeling of embodied man. So, Hinduism has one God, but it has many Gods. There are only a few of these Gods for whom temples are built and *pūjās* conducted. Gaṇeśa, Śiva, Subramaniam, Viṣṇu and Śakti are the most prominent Deities in contemporary Hinduism. Of course, there are many others for whom certain rites or *mantras* are done in daily ceremony, often in the home shrine. These include Brahmā, Sūrya, Sarasvatī, Lakshmī, Agni, Chandra, Ayyappan, Hanumān, Mariyamman and others. ¶The Hindu traditionally adopts an *Iṣṭa Devatā*. This is a personal Deity chosen from the many Hindu Gods, often according to the devotee's family background or the feeling of closeness to one form of divine manifestation. It is the unique and all-encompassing nature of Hinduism that one devotee may be worshipping Gaṇeśa while his friend worships Subramaniam or Viṣṇu, and yet both honor the other's choice and feel no sense of conflict. The profound understanding and universal acceptance that are unique in Hinduism are reflected in this faculty for accommodating different approaches to the Divine, allowing for different names and forms of God to be worshiped side by side within the temple walls. It may even happen that one may adopt a different personal Deity through the years according to one's spiritual unfoldment and inner needs.

TUESDAY

The Gods Are Living Realities

The Hindu religion brings to us the gift of tolerance that allows for different stages of worship, different and personal expressions of devotion and even different Gods to guide our life

on this Earth. Yet, it is a one religion under a single divine hierarchy that sees to the harmonious working together of the three worlds. These intelligent beings have evolved through eons of time and are able to help mankind without themselves having to live in a physical body. These great Mahādevas, with their multitudes of angelic *devas*, live and work constantly and tirelessly for the people of our religion, protecting and guiding them, opening new doors and closing unused ones. The Gods worshiped by the Hindu abide in the Third World, aided by the *devas* that inhabit the Second World. ¶It is in the Hindu temple that the three worlds meet and devotees invoke the Gods of our religion. The temple is built as a palace in which the Gods reside. It is the visible home of the Gods, a sacred place unlike every other place on the Earth. The Hindu must associate himself with these Gods in a very sensitive way when he approaches the temple. ¶Though the devotee rarely has the psychic vision of the Deity, he is aware of the God's divine presence. He is aware through feeling, through sensing the divine presence within the temple. As he approaches the *sanctum sanctorum*, the Hindu is fully aware that an intelligent being, greater and more evolved than himself, is there. This God is intently aware of him, safeguarding him, fully knowing his inmost thought, fully capable of coping with any situation the devotee may mentally lay at His holy feet. It is important that we approach the Deity in this way—conscious and confident that our needs are known in the inner spiritual worlds. ¶The physical representation of the God, be it a stone or metal image, a *yantra*

or other sacred form, simply marks the place that the God will manifest in or hover above in His etheric body. It can be conceived as an antenna to receive the divine rays of the God or as the material body in or through which the God manifests in this First World. Man takes one body and then another in his progression through the cycles of birth and death and rebirth. Similarly, the Gods in their subtle bodies inhabit, for brief or protracted spans of time, these temple images. When we perform *pūjā*, a religious ritual, we are attracting the attention of the *devas* and Mahādevas in the inner worlds. That is the purpose of a *pūjā*; it is a form of communication. To enhance this communication, we establish an altar in the temple and in the home. This becomes charged or magnetized through our devotional thoughts and feelings, which radiate out and affect the surrounding environment.

WEDNESDAY

Communing With the Gods

Chanting and *satsaṅga* and ceremonial rituals all contribute to this sanctifying process, creating an atmosphere to which the Gods are drawn and in which they can manifest. By the word *manifest*, I mean they actually come and dwell there, and can stay for periods of time, providing the vibration is kept pure and undisturbed. The altar takes on a certain power. In our religion there are altars in temples all over the world inhabited by the *devas* and the great Gods. When you enter these holy places, you can sense their sanctity. You can feel the presence of these divine beings, and this radiation from them is known as *darshan*. The reality of

the Mahādevas and their *darshan* can be experienced by the devotee through his awakened *ājñā* vision, or more often as the physical sight of the image in the sanctum coupled with the inner knowing that He is there within the microcosm. This *darshan* can be felt by all devotees, becoming stronger and more defined as devotion is perfected. Through this *darshan*, messages can be channeled along the vibratory emanations that radiate out from the Mahādevas, as well as from their representatives, the Second World *devas* who carry out their work for them in shrines and altars. ¶To understand *darshan*, consider the everyday and yet subtle communication of language. You are hearing the tones of my voice through the sensitive organ, your ear. Meaning comes into your mind, for you have been trained to translate these vibrations into meaning through the knowing of the language that I am speaking. *Darshan* is a vibration, too. It is first experienced in the simple physical glimpse of the form of the Deity in the sanctum. Later, that physical sight gives way to a clairvoyant vision or to a refined cognition received through the sensitive ganglia within your nerve system, the *chakras*. Through these receptors, a subtle message is received, often not consciously. Perhaps not immediately, but the message that the *darshan* carries, direct from the Mahādeva—direct from Lord Gaṇeśa, direct from Lord Murugan, direct from Lord Śiva Himself—manifests in your life. This is the way the Gods converse. It is a communication more real than the communication of language that you experience each day. It is not necessary to understand the communication immediately. The devotee may go

away from the temple outwardly feeling that there was no particular message, or not knowing in his intellectual mind exactly what the *darshan* meant. Even the words you are now reading may not be fully cognized for days, weeks or even months. The depth of meaning will unfold itself on reflection. ¶ Visiting a Hindu temple, receiving *darshan* from the majestic Gods of our religion, can altogether change the life of a worshiper. It alters the flow of the *prāṇas*, or life currents, within his body. It draws his awareness into the deeper *chakras*. It adjusts his beliefs and the attitudes that are the natural consequence of those beliefs. But the change is slow. He lives with the experience for months and months after his visit to the temple. He comes to know and love the Deity. The Deity comes to know and love him, helping and guiding his entire evolutionary pattern. *Darshan* coming from the great temples of our Gods can change the patterns of *karma* dating back many past lives, clearing and clarifying conditions that were created hundreds of years ago and are but seeds now, waiting to manifest in the future. Through the grace of the Gods, those seeds can be removed if the manifestation in the future would not enhance the evolution of the soul.

THURSDAY

The Meaning Of Icon Worship

Hindu temples are new to this side of the planet, and the knowledge of the very special and entirely esoteric nature of the Hindu temple is unknown in the West. One of the first misunderstandings that arises in the West is the purpose and function of the “graven image.” The Judaic-Christian tradition

firmly admonishes against the worship of graven images, though, of course, in Catholicism saints and images, and in Eastern Orthodoxy their pictures, are reverently worshiped. The Hindu doesn't worship idols or graven images. He worships God and the great godlike Mahādevas. The image is only that, an icon or representation or channel of an inner-plane Deity that hovers above or dwells within the statue. The physical image is not required for this process to happen. The God would perform His work in the temple without such an image, and indeed there are Hindu temples which have in the sanctum sanctorum no image at all but a *yantra*, a symbolic or mystic diagram. There are other Hindu temples which have only a small stone or crystal, a mark to represent the God worshiped there. However, the sight of the image enhances the devotee's worship, allowing the mind to focus on the sacred bonds between the three worlds, allowing the nerve system to open itself to the *darshan*. ¶Sight is very powerful. Sight is the first connection made with the Deity. The sight of the icon in the sanctum stimulates and enhances the flow of uplifting energies, or *prāṇas*, within the mind and body. Each Deity performs certain functions, is in charge, so to speak, of certain realms of the inner and outer mind. Knowing which Deity is being worshiped, by seeing the image of the Deity there, unfolds in the mind's eye a like image and prepares the way for a deeper devotion. ¶In a Hindu temple there is often a multiplicity of simultaneous proceedings and ceremonies. In one corner, an extended family, or clan, with its hundreds of tightly knit members, may be joyously

celebrating a wedding. At another shrine a lady might be crying in front of the Deity, saddened by some misfortune and in need of solace. Elsewhere in the crowded precincts a baby is being blessed, and several groups of temple musicians are filling the chamber with the shrill sounds of the *nāgasvaram* and drum. After the *pūjā* reaches its zenith, *brāhmin* priests move in and out of the sanctum, passing camphor and sacred ash and holy water to hundreds of worshipers crowding eagerly to get a glimpse of the Deity. All of this is happening at once, unplanned and yet totally organized. It is a wonderful experience, and such a diverse array of devotional ceremonies and such an intensity of worship can only be seen in a Hindu temple. There is no place on Earth quite like a Hindu temple. ¶Esoterically, the Gods in the temple, who live in the microcosm, can work extraordinarily fast with everyone. There is so much going on that everyone has the sense of being alone. The weeping woman is allowed her moment of mourning. No one feels that she is upsetting the nearby wedding. No one even notices her. The temple is so active, so filled with people, that each one is left to worship as he needs that day—to cry or to laugh or to sing or to sit in silent contemplation in a far-off corner.

FRIDAY

The Centrality Of Temples

Like the Hindu religion itself, the Hindu temple is able to absorb and encompass everyone. It never says you must worship in this way, or you must be silent because there is a ceremony in progress. It accepts all, rejects none. It encourages all

to come to God and does not legislate a single form of devotion. Hindus always want to live near a temple, so they can frequent it regularly. People arbitrate their difficulties in the vicinity of the temple. The Hindu people treat the temple very seriously and also very casually. It's a formal-informal affair. Between *pūjās*, some may sit and talk and chat while others are worshipping. You might even find two people having a dispute in the temple, and the Deity is the arbitrator of their quarrel, giving clarity of mind on both sides. ¶ Each Hindu temple throughout the world has its own rules on how to proceed and what to do within it. In some temples, in fact most temples in South India, all the men are required to take off their shirts and enter bare-chested. However, if you are in a business suit in the South Indian temple in New York, that's all right. You are not required to take off your shirt. Every temple has its own rules, so you have to observe what everybody else is doing the first time you go. ¶ Hinduism is the most dynamic religion on the planet, the most comprehensive and comprehending. The Hindu is completely filled with his religion all of the time. It is a religion of love. The common bonds uniting all Hindus into a singular spiritual body are the laws of *karma* and *dharma*, the belief in reincarnation, all-pervasive Divinity, the ageless traditions and our Gods. Our religion is a religion of closeness, one to another, because of the common bond of loving the same Gods. All Hindu people are a one family, for we cannot separate one God too far from another. Each in His heavenly realm is also of a one family, a divine hierarchy which

governs and has governed the Hindu religion from time immemorial, and will govern Sanātana Dharma on into the infinite. ¶Hinduism was never created, never founded as a religion. Therefore, it can never end. Until the Persians attached the name *Hindu* to those people living east of the river Indus, and the name Hinduism later evolved to describe their religious practices, this ancient faith bore a different title—the Sanātana Dharma, the Eternal Truth. The understanding was that within every man the germ or cell of his total affinity with God exists as the perennial inspiration of his spiritual quest and wellspring of all revelation. This enduring sense of an ever-present Truth that is God within man is the essence of the Sanātana Dharma. Such an inherent reality wells up lifetime after lifetime after lifetime, unfolding the innate perfection of the soul as man comes more fully into the awakened state of seeing his total and complete oneness with God.

SATURDAY

In God's Presence

In the beginning stages of worship, a Hindu soul may have to wrestle with disbelief in the Gods. He may wonder whether they really exist, especially if his own intuition is obscured by assimilation of Western, existentialist beliefs and attitudes. Yet, he senses their existence, and this sensing brings him back to the temple. He is looking for proof, immersed in the process of coming to know the Gods for himself. He is heartened and assured by hundreds of saints and *rishis* who have fathomed and found close and enduring relationships with the Gods, and who then extolled their

greatness in pages of scripture and chronicle. ¶The devotee stands before the sanctum and telepathically tells the Gods a problem, and with hopeful faith leaves and waits. Days or weeks later, after he had forgotten about his prayer, he suddenly realizes the problem has disappeared. He attempts to trace the source of its solution and finds that a simple, favorable play of circumstance and events brought it about. Had the Gods answered his prayer, or would it have happened anyway? He brings another prayer to the Gods, and again in time an answer appears in the natural course of his life. It appears to him that the Gods are hearing and responding to his needs. Trust and love have taken root. He goes on, year after year, bringing the Gods into his secular affairs, while just as carefully the Gods are bringing him into their celestial spheres, enlivening his soul with energy, joy and intelligence. ¶The Hindu looks to the Gods for very practical assistance. He devoutly believes that the Gods from their dwelling in the Third World are capable of consciously working with the forces of evolution in the universe and they could then certainly manage a few simpler problems. He devoutly believes that the Gods are given to care for man on the planet and see him through his tenure on Earth, and that their decisions are vast in their implications. Their overview spans time itself, and yet their detailed focus upon the complicated fabric of human affairs is just as awesome. ¶When a devotee settles upon his *Ishta Devatā*, the one God to whom his endearment and devotion will be directed, that Deity assumes the position of his spiritual parent. Many of you are parents

and know the inestimable value that correction and timely discipline serve in the raising of children into responsible, mature adults. The Gods are our spiritual parents. When a devotee is not living up to his best, betraying his own silent vows taken unto himself, his *Ishta Devatā*, or personal Deity, is present enough in his life, alive enough in his mind, to know this. The God has the ability to scan ahead in time and make a sharp and often painful adjustment or severe penalty in the life of the devotee to protect him from an even greater impending tragedy or mental abyss.

SUNDAY

How the Gods Work with Man

The Gods do not treat everyone alike. The attitude that all souls are equal and subject to equal standards of right and wrong behavior is not an Eastern understanding. Nor is it the way the Gods view the souls of men. There are younger souls and older souls, just as there are children and adults. They live worlds apart in the same world. Souls living side by side may actually be hundreds of lives apart in their spiritual maturation, one just learning what the other learned many lives ago. The Gods discern the depth of the soul, and when they are approached they see the devotee not only as he is but as he was and will be. They help the devotee in understanding within the sphere of intelligence which they command. ¶ Often one God will primarily direct one specialized mind stratum. He will come to know the problems and nuances indigenous to that mind region. Thus, the same misdeed performed by three souls of different ages under similar circumstances is viewed as three different

misdeeds by the Gods. An older soul is more aware, more able to control himself and therefore more responsible for his actions. He should have known better and finds that his transgression brings painful retribution. Another less mature soul is still learning control of the emotions that provoked his misdeed, and he is sharply scolded. Still another soul, so young that awareness has not yet fathomed the laws of *karma*, of action and reaction, and who remains unawakened to the emotional mastery the situation demanded, is lightly reprimanded, if at all. ¶The Gods in their superconscious judgment of human deeds and misdeeds are infinitely fair and discerning. Their judgments are totally unlike the notion of a God in heaven who arbitrarily saves or condemns. In Hinduism all men are destined to attain liberation. Not a single soul will suffer for eternity. Therefore, the Gods in their deliberations are not making what we would consider personal judgments. Their decrees are merely carrying out the natural law of evolution. They are always directing the soul toward the Absolute, and even their apparent punishments are not punishments, but correction and discipline that will bring the soul closer to its true nature. Now, of course, human law is not like this, especially today, but in civilizations past and in the great religious Hindu empires of India, there were such equitable courts of law, with enlightened men of justice, where sentences and punishments were meted out upon careful scrutiny of the individual, his particular *dharma* and the duties and expectations it bound him to uphold. ¶It is through the sanction of the Gods that

the Hindu undertakes the practice of *yoga*—that orthodox and strictly Hindu science of meditation that leads to merger of the many with the one. *Yoga* is the culmination of years of religious and devotional service and can only be successful with the support of the Gods who are the sentries guarding the gates of the various strata of consciousness. This sanction, once obtained, can and does allow the *kuṇḍalinī* force within the core of the spine to safely rise and merge with the Supreme that all Hindus know is the Absolute—timeless, causeless and spaceless. But first, much work has to be done.

Prapattiḥ
प्रपत्तिः



Total Surrender

You may turn your bone to fuel, your flesh to meat, letting them roast and sizzle in the gold-red blaze of severe austerities. But unless your heart melts in love's sweet ecstasy, you never can possess my Lord Śiva, my treasure-trove.

Tirumantiram 272

MONDAY
Softening of
The Heart

The *yoga* of pure devotion is found at the beginning, the middle and the end of the path. Merging with Śiva is more and more a deeply felt experiential reality when the soul gives of itself to Śiva inwardly and outwardly in unabashed devotion. *Prapatti* truly is the key that unlocks the love needed as merger increases as the years pass by and, as Satguru Yogaswami said, “Love pours forth to melt the very stones.” *Bhakti yoga* is not an intellectual study. It is a practice. It is also not an emotional experience. It is a devotional experience. There is a difference, which we will come to understand. *Bhakti yoga* is not a cure-all, nor a means to fast enlightenment. Rather, it is the foundation for enlightenment. It is not a technique. Nor is it a magic *mantra*. It is a way of life. The transformation that comes from living in the state of *bhakti yoga* is the softening of the heart. ¶ External worship, *bhakti yoga*, is taught first on the spiritual path, because it produces a softened, mellow heart. It is to waste the *guru*’s time to give training in meditation and contemplation before the heart has been softened through *bhakti yoga*. The patient *guru* will wait until this has happened within the devotee. Otherwise, any accomplishment attained through intense *rāja yoga* practices will not be sustained. And the problems that arise within the devotee’s subconscious mind—should he be taught *rāja yoga* before the proper preparation has been mastered—will go back on the *guru*. The *guru* will then have to act as the psychiatrist to solve the problems arising from the forced awakening. Whereas

a mature *bhaktar* takes such problems, or negative *karmas*, which are sometimes aroused as a result of deep meditation, to the temple Deities, placing them at their feet to be dissolved. This will not happen for the devotee who has not experienced living in the state of *bhakti yoga*, because the relationship has not yet been established between himself and the Gods. Therefore, the wise *guru* starts his devotee at the beginning of the path, not in the middle. ¶The path begins with *charyā*, getting to know the Gods and developing a relationship with them through service. *Charyā* is *karma yoga*. Then *kriyā* is experienced. *Kriyā* is *bhakti yoga*. Once *bhakti yoga* has melted the heart, then the deep *yoga* concepts and meditation techniques of *rāja yoga* may be practiced. They are to be understood within the internal mind, not just memorized. The wise *guru* will never teach deep meditation techniques to angry, jealous, fearful devotees. Such devotees should first learn to serve selflessly, by performing *karma yoga* projects in the *āśrama*, and then perform simple *bhakti yoga* until all anger has melted into love. ¶The inner knowing that “All is Śiva’s will” is one of the first benefits of *bhakti yoga*. Only through true *bhakti* can the *yogī* achieve and maintain the inner state of Satchidānanda. It is only the true *bhaktar* who can sustain living with God and the Gods unreservedly and begin to internalize his devotion into deeper meditations. One cannot internalize devotion until it has been truly externalized. Here is an example to explain the process of the internalization of devotion. A devotee resents something said to him by another devotee and flares up in anger.

The two devotees part, but the anger remains in the form of burning resentment. The emotion of anger has been internalized, but may later be unleashed on someone else.

TUESDAY

Foundations for Fruitful Yoga

Many Hindu teachers in the West teach purely *advaitic* meditation with no theism or religious practice, but most who have come to the West from India were raised in Hindu homes. They have within them a firm religious, cultural foundation for *yoga*. Many do not pass the religious culture on to their Western devotees, however. In an orthodox Hindu community they would most likely teach in a more traditional way. *Advaita* philosophy is appealing to the Westerner. It does not require a change in lifestyle. ¶The nondual, *advaita*-based meditations do bring the devotees out of the conscious mind, but more often than not lead them into the subconscious. It is here, within the subconscious, that unresolved problems with family and one's own personal ego begin to appear. Without a proper religious-cultural background and traditional Hindu belief system, these problems are difficult to handle. This turmoil is certainly not the purpose of *advaitic* meditations, but it is a by-product. The wise *guru* trains his devotees in traditional Hindu culture and values and teaches the beginning *yogas*, as well as temple protocol, music, the arts and dance. All these should be mastered to build a proper subconscious foundation within the mind. *Karma yoga* and *bhakti yoga* are the necessary prelude to the higher philosophies and practices. ¶Group meditation is all right, as the group can really help the

individual, as does the individual help the group. Intense meditation awakens the *saṁskāras*, the impressions of the past, and intensifies the *prārabdha karmas*, bringing them into manifestation before their time. It has a greenhouse effect. ¶No one should perform intensive meditation alone until he or she can serve selflessly and accept praise and blame and criticism without complaint or resentment, but with a sweet smile. Only when a devotee has reached this stage is he or she firmly on the *kriyā mārga*, which will lead quite naturally to the *yoga mārga*. Then, finally, *rāja yoga* and other kinds of more refined, intensive *sādhanas* can safely be performed. These will clean up the *karmas* of the past without mental pain, once the proper foundation has been set within the mind and character of the devotee. ¶The progressive *sādhanas* of *karma yoga*, *bhakti yoga* and then *rāja yoga* are like clearing a path of its stones. First you remove the big stones. Then you walk back along the path. You still see big stones, but they are half the size as the first ones that were removed, and you remove these as well. Then you walk back along the path and remove more stones that stand out as large, and on and on until the path is clear. It is a refinement process. ¶The seeker on the path has to be soft, pliable, easy to get along with, as well as firm-minded. Therefore, *bhakti*, which is love in action, is a necessary prerequisite to success on the San Mārga, the straight path to God, toward merger with Śiva. All kinds of *yogic* techniques can be practiced, but they hold no fruitful rewards for those who are not firm-minded and not strong in the essential virtues. The prideful, antago-

nistic and difficult-to-get-along-with people must soften their hearts. This is done through *bhakti* and *karma yoga*. These practices alone will free the devotee from the *āṇava mārṅa*—the path of building up and keeping the personal ego strong. The *āṇava mārṅa* is a difficult path to leave for the San Mārṅa, but the results on the San Mārṅa are so much more rewarding in the long run. ¶It is often postulated by certain Indian schools of thought that once you reach a certain stage, *bhakti* should be set aside because it is dual by nature. But a devotee arriving into a high state of consciousness does not give up his love for God and the Gods. His devotion does not stop; rather it becomes more intense. He does not stop eating, relating to family, friends and other devotees. These are all dual things, too. Yes, it is true that some teachers preach this doctrine. But to avoid the *charyā mārṅa*, having perhaps never been on it, and say, “I am on a greater and much higher one; I don’t have to do that” is another philosophy, not ours. ¶In Śaiva Siddhānta, the *mārṅas* are progressive stages of character building. They are a foundation for good character, which is built on *bhakti*. Proper habit patterns created through the daily *sādhanas* of *karma yoga* and *bhakti yoga* lay this foundation within the mind, body and emotions. In case a devotee fails in pursuit of the higher *yogas*, he will always have his success on the *charyā mārṅa* to rely upon. For someone to say, “I now intellectually understand the *Vedas* and do not need to express love and devotion” is sad indeed. One who had really realized the truths of the *Vedas* would never say this.

WEDNESDAY
Bhakti Is the
Foundation

Bhakti is a state of mind, an arrival at an inner state of consciousness. People who become angry, people who become jealous, people who are fearful, people who get confused are living in the *asura loka*. They are the ones who upset others and experience revenge. They have yet to come up even to the *āṇava mārḡa* and attain a little appreciation of themselves. They have yet to experience being secure in their own identity. ¶They have yet to “be their own person,” “find their own space.” They must first close the door on channeling *asuric* entities. Once firmly planted on the *āṇava mārḡa*, they begin feeling that they are God’s gift to the world and may seek out a spiritual teacher. If the teacher does teach them *karma yoga* and *bhakti yoga*, they begin to realize that there are forces in the universe, souls in the universe, who are much greater than they are now or will ever be for a long time. Once this happens, the die is cast. They are on the spiritual path to their own eventual enlightenment. ¶Our scriptures, the Śaiva Siddhānta scriptures, are filled with stories of the greatest *jñānīs* who performed *karma yoga* and *bhakti yoga* and also spoke out the highest truths of *jñāna*. The tales explain that during auspicious days of the month they performed intense *rāja yoga tapas*. This is the *yoga*—the arms and the head and the torso of *yoga*. You do not perform only one *yoga* without all the others. It is an integral whole. ¶On occasion we observe devotees pilgrimaging to a temple, prostrating so devotedly. But after leaving the temple, they slap one of their children.

We know that upon entering the house they argue with their spouse and complain about their in-laws. Where is the true *bhakti* here? This is what *bhakti* is not. Unfortunately, the children who observe this hypocrisy remember it for a long, long time. A child might think, “You love Lord Gaṇeśa, Mom, but you can’t love me.” When you love a baby, you will not hit it when it cries, even if the crying disturbs you. ¶ Wise *gurus* will not initiate anyone into *rāja yoga* techniques who does not have a sweet nature and a natural outpouring of *bhakti*. No one auditions for the symphony orchestra until he has mastered all that his first, second and third music teachers have taught him. ¶ Suppose a devotee who is not virtuous is taught an intense *rāja yoga* meditation and practices it ardently over a long period of time until a burst of light is seen. Then the devotee, now feeling quite above others, argues with his parents, or flashes out in anger when talking to a friend. At that moment, all the good merit and benefits of the *rāja yoga* awakening are erased. This is because the *prāṇa* of higher consciousness has been dissipated by the angry words, which now burn deeper into the mind of others than they would have before. No, a kindly, gentle nature must precede *rāja yoga sādhanas*. That is for sure. ¶ *Bhakti* is the base and the bedrock of spiritual unfoldment. A devotee who has an amiable nature, who is a good, considerate and giving person, is obviously a *bhaktar*. The disciplines of *bhakti yoga* make one a devotee, and a devotee is a very selfless type of person. These disciplines can take many forms, but the fruit of *bhakti yoga*, which is a loving dispo-

sition, must be attained before one can go further on the path with security. The proof is in the actions and attitudes of the individual. If he really sees Lord Śiva in and through all things, how can he not be a *bhaktar*? If he truly understands the law of *karma*, he cannot possibly resent any happening. He knows that the experiences of today were created in the past. He truly knows that today's actions mold the experiences of a future time. Yes, *bhakti yoga* is the bedrock of all minor and major enlightenments. Devotees who are very kind people, devotional, obedient, intelligent, will fulfill whatever assignments their *guru* gives—be it a pure *advaitic* path, the *rāja yogas* or the path of *karma yoga*.

THURSDAY
Lower States
Of Mind

When someone begins on the path from states of consciousness below the *mūlādhāra*, in the confused thinking areas of the mind, in the angry *chakras*, religion will be to him a superstitious, forboding, very unclear area. These *chakras* are also known as *talas*, or states of darkness, self-concealment and distortion. They are the “nether poles” of the higher *chakras* and of the seven corresponding *lokas*. Confused thinking we can define as “self-preservation thinking.” When a person is within this *chakra*, the feelings of “me and mine” are strong. It is a state of outward passion and sense indulgence. This is the vibration of the *talātala chakra*, which could be translated as “under the bottom level,” “place-nonplace” (*tala-atala*), or “realm of nonbeing.” In this fourth center below the *mūlādhāra*, the protection of one's small universe at all costs is the con-

sciousness. ¶Should such a person ever become uplifted, since his consciousness is deep within the lower *chakras*, he would first come up in consciousness into jealousy, the *sutala chakra*, meaning “great lower region,” a “good matter” state of spiritual darkness ruled by desire and passion. The feeling of jealousy is a higher consciousness than that of the *chakra* below, which confuses the thinking. The next upliftment, after jealousy and confused thinking, is the release into the *chakra* of anger, the second force center below the *mūlādhāra*. This is the *vitāla chakra*, translated as “the region of the lost,” “realm of division or confusion.” The upliftment to follow anger is to enter the *chakra* of fear, a state of spiritual annihilation called the *atala chakra*, meaning “without bottom,” or “no place.” Fear is a higher consciousness than anger or jealousy. It is people who live in this *chakra* who make up the masses who fear God rather than love God. ¶The fifth *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra* is called *rasātala*, literally “state of sense enjoyment.” This is the true home of the animal nature. Here personal selfishness predominates. Persons strongly in the consciousness of this force center care nothing for the problems and suffering of others. ¶Below this, dare we speak of it, is the *mahātala*, “the greatest lower region,” where ego rules supreme. This is the realm of unconscionable acts, wherein perpetrators feel absolutely no remorse for the most heinous wrongdoings. The conscience is completely dormant for those locked in this realm. Negativity, depression and other dark states of mind are the order of the day for those in the *mahātala chakra*. Finally, at the bottom of

consciousness is the *pātāla chakra*, “lower region of wickedness” or “fallen state,” where dark ignorance rules. This is the realm of vicious destruction, of revenge, murder for the sake of murder. Basking in the twisted vibrations of this area of consciousness, depraved transgressors torture others without a thought, express malice without a twinge of conscience, harm others in innumerable ways for sheer enjoyment and take delight in the emotional, mental and physical suffering of fellow humans and all beings that cross their path. Hatred is the ruling force in the *pātāla chakra*; malice reigns supreme. Far from reason, and farther still from compassion and insight, are those who live in the darkness of this area of mind. ¶ We can see that coming up through the lower *chakras* is quite an ordeal. But once the individual goes through the fear *chakra*, he comes to Lord Gaṇeśa’s feet and enters the realms of memory and reason, clarity and understanding. It is at this point in the unfoldment through the *chakras*, which is a journey of consciousness, that he would begin thinking of others and seek to benefit them more than himself. From here on, the path of spiritual unfoldment is not as ominous as it was before. There are no threatening areas, except that it is possible to fall back into lower consciousness.

FRIDAY
Stewards of
Mind Realms

The Gods are the controllers of these force centers within man. They live in the innermost areas of form. To enter the *mūlādhāra chakra*, the aspirant must go through Lord Gaṇeśa. And when the aspirant progresses to the *maṇipūra chakra*,

Gaṇeśa will introduce him to Lord Murugan. Once this is accomplished, the devotee will worship Lord Murugan as the Be-All and End-of-All, just as Gaṇeśa was worshiped when consciousness was in His *chakras*. Lord Murugan is the controller of the *maṇipūra chakra*, the *chakra* of will-power, and the two *chakras* above it, direct cognition and universal love. Now we can begin to see that the aspirant has to proceed in consciousness through the three *chakras* that Lord Murugan controls and meet all the tests before this God will introduce him to Lord Śīva. Lord Śīva's realm is *chakras* number six, seven and beyond. The aspirant still must go completely through the *chakras* of Lord Śīva's realm to become Śivaness—to experience His all-pervasiveness, and on into the essence of all essences, Paraśīva. ¶The aspirant who dearly loves Lord Śīva must finally go beyond Śīva's personal aspect to reach the impersonal side, and this is why, when he finally emerges from Paraśīva, he is really a true *bhaktar*. He is the true monistic theist. In the world of duality, theism is in itself a duality. Theism is very compatible with the mind of man, which is duality itself. Monism, on the other side, is beyond the mind itself. Monism is timeless, formless, and it is spaceless as well. True monism cannot be conceived by the mind. Yet, the mind does know of its existence. ¶When the devotee has proven himself, the Gods begin to take notice. We meet a God as we go up through the *chakras* above the *mūlādhāra*. We meet an *asura* as we go down through the *chakras* below the *mūlādhāra*. A God appears as each higher *chakra* breaks open. As the *mūlādhāra* opens and

awareness comes through it, we encounter Gaṇeśa. When we experience fear and anger, we meet and are influenced by the *asuras* of fear and anger. In the *chakra* that governs confused and selfish thinking, we meet and are influenced by the *asura* who rules this realm. Descending to the still lower *chakras* of petty theft, fraud and stealing, grand larceny, murder and violence, we would meet professionals in these areas. There are always inner Gods and outer Gods, for each *chakra* is a realm of consciousness with its own inner and outer hierarchy. ¶A *chakra* is a world, a sphere of consciousness. There are astral helpers and physical-plane helpers connected to each *chakra*. These spheres of consciousness do interrelate. A mentally healthy individual is functional in about three *chakras*, or spheres of consciousness, at a time. A person with severe mental problems would be in a single sphere of consciousness and could not deal with things that happened to him outside that area of the mind, or *chakra*. ¶When you meet the God or *asura* of a particular realm, it would always be a conscious meeting, but you may not always see the God or the *asura*. His presence would certainly be felt. Some symbol would appear, such as an image of Lord Gaṇeśa, or of Lord Śiva. A lot of people are open to Śivaness now and see Him through His images. Terrorists are seeing their *asura* gods in their guns, explosives and other weapons. At this time in the Kali Yuga, all states of consciousness are out in the open. All of the fourteen *chakras* are manifest in one way or another on Earth. It is a very intense time on the planet, and likewise a ripe time for spiritual unfoldment.

SATURDAY**How Bhakti
Is Cultivated**

Once a person rises in consciousness out of the *chakras* below the *mūlādhāra*, and the foundation of *bhakti* has been laid, then going into refined states of mind through meditation becomes

easy. This is because devotion has removed the barriers. Those who love each other can communicate easily. The devotee who has reverence for a temple and devotion for the Gods within it can communicate easily with those Gods. *Bhakti yoga* is love on all levels of consciousness—physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. *Bhakti yoga* makes us feel good. When in a state of *bhakti yoga*—yoked with the Divine through love—meditation is natural, and one can “soar within” with ease. There are no barriers where love is concerned. ¶The greatest inhibiting factor in practicing *bhakti yoga* is the doubting, cynical, intellectual mind. Doubt and skepticism harden the heart and narrow the mind. People in this state cannot really become devotees until their heart softens and their tense intellect relaxes. They must fulfill the *sādhana* of reconciliation, which is to go before each person they know and worship that person as a God. This *sādhana* is done in meditation. The devotee has to meet each one by bringing up the person’s face before him and sending kind thoughts and blessings of *prāṇa*. This must be done time and time again until love comes into the heart for each of them. Only after this *sādhana* has been accomplished will *bhakti* begin to bloom in the heart. The bloom of *bhakti* softens the heart and relaxes the intellect. ¶When you have the energy of

bhakti, of love, flowing through your body, meditation is easy. You don't have to go through the preliminaries. You are already functioning in the higher *chakras*. The *bhakti* experience takes the *prāṇas* into the higher *chakras* from the lower *chakras*. But if you are living in the consciousness of personal, communal, national or international antagonism, entering meditation will be difficult. All the preliminaries will have to be carefully gone through—*prāṇāyāma*, deep concentration, the lifting of the *prāṇas* into the heart and throat *chakras*, etc. Then slowly the internal *bhakti* is complete, and the vibration of love begins to be felt. This is time-consuming. ¶The Śaiva Siddhāntin finds it much easier to do this preliminary work in the temple through the externalized *yoga* of *bhakti*, rather than trying to internalize the *bhakti* and lift the *prāṇas* while seated in lotus position, which is time-consuming and not as enjoyable. Whereas, to lift the energies from the lower *chakras* to the higher *chakras* through performing *bhakti yoga* in the temple during worship is easy, natural, and considered by the Siddhāntist as being a pure joy. ¶The best way to learn *bhakti yoga* is to choose the finest *bhaktar* among your religious group and emulate him. You can read about *bhakti yoga*, understand it intellectually and learn what it is supposed to do for you. That is fine. But to progress on the path up the spine, it is necessary to be a part of a religious group. The group helps the individual, and the individual helps the group. There are nearly always one or two real *bhaktars* within every religious group. Therefore, to learn *bhakti yoga*, emulate one of them. This in itself is forget-

ting yourself, as you copy another person's actions and attitudes. True, the person you choose may not measure up to your standards in other areas of life. But if in approaching the Deity, he shows true humility, patience and total surrender, be like him. If you join another Hindu group, visit another temple or *satsaṅga* group, pick out a true *bhaktar* there and emulate him or her as well. This is the way to learn *bhakti yoga*. Vegetarianism is an essential for the *bhakti yogī*, as is proper personal, cultural conduct in all matters of society. Śaivite culture and a consistent lifestyle keep the *bhakti yogī* always reminded of the Divine within the universe and within himself. Those who have no barriers to love find it is easy to see God in everyone.

SUNDAY

Unqualified Surrender

What do we mean by internalizing worship? In external worship we are trying to see God and communicate with God with our two eyes and our physical nerve system. We enjoy His *darshan* and feel His *śakti*. In deep meditation, the external worship is deliberately internalized, and we are trying to see God with our third eye and feel God's all-pervasiveness through our psychic nerve system. Externalizing *bhakti* is really much easier than internalizing it. But once the externalized *bhakti* is perfected, it will be easy and natural to internalize *bhakti* right along. When this is accomplished, the most rigorous hurdles and time-consuming practices of *yoga*, which often lead the person onto *āṇava mārṅa*, will have been side-stepped. ¶ To internalize worship, after the *pūjā* is over sit before the Deity and draw into your-

self all the *prāṇas* you feel around your body. Then draw those energies up the spine into the head. This is done with the mind and with the breath. It is very easy to do. It is especially easy when one is at the end of a major *karmic* cycle. The *bhakti* of uncompromising surrender, *prapatti*, to the God during a temple *pūjā* awakens the *amṛita*. The *amṛita* is the sweet essence from the *sahasrāra chakra*. It is the binding yoke to the Divine. Bind yourself in the lotus posture after temple worship and simply internalize all the feeling that you had for the God during the worship. That's all there is to it. The *yogī* yoked within enjoys the *amṛita* that flows from the cranium throughout his body. Devotees who want to awaken the higher *chakras* and sustain that awakening on the safe path will throw themselves into becoming uncompromising *bhaktars*. Then all the Gods of all three worlds will open their hearts and shower their blessings upon them. ¶What is my advice for those who find such uncompromising surrender hard to imagine but realize it is their next step on the path? Go on a pilgrimage once a year, read scriptures daily, perform *pūjā* daily, go to the temple at least once a week, if not more often—fulfill these disciplines, known as the *pañcha nitya karmas*. This is the basic Śaiva Siddhānta *sādhana*. ¶But on another level, one will not be able to fulfill the *pañcha nitya karmas* if he or she is not fulfilling the *yamas* and the *niyamas*, for these are the character-builders. We must possess a good character to be successful in *bhakti yoga*. Therefore, begin at the beginning. Right thought produces right speech, which produces right action. Right thought is produced through

the knowledge of *dharma*, *karma*, *saṁsāra* and the all-pervasiveness of God. This knowledge correctly understood disallows the devotee from having wrong thoughts. He simply has right thought, and of course, right speech and action follow naturally. ¶ Śaiva Siddhānta extols the *guru* and says that when the student is ready, one will appear. The *guru* will always restate the *dharma* to a devotee who is having problems with *bhakti yoga* practices. He will always direct the mind to the beginning teachings, for it would be obvious that the student does not understand one or more of them. If the devotee is not following the *pañcha nitya karmas* or the *yamas* and *niyamas*, it is obvious that purified knowledge of these four areas—*dharma*, *karma*, *saṁsāra* and Śivaness—needs to be strengthened. ¶ Individual practices to advance spiritual unfoldment include prostrating before God, Gods and *guru*, full body, face down, arms and hands outstretched, and in that act, total giving up, giving up, giving up, giving up. In Sanskrit it is called *prāṇipāta*, “falling down in obeisance.” What are these devoted ones giving up? By this act they are giving the lower energies to the higher energies. It is a merger, a blending. When one is performing this traditional devotional act, awakening true *prapatti*, it is easy to see the lower energies from the base of the spine, the *mūlādhāra chakra*, rising, rising, rising up the spine through all six *chakras* above it and out through the top of the head. It is transmuting, changing the form of, the base energies which breed conflict and resistance, “mine and yours” and “you and me,” division, insecurity and separateness, into the spiritual energies of

“us and we,” amalgamation, security, togetherness. ¶Once the giving up of the lower is total—body and face on the ground, hands outstretched before the image of God, Gods or *guru*—those energies are surrendered into the higher *chakras* within the devotee, and it is a blissful moment, into the consciousness of “us and ours,” “we and oneness,” and inseparable love, thus claiming their individuality, not as a separate thing, but as a shared oneness with all. Thereafter, these devoted ones, having been transformed, are able to uplift others, to harmonize forces around them that they work with day after day after day, year after year after year. This total surrender, *prapatti*, is the meaning of Siddhānta. This is the true meaning of Vedānta. The combination of both, and the pure practice of *prapatti* as just described, brings out from within the deeper meanings of Vedānta, the Vedic philosophy, without having to depend on the path of words, lectures and debates. My *satguru* was once heard saying, “It’s not in books, you fool.”

Japa Yogaḥ
जप योगः



The Yoga of Incantation

The five-lettered Pañchākshara is the Lord's abode. Pañchākshara's manifest form is Namaḥ Śivāya. Its subtle form is Śivāya Namaḥ. Thus is He in that *mantra*, manifest and subtle.

Tirumantiram 919

MONDAY
The Magic
Of Japa

Japa is the prelude to *rāja yoga*. *Japa* links Siddhānta with Vedānta through the repetition of the mantra *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya*—or *Aum Śaravaṇabhava* for the uninitiated. Those who are initiated into the sacred Pañchākshara, *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya*, have the advantage, because the repetition of this *mantra* will make them eventually see directly Śiva's perfect universe, and they in themselves will become a blend of Vedānta and Siddhānta. The uninitiated are in preparation, using the mantra *Aum Śaravaṇabhava Aum*, thus quieting their minds, realizing the all-pervasiveness of Śiva and seeing that the natural state of the mind—when all *karmas* are temporarily suspended—is Satchidānanda, is peace, is bliss. Therefore, *japa yoga* is the prelude to *rāja yoga* and all other forms of *sādhana*. ¶ *Japa* is very widespread in Hinduism, more so than meditation. *Japa yoga* is easy to practice. The inexperienced can take it up immediately. It does produce certain results until they forget the *mantra*, which can happen! This may seem strange, but I have met devotees of *gurus* who had actually forgotten their *mantra*, even after paying a goodly sum to receive it. The innocent Americans and Europeans are the orphans and adopted children of Indian *gurus*. Some of these teachers, unaware of the critical differences of religion and culture of their new-found and eager devotees, respond by bringing them immediately into *japa* and *rāja yoga*, avoiding the known initiations and the basic philosophical and cultural foundations necessary for ultimate success. In the case of Indian devotees, these

cultural and philosophical foundations would have been acquired within the family home. This foundation is necessary, as it directs the subconscious mind, which is the inner motor of a person, preventing him from opposing, inhibiting and invalidating the realizations that naturally occur when one practices *yoga*. So, first we learn the philosophy, then through *japa* and more advanced *yogas* we realize it. Whereas in performing *japa* and *rāja yoga* before you know the philosophy, what you previously learned may conflict with what you now realize. This can be very disconcerting. ¶When the philosophy is properly understood, we possess right thought, right speech and right action, which is proper behavior. This is culture. Hindu culture is very different from the European cultures, which are based largely on Abrahamic beliefs. Humility and obedience before elders and those who are wiser is a very big part of Hindu culture, as is the regard for knowledge and wisdom and the deeper philosophies. Therefore, a good character expressed day by day within the individual who is freed from anger and from contentious mental arguments is a central foundation for the practice of *yoga*. ¶One without such purity should not practice *japa yoga* lest he awaken the knowledge of his imperfections which are better to keep veiled. For knowing such could send him into states of remorse, early repentance—which means being penitent before one has the stability to take on the reaction of such a momentous discovery and undertaking. To meditate, one must be free from anger, jealousy and contention. *Karma yoga* should be practiced by the devotee

prior to this, to smooth out all character flaws. Śivathondu—which is another word for *karma yoga*—service to Śiva, is the platform for *japa yoga*. ¶ Those who are victims to episodes of anger, to pangs of jealousy or to periods of fear should not meditate and should not perform *japa*. They should perform Śivathondu, attend group meditations and group *prāṇāyāma* sessions. This is because they must first be lifted up into the *mūlādhāra chakra* and above. They are living below it and must raise their consciousness in order to proceed deeply into themselves. It is the group itself in this case that will lift the individual who cannot easily lift himself. This process should be guided by a strong-minded, compassionate moderator.

TUESDAY

Japa Opens Inner Doors

One who performs *japa* properly will realize what he knows. You see, *japa* opens up the inner mind and focuses the energies of certain *chakras*, which are consciousness encased within the psychic nerve ganglia of the *nāḍī* network. Therefore, if he is a divine person, he will realize that Divinity. If he is an angry, selfish person, then he will realize that. We would want him to realize the former but not the latter. Through *karma yoga*, Śivathondu, the angry, hateful, contentious, competitive person will face himself through a series of small situations in which small realizations will occur. The instinctive nature and habits will be corrected until the individual is able to work smoothly over long periods of time. We would not want to open up his mind to the impurities, lest he become depressed or even morose

and suicidal. Therefore, *japa yoga* obviously is an initiation that should come a little down the road, farther down the path. ¶ Generally, those who want to practice *japa yoga* and do have impurities working within them fall away from repetitive *mantras* very quickly, becoming a little afraid of what might happen if they are successful. Their own soul is watching after them in this early stage. Then there are those who are ardent, fanatical, you might say, who want to get results in a limited period of time and have no sense of the consequences. They work tirelessly to do this. The wise *guru* would discourage much practice of intense *mantras* or meditating alone, and would instead encourage *karma yoga*, giving to others, working for work's sake, serving for service's sake, not looking for rewards. Group meditations and group chanting are fine at this stage, as is temple worship, until the purification process has had time to work its magic. ¶ In short, there are two kinds of Hindus—a majority who worship in the temples without a philosophical background and those who do have such a background and take part in their religion, discussion of the higher knowledge and meditation upon it, feeling no need for the Gods or for temple worship. The Pañchākshara Mantra, *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya*, the center of the *Vedas*, is the link between the two, between Siddhānta and Vedānta, because it makes the mind realize what it knows. Every Siddhāntin knows a little about Vedānta and disregards it. And every Vedāntin knows a bit about Siddhānta and disregards it. Through chanting *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya*, finally you will realize what you know, including what you pre-

viously disregarded, and that blends the two—makes the whole person. The *purusha* becomes satisfied living in the physical body. The *jīva* becomes Śiva. ¶Initiation is essential for the ultimate results in chanting *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya*, though the uninitiated can and do say *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya*. Within them it won't have much of an effect, but there will be an effect. This effect will be more potent and powerful once you have *dīkshā*, having studied and purified yourself through the purificatory process of *sādhana*. It would be so much better to chant *Aum Śaravaṇabhava* at this time, invoking Lord Murugan to bring the *guru* forth in your life who will initiate you. Murugan is the first *guru*, the first *swāmī* and renunciate. This is the preparatory stage.

WEDNESDAY

The Value Of Initiation

Oftentimes *japa* and chanting are the *ardha*-Hindu or non-Hindu's first introduction to Sanātana Dharma. An *ardha*-Hindu is often one who has been given a Hindu first name. It is our experience over the last fifty years that their *japa* has little effect unless they make the full commitment to becoming stalwart members of the Hindu religion and join a mature community. Those who are inside a department store handling and purchasing the merchandise and those outside looking through the window at the same merchandise are two different groups. *Ardha* means half, and *ardha*-Hindus are those who have come half way to making a full commitment and are still making up their mind. They are still on the outside looking in. Their *japa* doesn't have much power until they bring other aspects of their life into line

with the Hindu Dharma. ¶For the non-Hindu who has not made a commitment, the universal *mantra Aum* is the most significant and precious of all *mantras*. This can be chanted by those of all religions, without restriction. The sounds of a city make “Aum.” A child at birth says “Aum.” A mother giving birth says “Aum.” The last breath of a dying person is “Aum.” Even the cows say “Aum.” *Aum* is the *mantra* of Lord Gaṇeśa. All are striving for His holy feet. Those who are struggling with the lower nature, those who have not made a commitment to the Sanātana Dharma, a commitment which for the newcomers to the fold could be verified by their Hindu name on their passport, should all chant *Aum*. ¶To demonstrate the authority vested in the *mantra*, let me tell you a story. A minister in a court was summoned before the *mahārāja*. The minister also happened to be a *brahmin* priest, a *kulaguru* with the power to give initiation in the most sacred *mantra*, *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya*. The king asked him, “We would like you to initiate me into the sacred Pañchākshara Mantra.” The *guru* said, “Yes, Majesty, I shall begin preparing you for your initiation.” Then the king decreed: “No, we will take the initiation right now, and never mind the preparations.” The *kulaguru* objected, “This is quite impossible. My *guru* restricts me from giving initiation without due preparation.” The king retorted, “So, we will do the *mantra* without you. Or else explain to me how the *mantra* would work differently with the initiation than without.” The *kulaguru* said, “Yes, Majesty, I shall give you an explanation.” ¶In a loud voice, the *guru* called to the five guards standing amidst the gathered

audience, “Guards, come forward instantly and arrest this man, the *mahārāja*, he is into wrongdoings. He is demanding an initiation into the great Pañchākshara Mantra without the willingness to undergo the necessary preparations required by our noble *sampradāya*.” The guards stood silent, eyes wide, looking at the *mahārāja*, wondering what to do. The *mahārāja*, losing his composure upon hearing his minister’s preposterous command, was struck with awe and thought, “What madness has overcome this holy man?” He then shouted to the guards, “Here, promptly: arrest this minister of mine, this *kulaguru* who is behaving in such an insolent manner against the throne. Tie him securely and take him away.” The guards rushed forward without delay, grabbed the *guru* and held him tight. ¶The *guru* laughed and said, “Hold on a minute! I was just answering your question, Majesty. I spoke the *mantra* ‘Arrest this man.’ However, since I am not initiated into the court, not ordained to have that power, the guards stood idle and did not respond. You then gave the same *mantra*, ‘Arrest this man.’ Because you were carefully prepared and initiated as king, the guards responded.” Upon hearing this, the *mahārāja* threw himself at the *kulaguru*’s feet. The guards who had been hearing the entire conversation then released their captive, and themselves touched the holy man’s feet and returned to their posts. In the months ahead the *mahārāja* meticulously prepared himself for and received his initiation. Now all three worlds cooperate with him. His kingdom flourishes, crops grow, the rains come when needed, the rivers run clear and the wells are always

full, the cows are fat, the mangos fall sweetly from the trees, the Gods in the temples provide discipline for the king's subjects, and Himalayan *rishis* regularly visit the kingdom, giving of their wisdom to one and all. Even though His Majesty chants, with the proper visualization, *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya* 108 times daily, one thing is missing: the king himself has not yet attained to full and complete God Realization. There is a story yet to be told.

THURSDAY

Preparation

And Propriety

The *mantra* is the name of the inner-plane being whom you are calling. If you say, "Aum Namaḥ Śivāya," are you ready to see what Śiva will show you, once He comes and lifts the veils? May-

be a little preparation—cleaning a few things, straightening up the house, the subconscious basement—is in order first. If you say, "Aum Śaravaṇabhava," is your mind really ready to become peaceful, or is it disturbed by fits of anger? But every soul is ready to say, "Aum," and come to the feet of the Lord of Categories, who will set everything in order from the many yesterdays. ¶If you are in the temple worshipping Lord Murugan, the *mantra* *Aum Śaravaṇabhava* obviously has a total, overall effect. If you say "Aum, Aum, Aum" in front of Gaṇeśa, Gaṇeśa becomes conscious of your presence. The Deities are present in the temple. They may not be present in a person's home or under a tree. The main effect the *mantra* would have there would be to focus the concentration and quiet the mind. ¶If someone is already meditating and is self-instructed, not under a *guru*, and working for an eventual initiation to receive a *mantra*

upon which to do *japa*, then whatever *japa* is performed should neither be too much nor too intense. We suggest for the non-Hindu *Aum*, and for the uninitiated Śaivite *Aum Śaravaṇabhava*, 108 repetitions prior to meditation. This is totally on the safe side and will greatly enhance the meditation. ¶There is an idea that there is a special *mantra* for each person, and that a *mantra* should be secret. It has been my experience that *gurus* who are amassing wealth from unsuspecting Americans and Europeans will give all kinds of *mantras*. And they will be couched in a format that is sellable, like packaged merchandise. They will be made secret. But none of the traditional *mantras* that produce true realization and are lauded and acclaimed are secret. They are well known by every Hindu in the world. Each Hindu throughout the world knows whether he has purified himself or not, and prepared himself or not, sufficiently to pronounce them—though he may pronounce them at any time he wishes, and an impact and a beneficial effect will follow in his life. But the spiritual impact of pronouncing a *mantra* after earning an initiation (this does not mean paying for it, but earning it through study and practice, character building, improving, proving oneself to one's *guru*), that effect, is life-altering. It cleans the *karmas* of many past lives, perfects the lives of the future, and lays the foundation for *moksha* at the end of this or a future life. Let this not be misunderstood. ¶There are two classes of *mantras*, not powerful and powerful, meaning potentially dangerous. The only danger that a powerful *mantra* could have is opening a person to himself. The problem is not

with the *mantra*, but with what is inside the individual when the *chakras* open and he can see his *karmas* of the past and his impending *karmas* of the future. That's why a *mantra* is carefully given, like a medical prescription. You don't give two aspirins to a baby. You give a half of one, or a quarter. And just as a child's physical body takes years to grow up, so do the mind and emotions. If the early adult years are put into training and purification through *karma yoga*, *bhakti yoga* and study of Vedānta, then there are no troubles on the path to enlightenment. To turn on a light in a dark room with a flick of a switch is quite a shock to the darkness of the room itself. Would we want this to happen within the individual on the path? No. We want to turn up the dimmer very slowly so he or she can gradually adjust to the brightness that was there all the time. ¶ Many people want initiation because they want to get away from something. They want something to cure their ills. Others don't know what they want. They are disturbed, distraught with their *prārabdha karmas*, and they want relief. What they should be given is Śaiva Siddhānta—a comprehensive path of accomplishment. They should not be given a high-powered *mantra* that will, when it opens the mind, cause more frustration and disturbance from what the seeker sees. But once given such initiation—having no tools, mentally, emotionally or physically, to conquer the past *karmas* that the experiential emotions are intensifying (which should have been conquered through *karma yoga* and *bhakti yoga*)—the seeker falls into despair. It is the conscientious *guru's* responsibility to provide an on-going, progressive

training prior to initiation and to continue it afterwards. Those who make their living by selling *mantras* would be considered fraudulent by traditional Hindu standards.

FRIDAY

The Esoterics Of Japa

Knowing the meaning of the *mantra* is very helpful when the devotee is visualizing it at the same time. Then he also knows when he reaches the goal which the *mantra* is supposed to produce within him. Since most *mantras* are in Sanskrit, it is easy enough to find the meaning in the Sanskrit dictionary. We must remember that the first *mantras* were given in the language spoken by the people. Sanskrit *mantras* were given to people who spoke Sanskrit. Yet, *mantras* could be phrased in other ancient sacred languages as well. It is just that the Sanskrit language relates to the unfoldment of the inner being, which most other languages don't do as much. However, even in the English language, or any language, rituals are performed that do invoke the spirit forces of the religion. It just so happens that in Hinduism, Sanskrit is the most accepted language of all, agreed upon by the Hindu hierarchy of all three worlds. ¶ *Japa* is a *sādhana*, and all *sādhana* is repetitive. *Japa* is taking a few words as a *mantra* and repeating it over and over again for mind control and personal enlightenment. This would attract good beings on the astral plane and strengthen the protective aura of the individual doing *japa*. There is no reason to think that performing *japa* would affect the astral world in any way other than to bring forth goodness, compassion and admiration of the beings there toward the

devotee performing this discipline. ¶ *Namaḥ Śivāya Aum* and *Aum Śaravaṇabhava* have been revealed for spiritual unfoldment. They are not for magical purposes. Nor is *japa* intended for healing or other aims in the physical realm. True, Japanese Buddhists chant *Aum Namō Myōhō Renge Kyō* for success, jobs and wealth, but this is not *japa* in the Hindu understanding. This is more along the lines of affirmation. *Japa* is very close to *rāja yoga*. *Japa* leads to spiritual renunciation, *rāja yoga* to enlightenment, stimulating the *chakras* of the head. *Japa* is never used in the Hindu tradition to pray for material things. Hindus do pray for material blessings, health and abundance but not through the use of *mantras* or *japa*. For these they turn to prayers, songs and ritual which stimulate the *chakras* of willpower, reason and cognition, giving the worshiper physical, emotional and mental vigor to bring the worldly goods into his hands. *Mantras* for *japa* are usually short, but not always. The Gāyatrī Mantra, consisting of thirteen words, is an example of a rather long *mantra*. In summary, *japa* is religiously repeating just a few important, well-defined words, syllables or “seed sounds,” called *bīja*, to awaken the higher nature. ¶ Where did *mantras* come from? Mystical *ślokas* came from the *ṛishis* of ancient times who held conversations with the great *Mahādevas* and *devas* of the inner worlds. Out of this developed certain rituals that could, when performed properly, create certain causes in the physical world. In the English language we sometimes call these affirmations. An affirmation, as presented in our teachings, is generally for self-improvement. One is talk-

ing to his own subconscious mind. ¶ Because every sound has a color and creates a form on the astral plane when pronounced, the *mantra* must be pronounced properly, slowly, thoughtfully, with feeling, mentally seeing the color, mentally hearing the sound. The ideal way to perform *japa* 108 times is by also listening to the *nāda-nāḍī śakti*, the high “eee” sound one hears within the head when in a high state of consciousness. To perform *japa* quickly, as in a marathon, sometimes called “machine gun *japa*,” brings little benefit. If you don’t have time to do *japa*, don’t do it at all. It should not be a meaningless ritual. It should be a very meaningful experience. ¶ When we perform *japa* aloud, it is easier to concentrate the thought. The *mantra* is heard and therefore our mind does not wander. We must remember that letting the mind wander into irrelevant thoughts mitigates the benefits of the *japa*. Therefore, we must remain concentrated. We perform *japa*, which is a *sādhana*, for pragmatic benefits. There is no other reason. Therefore, we should keep our mind on what we are doing. Visualize the proper colors that the *mantra* produces from one stage to the next. In *Śaravaṇabhava Aum* we visualize light blue fading into white and fading back into light blue, back and forth—“Śaravaṇabhava Aum, Śaravaṇabhava Aum, Śaravaṇabhava Aum.” Blue is the color of the *ākāśa*, ether, and Śaravaṇabhava takes you there. Once the *japa* is perfected aloud, it may be done silently, simply by moving the lips but not making a sound, and then later making the sound internally without moving the lips. The ultimate accomplishment in the performance of *japa* is the *yoga* of

going to sleep while verbally and mentally pronouncing the *mantra*, which continues during the sleeping hours. Upon awakening, the same *mantra* is still being repeated, mentally and then verbally, without a break in continuity. This is quite an accomplishment, but it has been done.

SATURDAY

Getting the Most from Japa

There are some who in their spiritual exuberance follow the practice of doing 10,000 or 100,000 *mantras* a day in their *japa*, hundreds of thousands a month, millions a year. This is totally beneficial if under the direction of a *guru* who supervises the process. Most likely it would be given to an individual to conquer pride and arrogance. If a seeker is performing such intensive *japa* without the guidance of a *guru*, he then would be forcing a situation, using the *mantra* and the practice of *japa* like a drug, holding no concept in his mind of the results to be attained or even knowing if he has attained the results he should be attaining. It is the *guru* who always knows the results of the practice. But he never tells the results to the initiate. Attainment is never revealed intellectually until attainment has unfolded from within the individual, lest the intellectual knowledge of the attainment yet to be attained become a barrier to the attainment itself. ¶ Each *guru* has his own methods of *mantra* initiation from his own *sampradāya*. It's a school of verbal teaching. Most importantly, preparation must be attained and maintained in order to convince an orthodox *guru* that the commitment is strong enough to make the initiation beneficial. Initiation from an orthodox *guru*

begins a process of learning. It is not the end of a process of preparation after which the devotee is totally on his own once he pays his fee. There are many orthodox *gurus* in every country of the world. Choose your *guru* carefully by observing the devotees around him and what they have accomplished. If he has a preparation of training prior to initiation, qualifications to meet, such as vegetarianism, scriptural study, the performance of certain disciplines over a selective period of time, if he receives no fee for the initiation other than a gratuitous *dakṣiṇā* afterwards—the amount left to the discrimination of the devotee, a love offering, or a contribution toward the payment of a *pūjā* in a temple to the priest—and if he provides ongoing, more intensive training and education, scripturally and culturally, after the initiation, preparing the devotee for the next stage of initiation, then you have a traditional *satguru*. ¶ For the ultimate benefit in performing the *japa sādhana*, look on the Hindu Vedic calendar, *pañchāṅga*, and choose the *amṛita yoga* days. These are the most auspicious. Next are the *siddha yoga* days. On any given day, the most auspicious time is during *gulika kāla*. These are the times when the forces of the universe—this means the entire universe, and most especially our galaxy—promote spiritual unfoldment. Of course, the daily experience of 108 repetitions should persist. Any intensification of this—1,008 times, for instance—would be best performed at a specially auspicious day and time. Other auspicious times of day are before sunrise and at sunset. The very best place and time to perform *japa* is in the temple after the *pūjā*, when

all is quiet. This is the most ideal surrounding to repeat *japa* 108 times to gain maximum benefit. When performing *japa*, just breathe normally. *Japa* may be preceded by the *prāṇāyāma* practice that you have been taught by your *guru*. ¶ *Japa* is a very good preparation for meditation. And you meditate on the *mantra* as you do the *mantra*. You can't meditate on the *mantra* without repeating the *mantra* inwardly. When the *mantra* is linked with meditation, it should be pronounced slowly so that you can meditate on each syllable of the *mantra* that is being repeated. You must remember that *japa* is the repetition of a few words or a few syllables. That is the *sādhana* of *japa*. Everything else is something else.

SUNDAY

Pañchākshara Is Perfection

Aum Namaḥ Śivāya is such a precious *mantra* because it is the closest sound that one can make to emulate the sounds rushing out of the Self into the mind. Chanting it is profound because

it is a sound channel which you can follow to get close to the Self of your self—sort of like following a river upstream to yourself. *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya* can be equated with Śiva's drum of creation, called *damaru*. When *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya* is repeated, we go through the *chakras*, *Na-Ma Śi-Vā-Ya Aum*. The *Aum* is in the head *chakra*. Within *Namaḥ Śivāya* is each of the elements—earth, water, fire, air and ether—which in the mind are transmuted into all-pervasive consciousness, and that is also transmuted into the great *chakra* way above the head at the end of the *Aum*. In just the breath, the space of time between the next repe-

tition of “Aum Namaḥ Śivāya...Aum Namaḥ Śivāya...Aum Namaḥ Śivāya,” the *prāṇas*, having reached Paraśiva, fall back into the spiritual, mental, astral and physical worlds, blessing them all with new energy, new life and new understanding. “Namaḥ Śivāya Aum, Namaḥ Śivāya Aum, Namaḥ Śivāya Aum, Namaḥ Śivāya Aum” is the constant process of life. It is the essence of life itself. We must realize that at any given moment we are a complete Paraśiva-Satchidānanda *jīva*, only working on the “Maheśvara part”—on the *jīva*’s becoming Śiva. Paraśiva is there. Satchidānanda is there. The maturity of the *purusha*, of the *jīva*, the embodied soul, is not. Therefore, *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya* takes us into the reality above and beyond the relatively real. To know it is to experience it, and to experience it is to become initiated. ¶I have been performing *Aum Namaḥ Śivāya* for over fifty years. At first it had no meaning other than, “Wonderful, at last I got my *mantra*, and an assignment from my *guru* to perform *japa* regularly.” As the *japa* progressed, all the inner worlds opened, all the doors of the mind. All the spiritual forces were unleashed, and the ability to control them came naturally. You see, *Namaḥ Śivāya Aum* brings the totality of the individual to the forefront and makes it manifest in daily life. This most pragmatic *mantra* is found at the center of the *Vedas*, in the hymn known as Śrī Rudram, and Śiva is at the center of *Namaḥ Śivāya Aum*. As the center of the *Vedas*, it blends Vedānta with Siddhānta, fusing them together with the fire of realization. So, I and all Śaiva Siddhāntists are a fusion of Vedānta and Siddhānta, with all doors open of understanding of

the fourteen windows, the *chakras* of the mind, and even more than that. ¶ My *satguru*, Siva Yogaswami, placed great emphasis on *japa*, repeating the name of Śiva with concentration and feeling. This great Nātha *jñānī* explained, “May we not forget that *mantra* is life, that *mantra* is action, that *mantra* is love, and that the repetition of *mantra*, *japa*, bursts forth wisdom from within. *Japa yoga* is the first *yoga* to be performed toward the goal of *jñāna*. In the temple perform *japa*. Under the sacred tree, perform *japa*. I performed *japa* all of this life as a silent *sādhana*, and it is automatic now.” Siva Yogaswami enjoined his devotees: “Wear *rudrāksha* beads, repeat the Pañchākshara, let your heart grow soft and melt. Chant the letters five, and in love you will discover Śiva’s will. Chant so that impurities, anxieties and doubts are destroyed. All hail *Namaḥ Śivāya*.”

Manoviśvam

मनोविश्वम्



The Universe of the Mind

Bound by the primordial limitations, all living souls experience the five states: waking, dreaming, deep sleep, beyond deep sleep, the state beyond. Endless indeed are the bodies and organs that *māyā* endows. All souls alike, caught in birth and death, are struck by *karma*.

Tirumantiram 2160

MONDAY**The Inner and
Outer Being**

Popular thought prevalent today is that we have an external mind to be shunned and an inner being to be reached. I look at the internal areas of the mind and the external areas of the mind as being one and the same, an integrated whole, one totality of mind. In my personal life I have proven this to myself time and time again for more than fifty-one years. ¶The inner universe of the mind is tremendous. It is much larger, more complex and better organized than any of the universes we can see with our physical eyes. The superconscious areas of mind deep within each of us are more advanced than the externalities of the material conscious world. ¶As an example, this planet, Earth, began in a very simple way. Man himself has made it extremely complex. Man has added to the planet all of the buildings, all of the systems, the laws, the cities, the countries, the states. Man has done this all himself. Quite often I humorously say, "The Gods created heaven and Earth and man decorated them." The inner mind is many times more complex than this. ¶Man is discovering new things within the sea and in outer space. All of these vast new discoveries are being registered within his subconscious mind. Only through his deep, intuitive, perceptive faculties, resident within the inner area of his mind, is he able to grasp these new findings, relate them to discoveries of the past and conditions of the present and hold a mountaintop overview of it all. But if he does not have this deep, intuitive, perceptive faculty awakened, man becomes confused by these new discoveries and fearful of his future. ¶Only the one who is

inwardly awake, vibrant, alive and has the burning desire to know and be creative with that knowledge is content and at peace with himself and the world at large. For the more he knows about the external world, the more he discovers from deep within himself as he passes this knowledge on to the present generation, who will in turn pass it on to the succeeding generation, systematically and in an organized way. Many enlightened souls on the Earth today are handling the knowledge acquired from the exterior areas of the mind and the knowledge acquired from the depths of their own being in this way. To perform this mental activity, one does not have to be mystically inclined. A mystic is one who lives two-thirds within himself and one-third within the external areas of the mind. ¶ A person who lives two-thirds within the external mind and only one-third within himself is not classified as a mystic. Let us look at the one-third of the inner area of mind in which he is living. It can be a delightful inner world or a very tragic area of the mind. This depends upon the character of the individual himself, the nature of his evolution and how he conducts himself in daily life. Although he is living only one-third within, intuitive flashes can penetrate the exterior walls of his consciousness strongly enough to change the history and course of humanity.

TUESDAY

The Mind's Three Phases

The totality of the mind is vast and complicated. However, it is helpful to look at the entirety of the mind in three basic phases: the instinctive, the intellectual and the intuitive. The instinc-

tive mind is easy to become aware of and experience. It includes the impulses of our physical body, our cravings, our desires, our digestive system, and our emotional mechanism that works through the physical body. The systems of elimination and blood circulation and the regulation of the heartbeat are all within the instinctive mind. This phase of mind functions automatically, or instinctively. It is as much alive in the animal kingdom as among humans. ¶Man alone develops the intellectual mind and is responsible for its composition as he lives along through life. This phase is a mixture of man's instinctive desires and cravings coupled with the knowledge he has gained from others and from his own intuitive discoveries. Within man's intellect, he organizes a vast amount of knowledge that begins to accumulate from a very early age. Ninety percent of this knowledge deals with the externality of the world and mind itself. The intellect can consume most of man's time through an incarnation, and usually does, lifetime after lifetime. ¶The intuitive, or superconscious, phase is even more complex, more organized, more refined than the instinctive or intellectual phases. It is mystically known as the mind of light, for when one is in this state of mind, he may see light within his head, and sometimes throughout the entirety of his physical body, if his inner sight is developed enough. Otherwise, he just begins to feel good all over, as actinic energy permeates his nervous system. When intuitive flashes come, he knows the next thing to be done in a creative activity. This is the superconscious area of the mind. When man is extremely perceptive, tremendously

creative, and knowledge seems to come to him from the inside of himself spontaneously, he is a superconscious being. ¶ *Instinctive* is a word that some may understand and others take offense at. Don't. It only means "natural or innate," naming the drives and impulses that order the animal world and the physical and lower astral aspects of humans. For example, self-preservation, procreation, hunger and thirst, as well as the emotions of greed, hatred, anger, fear, lust and jealousy, are all instinctive forces. They are very real in animals and humans alike. When the mind functions instinctively, it is controlled by the habit impressions made in the subconscious during its journey through the experiences of life. *Instinctive* also means that the driving force comes from the sexual nature. The nature is turned in that direction subconsciously, even though the conscious mind may not be cognizant of the fact. It also means that in the event of an emergency, the animal nature would take over completely, being jarred loose from lack of what I term "mind-control," or from what might be called self-control.

WEDNESDAY

Intellect and the Instinctive Mind

The first steps on the spiritual path consist in learning to harness these tendencies and impulses and transmute their energies into the higher nature. But we should not think of the instinctive mind as "bad," for it controls the basic faculties of perception and movement, digestion, elimination, ordinary thought and emotion and the many other vital functions of the physical being. Animals, birds, fish, rep-

tiles and insects are the personification of the instinctive mind. Living mainly in the areas of fear, they react immediately to change. Their driving forces are sustenance, sex, shelter and security for their young and themselves. It is these instinctive drives that are the most difficult impulses for humans to deal with. They are, for people, the seeds of all the desires of all the entanglements within the four areas—sex, money, food and clothes—which we capture in one word, *desire*. Yes, it is desire that propels humanity onward. ¶The instinctive mind also has within it various forces: the force of fear, the force of anger, the force of jealousy and the dynamic force of self-preservation. It is what it is—instinctive. It is impulsive and immediately reacts to all situations. Though it is a great force in developing the intellect, its greatest enemy is intuition, the mind of the soul, which guides humans out of the morass of the lower nature into sublimity. ¶Most of us find the intellect a saving grace when it comes from the transformation of the instinctive nature into something more substantial. Constantly we strive to broaden our intellect, increase our knowledge, govern the mind with organized thinking and control our emotions by repressing the instinctive nature. This is nature's way of increasing man's justification of that which has passed before the window of the mind and was not pleasing to his intellect, the justification being that enough knowledge has not been acquired by the intellect to sufficiently suppress the instinctive nature. ¶While the instinctive mind places great pulls on the individual, the intellectual mind often has a stranglehold. An intellectual

person could run this explanation through his intellect and be able to explain it back better than we are unraveling it here, relating this point to that point exquisitely, yet deriving absolutely nothing from the conclusions to improve his own life. The next day his mental interest would be off on another subject.

THURSDAY Mystics never demean or belittle intellectual reasoning. The intellect is not bad. It is good and necessary when used correctly. But they also do not elevate it too highly, knowing it is not the whole mind, it is only one phase of the mind. Instinctive, intellectual and intuitive phases define the whole of the mind. We often use the terms “unfolding intuitive faculties” and “developing intuition” in an effort to encourage an individual on the path to work within himself in subduing his intellect so that he can actually observe the already functioning totality of his intuitive mind. ¶ In order to subdue the intellect—that partial conglomerate of thought patterns and modes of procedure which accord with the culture of the day—it is first necessary to inwardly observe how one’s acquired intellect actually functions. Observation is a faculty of the intuitive mind, and this particular aspect of observation only comes into usage after daily meditation has been maintained over a long period of time. Once an inkling of success in knowing intuition and how it differs from reasoning, emotional impulses and pre-programmed patterns within the subconscious awakens, the contest is won. Then and then only we can

sustain this knowledge and dive deeper into the inevitable, all the time losing the future and the past, and loosening the reins of the intellect. ¶Some men say they are part of God, that the God Spirit is within them. The intuitive mind we consider to be that part of God's vast mind—our inspiration. If you have ever had a hunch and had it work out, that is the intuitive mind working within you. It has temporarily dominated your conscious mind and made it possible for you to look into the future and estimate its happenings. The intuitive mind is the essence of time, yet it understands time and timelessness, its essence. It is the essence of space, yet it comprehends space and spacelessness. It is real, yet it does not exist—real only when used, nonexistent to the lower realms of the mind. ¶Man's individual awareness is either captured by the nerve system of external consciousness of the animal bodies, which his soul inhabits as vehicles to live in on Earth, or captured by his celestial nerve system. This, then, is the intuitive nature, the natural expression of the transcendental soul known as man.

FRIDAY

The Five States of Mind

Observing the great vastness of the mind, we can draw another conclusion and say that there are five states of mind: conscious, subconscious, subsubconscious, subsuperconscious and superconscious.

The first state is the conscious mind, in which we perform our daily routines. When awareness is in the conscious mind, we are externalized. This means we take our direction mainly from memory of past experiences, from other

people, from newspapers, magazines, radio, television or our emotions. The average man is aware in the conscious mind from the time he awakens in the morning until he falls asleep at night. That's what makes him average. Only when he becomes mystically inclined does he become consciously aware of some of the other four states. ¶The second state is the subconscious mind, the grand storehouse and computer of man. It faithfully registers all thoughts and feelings that pass through the conscious state, whether correct or incorrect, whether positive or negative. It registers them and acts or reacts accordingly. ¶The subsubconscious, the third state of mind, is a conglomeration of various actions and reactions that we have experienced in daily life. It is a subtle state composed of two or more vibrations of experience which mingle and form a third vibration. We have an experience. We react to it. Later we have a similar experience. We react to that. These two reactions merge in the subsubconscious, causing a hybrid reaction that lives with us many, many years. ¶The fourth state is the subsuperconscious mind. Deep, refined and powerful, it filters intuitive flashes from the superconscious mind through the subconscious gridwork. There are times when you want very much to find a clear answer from within yourself. However, being aware in the conscious mind predominantly, awareness is cut off from direct contact with the superconscious. So, you begin to ask questions of yourself. These questions are registered in the subconscious. The subconscious, like a well-programmed computer, begins to search for the right answer from the superconscious mind.

Then, all of a sudden, you know the answer from the inside out. Finding solutions through insight or intuition is one of the functions of the subsuperconscious. It also is the source of all true creativity, inspiration, understanding and perfect timing in daily events. ¶The superconscious is the fifth state of the mind. Within it is one world within another world and yet another. All mystical phenomena and deep religious experiences come from the superconscious. It is the mind of light, beautiful and vast. When one is superconsciously alive, he feels joyously alive throughout the totality of his being—physically, emotionally and mentally—for new energies are working through his nerve system. This state of the mind is available to everyone to be aware in. The superconscious is the mind of bliss. It is vast, pure intelligence. The subsuperconscious mind is that aspect of the superconscious functioning through established subconscious patterns. ¶As we learn to identify these states, one from another, we also become more sensitive, like the artist who learns to observe depth, color and dimension within a beautiful painting. His sense of enjoyment is far superior to that of the average man who simply sees the painting as a nice picture, having no appreciation of the intricacies of color, depth, movement and technique.

SATURDAY**Unfolding the
Superconscious**

The average man may have occasional subsuperconscious experiences and rare superconscious intuitive flashes. His awareness, however, is not attuned to know the intricacies of the working of his own mind. Therefore, he is not able to identify one

from the other, making his sense of enjoyment less than that of the mature mystic. Because he is unaware of the higher states of mind, the average man may harbor his awareness deep in a subconscious state of suffering over the past for long periods of time, thereby completely ignoring his superconscious intuitive flashes when they come. As a result, his ability to bring awareness inward, out of the external, conscious and subconscious states of mind and into more blissful and refined areas, is lessened. Now *sādhana* is necessary for him to unfold his inner depth. Although he is unaware of these superconscious happenings within himself and unable to astutely pinpoint and dramatically distinguish them from his turbulent subconscious, his superconscious breakthroughs do have an effect upon the totality of his being. But when man lives externalized in the conscious and subconscious states, all the inner enjoyment and conscious abilities of exercising perceptive faculties are completely lost. The ritual of daily *sādhana* must be performed to quell the ordinary mind's tumultuous turbulence. ¶ There are many mystics in the world today who have had no formal training and seem to unfold inwardly very rapidly simply by learning about the five states of mind, how to distinguish one from another, and how to move awareness within them consciously and systematically. They are participating in and enjoying some of the benefits of being able to experience step-by-step direct cognition of the five states of mind—conscious mind, subconscious mind, sub of the subconscious mind, subsuperconscious mind and superconscious mind.

There is but one mind and, in its functioning, it works the same in everyone, as an autonomous, interrelated, self-perpetuating mechanism. Concentrate upon that mind. Find out what the mind is. Observe your thoughts, feelings and actions from within, and know that your mind is yours to use to the extent that you control the mind with the will. ¶Why must you study the mind? Because understanding alone is fifty percent of the control of the mind. This understanding is necessary to impress the subconscious deeply enough to secure awareness so that spiritual strength continues to come from within, from the superconscious through the subconscious. Before we can meditate, we have to know our way around within the mind. What part of you understands how the mind works? It is your superconscious. The subconscious can't understand how the mind works, because it's the repository. The subsubconscious can't understand. It's a collective repository. Your conscious mind can't understand either, for it is opinionated knowledge—looking at the world through the eyes of others. Only the superconscious and subsuperconscious can conceive how the mind works.

SUNDAY

Understanding Is Control

When a situation comes up, I observe how the conscious mind looks at it. Then I ask how my subconscious would see it. Pondering further, I inquire how my subsuperconscious relates to it; then, how my superconscious views it. Through this process, I get a clear picture of what happened, how it happened and if I should take it seriously. You might react

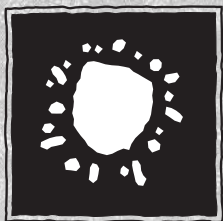
strongly to a happening, but when you look closely you see it wasn't much to be concerned about. It was just the subconscious reacting, so you forget it. The subconscious was the problem. It is your subsuperconscious, intuitive understanding that makes such judgments. ¶Remember, these are not five separate departments. They all interrelate. The conscious and subconscious work together. The subsubconscious seems to work independently of both the conscious and the subconscious, but it is not really independent. It is just another aspect of the subconscious. The superconscious is our vast, pure intelligence. The subsuperconscious is one aspect of the superconscious, functioning through subconscious patterns. ¶As we begin working with ourselves, we remold the patterns that set the course of our life. We remold our subconscious mind. We begin to identify with infinite intelligence, not with the body or the emotions or the intellect. As we prepare for the realization of the Self in this life, we set new energies into action within our body. We begin to flow our awareness out of the past and into the present, right into the now. This steadies emotion. Then we cease to have concepts that the physical body or the emotional body is "I." We begin to claim spiritual independence and are able to watch the mind think. By remolding old habit patterns in the subconscious mind, we cultivate a contemplative nature and become nonviolent in thought and action, having that innate understanding of the *karmic* cycles of the working of the various states of mind. We are able to love our fellow man. It is easy to keep promises and confidences, for we have a certain restraint.

We can begin to direct desires and acquire a certain inner poise which we did not have before, and we continually find new understanding through meditation. ¶In order to meditate, it is not enough to memorize the five states of mind—conscious mind, subconscious mind, sub of the subconscious mind, subsuperconscious mind and superconscious mind. It is not enough to memorize the processes of unwinding awareness and reprogramming the subconscious through affirmation, attention, concentration and observation. We must study out and apply these teachings to ourself. We must master them. This is the way we become a different person than we are today. When we simply memorize, we are only putting another intellectual covering over the beauty of our soul. ¶Surround yourself with superconscious people, people who are on the path. Being in their presence will help you, and their being in your presence will help them. The group helps the individual as the individual helps the group. This is provided the group is of one mind, both inner and outer. Place yourself in a good environment, a physically clean house, clean clothing, clean body, and among people who are shining forth from within. Do not surround yourself with people who are bound in the conscious mind, engrossed in jealousy, hate, fear and the other instinctive-intellectual qualities that cause contention in and among them. This will disturb you and hinder your progress on the spiritual path. If you are going to sit for meditation, you must follow these inner laws. ¶Do not argue with anyone anymore. A mystic never argues. Argument pulls awareness into the conscious

mind and programs the subconscious in a strange way. It becomes mixed up. Then it has to be unscrambled. Also, never try to convince anyone of anything. If you are talking to a mystic, he will understand what you are going to say as you speak it. Usually before you have spoken he will have grasped the point of it. He is that sharp. He is that keen. If you are talking to someone who lives deep in the intellect of the conscious mind, he will want to discuss endlessly. He will want to argue subtle points, and the issue will never be fully settled, especially if you disagree with him. ¶The mystic sits in meditation and asks himself, “Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going?” He has the sensitivity to take a little flower and study it and conquer the functions of distraction as he works to hold his awareness at attention, like a well-disciplined soldier of the within, with a will supreme in governing that attention. This caliber of mystic will in this way learn to concentrate inwardly, as his supreme will dominates his powers of awareness, bringing forth the body of the soul into the physical elements so its keen inner observation is unfolded.

Mānava Prabhāmaṇḍalam

मानव प्रभामण्डलम्



The Human Aura

That light within is as pure as the lightning's light. It is light that is great and red. It is the light of Śiva that beams *jñāna*. It is the light of *chakras* above. It is the light born of constant awareness of the pure sound, Aum. It is the light that is blended from all these lights.

Tirumantiram 2686

MONDAY**The Remarkable
Human Aura**

The human aura extends out around the body from three to four feet, even from five to six feet in the case of more evolved souls. It is made up of a variety of vibratory rates or colors. Each area of the mind that awareness flows through reflects a change in these vibratory rates of colors in the human aura. When you have developed a certain psychic sight, by seeing through the eyes of the soul, you will be able to look at a person, see the aura around him and know immediately the area of the instinctive, intellectual or superconscious mind he is aware in at that particular time. ¶ For instance, if someone's awareness was flowing through the realms of depression, that is, the area within the vast mind substance that contains the vibratory rate of depression, his aura would look rather gray, dim and dismal. If he was aware in the feeling of a genuine love for all humanity, his aura would look light blue, fringed and tinged with yellow. However, if his love for humanity was of a superficial, emotional nature, being more idle talk and emotion than subsuperconscious compassion, his aura would be pink or reddish, telling you there was still a lot of instinctive fire, and should an upsetting circumstance occur, he could easily forget about universal love and become quite angry. Then the pink would turn to flaming red streaked with black. After this, if he were to feel remorseful about the emotional upheaval, the aura would turn to dark blue, and you could hardly see his face for the deep blue mist that would form around his body. If awareness was flowing

through the area of the mind of inferiority and jealousy, the aura would be dark grayish-green in color. Someone with healing inclinations would have a pale green aura. A student increasing his intellectual knowledge would have an aura of brilliant yellow. The combinations are almost endless. ¶Several colors often appear in the aura at the same time. For example, the red of suppressed desire and seething anger might appear along with the yellow of intellectual involvement. This person's head would be surrounded in yellow, and the lower part of his body streaked in red. Even a touch of very dark green might appear, showing that jealousy caused his anger. It becomes easy to diagnose emotional problems simply by looking at the vibratory rate of the aura's colors and judging the area of the mind awareness is flowing through.

TUESDAY

Color's Ceaseless Ebb and Flow

The vast plasma of the mind is complete and finished in all of its various states, departments, areas and moods. It only seems as though it is being created as we move our awareness through it. Each area of the boundless universe of the mind has its own colors and sounds. We interpret them through our nerves and register them as feelings. When we separate awareness from that which it is aware of, it is possible to separate feeling from that which we feel. Then we can become aware of the sound of feeling and the color of feeling, as well as the color of sound, the sound of color and the feeling of sound. It will require some good meditation on your part to fully grasp this concept. But in time you

will come to understand the complete gamut of emotion and its vibratory rates as you begin to become aware of the aura around the physical body. ¶When someone is flowing his awareness through subsuperconscious areas of the mind and programming his subconscious anew, his aura rapidly changes. You know he is progressing on the path, for his aura goes through various changes of color patterns week after week as he works inwardly with his awareness. A devotee sitting in meditation, diligently working within himself, will in the course of half an hour change the colors of his aura three to four to five times, as he moves his awareness from the instinctive-intellectual areas into the brilliancy of subsuperconscious realms. His aura will take on shades of light blue and light yellow interlaced with white. Then as he moves into superconsciousness, rays of light from the central source of energy will begin to emerge from the core of his spine and flood out through his aura and penetrate the atmosphere of the room. You feel his presence as a *darshan*. ¶The sub of the subconscious mind has an aura of its own, deep within the outer aura that we have been describing. It is seen “within” the physical body itself and is different from the daily emotional-intellectual aura which appears around the physical body as a result of awareness being in one area of the mind or another. All the reactionary conditions of our past which are currently reacting in our subconscious mind are reflected in the colors of this inner subconscious aura. Oddly enough, the inner aura looks much like a modern art painting. This part of the aura does not flood out around the body, but

hovers deep within the body in the area of the chest and torso. Peering deep into the torso, one can see its various colors. They do not move. Modern art painters may without knowing it be depicting the subsubconscious aura of themselves, their family and their friends, for that is exactly what some paintings look like. ¶The inner aura might look like this: on the left side of the chest, a large area of green; down in the lower abdomen, a patch of red; near the throat, yellow; and across the heart area are streaks of orange or purple. These colors do not move. They just remain there vibrating, and the rest of the aura moves around and through them.

WEDNESDAY
Working with
The Inner Aura

As soon as one begins to meditate, to gain enough control of awareness, the colors begin to move a little. When the meditator breaks out of his ordinary daily life habit patterns by beginning to reprogram his subconscious mind, his inner aura begins to change. When after a good meditation a predominant subconscious reactionary pattern comes before his vision as if it happened yesterday, and he begins to react to it all over again, one of these color patterns may move up to the throat area. He will have to swallow. At that point, if you ask the question, "What's on your mind?" he would speak out this reaction. I always recommend it be written down and burned instead of spoken. Then that color leaves, never to reappear, and another one rises from underneath. A green color might leave and a brown one come up in its place. These repressed areas eventually will

dissipate, and awareness, once divided in many different ways, will pull in its tentacles from externalized areas of the mind until it can move freely through all areas of the mind. ¶Each time one of these deep-rooted subconscious reactionary conditions leaves, the inner aura becomes more fluid, brighter and less rigid. The devotee becomes more wholesome. After an entire subconscious cleansing, due to maybe a year of someone working with himself and developing and reprogramming his subconscious mind positively, the chest would turn into a pure sheet of very beautiful yellow, and rays of white light could be seen coming out from within it. This would continue until the devotee stopped working with himself. And if he began dwelling more in subconscious areas or encounters a condition in life which he is not able to face within himself and regresses into resentment, selfishness, self-pity and spite, the chest would cloud again and look exactly like a modern art painting. ¶The mind is like a vast universe. Man's individual awareness travels through the mind from one planet to another, one area to another. Or, if we compare the mind to the world, man's individual awareness travels through the mind from hate to love, to joy, to sorrow, to all the various ideas and concepts within the mind, as he would travel from country to country, city to city. Therefore, the human aura is very consistent. Each time man's individual awareness flows through love, the human aura reflects the pastel colors of love, as it would reflect the colors of hate, fear, jealousy, exuberance, compassion and the various areas of the intellect. One can learn to read the

colors of the human aura and know in what area of the mind the awareness of the person is flowing.

THURSDAY

The Art of Seeing Auras

The big question always arises, “How do we know whether or not we are seeing an aura, or if it is just our imagination?” Actually, there is no such thing as imagination, according to the general use of the word. When we go within ourselves, we find that each thing that is so-called imagination, or “in the world of image,” actually exists within the refined substance of the mind, and we are just becoming aware of it where it is imprinted in the vast internal substance of the mind. Only when we become aware of something that we imagine for a long enough period do we bring it out of the subtle areas of the mind and impress it upon the memory patterns of the physical brain. At that point we do not call it imagination. We begin to call it real. Finally, if we can bring it into physical manifestation, then we really begin to call it real. I suppose that this is the way man’s individual awareness has become externalized, so that he looks at the external world as real and the internal, refined areas of the mind as being unreal or elusive. It was not always so, however, because with the absence of the things to externalize man’s individual awareness, man is naturally within himself. ¶When awareness is within the very depths of the mind, so that color and light and sound are one and the same to him, he then looks at his fellow man from the inside out. He would first see the spine of someone he was looking at, and the lights within the spine, and then he would

see the inner aura, then the outer aura of the individual, and last he would see the physical body. When awareness is externalized to the point where we see physical things as reality, then we see the physical body first, and have to strain to see the aura and the internal layers of consciousness. ¶Go within yourself and all things will be unfolded to you on the inner planes of consciousness, as well as in the external states of mind. You will begin to see through them all. Seeing an aura is like seeing through someone. Their physical body begins to fade just a little bit, and we see where their awareness is flowing in the wonderful world of the mind. ¶The colors around the person are first seen within your own mind. You would not clearly see them around their physical body. Later, after becoming adjusted to this new form of sight, you may see colors around an individual's physical body. ¶Where do these colors come from? All things in the mind are sound and color. Look around you and observe each vibratory rate of every physical object as having a sound as well as a color. Everything is sound. Everything is color. Everything is shape. Therefore, in the refined areas of the mind, all things are color and all things are sound, recognizable through the sixth sense of the all-seeing eye. This faculty is always awake. You only have to learn how to be aware of and use it, in a similar way an artist must learn to distinguish with his physical eyes between one shade of color and another and between the dimensions in a painting.

FRIDAY**Psychic Sight's
Use and Misuse**

The mystic learns how to use his already developed sixth sense, his third eye. It is used all the time, constantly, day in and day out, though not consciously. For example, someone may walk into your home. You look at him and say, "You are not feeling very well today. You seem disturbed." How do you know? Inside yourself you are seeing his aura. If he enters looking bright and shiny, you know how he feels inside because you see his aura. ¶The spiritual path to realization of the Self, however, is not to see and analyze auras. The quest is to flow awareness through even the core of energy itself, into the vastness of the Self God, where awareness completely aware of itself, dissolves in its own essence, and merges into timelessness, into causelessness, into spacelessness, into Śiva, beyond that still, still area of the mind. Yes, learning to read auras can be a hindrance on the path to enlightenment because one can become the center of attraction, for everybody wants to know what his aura looks like. The aura is constantly changing. To give a reading of a friend's aura would be like telling him what kind of clothes he is wearing. The next day, he may be wearing something different. Also, when you can see someone's aura, quite often you do not notice it. Generally if you do have this awakened inner perception of auras, you would only notice someone's aura if it were peculiarly dull or strongly radiant. A mystic who has control of this faculty does not generally see auras all of the time, just when he wants to. But if a person's aura were outstand-

ing in a certain way, naturally it would stand out clearly and be seen easily. And so, when we look into such an aura, we are actually looking into the area of the mind in which his individual awareness is traveling, for the mind is always totally in a state of creation, with awareness flowing through the mind just as the traveler roams the world. ¶The mystic has to caution himself not to become overly involved in the emotions of others. He must protect his inner life by living two-thirds within and only one-third in the external realms of consciousness. And he must be wise enough to know that each one has to walk either over or around all the boulders in his path. In other words, if you are around people who are not good, who have dark auras, who have deep-rooted subconscious areas that represent a lot of black, gray, red, green blobs hidden in the psychic nerve currents of their chest, and you are not quite out of that area yourself, the vibratory rate of those people will draw you back into those areas of the mind. That is why those who live the contemplative life like to be among themselves. They like to be with people of the same lifestyle. It is necessary. It is extremely necessary to surround yourself with a good environment to make progress on the spiritual path past a certain point. You can meditate a little bit to move awareness into a peaceful area of the mind or get a little burst of inner light, or practice breathing and have a healthier body and a sound nerve system. But if you really want to go deep within toward your goal, you have to move awareness, physical body, emotional body, mental body, in with a group of people that are thinking along the

same lines and living the same lifestyle. The group helps the individual and the individual helps the group. ¶The gift of psychic vision should be developed very gradually through the stages of *sādhana*. The veiling grace of Lord Śiva is for very good reason. Some people are born with psychic sight and maintain it throughout their lifetime. As this faculty was developed in a prior birth, the wisdom and understanding of its proper use comes naturally to them. But more commonly, psychic sight develops slowly, almost imperceptibly, through an unbroken continuity of *sādhana*. Through the unveiling grace of Lord Śiva we are allowed to see what needs to be seen at the proper time in our life when we can sustain the resultant reactions. ¶We often observe the facial expressions and body language of friends and strangers and thus learn the contents of their conscious and subconscious mind, and from this deduce how they are thinking and feeling. But much can be concealed if we see no deeper. For example, someone may be smiling when he is really feeling depressed. However, when we see with our astral vision, there is no mystery. When we peer into their subconscious mind, we see the colors of their moods and emotions that perhaps are not reflected in their faces. Yes, colors and auras do relate to the five states of mind, conscious, subconscious, sub of the subconscious, subsuperconscious and superconscious.

SATURDAY

Chakras

And Nāḍīs

There are seven great force centers of psychic nerve ganglia, called *chakras*, within the physical body, the astral body and the body of the soul. Each *chakra* is a spinning vortex of mind power, a vast collective area of many, many different thought strata of odic and actinic energy. When awareness flows through any one or more of these areas, certain functions happen, such as the function of memory, the function of reason and the function of willpower. As the *chakras* spin, releasing energies into the body, these energies permeate the physical cells with life and vitality and radiate out through the force fields that surround the body. The forces are cloud-like or fog-like in consistency and reflect these energies in much the same way as a cloud reflects the rays of the sun. You have watched clouds in the sky at sunset. They appear to change color from white to pink to orange and then to darker shades. Of course, the clouds do not change. The light waves change. The clouds faithfully reflect the color of the light. In a similar way, the human aura is a reflection of the wave length of energies generated in our mind by our emotions and from our body. The basic odic and actinic energy of the aura itself does not change. It is the energies emanating from the *chakras* that change. The aura simply mirrors those energies as color vibration. ¶ Within the aura are psychic nerve currents called *nāḍīs*. It is through these *nāḍīs* that you feel someone standing next to you without turning your head to look at him. Also, by standing next to a per-

son, two or three feet away, you can feel how he is feeling. Feelings are transferable, for feelings are vibrations which can be felt through the subtle nerve system. You feel them with these astral *nāḍīs* that extend out from the body into and through the aura. Oftentimes you may identify with the feelings that you pick up from others and begin to feel that way yourself, while actually you are just picking up the vibration from someone near you. As we have learned, through the clairvoyant vision these feelings can be seen as colors in the astral atmosphere surrounding your acquaintance. As feelings are transferable, the colors within our aura are transferable, too. We now know that our aura, and the thoughts and feelings which give rise to it, affects and influences those around us. In a sense, we “rub off on one another.” A positive example is the way in which the pure and healthy aura of the faithful and devoted Hindu wife enhances the aura of her husband. His mental state is generally more positive as a result, and his business prospers.

SUNDAY
Improving
Your Aura

With the knowledge of the effect that we have on others through our mental and emotional astral atmosphere, we gain a wonderful *siddhi*: the ability to develop and improve our own aura

and thus our daily mental and emotional state, and at the same time the power to improve the aura and mood of those around us. Your *sādhana* now is to take pains to develop your aura in the direction of more desirable colors and to gradually eliminate undesirable ones. ¶ Now we shall begin to understand how to perform this new *sā-*

dhana. It works in two ways: 1) by visualizing one or more bright, positive colors flooding your aura, immediately your awareness leaves the undesirable area of the mind (such as depression, anger or jealousy), and you experience more positive feelings; 2) by consciously moving your awareness into more positive areas through the repetition of positive affirmations or *mantras*, while at the same time working to bring through the corresponding feelings, such as joy, happiness or contentment. In this way the aura is infused with bright, positive colors. Consciously working to improve one's own aura becomes doubly important when we remember that its colors, being magnetic, react back on our mind and emotions, thus intensifying and neutralizing the original mental states which called them forth. We have all found this to be true through the lesson that any negative mood or mental state seems to hold one in its clutches of its own accord, and it takes willpower to pull oneself into a more positive frame of mind. But, as you may have found in your previous experience with *sādhana*, consistent effort does yield results. You can steady and strengthen your mental and emotional faculty just as you can strengthen your physical muscles and steady your nerves through exercise and practice. ¶By consistently visualizing desirable colors in your aura, especially during moments of trial and emotional turmoil, you can become quite facile and skillful in controlling your individual awareness. Brightening up your aura in this way neutralizes the remnants of negative emotion and charges the aura with actinic energy. Automatically, feel-

ings of depression and despair give way to courage and confidence. Feelings of jealousy and resentment give way to confidence and compassion. ¶As you continue with this *sādhana*, you will see how well it can work for you. This practice will also help you to further build and mold your character in accordance with the *yamas* and *niyamas* by keeping your awareness out of the darker or more dense states of the mind. You will soon develop a strong and more attractive personality which will naturally uplift others. ¶You have discovered the five states of mind: conscious, subconscious, sub of the subconscious, subsuperconscious and superconscious. You also understand the three phases of the mind: instinctive, intellectual and superconscious. Now we are learning about our individual awareness, what it is and how it travels through the vast universe of the mind just as a traveler moves from place to place on the Earth. In each place that the traveler visits, he is affected by the vibrations around him. He absorbs the thoughts of others and their moods. He is influenced by the events he participates in. Similarly, when your individual awareness travels through the mind, it is influenced or colored by the vibrations within each area of the mind it becomes aware in. This influences your nerve system and lays the foundation for your thoughts and feelings, thus giving rise to the colors in your aura. These colors are ever changing, because your own awareness is constantly moving through the vast universe of mind substance.

Nidrā Svapnāni cha
निद्रा स्वप्नानि च



Sleep and Dreams

The gross body of the waking state, the subtle body of the dream state, both made of twenty-five *tattvas*, are verily of *bindu's* power. That power, permeating the soul, penetrates the states of waking and dreaming.

Tirumantiram 2187

MONDAY
The World
Of Dreams

Dreams have been a mystery and a puzzle to people of all ages throughout time. The wonderment of dreams has been apparent in history, philosophy and now even in science. This leads us

to assume that the dream state is not unlike the waking state, for especially in this technological age of communication, we live more in our mind than in our physical body. Millions are computer literate and deal in concepts far beyond the normal state anyone would have found himself in one hundred years ago. The mind never sleeps—only the physical body experiences this indulgence—and the physical brain perceives and records what passes through the mind, but the astral brain perceives and records...oh-so-much more! Therefore, keeping this in mind, there is a continuity of consciousness twenty-four hours a day, but not all of it is perceived or recorded by the physical brain, either through the day or through the night. This is why it is difficult to remember all the details of one's life and experience, even as short a time as forty-eight hours ago. It is only the important things, those which make the strongest impression within the physical brain's memory patterns, that are remembered. ¶ In the inner worlds, inner universe, there is a life not unlike this one that we experience as a *jīva*, but far more complete, intricate, logical and much more advanced. Within this world, the *Antarloka*, there are great schools where students gather to learn of a more productive future that they can participate in creating when they incarnate. Here they mix and mingle with other souls whose

physical bodies are sleeping and whom they will work and cooperate with during their next cycle of birth. It is a well-planned-out universe, both the outer universe and the inner universe. The value of sleep for the person on the path is to gain the ability to bypass the lower dream state and soar deeper within to these inner-plane schools. This is done by the repetition of *mantras*, *japa yoga*, just before sleep, after relaxing the body through *haṭha yoga* and diaphragmatic breathing. ¶ It is almost traditional in many cultures to try to remember one's dreams, and dreamologists will even interpret them for you. This all borders close to the realm of superstition and is far less desirable for spiritual growth than other more pragmatic types of practices. A beginner on the path, or even one in the intermediate phase, should endeavor to forget dreams and strengthen the fibers of the mind and psyche through daily *sādhana*. There is actually a time, on the *yoga mārga*, after the *charyā* and *kriyā mārgas* have been well mastered and passed through, that the remembrance of one's dreams is beneficial and fruitful, but this would only be between the *guru* and the *śishya*. ¶ When *japa* is well performed and the sincere desire is maintained to transcend the forces of the physical body and enter into the astral schools of learning, the aspirant would have dreamless nights. A deep sleep would prevail. There may be a few seconds of dreaming just before awakening, to which one should not pay any attention, as the astral body quickly reenters the physical. But a deep, dreamless sleep is in itself an indicator that the *purusha* is totally detached from the physical forces and totally intact and functioning

in the Devaloka. Himalayan Academy is an academy in the Devaloka in which *rishis* of the Nandinātha Sampradāya teach, help and guide tens of thousands of devotees of God Śiva who have been influenced by the words and teachings of our *sampradāya*. ¶ We want to forget bad dreams as quickly as possible, lest by remembering them through the conscious mind we impress them in the immediate subconscious and make them manifest in daily life. To think about a bad dream is to create. To forget it is to avoid creating. Therefore, if you have the slightest worry about dreams and are not directly under a *guru's* guidance on a daily basis, it is best to let them slide by and consider them unimportant and not a part of you, as you would consider a television program to be. ¶ Really bad nightmare kinds of dreams are not natural to the sleeper's mind. Therefore, we must assume that they are produced by outside influences, such as what the neighbors are going through in the next apartment, the apartment above or the apartment below, or what a dear friend or relative may be experiencing in daily life. Subjective as they are, the frustrated, confused, even threatening, dreams of this nature are taken to be one's creation or one's own problem. However, this is more than often not true. A child may be tormented by nightmares and wake up screaming, and the solution would be to have it sleep in another room, away from the next-door apartment where the husband and wife are battling, entertaining hateful thoughts. These kinds of quarrels permeate the inner atmosphere one hundred yards around, as far as the loudest voice could be heard if there were no walls. This is

why those on the path seek the quiet of a forest, a life away from the city, in order to perform *sādhana* in their spiritual pursuit. Dreams of capture and chase are not products of one's own mind. They are definitely outside influences.

TUESDAY

Experiences on The Astral Plane

When we are in a dream, it seems so real to us. When we wake up, we reflect on it as a dream, which is usually thought of as unreal. Similarly, Indian philosophers enjoy saying that we are in this life and it seems real until we wake up, through spiritual enlightenment, to a greater reality. If we postulate that dreams are real, we must then acknowledge that what we remember of them is our uninhibited states of consciousness, experience, unencumbered by society, local and national customs or inhibitions planted into the mind by parents at a young age. Knowing this will let us know who we really are, underneath the façade, encumbered by society, suppressed by beliefs and attitudes of the waking state. We are free in our dreams. No one is looking at us. Society, family and friends are not judging us. ¶ *Āyurveda* physicians state that those of the *kapha dosha*, which is water and earth, often dream of water. One who is of the *pitta dosha*, fire nature, dreams of fire. A *vāta*, or air nature, dreams of air. But they also say that it may be best to forget your dreams, because they might be produced by indigestion or constipation. And these may be dreams you would not want to remember. Nevertheless, if dreams depict who we really are, it may be beneficial for those under the guidance of a *satguru* to write them down each morning upon arising and put them at his holy feet at

the end of each month. This would be strictly a *guru-śishya* training relationship and for a specified period of time, not more than four months. It might be scary, even disheartening, for you to do this for yourself. And *satgurus* would recommend that you forget your dreams upon awakening, for if remembered they may bring that reality into the awakened reality and produce experiences you would not want to experience. ¶One more thing comes to mind—this is that occasionally I have experienced being absolutely aware, fully conscious of the physical body, eyes closed, while simultaneously seeing through the eyes of the inner body and communicating through thought with astral people in my room. Sometimes when the *mathavāsis* have been late to feed me because I was napping but fully conscious, the guardian *devas* would come before me with delicious food, nicely prepared, and with their astral hands spoon it into my mouth, and I could actually smell and taste it. When the astral meal is over, I am not physically hungry anymore. During the height of the Sri Lanka civil war crisis, when thousands of my devotees there were being killed day after day, several times during the day I deliberately took naps, off and on. Just before these sleeps and just before awakening in the morning, I would meet with those who had been killed and bless them one at a time as they came before me. I was totally conscious as my astral hand would put the blessing, the mark of *vibhūti*, Śiva's sacred ash, upon their forehead. Then they would go on into the Śivaloka. This type of physical-astral experience is definitely not a dream; nor is it a superconscious vision. It is an actual, intense hu-

man happening involving this world and its astral double, coexisting in communicative activity. Unlike dreams, which are quickly forgotten, these physical-astral experiences, not unlike superconscious visions, leave an indelible mark in the physical brain and are more vivid months and even years later than when they were experienced. ¶For three or four years in the late fifties, I researched the death experience and its astral interface with this apparent reality. The dream world was explored, and the astral interface with waking consciousness within it. We discovered that there are many thousands of astral lovers who regularly visit women to satisfy their sexual desires. These women are single, either not married yet, or divorced, or married, but their husbands were not able to satisfy them. It was also discovered that because of this psychic phenomenon, women who have had unhappy marriages are more attracted than men to spiritualism, as it was called in those days. Such astral male lovers are called *gandharvas* in the *Vedas*, and their female counterparts are the *apsarās*. These are definitely experiences, astral-physical-plane interface experiences, as real as happenings during the waking day.

WEDNESDAY

Interpreting Our Dreams

In the early 1980s, just before Sri Lanka's civil war, I was invited by the government to travel through the country and visit all who were attached to our Śiva Yogaswāmī Paramparā during the past century. There were massive parades for miles and miles in villages we passed through, grand receptions, rides on great chariots and hundreds of garlands from those that came

alive for the event. All during these times, knowing that war was imminent, I preached that Śiva's devotees do not fear death, it is only a passing into another life. Later, at the height of the civil war, when my devotees were experiencing the transition and the killing and torture, it was perplexing to me to understand how people that were so high in consciousness and culture could go so low. ¶In many, many astral, conscious states, I visited the lowest *chakras*, protected by *devonic* helpers and unseen by those within them, and discovered for myself these regions before ever reading about them. Having never read a book from cover to cover in my life and, having been trained from very early years, sixteen or seventeen, to have the experience first and then somehow or other it would be verified by scripture later on, this was my path. I was told that to know what was coming up in the experiential pattern of spiritual unfoldment could be to put into the subconscious mind the experience and memories of it, which would not be the experience at all. This, I was taught, would build a spiritual pride that would detour one from the path to Self Realization. Very carefully I observed this, fully understanding the wisdom of the advice. It was amazing to me to have verified in obscure scriptures that the *chakras*, or *talas*, below the *mūlādhāra* were exactly as when I visited each of them, guided by mighty *devas* who had the power to go anywhere within the mind. Life has taught me that knowledge is best when it is experiential, not intellectually learned and then remembered. This I have endeavored to impress upon my devotees over the past five decades. ¶Hindus say there are

kinds of dreams conjured from the needs of the individual, and then there is another kind that is sent by the Gods. I myself have appeared in dreams to people that have never seen me, seen my picture or even knew of my physical existence. Gods communicate by pictures. Therefore, certain kinds of dreams have meaning if they are sent by the Gods. Signs, symbols and body language to the Asian people have great meaning. For instance, folding your arms across the chest in the West may be just resting them; in the East it is a sign of disdain. Dreams from the Gods come to very religious people who live a disciplined life of *sādhana*, rising at four in the morning, and living Hindu Dharma to the best of their ability to understand it. They have attracted the attention of the Gods because they have penetrated the realms of the Gods. If they let down, then they would not have those kinds of visitations any longer. ¶The average lifetime is about eighty years in the United States. The average time someone sleeps is about one third of his life. Therefore, we are dreaming about twenty-seven years of our life. We assume that dreams only occur when the physical body is asleep. But what about the unproductive thoughts, the daydreams, thinking about unfounded fears, the uncontrolled states of waking mind, mental arguments, mental fears, the uncontrolled combative thoughts, fantasies—sexual, violent, tender, loving, worrisome, fretful, indecisive or gruesome? ¶If someone confesses his dreams he has at night, he should also confess his dreams during the day. The ancient scriptures say that dreams are like our waking thoughts in this way: if we dream and forget the

dream, it is as though the dream had never happened. If you think a thought during the day and forget the thought, it's as though the thought had never happened. It's when we remember and speak out a dream or remember and speak out a thought that it has reality on this plane.

THURSDAY

Shielding Your Emotional Nature

Some dreams come from the person's nature, *vāta*, *pitta*, *kapha*, and others from the emotional nature, some from subconscious fears, and some from just playing back experiences in daily life.

But certain dreams are brought by the Gods. We might not call these dreams, by our way of defining them. And there are prophetic dreams. Prophetic dreams come from the superconscious mind, beyond the subconscious. It is a state of mind that sees into the future and into the past simultaneously, is able to read the *ākāśic* records. During intense periods of one's life that will manifest in the future, be they good, bad or mixed, it is this state of mind within every human soul that is tapped, or that of its own volition infiltrates its wisdom in coming events upon the physical brain through what is called a prophetic dream. There is no mystery here. Sincere souls should be warned of impending dangers or good fortune that might disrupt their current mundane lifestyle. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Like visions of the Gods and astral-physical interfaces, prophetic dreams, which are more like visions, are also remembered and cannot be forgotten. They are remembered day after day even more vividly than when they occurred. Let's not be unaware that our own superconsciousness, our third eye, our

dūrdarśana, our far-seeingness, can warn us of events. ¶If you dream that you are dying, in Hindu thought it means you are going to live. But if you dream your teeth are falling out, you are going to die. And we must know that this has been tried and tested and proved worthy over thousands of years of experience. I myself, being of a *kapha dosha*, dream of water. When the water is calm, I know that there will be no mental disturbances in the foreseeable future. But when there are dashing ocean waves, I know that within seventy-two hours, three days, there will be a mental disturbance with an aggression of mental force. This has been proven to my external, conscious mind time and time again. The ancient texts speak of giant floods that consume the world, as in typical dreams. The single most talked about dream in Indian lore is of flying. ¶If you remember a dream a month later, it is not an ordinary dream. It has meaning. Therefore, if you are prone to go to a dream analyst, and you want to get the right knowledge from his perception, present to him an astral-physical interface, a dream or a vision, at least thirty-one days after it has happened and which is still important to you and a part of your life. This is the best advice we can give for an honest appraisal. This is very good *satguru* advice. ¶The most prophetic dreams come in the early hours just before sunrise. The more subconscious-cleansing type dreams come before that time. But in my own experience, the really impressive dreams come just before waking up at three or four o'clock in the morning. It's always a couple of hours before sunrise. Eleven or twelve o'clock? No! These are kind of witchy times, uncon-

scious times, and dreams experienced then just fade away. ¶When you wake up during the night, discipline should be applied lest you just roll over in a semi-conscious state and return to the dream world, going back into a subconscious or lower astral area—which might be negative, might be positive, you don't know. To avoid this, you should become fully awake. The ideal practice for seekers is to sit up when you wake up during the night. Sit and listen for a minute or two to the *nāda-nāḍī śakti* or go into the light within your head if you are able. Then, if you wish, consciously lie down and go back to sleep, just like you did when you went to bed in the first place. ¶If you then have difficulty returning to sleep, you can assume you have had sufficient rest for your physical body. In such a case, don't force yourself to return to sleep, waiting for the alarm to ring, which is a kind of indulgence. Instead, get up. That means fully get out of bed, get dressed and do something useful. If you just roll over and go into the semiconscious dream world, you can go into subconscious areas, into the Pretaloka, and even have astral attacks from astral entities, and even into the *talas* below the *mūlādhāra*. This drains the physical and astral energies of their life and vigor. In my early training, both ways were tested, so the knowledge from actual experience is evident. Follow the formula: “Wake up, get up.” One of my *sādhana*s practiced in Sri Lanka in the late '40s was to sleep for only two hours, wake up with the help of a small alarm clock, sit in the lotus posture and meditate as long as possible, reset the alarm for another two hours, and repeat until just before sunrise. ¶When people begin to meditate and are

on the spiritual path, working with themselves—and this means that they do accomplish making a difference in their behavior, their beliefs, attitudes and daily actions—their dream life will reflect these results as well. For them, the dream *karmas* can be worked out. *Karma* is often qualified as a force that is sent out from us and returns to us, generally through other people. Nearly always, *karma* is related to the waking state. However, we do experience emotions in dreams. The world within is as solid as is the body in which we find ourself in the awakened state. We do experience in the inner worlds, while the physical body is asleep, forces going out from our thoughts, feelings and what we say and think, and these obviously are dream *karmas*, real *karmas* that will eventually manifest on the physical plane unless reexperienced and dissolved within the dream world itself. The reason why dream *karmas* can only be worked out by those who are performing *sādhana* and making actual changes in their lives is because they have effected a certain soul control over their mind, physical body and emotions, and this naturally carries over into the dream reality.

FRIDAY

Working with The Dream State

We really should have another word for this dream reality, as the word *dream* has taken on connotations of something that only exists in one's imagination. These kinds of dreams—when a person is in his astral body and can feel what he touches, emote to his experiences, think and talk—are not what is known as the dream state. This is an astral experience, similar to the death experience, but the astral body is

still connected to the physical body. Dreams and death are brothers, with the exception that the silver cord is not broken, which is the psychic cord of actinodic energy, or the umbilical cord between the astral body and its physical duplicate, or of the physical body and its astral duplicate. Therefore, when one begins the regular practice of *sādhana*, meditation, *mantras*, correcting behavioral patterns in daily life, the astral body is able to disconnect from the physical body and an astral reality is experienced, which is not a dream when remembered, in the sense that dreams are usually denoted to be. ¶The English-language concepts of dreams—such as “when I wake up,” “when I was dreaming” or “I tried to remember my dream”—set the pattern for the psychology behind dreams in the Western context. We could say, “I realized I was consciously active as I reentered my physical body and tried to impress in my physical brain the creative work, activity, thoughts, feelings and experiences that happened throughout the night.” This would be affirming twenty-four-hour consciousness, of which the physical body plays a very small part in its apparent reality. ¶Because they are experienced, because they affect our waking life and because many of them are portents of the future: these are reasons Adi Sankara gave in saying that dreams are real in many respects. In the West, dreams are thought of as more or less unreal. In the East they are thought of as both real and unreal. The Sanskrit word for dream, *svapna*, is etymologically related to the Greek word *hypnos* and includes the content of dream and the form or process of dreaming. It is one of four *avasthās*, or states of

consciousness, given in the *Upanishads*: *jagrat*, the waking state; *svapna*, the sleeping or dreaming state; *sushupti*, deep sleep; and *turiya*, the fourth state, also called *samādhi*. ¶We have spoken earlier about the twenty-four-hour consciousness of the mind and how even in the waking state an uncontrolled mind is dreaming and fantasizing, and we made the point that it is only the physical body that experiences the phenomenon of sleep. The astral body does not have to. It can remain awake and active twenty-four hours a day, because it is always functioning within the physical body during the physical body's waking hours as well. We actually live in our astral body twenty-four hours a day. That is the true home of the soul, mind, emotions, seed *karmas*. The astral body, when fortunate enough to have a physical body, uses it at least half a day every day, when that body is not sleeping. ¶More and more subtle dimensions of consciousness are dealt with in *sādhana*. Ultimately, perhaps, one even begins to work with dreams in subtle ways. The Hindu idea that one would not steal or injure even in a dream seems to reinforce this subtlety. A dream that might not mean anything to an ordinary person, say an incident of stealing, might be thought important to an adept. Often religious people suppress their natural feelings in order to live up to religious concepts of virtue and ethics that they have not naturally worked into and earned by clearing up their past behavioral patterns through daily *sādhana*, self-inquiry and change in belief through belief therapy. This means totally eradicating one belief and replacing it with a new one that is more in line with the religious principles they have

decided to mold into their life than were the older ones. Because of this suppression, the expression of the desires is released and experienced during dreams. Many people who have accomplished these repressions exceedingly well have repetitive dreams. Here the *guru* would take note of the dreams that were occurring to see if they were actually suppressed desires, feelings and emotions that had to be talked about in the light of day and changed, especially if they are recurring. The recurrence of the same or similar dream experience indicates that work needs to be done within the seeker, who has set for himself too high a standard during the waking state and is not performing enough *sādhana* and *tapas* to maintain that standard. Therefore, the letdown comes when no one is watching. During dreams he can do what he really wants to do. ¶The key here for the seeker is not to carry the dream into daily life and then start to do what he did in the dream in the physical world. This would only make more *karmas* and compound the situation, stop the *sādhana*s and open a door for perhaps endless other *karmas* or a complete life change, change of personality. The remedy is, if possible under the guidance of a *guru*, to perform certain *sādhana*s, *tapas*, penance, self-inquiry, even a penance for having the dream, while remembering the high standards of virtue and good conduct that should have been maintained during that sleep cycle. This explains the Hindu point of view that one should not steal even during dreams, commit adultery, harm anyone or act against *dharma*, the *yamas* and *niyamas*, in any way.

SATURDAY

**The Continuity
Of Consciousness**

In India there is the concept that dreams affect not only the dreamer himself but those around him as well. Partially this is because the concept of self is intertwined with everything else: family, community, village, cosmos. Thus, a dream by the *guru* would affect all of his monks. The dreams that a *guru* would dream would become the teachings of the *guru* to all *śishyas*. But because the *śishyas* were in tune with his inner mind, the knowledge would be imparted to them at the same time that the dreams were occurring. Therefore, they would very rapidly pick up on the teachings that developed out of the dreams. ¶ Similarly, families, friends, loved ones and relations are all connected. To be connected to a *guru* would not disconnect you from your family, but only from the members of the family that were not connected to the same *guru*. They would, all of a sudden, be on the outside of the family looking in, because they would not be in the inner, dream, astral, inner-plane-school phenomenon that being connected to a *guru* provides. When entire families are of the same *sampradāya* and hold allegiance to the same *paramparā*, all goes well in the continuity of consciousness through the entire life cycle. ¶ There is no reason to think that dreams are individually secret in the vibrations they create and that they do not affect the inner minds of those the person is connected to. But then again, this applies to people who are doing regular spiritual disciplines and are tapping inner resources and through these inner resources are tapping the higher dimensions of the mind and striving

for higher consciousness. ¶The first thing a *guru* would do, or which you can do, if somebody tells about a dream, is to discern if he is an undisciplined person. If so, the dream obviously reflects his undisciplined nature. If he has been disciplined in the past and is now resting on his accomplishments and has let down on his disciplines, or if he is currently doing *yoga* at a certain time each day, this knowledge itself will show in the dream's quality. ¶In India, dreams are also understood to be good and bad omens. The *Atharva Veda's* appendix sixty-eight is all about the symbolism of dreams. Traditional good omens are dreaming that you have been killed, that your house has burned down. Indian dream analyzers actually interpret those dreams as positive. Dreaming that your teeth are falling out is bad. Being covered with oil is bad. Dreaming of a woman in a green or red *sārī* is bad, though dreaming of a woman in general is considered auspicious. If you dream that someone gave you an umbrella or that you are riding on a camel, that is good. It is only ignorance—which is the ability to ignore—to pass over an entire subject area of knowledge with a superficial reason or comment. These age-old traditions which have stood the test of time are obviously a systematic investigation by many learned people of what tens of thousands of men and women have experienced after having had dreams of these kinds and thus formulated these postulations. The Western rationalist would write them off simply as superstition. ¶The word *superstition* comes from the Latin *superstitio*, originally meaning “a standing still over.” *Webster's Dictionary* defines *superstition* as “any belief or attitude based on

fear or ignorance that is inconsistent with the known laws of science or with what is generally considered in the particular society as true and rational, especially such a belief in charms, omens, the supernatural, etc.” These simple words are very important because they have the power to block out from human consciousness vast amounts of mystical knowledge. The Hindu looks at time not in a twenty-four-hour day, but a cycle of lifetimes, of many lives, and from creation of the soul to its eventual fulfillment of merger in Śiva. The Westerner looks at time as a straight line. It has a beginning; it has an end. The line begins at birth and ends at death. Therefore, such a short line of consciousness cannot waste time in superstition, imagination. Whereas the Hindu believes that the knowledge acquired in one life should be carried over to the next life, the next and the next. It is an ever-building, ever-growing maturation of not only the soul but the many bodies it inhabits. ¶The theme that we are working with is the continuity of consciousness from birth to death—but even more, from the creation of the soul to its final merger into its creator, having fully matured into the image and likeness of the creator—and the experiential consciousness, twenty-four hours a day, as creating *karmas*.

SUNDAY

Shared Dreams; Inner Darkness

It is the one-life belief that creates the big distinction between waking and sleeping. It is the super misconception that the objective reality is real and the subjective reality is fantasy, unreal.

Quite the contrary, the subjective reality is real and the ob-

jective reality is less real from the Hindu point of view. Both the subjective and objective realms are given reality by the previous *samskāras* impressed within the soul, and when done with and healed, those subjective and objective realities fade away. It is because of these *samskāras* that people do not merge with Śiva as Śiva, why the *jīva* does not become Śiva immediately. Experiences had and *karmas* made in a physical birth will require a physical birth to heal them. Experiences and *karmas* made in the dream world will require sleep experience to heal them. ¶One of the strong themes in Hindu dream thought is that of shared dreams. This means two people having the same dream and confirming it later by talking about it, two people communicating in a dream which reflects later in reality, or two people entering a dream together. Tibet's *gurus* and disciples would dream the same dream consciously, being of such one-mindedness, with the purpose of creating something on the physical plane, and if they pooled their minds like that, they would be able, according to our tradition, to create something that never existed before. ¶Two people sharing the same dream and communicating within that dream is a definite astral-plane experience. People endeavoring to have the same dream is a systematic teaching of the Nandinātha Sampradāya, such as entering inner-plane schools where everyone is learning from great Nātha adepts. People having the same dream and then talking about it and saying "Yes, I had a dream like that at the same time" may be a prophetic message from the Gods and *devas*, a form of channeling. The intelligent souls living in the inner world want to communicate something

to those in the outer world and can't communicate it directly through a psychic, so they try to communicate it through dreams through numerous people. These are usually very prophetic dreams. Dreams of this kind should not be taken overly seriously if only two people have them, because one might be just agreeing with the other that he had also had it, compromising or looking for favors. If two people have had the same dream, they should look for a third person who has also had the same dream. This is the protective step to take. The inner-plane beings will project the same image and knowledge through five, ten, fifteen individuals, so there will always be a third person, or a fourth or a fifth. Then these prophetic kinds of dreams can really be taken seriously. With these kinds of projected dreams, there is no need to panic, because they are projected by the great overseers of this planet long before anything foreboding would happen, to give inhabitants a chance to understand and adjust the situation. They are not given in the framework of something happening in two or three days or a week or two. ¶ Enlightenment gives experiential understanding of all states of mind, from the nothing which is the fullness of everything and the fullness which is the emptiness of nothing, into sound, color, combinations of colors and sounds, which is form. The forms that interrelate with forms make *saṃskāras*. The forms of the *saṃskāras* remembered separate and categorize the forms, and *voilà*, human life is created. Enlightenment means seeing the entire picture simultaneously, because when the light is turned on, everything in the room is seen. When the light is turned on in the mind,

everything in the mind is seen. There are no mysteries, no dark areas, no gray areas. Unlike turning on the light in the room, which immediately produces shadows, enlightenment illumines everything in the mind from the inside out. There are no shadows, no mysteries. Yes, dreams are no mystery to the enlightened, but are seen no differently than the waking state. There is only one reality in form, which is the pure consciousness which is conscious of form, and this reality is what realizes itself as formless, timeless, spaceless. ¶An enlightened man does not dream or live differently, but simply sees his dreams and waking life differently. The unenlightened person has definitely a darkness, many gray areas in the struggle for enlightenment. Or, if he is not struggling for enlightenment, the blackness within is his reality. An occasional flash of light, which might come with a bright, unexpected idea, is like a word from the Divine, considered a word from the Divine. The unenlightened are blinded by their own good deeds, mixed deeds and bad deeds of the past, couped up in darkness and held there by their lethargy and inability to attempt a *yoga*, a union, with the Divine. As a single leaf from a tree can guard your eyes from the bright impact of sunlight when held between you and the sun, so can one single belief—and the religious ones are clung to most religiously—hold a believer in dark areas of the mind.

Karma Prākṛitika Vidhiḥ

कर्म प्राकृतिक विधिः



Karma, the Natural Law

Unaware of the evil fruits that *karma* brings, they choose not to attain the *jñāna* which grants liberation from *karma*. “Renounce *karma* and be liberated”—this Vedic teaching is unknown to them who, wallowing in *karma*, will never reap the rich harvest.

Tirumantiram 2557

MONDAY

The Law of
Cause and Effect

Memory patterns are extremely magnetic. They cause us to have experiences of the type that make us wonder, “Why should that have ever happened to me? What did I do to attract this?

What did I do to cause that? I don’t deserve this happening to me.” The vibrations that cause these experiences were put into effect in this or a past life. *Prāṇic* forces deep within imprint memory patterns of these actions we put into motion, causing us to face the reactions of them in this life. We face those reactions collectively through other people and through our own action. We are impelled to do certain things. Why? We call it *karma*. *Karma* means cause and effect. We throw a boomerang. It travels out into the air, turns around and comes back to us with equal force. In a similar way, our actions and even our thoughts set up patterns of reaction that return to us with equal force. This is the natural law of *karma*. Every action, every effect, in the universe has been preceded by a specific cause or set of causes. That cause is in itself an effect of prior causes. The law of *karma* is the law of cause and effect, or action and reaction. ¶When we cause a traumatic disruption within ourselves or within others, the action is imprinted in the memory patterns of the *mūlādhāra chakra*. The seed has been planted and will remain vibrating in the depths of the mind even though consciously forgotten. We carry it over from life to life, from birth to birth until one day it blossoms into the fruit of our action—reaction. ¶The reason patterns of the *svādhishṭhāna chakra*, just above memory,

do not understand these experiences at all, because that *chakra* functions at a different rate of vibration. So, only after the event has occurred, or the impulses have come, can we reason them out rationally. Since we have forgotten our past life and are only left with the *prāṇic* reverberations deep in the memory cells, we don't know the causes. In fact, there seems to be no cause for many of the things that happen to us in life, no reason or justification. This can be frustrating. However, that is *karma*, and it is generally written off by saying, "That's *karma*." It is an effect to a previous cause. ¶The best attitude to hold when you first recognize the existence of *karma* is to realize that, true, it is a joy or a burden, and to stand straight, carrying that joy or that burden well balanced, seeking at all times not to add to it. Carry your *karma* cheerfully. Then begin the tedious task of unwinding these multitudinous patterns through performing daily *sādhana*. Each next step will become quite obvious to you as you begin to find that you are the writer of your own destiny, the master of your ship through life, and the freedom of your soul is but yours to claim through your accomplishments of your *yoga*.

TUESDAY

How We Face Our Karma

How can we work out *karma*? There are thousands of things vibrating in the *mūlādhāra chakra*, and from those memory patterns they are going to bounce up into view one after another,

especially if we gain more *prāṇa* by breathing and eating correctly. When meditation begins, more *karma* is released from the first *chakra*. Our individual *karma* is intensified

as the ingrained memory patterns that were established long ago accumulate and are faced, one after another, after another, after another. ¶ In our first four or five years of striving on the path we face the *karmic* patterns that we would never have faced in this life had we not consciously sought enlightenment. Experiences come faster, closer together. So much happens in the short span of a few months or even a few days, catalyzed by the new energies released in meditation and by our efforts to purify mind and body, it might have taken us two or three lifetimes to face them all. They would not have come up before then, because nothing would have stimulated them. ¶ First, we must know fully that we ourselves are the cause of all that happens. As long as we externalize the source of our successes and failures, we perpetuate the cycles of *karma*, good or bad. As long as we blame others for our problems or curse the seeming injustices of life, we will not find within ourselves the understanding of *karmic* laws that will transmute our unresolved patterns. We must realize that every moment in our life, every joy and every sorrow, can be traced to some source within us. There is no one “out there” making it all happen. We make it happen or not happen according to the actions we perform, the attitudes we hold and the thoughts we think. Therefore, by gaining conscious control of our thoughts and attitudes by right action, we can control the flow of *karma*. *Karma*, then, is our best spiritual teacher. We spiritually learn and grow as our actions return to us to be resolved and dissolved. ¶ The second way to face *karma* is in deep sleep and meditation.

Seeds of *karma* that have not even expressed themselves can be traced in deep meditation by one who has many years of experience in the within. Having pinpointed the unmanifested *karmic* seed, the *jñānī* can either dissolve it in intense light or inwardly live through the reaction of his past action. If his meditation is successful, he will be able to throw out the vibrating experiences or desires which are consuming the mind. In doing this, in traveling past the world of desire, he breaks the wheel of *karma* which binds him to the specific reaction which must follow every action. That experience will never have to happen on the physical plane, for its vibrating power has already been absorbed in his nerve system.

WEDNESDAY

Working It Out On the Inside

A third way that past actions are re-enacted is through the actual intense reactionary experience and working with yourself, conquering inner desires and emotions. When something happens to you that you put into motion in a past life or earlier in this life, sit down and think it over. Do not strike out. Do not react. Work it out inside yourself. Take the experience within, into the pure energies of the spine and transmute that energy back into its primal source. In doing so, what happens? You change its consistency. It no longer has magnetic power, and awareness flows away from that memory pattern forever. You could remember the experience, but your perspective would be totally detached and objective. This is the most common way *karma* is resolved, in day-to-day experiences. By living an inner life, you stop

creating uncomplimentary *karma* and can therefore consciously face the reactions of the past without the confusion of additional day-to-day reactions. ¶Everyone lives an inner life. When you are thinking over that film that you saw last week, that is inner life. When you are deeply involved in a reactionary area because of something that has happened or is happening to someone else, you are living inwardly the same experience that you think he is going through. ¶In your life, someone you love has gone through an experience, and you have shared it with him. You felt his suffering and began to live it through dramatically. Actually, that same experience under a different set of conditions would have been happening to you, but it was happening to you in an indirect way through observation. You were able to vicariously work through this *karma*. ¶Perhaps your friend is destined to lose his leg in this life because he caused someone else to lose a leg in a past life. If he is living as an instinctive being, with all the energies flowing through the first two *chakras*, memory and reason, and through the passive physical forces, that experience will come to him in full force. However, perhaps he has his energies flowing through aggressive intellectual forces. Even if he is not consciously on the path of enlightenment, but is kindly and subdues his instinctive reactions by his intellect, that *karma* would still come back to him, but he would experience it in a different way. ¶One morning he may pick up the newspaper and read about an automobile accident in which someone has lost a leg. This news jars him. His solar plexus tightens. His

reaction is so severe that he cannot eat his breakfast that morning. He does not know why, but all day he lives and relives every experience the article describes. He wonders, “What if this had happened to me? What would I do? How would I face it? How would I adjust my consciousness to it?” At work he imagines himself going through life with one leg—the therapy, the family concern, the emotional adjustment. It may take him three or four days to work his awareness out of that reaction. He does not know why that particular article in the newspaper impressed him so much. It seems foolish to him to think so much about the event and he tries to forget it. Soon thereafter, while hiking in the mountains, he stumbles and falls, cutting his thigh on the jagged rocks, tearing a few ligaments. The full force of the *karmic* experience comes, but because of his present goodness and previous blessings earned through control of his intellect, he receives the experience as a minor wound and an emotional reaction to another’s losing his leg. This seed *karma* is worked through within himself in this way. He does not have to lose a leg, as he would if he were living in the instinctive mind of fear, anger and jealousy.

THURSDAY

The Effect of Self Realization

“I am the master of my fate.” This is how you become the master of your fate and the ruler of your own destiny. Through meditation you can bring everything to the now. “What

happens when all the *karma* of all my past lives is worked out and I finally bring myself up to the now? Then what happens?” you might ask. You would truly be an artisan,

an absolute expert at working out *karma* in the mental and spiritual spheres, and could begin to help working out *karma* for other people. *Karma* is transferable. One can take on some of the *karma* of other people, work it out for them and make their burden a little easier for them. ¶ After the realization of the Self, Paraśiva, the forces of *dharma* and previous *karma* still exist, but through the force of the realization of God, much of the impending impact of *karma* has dwindled, and it is faced differently, treated differently. Prior to the experience of realization, *karmas* were dealt with in individual increments. After realization, the sum total is seen. The spiritual destiny is realized. The *karma* and *dharma* and the future manufacturing of *karma* are viewed from within out, as a totality. ¶ One does not have the experience of realizing the Self until all of his *karma* is in a state of resolve. This means that the action-and-reaction patterns were balanced out, one against the other, through his ability to be steadfast in his *yoga*, *brahmacharya* and previous superconscious insights which have revealed the true nature of himself. When this begins to occur in him, he actually sees that man is not man, man is the Self, God, for his *karma* and the forces of his *dharma* have begun to become transparent to him. ¶ Through the power of his realization, the *karma* is created and simultaneously dissolved. This occurs for the one who lives in the timeless state of consciousness. If one were to realize the Self each day, he would live his life like writing his *karma* on the surface of water. The intensity of the Self is so strong that action and reaction dissolve, just as the

water's surface clears immediately when you remove your finger from having written or made designs upon it.

FRIDAY

The State Of Resolve

When you hear the high-pitched sound “eee” in your head, your *karma* and your *dharma* are at that moment well balanced in this life. This is reassuring to know, as is the fact that if you persist in this state for an exceedingly long period of time, you would come into the realization of the experience of God. However, as you doubtless have already experienced, distractions you have set into motion teasingly bring awareness into another area, and almost without your knowing it, the high-pitched “eee” sound has faded and a thought has taken its place. ¶When you are in a state of resolve—and *resolve* is the key word here; this means you have resolved the major *karmas* of conflict—good fortune and all the emotions arise, both generated through understanding the awakened philosophies by the practice of *yoga* and the results obtained. Then the *karmas* of the head *chakras* begin to unfold, resulting in these sublime feelings. These *karmas* are only experienced after many Paraśiva experiences, but they are felt before as a blissful impending future. It is from these *karmas* the word *bliss* derives. Only beyond the beyond the beyond—within the vastness within the heart and core of the universes, when space turns to spacelessness, time stops and *māyā's* endless cycles are no more—are there no more *karmas*. *Māyā's* endless cycle of creation, preservation and dissolution are *karmas* in the manifold creations of this process.

SATURDAY

The Role of The Satguru

Responsibly resolving *karma* is among the most important reasons that a *sat-guru* is necessary in a sincere seeker's life. The *guru* helps the devotee to hold his mind in focus, to become pointedly conscious of thought, word and deed, and to cognize the lessons of each experience. Without the guidance and grace of the *guru*, the devotee's mind will be divided between instinctive and intellectual forces, making it very difficult to resolve *karma*. And only when *karma* is wisely harnessed can the mind become still enough to experience its own superconscious depths. ¶The *guru* guides and also shares a bit of the heavier burdens, if one is fortunate enough to be dedicated enough to have a *guru* who will lend his powers in this way. But each aspect of the *karma*, the outgrowth of the *dharma*, must be passed through by the disciple, creating as little as possible of a similar *karma* on this tenuous path of the repetition of the cycles of life. ¶The *guru* is able, because of his enlightenment or *tapas*, or as his *tapas*, to take upon himself the *karma* of another. Just what exactly does this mean? You have already found such persons at the moment of your birth—your mother and your father, who, perhaps unknowingly, took the full impact of your *dharma*, and continue to take the impact of the *karma* you create, deeply within their nerve systems. If your *karma* is of a heavy nature, it could disrupt the entire home, and they could suffer because of it. On the other hand, if your *dharma* is *devonic*, full of merit accrued by generosity, good deeds and graciousness in your former life, your presence

in their home is a blessing, and the force of your arrival may mitigate influences in their minds of an uncomely nature, bringing peace, harmony and forbearance into the home. The *guru* may take unto himself, into his nerve system, some of the heavier areas of your *karma* in the same way your parents performed this function for you perhaps unknowingly. ¶ Planetary changes activate new *karmas* and close off some of the *karmas* previously activated. These *karmas* then wait in abeyance, accumulating new energy from current actions, to be reactivated at some later time. These *karmic* packets become more refined, life after life, through *sādhana*. All of this is summed up by one word, *evolution*. ¶ The planets do not cause the events or the vibrations that individuals react to either positively or negatively. The magnetic pulls of light or the absence of light release that which is already there within the individual. If not much is there, not much can be released. The magnetic pulls and the lack of magnetism are what *jyotisha* (Vedic astrology) is telling us is happening at every point in time. Two things—magnetism and its absence. On and off. Light and dark. With and without. Action and no action. Therefore, these keys release within the individual what was created when other keys were releasing other *karmas*. It is our reaction to *karmas* through lack of understanding that creates most *karmas* we shall experience at a future time. The sum total of all *karmas*, including the journey through consciousness required to resolve them, is called *saṁsāra*. ¶ *Dharma* is like a box, made of restraints and observances. The box contains *karma*. It allows an individual to work through

his birth *karmas* and prevent unseemly new *karmas* from being created to be worked out in the next life. Without the guidance of *dharma*, the individual is free to make all kinds of new *karma*.

SUNDAY

Categories Of Karma

We are born. Birth is like going on an Innersearch Travel-Study Program. In preparing for our journey, we pack certain belongings. We don't bring everything that we own, which we could liken to our *sañchita karmas*. We might try to, but we don't. We bring only two suitcases, which we can manage quite easily, one in each hand, with wheels on them. Our other suitcases and things in our closet we leave at home. These are like the *karmas* that we don't bring with us when we are born. We bring just a certain portion of our *karmas* to live through in this life, called *prārabdha karmas*. *Karmas* left to be worked out in another life are in seed stage, inactive—hanging in the closet. ¶So, here we are, with our two suitcases of *karma*, and the idea is to go through life and come out the other end without the suitcases. Unless we have *dharma*, which we are committed to and live fully, which has the restraints, we would fill up the suitcases again, buying knick-knacks, as you all have been doing, so that when you get off the boat, your suitcases are full again. That becomes *karma*, *kriyamāna karma*. We have choices to not make new *karma*, especially the ones we don't want to face in the future. That is the cycle of life. It works like that until all the suitcases are empty. ¶The *swāmīs* who renounce the world and do *tapas* are trying to burn the

seeds of the *karmas* that they did not bring with them in this life. They set fire to the whole house. They renounce the world and put restrictions upon themselves that others don't, especially those who are going through their *puru-shārtha karmas*. You also have to do your *karma*. Understanding all this, we can see the need for daily discipline. ¶What do we mean, exactly, by the terms good *karma* and bad *karma*? There is good *karma* as well as bad, though we say there is no good nor bad—only experience. Still, some *karmas* are more difficult to bear, experience and reexperience than others. This is where it is extremely important to inhibit the tendencies to let loose the forces that externalize awareness, while at the same time performing the *sādhana* of realizing the Source through internalizing awareness. It is this constant pull between the inner and the outer, or individual awareness soaring back and forth between the externalities and internalities, that keeps churning the fiery forces of *karma* into the smoldering coals of *dharma*. Good *karma* is denoted by good merit, since every cause has its due effect. Therefore, so-called bad *karma* brings injury, pain, misunderstanding and anguish, which when suffered through completes the cycle. ¶Ancient *yogīs*, in psychically studying the timeline of cause and effect, assigned three categories to *karma*. The first is *sañchita*, the sum total of past *karma* yet to be resolved. The second category is *prārabdha*, that portion of *sañchita karma* being experienced in the present life. *Kriyamāna*, the third type, is *karma* you are presently creating. However, it must be understood that your past negative *karma* can be altered into

a smoother, easier state through the loving, heart-*chakra* nature, through *dharma* and *sādhana*. That is the key of *karmic* wisdom. Live religiously well and you will create positive *karma* for the future and soften negative *karma* of the past. ¶ Right knowledge, right decision and right action imperceptibly straighten out, unkink and unwind ignorantly devised or contrived past actions. The key word is *reform*. Re-form, re-make, re-cast. To put into a molten state and be reformed is what happens to our *karma* when we enter *dharma*. *Adharma* is creating *karma*, good, not so good, terrible, mixed and confused. *Dharma* reforms all of this—reshapes and molds, allowing the devotee to do good and think good, to be clearly perceptive. Putting all the *karma* in a molten state is *bhakti*. Happy *karma*, sad *karma*, bad *karma*, when consciously or unconsciously wanted to be held on to, inhibits *bhakti*. *Bhakti* brings grace, and the sustaining grace melts and blends the *karmas* in the heart. In the heart *chakra* the *karmas* are in a molten state. The throat *chakra* molds the *karmas* through *sādhana*, regular religious practices. The third-eye *chakra* sees the *karmas*, past, present and future, as a singular oneness. And the crown *chakra* absorbs, burns clean, enough of the *karmas* to open the gate, the door of Brahman, revealing the straight path to merging with Śiva.

Tyāga Jivanam Paddhatidvayam cha
त्याग जीवनं पद्धतिद्वयं च



Renunciate Life and The Two Paths

He is *dharma*. He is birthless and kinless. He abides in the wilds, living by alms. He has renounced all, and to all those who renounce, He destroys their bonds of birth. You unknowing ones, know this.

Tirumantiram 1616

MONDAY**Distinguishing
The Two Paths**

There are two traditional paths for the devout Hindu of nearly every lineage. The first is the path of the renunciate. The second is the path of the householder, who guides human society and produces the next generation. The ancient *rishis* evolved well-defined principles for both, knowing that unmarried aspirants would most easily unfold by adhering to principles of nonownership, noninvolvement in the world and *brahmacharya*, while married men and women would uphold the more complex and material family *dharma*. Though the principles or guidelines for these two paths are different, the goal is the same: to establish a life dedicated to spiritual unfoldment, hastening the evolution of the soul through knowledge of the forces at work within us, and wise, consistent application of that knowledge. ¶In our *Holy Orders of Sannyāsa*, the two lifestyles of Hindu renunciates are described as follows. “Some among them are *sādhus*, anchorites living in the seclusion of distant caves and remote forests or wandering as homeless mendicants, itinerant pilgrims to the holy sanctuaries of Śaivism. Others dwell as cenobites, assembled with their brothers, often in the *āśrama*, *aadheenam* or *maṭha* of their *satguru*, but always under the *guru*’s aegis, serving together in fulfillment of a common mission. These devotees, when initiated into the order of *sannyāsa*, don the saffron robes and thereby bind themselves to a universal body of Hindu renunciates, numbering today three million, whose existence has never ceased, an assembly of men

inwardly linked in Śivasambandha, their mutual dedication to Śiva, though not necessarily outwardly associated.” ¶We can thus see that in the strictest traditions, the renunciate path includes only those who have received initiation, *sannyāsa dīkshā*, from a qualified preceptor, for only they have fully and irrevocably renounced the world and closed off all other options for their future. However, depending on the tradition, the renunciate path broadly includes the wandering *sādhu*, or homeless mendicant, and the *sādhaka* under vows preparing for *sannyāsa* at some future time. ¶We have studied the three primary currents in the human nerve system. The aggressive-intellectual current is masculine, mental in nature and psychically seen as blue in color. This current is termed in Sanskrit *piṅgalā*. The passive-physical current is feminine, material in nature. This current, which is pink or red, is known as *iḍā*. The third current is spiritual in nature and flows directly through the spine and into the head. Being yellowish-white, the *sushumṇā*, as it is called, is the channel for pure spiritual energies that flood into the body through the spine and out into the 6,000 miles of nerve currents. Depending on the nature and *dharma*, each individual’s energy expresses itself as predominantly physical or intellectual—passive or aggressive—or spiritual. However, in the *sannyāsin* the two forces are so precisely balanced that neither is dominant, and he therefore lives almost totally in *sushumṇā*. The monastic, whether a monk or a nun, is in a sense neither male nor female, but a being capable of all modes of expression. ¶At times, the renunciate’s *sādhana* is austere,

as he burns layer after layer of dross through severe *tapas*. He wears the saffron robe, studies the ancient ways and scriptures. He chants the sacred *mantras*. He reflects constantly on the Absolute. He lives from moment to moment, day to day. He is always available, present, open. He has neither likes nor dislikes, but clear perceptions.

TUESDAY

**The Meaning
Of Renunciation**

Having stepped out of his ego shell, the *sannyāsin* is a free soul. Nothing binds him. Nothing claims him. Nothing involves him. Without exclusive territory, without limiting relationships, he is free to be himself totally. If he has problems within himself, he keeps them silently within and works them out there. If he speaks, it is only to say what is true, kind, helpful or necessary. He never argues, debates, complains. His words and his life always affirm, never negate. He finds points of agreement, forsaking contention and difference. No man is his enemy. No man is his friend. All men are his teachers. Some teach him what to do; others teach him what not to do. He has no one to rely upon except God, Gods, *guru* and the power within his own spine. He is strong, yet gentle. He is aloof, yet present. He is enlightened, yet ordinary. He teaches the basic philosophy of monistic theism, or non-dual Reality. He speaks wisely of the Vedic scriptures and ancient *śāstras* and lives them in his own example. Yet, he consciously remains inconspicuous, transparent. ¶He is a man on the path of enlightenment who has arrived at a certain subsuperconscious state and wishes to stay there. Therefore, he automatically has released various inter-

actions with the world, physically and emotionally, and remains poised in a contemplative, monastic lifestyle. The basic thought behind the philosophy of being a *sannyāsin* is to put oneself in a hot-house condition of self-imposed discipline, where unfoldment of the spirit can be catalyzed at a greater intensity than in family life, where the exterior concerns and overt responsibilities of the world predominate. ¶The *sannyāsin* is the homeless one who remains detached from all forms of involvement—friends, family, personal ambition—finding security in his own being rather than attaching himself to outward manifestations of security, warmth and companionship. He is alone, but never lonely. He lives as though on the eve of his departure, often abiding no more than three nights in the same place. He may be a pilgrim, a wandering *sādhu*. He may be a monastic contemplative living in a cloistered monastery or semi-cloistered *āśrama*. In preparation for *sannyāsa*, the aspirant leaves behind family, former friends and old acquaintances and steps out into a new pattern of subsuperconscious living. He strives to be all spine-power, all light. When we see him trying, although he may not be too successful at it if he is going through some inner turmoil or challenge, we know he is striving, and that is an inspiration to us. His very existence is his mission in life. He has dedicated himself to live a life of total commitment to the path of *yoga*, and by doing so he sustains the spiritual vibration for the householders. It is the renunciate who keeps the Vedic religions alive on the Earth. He keeps the philosophy vibrant and lucid, presenting it dynamically to the householders.

WEDNESDAY**The Stage of
Path-Choosing**

The two paths—householder and renunciate—every young man has to choose between them. In Hindu tradition the choice is made before the marriage ceremony, and, if not, during the ceremony itself. The choice must be his and his alone. Though guided by the advice of parents, elder family members and religious leaders, the choice is his and his alone as to how his soul is to live through the birth *karmas* of this incarnation. Both paths take courage, great courage, to step forward and embrace the responsibilities of adult life. ¶ In making this decision in our tradition we have found it valuable for the young man to spend time in a Hindu monastery where he can live the monk's life for a period of six months or more and receive spiritual and religious training that will enhance his character for a positive future, no matter which path he chooses. Only by living for a time as a monk will he come to truly understand the monastic path and be empowered to make a knowledgeable choice between that path and the traditional *dharma* of the householder, raising a family and serving the community. One of the best times for this sojourn apart from the world, setting aside life's usual concerns, is just after high school or during an interim break. Then, after the time in the monastery, a firm and positive consideration should be made, in consultation with family and elders, as to which of the two paths he wishes to pursue. Once this decision is made and blessings given by the family preceptor, a path-choosing ceremony, *Ishta Mārga Saṁskāra*,

should be held in the presence of the religious community to which he belongs, thus making the decision known publicly to one and all. ¶Path-choosing is a beginning, pointing a direction, declaring an intention. Marriage becomes a lifetime commitment only when the final marriage vows are spoken. This is preceded by months or even years of choosing a spouse, a process that calls forth the wisdom of the two families, community elders, religious leaders and those who are trained to judge astrological compatibilities. Renunciate life in our Nātha tradition and many others becomes a lifetime commitment only when final, lifetime vows of renunciation of the world are voiced. This is preceded by ten or more years of training during which the postulant monastic renews temporary vows periodically, at two-year intervals. During this lengthy time of training, the *sādhaka* is free to choose not to renew his vows at any juncture and opt instead for the path of the householder and be welcomed back into the family community. In some lineages, no formal vows are even taken, but there are traditionally understood norms of conduct, proprieties and protocol to be adhered to. For choosing the renunciate path is indeed not just like taking a position in a corporation. It is embracing a way of life, an attitude of being. ¶We might say that one does not choose renunciation, but rather is chosen by it, when the soul is matured to the point when the world no longer holds a binding fascination. While considerations of the order that one will join are practical realities, it is vital that the young man choosing renunciate life do so not seeking place or position in a particular

order, but sets out as a free spirit, unencumbered, under the guidance of his *satguru*, willing to serve everywhere and anywhere he is sent, be it in his *guru's* central *āśrama*, a distant center, a monastery of another *guru* or alone on an independent *sādhana*. The clear path is to define the path itself. Then, proceed with confidence.

THURSDAY

The Way of The Bachelor

Of course, not all are necessarily able to set forth with perfect clarity in life. Thus, both the renunciate and householder communities accept singles who are not selfish and self-indulgent, who gather together into their respective home-like environments, sharing finance, food and worship. It is in Hindu culture the way of the unmarried devotee, who, whether woman or man, wears white and abjures the family *dharma* while not necessarily joining an *āśrama*, wandering as a *sādhu* or following any monastic regimen. This is not a formal path, but it is a spiritual lifestyle which if successfully fulfilled is an alternative for those who cannot follow one of the two traditional paths. Singles who succeed in living harmoniously with one or more like-minded individuals may be considered worthy to enter *āśramas* in association with a *guru* and under the authority of a rigorous discipline greater than they could provide for themselves. ¶ This might be called the way of the spiritual bachelor or spinster—the *brahmachārī* or *brahmachārīṇī*. These are humble men and women, often under simple vows, who are not following the traditional renunciate path, but don't intend to marry and so remain celibate and dedicate themselves to serving

God, Gods, *guru* and humanity. Among them are those who are still deciding between the two paths, even at a later age. It usually does not include those whose spouse has passed on or who have suffered a divorce, as they are considered still a spouse, nor others whose heavy *karmas* would disallow them from entering a traditional order for one or more reasons. This life of bachelor or spinster can, when strictly and sincerely followed, be a joyous and useful life in service to *dharma* and fulfillment of spiritual goals. This is provided that devotees do not isolate themselves but eagerly and persistently serve the family community and the renunciate community with dedicated, cooperative effort, and get along one with another in harmony, love and trust, in the spirit of true Sivathodu, service to Śiva, never alienating themselves from others, but stepping forward as best they can to serve selflessly and wholeheartedly. The positive cooperation of their untiring energies is truly recognized in all three worlds. ¶ There is another group that has no path, who neither marry nor follow the path of discipline and who are self-indulgent, unwilling to live with others and benefit from hastening their *karmas* through interaction, so that this puts many of their *karmas* on hold for another life. These souls think they are making spiritual progress, but they are, in fact, making new unwholesome *karmas* through a selfish lifestyle of non-commitment and unexamined egocentricities. They fail to realize or accept that interaction with others, whether householders or monastics, is needed to bring up quickly the *karmas* to be resolved in this birth and perhaps the next,

and that avoidance of others offers no stimulus for progress. ¶Such single men and women may delude themselves into thinking they are *sādhus*, mendicants, *yogīs* or mystics, but in actuality they have invented their own routines which are not in harmony with the *sādhu* path of strictness and tradition. Following a self-chosen, self-defined path, they answer up to no one and, therefore, deal with the clever avoidance syndrome. ¶They are considered to be like children by both the renunciate and the householder. Both groups constantly work to set aright these obstinate, unruly seekers, to bring them into a lifestyle of unselfish behavior, of interaction with others, encouraging them to replace egocentric patterns and preferences with the higher qualities of selfless service, group involvement and, above all, *prapatti*, humility, total surrender to the Divine within the temple and themselves. They are encouraged to overcome anger, back-biting, fear, jealousy, overt intellectual knowing, and talkativeness with the *sādhana* of silence, *mauna*, to bring forth the humility needed to make spiritual progress in this life. Many, however, are sincerely committed to noncommitment. Strange as it may seem, these unguided souls use up their allotted time for guidance and then beg for more. Those who walk on neither of the two paths are a daily burden to both the householder and the *sannyāsin*.

FRIDAY
Following
Neither Path

It is necessary for spiritual unfoldment on the path to enlightenment to live among others, be loyal, faithful, not promiscuous, to settle down and establish a cooperative routine of commu-

nity life. Living among others—even having roommates who think, believe and have adopted the same spiritual, religious disciplines—grants the burden of good conduct, prompt resolution of problems and an abundance of sharing, giving and caring during the trials and happinesses that naturally arise in living with others. ¶Those who are self-indulgent have no inclination to share companionship in a family, an *āśrama* or spiritual community, as getting along with others is burdensome, bothersome, impossible to even imagine. Their subconscious is so full of dross that their aloneness relieves it somehow—through self-indulgence on the Internet, sweets, preferential foods and avoidance of confrontations of any kind which might or would conjure up anger, distance and dispel the little I-ness into I-identity within a group where *kukarmas* and *sukarmas* are shared as their life on the spiritual path moves upward and upward and upward. ¶All *gurus* should disallow and throw such seekers out of their *āśramas*, lest they become accomplished detractors and herald an Internet site against them. Their only purpose is to infiltrate, dilute and destroy—not always consciously, perhaps, but subconsciously—and to bring everything down to their own level. The borderline conflicts that they create, where no one is exactly right and no one is exactly wrong, hold back the spiritual work, the mission of the lineage, temporarily, perhaps only for a moment, an hour or a day. Their mission of preaching indecision to those who have decided is fulfilled. When they tire of their new surroundings and are ready to move on, they infiltrate another group, endeavoring to take along

with them those they have converted to their ways. All *sat-gurus*, *gurus*, *swāmīs*, heads of Hindu orders and those of other faiths, too, have recognized this problem and are alerted to potential infiltration, dilution and disruption of their group by those who do not belong because they will not follow the accepted patterns and instead endeavor to adjust them, dilute them into the nothingness which they would find inside themselves if they were even to spend a moment or two alone. ¶ Other faiths are a little better disciplined in demanding followers to be totally converted to their particular denomination and not admitting into their sanctuaries, monasteries and administrative bodies those who have not taken up a strong commitment. It is here the trouble lies for Hindu-based organizations, bringing in members of Abrahamic religions, faiths which are, by their own proclamations, dedicated to the destruction of Hinduism. Truly devout born members of Hinduism would never turn against the cause they support, nor would those who join the faith by valid adoption or conversion—for to make their unwavering commitment, they made sacrifices, be it a family inheritance or alienation from their community, such as Jews, Christians and Muslims have faced who left their fold and converted to the Sanātana Dharma. The voice here is commitment to an established religion and fully converting to it by severing from any and all prior affiliations. Also, there should be zero tolerance for inharmonious conditions. So many *gurus* live surrounded by conflicts amongst followers as a way of life. No wonder they pass on before their time. ¶ It has always been

my advice to *gurus* and *swāmīs* to impose aloneness as a *prāyaśchitta*, penance, on dissidents who have infiltrated their core. In their aloneness, they would experience the torment of their own misdeeds, and their departure would be imminent, or in their aloneness their soul might shine forth and deliver a message to their errant mind—perhaps preprogrammed by others who sent them to break up the group—and emancipate them from the destructive and disruptive path they are on. Those within the *āśrama* pursuing a higher path, training for true renunciation, are then freed from the detractors. The detractors are also freed to find good spouses and raise good families within the confines of their faith. Every group has such misfits within it from time to time. Wise *gurus* and *swāmīs* will ferret them out and send them on their way before they make too many bad *karmas* that will sorely impact their next birth. ¶ Many devotees ask about realization amidst family life, not renouncing the world, but just changing your attitude about life: “I mentally renounce the world and therefore I am a *sannyāsin*.” Realization in family life is in the *anāhata* and *viśuddha chakras*, which then stimulates the *chakras* above into psychic abilities of various kinds: astral projection, foreseeing the future, reincarnation-readings of past lives and more. These realizations are stabilizing to the families, especially to the elders of the extended family when three generations live in one house. However, the family man would not want to seek for timeless, formless, causeless Paraśiva, because this would be a foundation, a starting point, for detaching from the family, and he would

never look back. To renounce the world may not be possible, but if he were to continue seeking for total transformation, the world would renounce him. The family would find their newly acquired mendicant incompatible with their desires and goals. The wife would find her spouse more interested in himself than her, with difficulties in maintaining income, continuity of family duties, distaste for work in the world, and the desire to retire into mountain caves, or at least a peaceful forest. All these thoughts, desires and feelings manifest in deserting family duties, or *grihastha dharma*, and its penalty is bad merit and breaking the vows that fulfill that dharma. So, you can see the dilemma that entangles stepping over the fiery line without the proper preparation, qualifications and initiations. It is the *sannyāsa* initiation that gives permission, the starting point for the experience of Paraśiva and the aftermath of transformation. This is what the orange robes signify in orders that set for themselves this ideal as their true goal.

SATURDAY

A Message

To Sannyāsins

To further delineate the nature of renunciate life, I would like to share with you a letter I wrote to the *sannyāsins* of my Saiva Siddhanta Yoga Order.

It constitutes the introduction to *Holy*

Orders of Sannyāsa, the vows and ideals they live by. ¶“The first part of your life was lived for yourself; the second part will be lived in the service of others, for the benefit of your religion. You have been tried and tested through years of training and challenges and proved yourself worthy to wear the *kavi*, the orange robes, and to fulfill the

illustrious Śaiva *sannyāsin dharma*. ¶“The *sannyāsin* harkens close to Śiva and releases the past to an outer death. Remembering the past and living in memories brings it into the present. Even the distant past, once remembered and passed through in the mind, becomes the nearest past to the present. *Sannyāsins* never recall the past. They never indulge in recollections of the forgotten person they have released. The present and the future—there is no security for the *sannyāsin* in either. The future beckons; the present impels. Like writing upon the waters, the experiences of the *sannyāsin* leave no mark, no *saṃskāra* to generate new *karmas* for an unsought-for future. He walks into the future, on into the varied *vr̥ttis* of the mind, letting go of the past, letting what is be and being himself in its midst, moving on into an ever more dynamic service, an ever more profound knowing. Be thou bold, *sannyāsin* young. Be thou bold, *sannyāsin* old. Let the past melt and merge its images into the sacred river within. Let the present be like the images written upon the water’s calm surface. The future holds no glamour. The past holds no attachment, no return to unfinished experience. Even upon the dawn of the day, walk into your destiny with the courage born of knowing that the ancient Śaivite scriptures proclaim your *sannyāsin’s* life great above all other greatness. Let your life as a *sannyāsin* be a joyful one, strict but not restrictive, for this is not the path of martyrdom or mortification. It is the fulfillment of all prior experiential patterns, the most natural path—the straight path to God, the San Mārga—for those content and ripened

souls. Leave all regret behind, all guilt and guile, others will preserve all that you proudly renounce. Let even the hardships ahead be faced cheerfully. ¶“Never fail to take refuge in your God, your *guru* and your Great Oath. This is the highest path you have chosen. It is the culmination of numberless lives, and perhaps the last in the ocean of *saṁsāra*. Be the noble soul you came to this Earth to be, and lift humanity by your example. Know it with a certainty beyond question that this is life’s most grand and glorious path, and the singular path for those seeking God Realization, that mystic treasure reserved for the renunciate. Know, too, that renunciation is not merely an attitude, a mental posture which can be equally assumed by the householder and the renunciate. Our scriptures proclaim that a false concept. True renunciation must be complete renunciation; it must be unconditional. There is no room on the upper reaches of San Mārga for mental manipulations, for play-pretend renunciation or half-measure *sādhana*. Let your renunciation be complete. Resolve that it will be a perfect giving-up, a thorough letting-go. Let go of the rope. Be the unencumbered soul that you are. Be the free spirit, unfettered and fearless, soaring above the clamor of dissension and difference, yet wholeheartedly and boldly supporting our Śaivite principles against those who would infiltrate, dilute and destroy. All that you need will be provided. If there is any residue of attachment, sever it without mercy. Cast it off altogether. Let this be no partial renunciation, subject to future wants, to future patterns of worldliness. Give all to God Śiva, and never

take it back. To make this supreme renunciation requires the utmost maturity coupled with a dauntless courage. It requires, too, that the wheel of *saṁsāra* has been lived through, that life hold no further fascination or charm.

SUNDAY

A New

Spiritual Birth

“Through experience the soul learns of the nature of joy and sorrow, learns well to handle the magnetic forces of the world. Only when that learning is complete is true *sannyāsa* possible. Other-

wise, the soul, still immature, will be drawn back into the swirl of experience, no matter what vows have been uttered. True renunciation comes when the world withdraws from the devotee. *Sannyāsa* is for the accomplished ones, the great souls, the evolved souls. *Sannyāsa* is not to be misinterpreted as a means of getting something—getting enlightenment, getting *punya*, or merit. *Sannyāsa* comes when all getting is finished. It is not to get something, but because you are something, because you are ready to give your life and your knowledge and your service to Śaivism, that you enter the life of the *sannyāsin*. The *kavi*, or saffron robes, are the royal insignia of the *sannyāsin*. Those in *kavi* the world over are your brethren, and you should feel one with each of these hundreds of thousands of soldiers within.

☞“The ideals of renunciation as practiced in the Sanātana Dharma are outlined fully in these *Holy Orders of Sannyāsa*. Live up to them as best you can. You need not be a saint or *jīvanmukta* to enter into the ancient world order of *sannyāsa*. Renunciation in its inmost sense is a gradual process. It does not happen instantly when a vow is spoken. Do not mistake

sannyāsa dīkshā as the end of effort, but look upon it as a new spiritual birth, the beginning of renewed striving and even more difficult challenges. There will remain *karmas* to be lived through as the soul continues to resolve the subtle attachments, or *vāsanās*, of this and past lives. It is enough that you have reached a knowing of the necessity of *tyāga*. It is enough that you renounce in the right spirit and pledge yourself to meet each challenge as befits this tradition, bringing honor to yourself and your religion. ¶“Finally, you are charged with preserving and defending the Śaiva Dharma teachings of the Nandinātha Sampradāya’s Kailāsa Paramparā as brought forth in *The Master Course* trilogy of *Dancing, Living and Merging with Śiva*, and in *The Holy Bible of the Śaivite Hindu Religion*. You are cautioned against being influenced by alien faiths or beliefs. You are the vault, the repository, wherein are kept the priceless treasures of Śaivism, secure and available for future generations. All who accept these Holy Orders accept a selfless life in which all monastics work their minds together, thus keeping the *saṅgam* strong and effective. You must not veer from the San Mārga, nor follow an individual path, nor remain remote or aloof from your brother monastics. It is a serious life which you now enter, one which only a *sannyāsīn* can fully undertake. Remember and teach that God is, and is in all things. Spread the light of the One Great God, Śiva—Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, immanent and transcendent, the Compassionate One, the Gracious One, the One without a second, the Lord of Lords, the Beginning and End of all that is. Anbe Sivamayam Satyame Parasivam.”

Narā Nāryaścha Naikāḥ

नरा नार्यश्च नैकाः



Men and Women Are Not the Same

Course the breath in appropriate ways through the feminine *iḍā* and masculine *piṅgalā nāḍīs*. Seat yourself in agreeable *āsanas* and, directing the breath within, ascend upward through the triangle-shaped *mūlādhāra*. Truly, you may see the feet of the Lord who is timeless eternity.

Tirumantiram 2173

MONDAY
The Ideals of
Family Life

If both husband and wife are on the spiritual path, the householder family will progress beautifully and deeply. Their love for one another and their offspring maintains family harmony.

However, the nature of their *sādhana* and unfoldment of the spirit is different from that of the *sannyāsin*. The family unit itself is an odic-force structure. It is a magnetic-force structure, a material structure, for they are involved in the objects and relationships of the world. It is the family's effort to be "in the world but not of it" that gives the impetus for insight and the awakening of the soul. The struggle to maintain the responsibilities of the home and children while simultaneously observing the contemplative way, in itself, provides strength and balance, and slowly matures innate wisdom through the years. ¶The successful Hindu householder family is stable, an asset to the larger community in which it lives, an example of joyous, contented relationships. Members of the family are more interested in serving than being served. They accept responsibility for one another. They are pliable, flexible, able to flow freely like water. They worship and meditate daily without fail and strictly observe their individual *sādhanas*. Their insight is respected and their advice sought. Yet, they do not bring the world into the home, but guard and protect the home vibration as the spiritual center of their life. Their commitments are always first to the family, then to the community. Their home remains sacrosanct, apart from the world, a place of reflection, growing and peace.

They intuitively know the complex workings of the world, the forces and motivations of people, and often guide others to perceptive action. Yet, they do not display exclusive spiritual knowledge or put themselves above their fellow man. ¶Problems for them are merely challenges, opportunities for growth. Forgetting themselves in their service to the family and their fellow man, they become the pure channel for love and light. Intuition unfolds naturally. What is unspoken is more tangible than what is said. Their timing is good, and abundance comes. They live simply, guided by real need and not novel desire. They are creative, acquiring and using skills such as making their own clothing, growing food, building their own house and furniture. The inner knowing awakened by their meditations is brought directly into the busy details of everyday life. They use the forces of procreation wisely to produce the next generation and not as instinctive indulgence. They worship profoundly and seek and find spiritual revelation in the midst of life. ¶Within each family, the man is predominantly in the *piṅgalā* force. The woman is predominantly in the *iḍā* force. When the energies are the other way around, disharmony is the result. When they live together in harmony and have awakened enough innate knowledge of the relation of their forces to balance them, then both are in the *sushumṇā* force and can soar into the Divinity within. Children born to such harmonious people come through from the deeper *chakras* and tend to be highly evolved and well balanced.

TUESDAY
Maintaining
A Balance

Should the woman become aggressively intellectual and the man become passively physical, then forces in the home are disturbed. The two bicker and argue. Consequently, the children are upset, because they only reflect the vibration of the parents and are guided by their example. Sometimes the parents separate, going their own ways until the conflicting forces quiet down. But when they come back together, if the wife still remains in the *piṅgalā* channel, and the husband in the *iḍā* channel, they will generate the same inharmonious conditions. It is always a question of who is the head of the house, he or she? The head is always the one who holds the *prāṇas* within the *piṅgalā*. Two *piṅgalā* spouses in one house, husband and wife, spells conflict. ¶The balancing of the *iḍā* and *piṅgalā* into *sushumṇā* is, in fact, the pre-ordained spiritual *sādhana*, a built in *sādhana*, or birth *sādhana*, of all family persons. To be on the spiritual path, to stay on the spiritual path, to get back on the spiritual path, to keep the children on the spiritual path, to bring them back to the spiritual path, too—as a family, father, mother, sons and daughters living together as humans were ordained to do without the intrusions of uncontrolled instinctive areas of the mind and emotions—it is imperative, it is a virtual command of the soul of each member of the family, that these two forces, the *iḍā* and *piṅgalā*, become and remain balanced, first through understanding and then through the actual accomplishment of this *sādhana*. There can be no better world, no new age, no

golden future, no peace, no harmony, no spiritual progress until this happens and is perpetuated far into the future. This is the *sādhana* of the father. This is the *sādhana* of the mother. And together they are compelled by divine law to teach this *sādhana* to their offspring, first by example, then through explanation of their example, as youths mature into adulthood. Those unfortunate couples who neglect or refuse to perform this *sādhana*—of balancing the *iḍā* and *piṅgalā*, and from time to time bringing both into the *sushumṇā*—are indeed distressed by their own neglect. At the time of death, as their life ebbs into the great unknown, they will, in looking back, see nothing but turmoil, misunderstanding, hurts—physical hurts, emotional hurts, mental hurts. Their subconscious will still be hurting, and they will know the hurt they gave to others will follow them into the next world, then into the next, to be reexperienced. Their pain knows no cure during their last few hours before transition from the physical body into one of the astral worlds they earned access to, as their good deeds, misdeeds and wrongful deeds are gathered together and totalled. Therefore, it is for the wise, the understanding, the hopeful parents to follow the *iḍā-piṅgalā-sushumṇā sādhana* daily, weekly, monthly, yearly. This is the path for the family persons toward merger with Śiva. It truly is.

WEDNESDAY
Spiritual
Leadership

Who is the spiritual leader of the house? The man or the woman? *Dancing with Śiva* states: “The husband is, first, an equal participant in the procreation and upbringing of the future generation.

Second, he is the generator of economic resources necessary for society and the immediate family. The husband must be caring, understanding, masculine, loving, affectionate, and an unselfish provider, to the best of his ability and through honest means. He is well equipped physically and mentally for the stress and demands placed upon him. When he performs his *dharma* well, the family is materially and emotionally secure. Still, he is not restricted from participation in household chores, remembering that the home is the wife's domain and she is its mistress." ¶If this happens, everything works out naturally in the home in a very harmonious way. If this does not occur, then the *prāṇic* forces do not flow as well for the family. Why? Because the stabilizing influence of the *prāṇas*, under control and well balanced, has not come to pass. As a result, there can be no effective invoking of God, Gods and *guru*. Arguments, rude and harsh words fly back and forth, children are maltreated, and backbiting of the husband, relatives, friends and neighbors is not uncommon. Adultery with prostitutes or casual pickups tempts, distracts and burdens the husband with guilt, especially during his wife's monthly retreat and during pregnancy. The life of a family going through such *karmas* is chaos. The children, who modern psychiatrists and ancient seers say, are guided by the example of their parents, are thrown overboard, as from a ship they safely boarded with full confidence. Reality points out that there are no, never have been, nor ever will be, delinquent children. Delinquent parents are the culprits; "the parents are what is wrong with society; children are

only guilty of being guided by their example.” ¶The wise men of ancient times understood how the *prāṇic* life forces flow within man and woman. They knew that the family man’s being in the *sushumṇā* current stabilizes the forces of the home. If he is meditating and going within himself, his wife will not have to meditate as much. She and the children will go within to their Divinity automatically on the power of his meditation. If he radiates peace, Divinity and confidence, they will too, without trying, without even being conscious of it. ¶One thing to remember: the family man is the *guru* of his household. If he wants to find out how to be a good *guru*, he just has to observe his own *sat-guru*, that is all he has to do. He will learn through observation. Often this is best accomplished by living in the *guru’s āśrama* periodically to perform *sādhana* and service. Being head of his home does not mean he is a dominant authority figure, arrogantly commanding unconditional obedience, such as Bollywood and Hollywood portray. No. He must assume full responsibility for his family and guide subtly and wisely, with love always flowing. This means that he must accept the responsibility for the conditions in the home and for the spiritual training and unfoldment of his wife and children. This is his *purusha dharma*. To not recognize and not follow it is to create much *kukarma*, bad actions bringing back hurtful results to him in this or another life.

THURSDAY**Wife and
Mother**

When the wife has problems in fulfilling her womanly duties, *strī dharma*, it is often because the husband has not upheld his duty, nor allowed her to fulfill hers. When he does not allow her to or fails to insist that she perform her *strī dharma* and give her the space and time to do so, she creates *kukarmas* which are equally shared by him. This is because the *purusha karmic* duty and obligation of running a proper home naturally falls upon him, as well as upon her. So, there are great penalties to be paid by the man, husband and father for failure to uphold his *purusha dharma*. ¶Of course, when the children “go wrong” and are corrected by the society at large, both husband and wife suffer and equally share in the *kukarmas* created by their offspring. In summary, the husband took the wife into his home and is therefore responsible for her well-being. Together they bring the children into their home and are responsible for them, spiritually, socially, culturally, economically, as well as for their education. ¶What does it mean to be the spiritual head of the house? He is responsible for stabilizing the *prāṇic* forces, both positive, negative and mixed. When the magnetic, materialistic forces become too strong in the home, or out of proper balance with the others, he has to work within himself in early morning *sādhana* and deep meditation to bring through the spiritual forces of happiness, contentment, love and trust. By going deep within himself, into his soul nature, by living with Śiva, he uplifts the spiritual awareness of the entire family into one of the

higher *chakras*. How does he accomplish this? Simply by moving his own awareness into a *chakra* higher than theirs. The awareness of his family follows his living example. ¶The family woman has to be a good mother. To achieve this, she has to learn to flow her awareness with the awareness of the children. She has been through the same series of experiences the children are going through. She intuitively knows what to do next. As a mother, she fails only if she neglects the children, takes her awareness completely away, leaving the children to flounder. But if she stays close, attends to each child's needs, is there when he or she cries or comes home from school, everything is fine. The child is raised perfectly. This occurs if the wife stays in the home, stabilizing the domestic force field, where she is needed most, allowing the husband to be the breadwinner and stabilizer of the external force field, which is his natural domain.

FRIDAY
How Forces
Go Awry

Odic force is magnetic force. Actinic force comes from the central source of life itself, from Lord Śiva. It is spiritual force, the spirit, pure life. The blend of these two forces, the actinodic, is the magnetic force that holds a home together and keeps everything going along smoothly. If a family man and woman are both flowing through the aggressive-intellectual current, the magnetic-odic forces become strong and congested in the atmosphere of the home, and inharmonious conditions result. They argue. The arguments are never resolved, but it is a way of dissipating the odic forces. If the man and the woman are flowing through

the passive-physical current, the magnetic odic forces are not balanced. They become physically too attracted to one another. They become unreasonable with each other, full of fear, anger, jealousy, resentment, and they fight or, worse, take their frustrations out by beating, calling names and hurting, in many other ways, each other and their own children who came trustingly into their family. True, it is within the child's *prārabdha karmas* to experience this torment, but it is the duty of the parents to protect him from it, creating an environment in which unseemly seeds will not germinate. True, it may be the child's *karma* to experience torment, yet the parents do not have to deliver it. Wise parents find loving means of discipline and protect themselves from earning and reaping the unseemly *karmas* through improper *himsā* methods of punishment. ¶However, if each understands—or at least the family man understands, for it is his home—how the forces have to be worked within it, and realizes that he, as a man, flows through a different area of the mind than does his wife in fulfilling their respective, but very different, birth *karmas*, then everything remains harmonious. He thinks; she feels. He reasons and intellectualizes, while she reasons and emotionalizes. He is in his realm. She is in her realm. He is not trying to make her adjust to the same area of the mind that he is flowing through. And, of course, if she is in her realm, she will not expect him to flow through her area of the mind, because women just do not do this. ¶Usually, it is the man who does not want to, or understand how to, become the spiritual head of his house. Often he

wants the woman to flow through his area of the mind, to be something of a brother and pal or partner to him. Therefore, he experiences everything that goes along with brothers and pals and partners: arguments, fights, scraps and good times. In an equal relationship of this kind, the forces of the home are not building or becoming strong, for such a home is not a sanctified place in which they can bring inner-plane beings into reincarnation from the higher celestial realms. If they do have children under these conditions, they simply take “potluck” off the lower astral plane, or Pretaloka. ¶A man goes through his intellectual cycles in facing the problems of the external world. A woman has to be strong enough, understanding enough, to allow him to go through those cycles. A woman goes through emotional cycles and feeling cycles as she lives within the home, raises the family and takes care of her husband. He has to be confident enough to understand and allow her to go through those cycles. ¶The *piṅgalā* force takes man through the creative, intellectual cycles. Man brings through creativity from inner planes. He invents, discovers, foresees. We normally consider it as all having been created within his external mind, but it is done through his *piṅgalā* force operating on inner planes of consciousness. He is not going to be smooth always and living in superconscious states, for he has to go through experiential cycles. He must be inspired one day and empty the next. He must succeed and fail. He is living his destiny and working out *karmas*.

SATURDAY
Nurturing
Harmony

A woman living in the *iḍā* current goes through her emotional cycles, too. Her moods change regularly. She laughs, cries, sulks, enjoys. He has to be wise enough to allow her to have these ups

and downs and neither criticize nor correct her when she does. If conditions become strained within the home, the man of the house becomes the example by feeling the power of his spine and the spiritual force of Śiva within it. He finds that he remains calm and can enjoy the bliss of his own energy. He finds ways and means to create joy and happiness and make odic forces that may have gone into a heavy condition beautiful, buoyant and lovely again. ¶Rather than arguing or talking about their cycles, the man who is spiritual head of his house meditates to stabilize the forces within himself. He withdraws the physical energies from the *piṅgalā* and the *iḍā* currents into *sushumṇā* in his spine and head. He breathes regularly, sitting motionless until the forces adjust to his inner command. When he comes out of his meditation, if it really was a meditation, she sees him as a different being, and a new atmosphere and relationship are created in the home immediately. ¶The children grow up as young disciples of the mother and the father. As they mature, they learn of inner things. It is the duty of the mother and the father to give to the child at a very early age his first religious training and his education in attention, concentration, observation and meditation. ¶The parents must be fully knowledgeable of what their child is experiencing. During the first seven

years, the child will go through the *chakra* of memory. He will be learning, absorbing, observing. The second seven years will be dedicated to the development of reason, as the second *chakra* unfolds. If theirs is a boy child, he is going through the *piṅgalā*. If a girl child, she is going through the *iḍā* current and will go through emotional cycles. By both spouses' respecting the differences between them and understanding where each one is flowing in consciousness, there is a give and take in the family, a beautiful flow of the forces. ¶The *āchāryas* and *swāmīs* work with the family man and woman to bring them into inner states of being so that they can bring through to the Earth a generation of great inner souls. It is a well-ordered cycle. Each one plays a part in the cycle, and if it is done through wisdom and understanding, a family home is created that has the same vibration as the temple or a contemplative monastery. ¶In summary, woman is in the *iḍā* current predominantly and does not think or flow through the same areas of thought strata as the man does. If he expects her to think the same way that he is thinking, he is mistaken. Once they have a balance of the forces in the home, she is not going to be analytical. She will be in thought, of course, but she will not indulge in his ramified thinking. She is naturally too wise for this. If he wants to have discussions with her or use her as a sounding board, he is inadvisedly guiding her into the *piṅgalā* current. And if she is going through one of her emotional cycles at the time, she will become upset with him for apparently no reason at all. He has to realize that her intuition is keen, and that she will have, from

time to time, profound intuitive flashes. She might explain to him spontaneously the answer to something he has been thinking about for days, without his having verbally expressed to her what was on his mind. This happens quite often in the positive, harmonious home.

SUNDAY

Mutual Appreciation

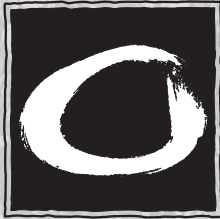
Tremendous confusion can exist within the family if the man and the woman think that they are the same and are flowing through the same areas of the external mind. The only area that they should flow through together is the *sushumṇā*, the spiritual. And when they are both intently in the intuitive mind, they will unravel deep and profound things together. She is in the home, making things nice for him. When he returns from his mental involvements in the world, it is up to him to get out of the intellectual mind and into the spiritual currents of his superconsciousness in order to communicate with her at all, other than on a subconscious, physical or materialistic level. ¶ For harmony to prevail between a man and a woman, he has to live fully within his own nature, and she has to live fully within her own nature. Each is king and queen of their respective realms. If each respects the uniqueness of the other, then a harmonious condition in the home exists. ¶ A good rule to remember: the man does not discuss his intellectual business problems with his wife, and she does not work outside the home. He solves his problems within himself or discusses them with other men. When he has a problem, he should go to an expert to solve it, not bring it home to talk over.

If he does, the forces in the home become congested. The children yell and scream and cry. ¶A contemplative home where the family can meditate has to have that uplifting, temple-like vibration. In just approaching it, the *sushumṇā* current of the man should withdraw awareness from the *piṅgalā* current deep within. That is what the man can do when he is the spiritual head of the home. ¶A woman depends on a man for physical and emotional security. She depends on herself for her inner security. He is the guide and the example. A man creates this security by setting a positive spiritual example. When she sees him in meditation, and sees light around his head and light within his spine, she feels secure. She knows that his intuition is going to direct his intellect. She knows he will be decisive, fair, clear-minded in the external world. She knows that when he is at home, he turns to inner and more spiritual things. He controls his emotional nature and he does not scold her if she has a hard time controlling her emotional nature, because he realizes that she lives more in the *iḍā* force and goes through emotional cycles. In the same way, she does not scold him if he is having a terrible time intellectually solving several business problems, because she knows he is in the intellectual force, and that is what happens in that realm of the mind. She devotes her thought and energies to making the home comfortable and pleasant for him and for the children. He devotes his thought and energies to providing sustenance and security for that home. ¶The man seeks understanding through observation. The woman seeks harmony through devotion. He must observe

what is going on within the home, not talk too much about it, other than to make small suggestions, with much praise and virtually no criticism. He must remember that his wife is making a home for him, and he should appreciate the vibration she creates. If he is doing well in his inner life, is steady and strong, and she is devoted, she will flow along in inner life happily also. She must strive to be one with him, to back him up in his desires and his ambitions and what he wants to accomplish in the outside world. This makes him feel strong and stand straight with head up. She can create a successful man of her husband very easily by using her wonderful intuitive powers. Together they make a contemplative life by building the home into a temple-like vibration, so blissful, so uplifting.

Chitta Chakrāṇi

चित्त चक्राणि



Spinning Wheels Of Consciousness

Piercing the *chakras* that are multi-petalled—four, six, ten, twelve and sixteen—behold then the twin petalled *ājñā* center. You have indeed arrived at the holy feet of the timeless, causeless One.

Tirumantiram 1704

MONDAY**14 Regions of
Consciousness**

Hindu scriptures speak of three worlds, fourteen worlds and countless worlds. These are different ways to describe Śiva's infinite creation. Of the fourteen worlds, seven are counted as rising above the Earth and seven as descending below it. Correspondingly, there are fourteen great nerve centers in the physical body, in the astral body and in the body of the soul. These centers are called *chakras* in Sanskrit, which means "wheels." These spinning vortices of energy are actually regions of mind power, each one governing certain aspects of the inner man, and together they are the subtle components of people. When inwardly perceived, they are vividly colorful and can be heard. In fact, they are quite noisy, since color, sound and energy are all the same thing in the inner realms. ¶When awareness flows through any one or more of these regions, the various functions of consciousness operate, such as the functions of memory, reason and willpower. There are six *chakras* above the *mūlādhāra chakra*, which is located at the base of the spine. When awareness is flowing through these *chakras*, consciousness is in the higher nature. There are seven *chakras* below the *mūlādhāra chakra*, and when awareness is flowing through them, consciousness is in the lower nature. In this Kali Yuga most people live in the consciousness of the seven force centers below the *mūlādhāra chakra*. Their beliefs and attitudes strongly reflect the animal nature, the instinctive mind. We want to lift our own consciousness and that of others into the *chakras* above the *mūlādhāra*.

This brings the mind out of the lower nature into the higher nature. We do this through personal *sādhana*, prayer, meditation, right thought, speech and action and love for Lord Śiva, who is All in all. ¶The *mūlādhāra chakra*, the divine seat of Lord Gaṇeśa, is the dividing point between the lower nature and the higher nature. It is the beginning of religion for everyone, entered when consciousness arrives out of the realms below Lord Gaṇeśa's holy feet. ¶The physical body has a connection to each of the seven higher *chakras* through plexes of nerves along the spinal cord and in the cranium. As the *kuṇḍalinī* force of awareness travels along the spine, it enters each of these *chakras*, energizing them and awakening, in turn, each function. In any one lifetime, man may be predominantly aware in two or three centers, thus setting the pattern for the way he thinks and lives. He develops a comprehension of these seven regions in a natural sequence, the perfection of one leading logically to the next. Thus, though he may not be psychically seeing spinning forces within himself, man nevertheless matures through memory, reason, willpower, cognition, universal love, divine sight and spiritual illumination. ¶It may help, as we examine each of these centers individually, to visualize man as a seven-storied building, with each story being one of the *chakras*. Awareness travels up and down in the elevator, and as it goes higher and higher, it gains a progressively broader, more comprehensive and beautiful vista. Reaching the top floor, it views the panorama below with total understanding, not only of the landscape below, but also of the relation of the building to

other buildings and of each floor to the next. ¶In Sanātana Dharma another analogy is used to portray the *chakras*—that of a lotus flower. This flower grows in lakes and pools, taking root in the slimy mud below the surface, where no light penetrates. Its stem grows upward toward the light until it breaks the surface into fresh air and sunshine. The energy of the sun then feeds the bud and leaves until the delicate lotus blossom opens. The first *chakra* is called the root *chakra*, *mūlādhāra*. Awareness takes root in the baser instincts of human experience and then travels through the waters of the intellect, becoming more and more refined as it evolves until finally it bursts into the light of the superconscious mind, where it spiritually flowers into the 1,008-petaled lotus *chakra* at the top of the head. By examining the functions of these seven great force centers, we can clearly cognize our own position on the spiritual path and better understand our fellow man.

TUESDAY

Mūlādhāra, the Realm of Memory

The *chakras* do not awaken. They are already awakened in everyone. It only seems as if they awaken as we become aware of flowing our energy through them, because energy, willpower and awareness are one and the same thing. To become conscious of the core of energy itself, all we have to do is detach awareness from the realms of reason, memory and aggressive, intellectual will. Then, turning inward, we move from one *chakra* to another. The physical body changes as these more refined energies flow through it and the inner nerve system, called *nāḍīs*, inwardly becomes stronger and stron-

ger. The *mūlādhāra chakra* is the memory center, located at the base of the spine, and is physically associated with the sacral or pelvic nerve plexus. *Mūla* means “root” and *adhāra* means “support,” so this is called the root *chakra*. Its color is red. It governs the realms of time and memory, creating a consciousness of time through the powers of memory. Whenever we go back in our memory patterns, we are using the forces of the *mūlādhāra*. ¶ This *chakra* is associated also with human qualities of individuality, egoism, materialism and dominance. Man lives mostly in this *chakra* during the first seven years of life. This center has four “petals” or aspects, one of which governs memories of past lives. The other three contain the compiled memory patterns and interrelated *karmas* of this life. When this *chakra* is developed, people are able to travel on the astral plane. It is complete within itself, but when the first two *chakras* are charged with gross, instinctive impulses and developed through Western education, with its values and foibles which contradict Hindu *dharma*, they can create together a very strong odic force which, when propelled by the worldly will of the third *chakra* toward outer success and power, can dominate the mind and make it nearly impossible for awareness to function in the higher force centers, so great is the material magnetism. Men living fully in these lower three *chakras* therefore say that God is above them, not knowing that “above” is their own head and they are living “below,” near the base of the spine. ¶ You have seen many people living totally in the past—it’s their only reality. They are always reminiscing: “When I was a boy, we

used to... Why, I remember when... It wasn't like this a few years ago..." On and on they go, living a recollected personal history and usually unaware that they have a present to be enjoyed and a future to be created. On and on they go, giving their life force energies to the task of perpetuating the past. The *mūlādhāra* forces are not negative forces. Used and governed positively by the higher centers, the powers of time, memory and sex are transmuted into the very fuel that propels awareness along the spinal climb and into the head. Similarly, the mature lotus blossom cannot in wisdom criticize the muddy roots far below which, after all, sustain its very life. ¶The center of man's reasoning faculties lies in the second, or hypogastric, plexus, below the navel. It is termed *svādhishṭhāna*, which in Sanskrit means "one's own place." Its color is reddish orange. Once the ability to remember has been established, the natural consequence is reason, and from reason evolves the intellect. Reason and intellect work through this *chakra*. We open naturally into this *chakra* between the ages of seven and thirteen, when we want to know why the sky is blue and the "whys" of everything. If very little memory exists, very little intellect is present. In other words, reason is the manipulation of memorized information. We categorize it, edit it, rearrange it and store the results. That is the essence of the limited capacity of reason. Therefore, this center controls the *mūlādhāra*, and in fact, each progressively "higher" center controls all preceding centers. That is the law. In thinking, solving problems, analyzing people or situations, we are functioning in the domain of

svādhishṭhāna. ¶ This center has six “petals” or aspects and can therefore express itself in six distinct ways: diplomacy, sensitivity, cleverness, doubt, anxiety and procrastination. These aspects or personae would seem very real to people living predominantly in this *chakra*. They would research, explore and wonder, “Why? Why? Why?” They would propose theories and then formulate reasonable explanations. They would form a rigid intellectual mind based on opinionated knowledge and accumulated memory, reinforced by habit patterns of the instinctive mind.

WEDNESDAY

The Centers of Reason and Will

It is in the *svādhishṭhāna chakra* that the majority of people live, think, worry and travel on the astral plane. If they are functioning solely in the reasoning capacity of the mind, devoting their life’s energies to its perpetuation in the libraries of the world, then they would take the intellect very seriously, for they naturally see the material world as extremely real, extremely permanent. With their security and self-esteem founded in reason, they study, read, discuss, accumulate vast storehouses of fact and rearrange the opinions and conclusions of others. When guided by the higher *chakras* and not totally entangled in ramifications of intellect, the powers of *svādhishṭhāna* are a potent tool in bringing intuitive knowledge into practical manifestation. Reason does not conflict with intuition. It simply comes more slowly, more clumsily, to the same conclusions. Nevertheless, the intellect, in its refined evolution, can harness and direct the base instincts in man. ¶ Within the third center,

called the *maṇipūra chakra*, are the forces of willpower. *Maṇi* means “gem,” and *pūra* means “city,” so *maṇipūra* signifies the “jewelled city.” Its color is yellow. It is represented in the central nervous system by the solar plexus, where all nerves in the body merge to form what has been termed man’s “second brain.” This is significant, for depending on how the energy is flowing, the forces of will from this *chakra* add power either to worldly consciousness through the first two centers or to spiritual consciousness through the fourth and fifth centers. In Hindu mysticism, this dual function of willpower is conveyed in its ten “petals” or aspects, five which control and stabilize the odic or material forces of memory and reason, and five which control the actinic or spiritual forces of understanding and love. Therefore, the *maṇipūra* energies are actinodic in composition, while *mūlādhāra* and *svādhishṭhāna* are purely odic force structures. ¶When awareness functions within the realms of memory, reason and aggressive willpower, men and women are basically instinctive in nature. They are quick to react and retaliate, quick to have their feelings hurt and quick to pursue the conquest of others, while fearing their own defeat. Success and failure are the motivating desires behind their need to express power and possess influence. Consequently, their life is seeded with suffering, with ups and downs. They look for a way out of suffering and yet enjoy suffering when it comes. They are physically very hard working and generally not interested in developing the intellect unless it can help them achieve some material gain. In these states of consciousness, the

ego rises to its greatest prominence, and emotional experiences are extremely intense. If, on the other hand, the willpower has been directed toward higher awakening, awareness is propelled into deeper dimensions. Gains and losses of material possessions and power no longer magnetize their awareness, and they are freed to explore higher centers of their being. Inwardly directed, the willpower gives resolute strength to these aspirants, strength to discipline the outer nature and to practice *sādhana*.

THURSDAY

Cognition and Divine Love

With the spiritual will aroused, awareness flows quite naturally into the *anāhata chakra*, the heart center, governing the faculties of direct cognition or comprehension. Connected to the cardiac plexus, this *chakra* is often referred to as “the lotus of the heart.” Its twelve “petals” imply that the faculty of cognition can be expressed in twelve distinct ways or through as many masks or personae. Its color is a smoky green. Man usually awakens into this region of cognition around age twenty-one to twenty-six. Life for seekers in this *chakra* is different than for others. It is in *anāhata*, literally “unstruck sound,” that the aspirant attains his mountaintop consciousness. Instead of viewing life in its partial segments, like seeing just the side of the mountain, he raises his consciousness to a pinnacle from which an objective and comprehensive cognition of the entirety is the natural conclusion. Uninvolved in the seemingly fractured parts, he is able to look through it all and understand—as though he were looking into a box and seeing the inside, the outside,

the top and the bottom, all at the same time. It looks transparent to him and he is able to encompass the totality in one instantaneous flash of direct cognition. He knows in that split second all there is to know about a subject, and yet would find it difficult to verbalize that vast knowing. Various highly endowed psychics are prone to utilize this force center, for such spiritual powers as healing are manifested here. ¶ People with the *anāhata chakra* awakened are generally well-balanced, content and self-contained. More often than not, their intellect is highly developed and their reasoning keen. The subtle refinement of their nature makes them extremely intuitive, and what is left of the base instincts and emotions is easily resolved through their powers of intellect. It is important that the serious aspirant gain enough control of his forces and *karmas* to remain stabilized at the heart center. This should be home base to him, and he should rarely or never fall below *anāhata* in consciousness. Only after years of *sādhana* and transmutation of the sexual fluids can this be attained, but it must be attained and awareness must settle here firmly before further unfoldment is sought. ¶ Universal or divine love is the faculty expressed by the next center, called the *visuddha chakra*. This center is associated with the pharyngeal plexus in the throat and possesses sixteen “petals” or attributes. Whereas the first two centers are predominantly odic force in nature and the third and fourth are mixtures of odic force and a little actinic force, *visuddha* is almost a purely actinic force structure. On a percentage scale, we could say that the energies here are eighty percent actinic

and only twenty percent odic. Whenever people feel filled with inexpressible love and devotion to all mankind, all creatures, large and small, they are vibrating within *viśuddha*. In this state there is no consciousness of a physical body, no consciousness of being a person with emotions, no consciousness of thoughts. They are just being the light or being fully aware of themselves as actinic force flowing through all form. They see light throughout the entirety of their body, even if standing in a darkened room. This light is produced in the *ājñā chakra* above through the friction occurring between the odic and actinic forces and perceived through the divine sight of the third eye. The sense of “I,” of ego, is dissolved in the intensity of this inner light, and a great bliss permeates the nerve system as the truth of the oneness of the universe is fully and powerfully realized. *Viśuddha* means “sheer purity.” This center is associated with blue, the color of divine love. ¶The *jñānī* who has awakened this center is able for the first time to withdraw awareness totally into the spine, into the *sushumṇā* current. Now he begins experiencing the real spiritual being. Even at this point he may hold a concept of himself as an outer being, as distinct from the inner being he seeks. But as he becomes stronger and stronger in his new-found love, he realizes that the inner being is nothing but the reality of himself. And as he watches as the outer being fades, he realizes that it was born in time and memory patterns, put together through the forces of reason, and sustained for a limited period through the forces of will. The outer shell dissolves and he lives in the blissful inner consciousness

that knows only light, love and immortality.

FRIDAY

Divine Sight And Illumination

The sixth force center is *ājñā*, or the third eye. *Ājñā chakra* means “command center” and grants direct experience of the Divine, not through any knowledge passed on by others, which would be like the knowledge found in books. Magnetized to the cavernous plexus and to the pineal gland and located between the brows, the *ājñā chakra* governs the superconscious faculties of divine sight within man. Its color is lavender. Of its two “petals” or facets one is the ability to look down, all the way down, to the seven *talas*, or states of mind, below the *mūlādhāra* and the other is the ability to perceive the higher, spiritual states of consciousness, all the way up to the seven *chakras* above the *sahasrāra*. Thus, *ājñā* looks into both worlds: the odic astral world, or Antarloka, and the actinic spiritual world, or Śivaloka. It, therefore, is the connecting link, allowing the *jñānī* to relate the highest consciousness to the lowest, in a unified vision. This center opens fully to the conscious use of man after many experiences of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, Self Realization, resulting in total transformation, have been attained, although visionary insights and, particularly, inner light experiences are possible earlier. ¶The composition of this *chakra* is so refined, being primarily of actinic force, that a conscious knowledge of the soul as a scintillating body of pure energy or white light is its constant manifestation. From here man peers deeply into the mind substance, seeing simultaneously into the past, the present

and the future—deeper into evolutionary phases of creation, preservation and destruction. He is able to travel consciously in his inner body, to enter any region of the mind without barrier and to reduce through his *samyama*, contemplation, all form to its constituent parts. ¶It is not recommended on the classical Hindu *yoga* path for one to sit and concentrate on this force center, as the psychic abilities of the pineal gland can be prematurely awakened over which control is not possible, creating an unnecessary *karmic* sidetrack for the aspirant. Visions are not to be sought. They themselves are merely illusions of a higher nature around which a spiritual ego can grow which only serves to inhibit the final step on the path, that of the Truth beyond all form, beyond the mind itself. Therefore, the pituitary gland, which controls the next and final center, should be awakened first. This master gland is located about an inch forward and upward of the left ear, near the center of the cranium. At that point one can inwardly focus awareness and see a clear white light. This light is the best point of concentration, for it will lead awareness within itself and to the ultimate goal without undue ramification. ¶The *sahasrāra*, or crown *chakra*, is the “thousand spoked” wheel, also known as *sahasradala padma*, “thousand-petaled lotus.” Actually, according to the ancient mystics, it has 1,008 aspects or attributes of the soul body. However, these personae are transparent—a crystal clear white light, ever present, shining through the circumference of the golden body which is polarized here and which seems to build and grow after many experiences of sustained *nirvikalpa*

samādhi, manifesting a total inner and outer transformation. ¶The crown center is the accumulation of all other force centers in the body, as well as the controlling or balancing aspect of all other sheaths or aspects of man. It is a world within a world within itself. When the *yogī* travels in high states of contemplation, when he is propelled into vast inner space, he is simply aware of this center in himself. In such deep states, even the experience of light would not necessarily occur, since light is only present when a residue of darkness is kept, or since light is the friction of pure actinic force meeting and penetrating the magnetic forces. In the *sahasrāra*, the *jñānī* dissolves even blissful visions of light and is immersed in pure space, pure awareness, pure being. ¶Once this pure state is stabilized, awareness itself dissolves and only the Self remains. This experience is described in many ways: as the death of the ego; as the awareness leaving the mind form through the “door of Brahman,” the Brahmarandhra, at the top of the head; and as the inexplicable merger of the *ātman*, or soul, with Śiva, or God. From another perspective, it is the merger of the forces of the pituitary with the forces of the pineal. Great inner striving, great *sādhana* and *tapas*, first activate the pituitary gland—a small, master gland found near the hypothalamus which regulates many human functions, including growth, sexuality and endocrine secretions. It is inwardly seen as a small white light and referred to as “the pearl of great price.” When the pituitary is fully activated, it begins to stimulate the pineal gland, situated at the roof of the thalamic region of the brain and influencing matu-

ration of consciousness expansion. The pineal is inwardly viewed as a beautiful blue sapphire. For man to attain his final, final, final realization, the forces of these two glands have to merge. Symbolically, this is the completion of the circle, the serpent devouring its own tail. For those who have attained this process, it can be observed quite closely through the faculty of divine sight.

SATURDAY

The Unfoldment Of Humanity

This is the story of man's evolution through the mind, from the gross to the refined, from darkness into light, from a consciousness of death to immortality. He follows a natural pattern that

is built right in the nerve system itself: memory, reason, will, direct cognition, inner light perceptions of the soul, which awaken a universal love of all mankind; psychic perceptions through divine sight; and the heavenly refinement of being in the thousand-petaled lotus. ¶ During each age throughout history, one or another of the planets or *chakras* has come into power. Remember when the Greek God Cronus was in supreme power? He is the God of time. Mass consciousness came into memory, or the *mūlādhāra chakra*, with its new-found concern for time, for a past and a future, dates and records. Next the mass consciousness came into the *svādhishṭhāna* and its powers of reason. Reason was a God in the Golden Age of Greece. Discourse, debate and logic all became instruments of power and influence. If it wasn't reasonable, it wasn't true. Next the *chakra* of will came into power. Man conquered nations, waged wars, developed efficient weapons. Crusades were

fought and kingdoms established during the period. Our world was experiencing force over force. Direct cognition, the *anāhata chakra*, came into power when man opened the doors of science within his own mind. He cognized the laws of the physical universe: mathematics, physics, chemistry, astronomy and biology. Then he unfolded the mind sciences by penetrating into his subconscious mind, into the *chakras* where he had previously been. With man's looking into his own mind, psychology, metaphysics and the mind religions were born. ¶Now, in our present time, the mass consciousness is coming into *visuddha*—the forces of universal love. The forerunners of this emerging Sat Yuga, popularly called the New Age, are not worshiping reason as the great thing of the mind or trying to take over another's possessions through the use of force. They are not worshiping science or psychology or the mind religions as the great panacea. They are looking inward and worshiping the light, the Divinity within their own body, within their own spine, within their own head, and they are going in and in and in and in, into a deep spiritual quest which is based on direct experience, on compassion for all things in creation. ¶As the forces of the *visuddha chakra* come into prominence in the New Age, it does not mean that the other centers of consciousness have stopped working. But it does mean that this new one coming into prominence is claiming the energy within the mass consciousness. When this center of divine love gains a little more power, everything will come into an exquisite balance. There will be a natural hierarchy of people based on the awakening of their soul,

just as previous ages established hierarchies founded on power or intellectual acumen. With that one needed balance, everything on the Earth will quiet down, because the *viśuddha chakra* is of the new age of universal love in which everyone sees eye to eye, and if they do not, there will always be someone there to be the peacemaker. Look back through history and you will see how these planetary influences, these great mind strata of thought, have molded the development of human society.

SUNDAY

Chakra Cycles In Each Lifetime

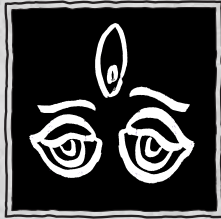
The same cyclical pattern of development in human history is evident even more clearly in the growth of the individual. In the seven cycles of a man's life, beginning at the time of his birth, his awareness automatically flows through one of these *chakras* and then the next one, then the next and then the next, provided he lives a pure life, following Sanātana Dharma under the guidance of a *satguru*. ¶In reality, most people never make it into the higher four *chakras*, but instead regress back time and again into the *chakras* of reason, instinctive will, memory, anger, fear and jealousy. Nevertheless, the natural, ideal pattern is as follows. From one to seven years of age man is in the *mūlādhāra chakra*. He is learning the basics of movement, language and society—absorbing it all into an active memory. The patterns of his subconscious are established primarily in these early years. From seven to fourteen he is in the *svādhishṭhāna chakra*. He reasons, questions and asks, “Why? Why? Why?” He wants to know how things work. He refines his abil-

ity to think for himself. Between fourteen and twenty-one he comes into his willpower. He does not want to be told what to do by anyone. His personality gets strong, his likes and dislikes solidify. He is on his way now, an individual answerable to no one. Generally, about this time he wants to run away from home and express himself. From twenty-one to twenty-eight he begins assuming responsibilities and gaining a new perspective of himself and the world. Theoretically, he should be in *anāhata*, the *chakra* of cognition, but a lot of people never make it. They are still in the bull-in-the-china-shop consciousness, crashing their way through the world in the expression of will, asking why, reasoning things out and recording it in memory patterns which they go over year after year after year. ¶ But if awareness is mature and full, having incarnated many, many times, he goes on at twenty-one to twenty-eight into the *anāhata chakra*. Here he begins to understand what it's all about. He comprehends his fellow men, their relationships, the world about him. He seeks inwardly for more profound insight. The *chakra* is stabilized and smoothly spinning once he has raised his family and performed his social duty and, though he may yet continue in business, he would find the energies withdrawing naturally into his chest. It is only the renunciate, the *maṭhavāsi*, the *sannyāsin*, who from twenty-eight to thirty-five or before, depending on the strictness of his *satguru*, comes into the *viśuddha chakra*, into inner-light experiences, assuming a spiritual responsibility for himself and for others. This awakening soul appreciates people, loves them. His heart

and mind broadly encompass all of humanity. He is less interested in what people do and more in what they are. It is here that, having withdrawn from the world, the world begins to renounce him. Then, from thirty-five to forty-two, or before, he perfects his *sādhanas* and lives in the *ājñā chakra*, experiencing the body of the soul, that body of light, awareness traveling within naturally at that time, withdrawing from mundane affairs of the conscious mind. From forty-two through forty-nine he is getting established in the *sahasrāra chakra* in a very natural way, having met all of the responsibilities through life. ¶ This is the exacting path a devotee would follow under the training of a *satguru*. Ideally, and traditionally, the young man should come under the training of a *guru* at about fourteen years of age, when he is just coming into the *maṇipūra* area of will. At this point, the will is malleable and can be directed into the channels of the inner climb, rather than directed toward the outer world, though he may work or study in the outer world, too. But his motivation is inner. Carefully guided, awareness flows through each of these force centers, and at fifty years of age, he is fully trained and mentally prepared to take on intense spiritual responsibilities of his *sampradāya* and soar even more deeply inward in a very, very natural way.

Darśanam, Guru Kṛipā

दर्शनं गुरुकृपा



Darshan, Grace of the Guru

He taught me humility, infused in me the light of devotion, granted me the grace of His feet. After holy interrogation, testing me entirely, He revealed to me the Real, the unreal and real-unreal. Undoubtedly, the Śiva-Guru is Iraivan, the worshipful Lord Himself.

Tirumantiram 1573

MONDAY
Training from
A Satguru

Several thousand years ago, a *yoga* master was born from his own realization of the Self. He was born from his search within, where he found Absolute Existence, deep inside the atomic structure of his being. This master's realization came as he controlled the mind and penetrated through it to the very core of its substance. After Self Realization, his mind opened into its fullness of knowing. This knowledge he then imparted, as needed, to the students who came to him curious or eager to solve the philosophical and metaphysical puzzles of life. The first esoteric universities formed around the master in this way. Other masters have since come and gone. Each in turn battled and conquered the fluctuating mind and penetrated into the depth of being. Students gathered around them in a most natural sequence of events. Each master brought forth from his intuition the related laws and disciplines needed so that they, too, might attain Self Realization, *īmkāif*, as it is called in Shūm, the language of meditation. ¶ This is known as the *guru* system of training. It is personal and direct. An advanced devotee is one whose intuition is in absolute harmony with that of his master. This is the way I teach, not in the beginning stages when my devotees are probing the subject matter for answers, but after they have conquered the fluctuation of the patterns of the thinking mind. When they reach an advanced level of control and rapport with me, they have become *śishya*, dedicated their lives to serving mankind by imparting the teachings of Advaita Īśvaravāda—the non-

dualistic philosophy of the *Vedas*, the basic tenet of which is that man merges into God. ¶ Advice can be given freely, but unless the seeker is dedicated to the path of Eternal Truth, it is taken only on the intellectual plane and quoted but rarely used. Therefore, the wise *guru* gives challenges—spiritual assignments known as *sādhana*—advice, spiritual direction and guidance that merge with the aspirant's own individual will. This causes daily, recognizable results from actions taken to produce accomplishment physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. Each seeker sets his own pace according to his character, his ability to act with care, forethought, consistency and persistence in the *sādhana* given to him by his *guru*. ¶ There are five states of mind. Each one interacts somewhat with the other. The conscious mind and the subconscious mind work closely together, as does the sub of the subconscious with the subconscious, and the subconscious with the subsuperconscious. The superconscious is the most independent of them all. Being the mind of light, when one is in a superconscious state, seeing inner light is a constant experience of daily life. To attain states of this depth and still function creatively in the world, a solid training under a *guru* is requisite. ¶ The power to meditate comes from the grace of the *guru*. The *guru* consciously introduces his student into meditation by stimulating certain superconscious currents within him. The grace of the *guru* is sought for by the *yogīs* and is well understood by them.

TUESDAY
Darshan's
Mystic Power

Little is known of the *guru's* grace or the power of *darśana* in Western culture. *Darśana* (more popularly *darshan*) is a Sanskrit word meaning “vision, seeing or perception.” But in its mystical usage, it is more than that. *Darshan* is also the feeling of the emotions of a holy person, the intellect, the spiritual qualities that he has attained and, most importantly, the *śakti*, the power, that has changed him and is there constantly to change others. *Darshan* encompasses the entirety of the being of a person of spiritual attainment. In India, everyone is involved in *darshan*. Some at a temple have *darshan* of the Deity. Others at an *āśrama* have *darshan* of their *swāmī* or on the street enjoy *darshan* of a *sādhu*. And most everyone experiences *dūrdarshan*. That's the word for television in India, meaning “seeing from afar.” Even this seeing, through movies, news and various programs of mystery, tragedy, humor, the fine arts and culture, can affect our emotions, intellect, pulling us down or lifting us up in consciousness. Seeing is such a powerful dimension of life, and it affects us in so many ways, inside and out. *Darshan*, in the true meaning of this mystical, complex and most esoteric word, conveys all of this. ¶The concept of *darshan* goes beyond the devotee's seeing of the *guru*. It also embraces the *guru's* seeing of the devotee. Hindus consider that when you are in the presence of the *guru* that his seeing of you, and therefore knowing you and your *karmas*, is another grace. So, *darshan* is a two-edged sword, a two-way street. It is a process of seeing and being seen.

The devotee is seeing and in that instant drawing forth the blessings of the *satguru*, the *swāmī* or the *sādhu*. In turn, he is seeing the devotee and his divine place in the universe. Both happen within the moment, and that moment, like a vision, grows stronger as the years go by, not like imagination, which fades away. It is an ever-growing spiritual experience. The sense of separation is transcended, so there is a oneness between seer and seen. This is monistic theism, this is *Advaita Īśvaravāda*. Each is seeing the other and momentarily being the other. ¶ *Darshan* embodies *śakti*. *Darshan* embodies *śānti*. *Darshan* embodies *vidyā*, perceiving on all levels of consciousness for all inhabitants of the world. It is physical, mental, emotional, spiritual perception. Hindus believe that the *darshan* from a *guru* who has realized the Self can clear the subconscious mind of a devotee in minutes, alleviating all reaction to past actions and alter his perspective from an outer to an inner one. *Darshan* is the emanating rays from the depth of an enlightened soul's being. These rays pervade the room in which he is, penetrating the aura of the devotees and enlivening the *kuṇḍalinī*, the white, fiery, vapor-like substance that is actually the heat of the physical body in its natural state. ¶ In the Orient, whenever the cloud of despair covers the soul of a devotee, the *darshan* of a *guru* is sought. Whenever it becomes difficult to meditate, his grace is hoped for to lift the veil of delusion and release awareness from the darker areas of mind to soar within. Consciously merge into the inner being of yourself, and you will know your *guru* when you find him.

WEDNESDAY

The Scent
Of a Rose

If you were to travel through India on a spiritual pilgrimage, you would undoubtedly hear much about the Sanskrit word *darshan*. The religious leaders of the Orient are categorized according to the *darshan* they give, for there are various kinds of *darshan*. *Darshan* is the vibration that emanates from the illumined soul as a result of his inner attainment, be he a *yogī*, *pandit*, *swāmī*, *guru* or a *ṛishi*. Usually the *yogī*, *swāmī*, saint or sage attracts his following not so much by what he says as by the *darshan* he radiates. Hindus travel for miles to receive the *darshan* of an illumined soul established in his enlightenment. Perhaps he doesn't even speak to them. Perhaps he scolds some of them. Perhaps he gives the most inspired of talks to them. In any case, they feel the *darshan* flooding out from him. ¶A great soul is always giving *darshan*. The Hindus believe that the *darshan* coming from a great soul helps them in their evolution, changes patterns in their life by cleaning up areas of their subconscious mind that they could not possibly have done for themselves. They further believe that if his *darshan* is strong enough, if they are in tune with him enough, by its power the *kuṇḍalinī* force can be stimulated enough that they can really begin to meditate. This is called the grace of the *guru*. The ability for one to meditate comes from this grace. You must have it before you can begin to meditate, or you must do severe austerities by yourself instead. *Darshan* is not well understood in the West, because the West is outwardly refined but not necessarily inwardly refined.

The peoples of the Orient, by their heritage, are inwardly sensitive enough to understand and appreciate *darshan*. ¶*Darshan* and the unfolding soul on the path are like the rose. When the rose is a bud, it does not give forth a perfume. Unfoldment is just beginning. We admire the beauty of the bud, the stem and the thorns. We are aware that it has the potential of a magnificent flower. In the same way, we appreciate a beautiful soul who comes along, seeing in him the potential of a spiritual mission in this life. ¶In the life of a bud, nothing happens until unfoldment begins. The same is true for the fine soul. It happens occasionally that someone comes along and picks the bud. This means the fine soul is in the wrong company. Now neither the bud nor the soul can unfold. But when they are well protected in a garden or *āśrama* by a careful gardener, or *guru*, the bud and the soul unfold beautifully. ¶With just their first little opening to the world, they begin to see the light of the outer and inner sun shining down into the core of their being. It is still too early, of course, for the rose to have a noticeable fragrance, or the soul a *darshan*. We might appreciate them closely, but we would detect little in this early and delicate stage of unfolding. At this time, the unfolding soul might say, “I can see the light in my head and in my body.” And the sun’s rays keep pouring into the rose, penetrating into the stem and as deep as the roots. It is feeling stronger and unfolding more and more. If no one picks it because of its unfolding beauty, the rose continues to unfold until it opens into all its glory. Then a wonderful thing happens. The delicate perfume of the

rose fills the air day and night. It is the *darshan* of the rose. ¶To some people, the bouquet of the rose is very strong; to others, it is rather weak. Is the emanation of the rose stronger at one time than another? No. It is always the same. It goes on and on and on, maturing all the while into a deeper, richer, more potent scent. Soon it is filling the entire garden. But to the one who comes into the garden with a stuffy nose, there is only the beauty of the flower to experience. ¶In the same way, one who is closed on the inside of himself misses the *darshan* of the awakened soul. He sees in the greater soul just another ordinary person like himself. The *darshan* is there, but he is too negative to feel it. But the *darshan* permeates him just the same. He goes away from the garden not having smelled a rose, but carrying the perfume of the rose himself. If you stand away from the rose, you smell less of its fragrance. Bring yourself really close, and more of its strong and sweet scent will penetrate your body.

THURSDAY
Sensitivity
To Darshan

Darshan from a great soul, like the pollen of the flowers, can stimulate healthy sneezing and cleansing if one's subconscious happens to be congested. Call it, if you like, an allergy to flowers. Some people have allergies to *gurus*, too. The *guru's darshan* lifts repressed subconscious patterns that have been out of the flow of the cosmic pattern of regenerative life, bringing them up before one's conscious attention. Instead of feeling wonderful, the visitor to the garden feels miserable, as the fire is brought up from within, releasing his aware-

ness to view the polluted state of the subconscious mind. ¶Some people are more sensitive to fragrance than others. Others are so selfless and sensitive, they can become the fragrance itself for a time. In such a person, the rose smells sweet through every pore of his body. He is not in the least aware of any subconscious congested area of the mind. He sits in the garden and goes deep into meditation on the subtle fragrance of the flowers. The same principle relates to the unfolded soul. *Darshan* pours forth from within the unfolded soul just as fragrance flows from the rose—stronger at some times than at others because some devotees are more in tune than others. For them, the room begins to ring and vibrate. Some people are so sensitive that when a great soul comes to the same town, they feel his presence. This shows their inner attunement to the constant flowing power of the *darshan*. ¶Everyone has some feelings radiating from within, but they are emanations that fluctuate. Because you feel these vibrations coming from them, you can intuit how they are feeling. They do not emanate a constant or a building flow. It is a fluctuating flow of emotional, or astral, energy. The *darshan* I am explaining is really the energies flowing from the deeper *chakras*, *sahasrāra* and *ājñā*, the seventh and sixth *chakras*, or psychic force centers, in the head, through the *kuṇḍalinī* force within the spine. These energy flows do not fluctuate as the emotional odic-force energies do. They go on day and night and night and day through the illumined soul. Those devotees who are in tune with the *guru* can feel his physical presence when he enters their town because the *darshan*

gets stronger. And it feels to them more ethereal when he is farther away. ¶These energy flows are very important to study, because it is possible to draw and enjoy a great *darshan* from an illumined soul if you approach him in just the right way. If you can become as a sponge when you approach him, you will draw out inspiring talks and gracious blessings from him. The Hindu is conscious that he is drawing *darshan* from his *rishi* or his *satguru*, just as you are conscious of drawing the perfume of the rose into your body. When approaching a soul who is known to give *darshan*, be in the same area of the superconscious mind that you feel he must be in. The *guru* does not have to be necessarily functioning in that same area. He could be externalized in consciousness at the time. This is not important. It does not stop his *darshan* at all. The *guru*, feeling you draw the *darshan*, would immediately go within and enjoy it himself. Once *darshan* is there in him, it is always there.

FRIDAY

Protection and Stabilization

Hindu devotees are very careful not to upset their *guru*, for they do not want his forces strongly directed at them. It is the same *darshan*, however. At a time such as this, it is like a distilled perfume from the rose. It becomes too potent. Therefore, the devotee tries to maintain a good atmosphere around the *guru* so that his *darshan* is pleasant and natural. The *darshan* of a *guru* is the power that stabilizes the devotee on the path. The philosophies, teachings and practices that he is given to do are important, but it is the power of *darshan* that is his stabilizing influence, enabling him to unfold easily on

the path of enlightenment. ¶ *Darshan* is a mystical power emanating from the adept who has gone deep enough within to awaken this power. By stabilizing that power, he gives psychic protection to his disciples and devotees, even during their sleep at night. The same power grants them the ability to meditate without the prior necessity of extensive *tapas*. *Satguru darshan* releases the awareness of the devotee, out of the area of the mind which is constantly thinking, into sublimity. ¶ A beginning meditator is usually aware most of the time in the area of consciousness where thoughts run constantly before his vision. He finds it difficult to go deeper. All efforts fall short of the divine life he inwardly knows he can live, as he is bound by the cycles of his own *karma*. The *satguru's* power of *darshan* releases the meditator's individual awareness from the thinking area of mind and stabilizes him in the heart *chakra*, and he begins to awaken and unfold his Divinity. ¶ Devout Hindus sit before a *satguru* and, in seeing him, draw the *darshan* vibration from him, absorbing it into themselves. They are sensitive enough to distinguish the vibration of *darshan* from the other vibrations around the *guru*. They also believe that any physical thing the *satguru* touches begins to carry some of his *darshan* or personal vibration, and that when away from him they can just hold the article to receive the full impact of his *darshan*, for the physical object is a direct link to the *satguru* himself. It is *darshan* vibration that makes a human being a holy person. When we say someone is holy or saintly we are feeling the radiations of that divine energy flooding through him and

out into the world. ¶The inner life of a devotee has to be stabilized, cherished and well protected by the *guru*. The *guru* is able to do this through his well-developed facilities of *darshan*, even if his devotee lives at great distances from him. Unless the inner vibratory rate of the devotee is held stable, he will not come into his fullness in this life. If a plant is transplanted too often, it won't come into its full growth. If the bud is picked before it blooms, it will not flower or give forth its redolent fragrance. Yes, the grace of the *satguru* fires the ability to meditate in the seeker, the erudite Hindu believes.

SATURDAY

Relationship With a Guru

A child living with his family who does right by his family in honoring his mother and his father reaps a reward—for that mother and father are going to gladly see to all his needs in the emotional, intellectual and material world. But if the child negligently begins to play with the emotions and intellect of his mother and father by not living up to their expectations, they will be relieved when he is old enough to leave home and be on his own. During the time he is still at home, they will, of course, talk with him and work the best they can with the negative vibrations he generates, as their natural love for him is a protective force. ¶As it is with the parents, it is much the same with the *guru*. A devotee coming to his *guru* who is evolved, honest and able is first asked to do simple, mundane tasks. If they are done with willingness, the *guru* will take him consciously under his wing for a deeper, inner, direct training, as he fires him

to attain greater heights through *sādhana* and *tapas*. This *darshan* power of the *guru* will then be constantly felt by the disciple. But if the disciple were to turn away from the small tasks given by his *guru*, he would not connect into the deeper *darshan* power of the *satguru* that allows him to ride into his meditations deeply with ease. If the devotee breaks his flow with the *guru* by putting newly awakened power into intellectual “ifs” or “buts” or—“Well, now I know how to meditate; I don’t need you anymore. Thank you for all you’ve done. I’ve learned all you have to offer me and must be on my way”—or if he merely starts being delinquent in his efforts, then the *guru*-disciple relationship is shattered. ¶ Still a certain *darshan* power goes out to him, but the *guru* no longer consciously inwardly works with him as an individual. He knows it is too dangerous to work with this fluctuating aspirant, for there is no telling how he might take and use the accumulating power that would later be awakened within him. The *satguru* makes such a one prove himself to himself time and time again and to the *guru*, too, through *sādhana* and *tapas*. *Sādhana* tests his loyalty, consistency and resolution. *Tapas* tests his loyalty as well as his personal will, for he does *tapas* alone, gaining help only from inside himself, and he has to be aware on the inside to receive it. A wise *guru* never hesitates to “put him through it,” so to speak. ¶ A *guru* of India may give *tapas* to a self-willed disciple who insisted on living his personal life in the *āśrama*, not heeding the rules of his *sādhana*. He may say, “Walk through all of India. Stay out of my *āśrama* for one year. Walk through the Himalayas.

Take nothing but your good looks, your orange robe and a bowl for begging at the temples.” From then on, the *guru* works it all out with him on the inside for as long as the disciple remains “on *tapas*.” Maybe the *guru* will be with him again, yet maybe not; it depends entirely on the personal performance of the *tapas*. ¶ This, then, is one of the reasons that it is very, very important for anyone striving on the path to first have a good relationship with his family—for the *guru* can expect nothing more than the same type of relationship eventually to arise with himself, or between the aspirant and some other disciple. As he gets more into the vibration of the *guru*, he is going to relax into the same behavioral patterns he generated with his parents, for in the *āśrama*, many of the same vibrations, forces and attitudes are involved.

SUNDAY

The Devotee's Responsibilities

The aspirant may go to his *guru* and be one with him by preparing himself to receive his grace. As a result, he may be able to meditate, to keep his personal *karma* subdued sufficiently to quiet the inner forces. Once a *guru* has been chosen, the aspirant must be loyal to him and stay with that one *guru* only. He should not go from one to another, because of these subtle, powerful inner, connecting vibrations of *darshan* and the training received through the power of a *satguru's* use of *darshan*. These inner, mystical laws protect the *guru* himself against people who wander from one *guru* to another, as well as warn the seeker against the fluctuating forces of his own mind as he creates and breaks the subtle yet pow-

erful relationship with a holy person. ¶ *Satguru darshan* opens psychic seals in the devotee by moving his awareness out of an area that he does not want to be in. Similarly, a blowtorch changes the consistency of metal. The *satguru* is like the sun. He is just there, radiating this very pure energy like the sun evaporates water. The *satguru* hardly does anything at all. It is the seeker who opens himself to the great accumulated power of *darshan* which the *guru* inherited from his *guru* and his *guru's guru*, as well as the natural *darshan* he unfolded from within himself through his evolution and practices of *sādhana* and *tapas*. It's all up to the aspirant at first. ¶ A *satguru* doesn't do a thing. The *guru* can amuse himself externally with anything. It does not make any difference in his *darshan* when he is at a certain point in his unfoldment. If you are around him long enough, and if you are honest with yourself and persistent in the tasks he asks you to perform and directions he gives you, psychic seals lift after awhile. But you have to do your part. He does his in an inner way, and as he does, you will feel the psychic seals melt away under his fiery *darshan*, just like a blowtorch penetrates and transforms the metal it touches.

Jñāninaḥ Tad Darśita Mārgaścha
ज्ञानिनः तदर्शित मार्गश्च



Jñānis and the
Path They Teach

The great knowers seek the Lord of the heavens.
Those who seek the company of these great ones
will attain Śivaness. They become the path of
virtue and are truly blessed. To consort with
the great knowers is indeed bliss supreme.

Tirumantiram 545

MONDAY**The Holy Path
To Siva's Feet**

So many in the world are unaware of the great joys that are the reward of a religious life lived well. They seek their fulfillment outside of themselves and fall short time and time again. One day they will conclude, as you all have, that it is the inner life, the spiritual life, that alone brings eternal, unchanging happiness. This outer world and consciousness can never bring the soul real contentment, real fulfillment. Oh, you can find a temporary happiness, but it will be followed by its opposite in due course. The outer consciousness of the material world is by its very nature a bondage. It binds one through *karma*. It binds one through *māyā*. It binds one through *āṇava*, or ego identity and ignorance. That is the nature of the world, to bind us. ¶When the soul has had enough experience, it naturally seeks to be liberated, to unravel the bonds. That begins the most wonderful process in the world as the seeker steps for the first time onto the spiritual path. Of course, the whole time, through all those births and lives and deaths, the soul was undergoing a spiritual evolution, but unconsciously. Now it seeks to know God consciously. That is the difference. It's a big difference. By this conscious process of purification, of inner striving, of refining and maturing, the *karmas* come more swiftly, evolution speeds up and things can and usually do get more intense. Don't worry, though. That is natural and necessary. That intensity is the way the mind experiences the added cosmic energies that begin to flow through the nervous system. ¶So, here is the soul, seeking intentionally

to know, “Who am I? Where did I come from? Where am I going?” A path must be found, a path that others have successfully followed, a path that has answers equally as profound as the seeker’s questions. In Śaivite Hinduism, we have such a path. It is called the Śaiva Neri, the Path of Śiva. It is a wide and unobstructed path that leads man to himself, to his true Self that lies within and beyond his personality, lies at the very core of his being. ¶ I want to speak a little about this inner path today. You all know that it is a mystical path, full of mystery. You cannot learn much of it from books. Then where to look? Look to the holy scriptures, where the straight path to God is described by our saints. Look to the great masters, the *siddhas*, or perfected ones. Look to the *satgurus*, who have themselves met and overcome the challenges that still lie ahead for you. Look to them and ask them to help you to look within yourself. Much of the mysticism which is the greatest wealth of Hinduism is locked within these masters, who in our tradition are known as the *satgurus*, the sages and the *siddhas*. There is much to say on this. As Yogaswami told us, “The subject is vast and the time is short!”

TUESDAY

Four Stages Of Evolution

Let me begin with something that may at first come as a surprise to you. All men and women on the Earth are doing exactly as they should and must do. People complain, “I wish I were rich. I wish I lived somewhere else. I really should be a doctor. If only things were different.” But in the final analysis, we are all doing exactly as we want, as we must, doing

what is next on our personal path of evolution. Nothing is wrong. Nothing should be that is not. Even the drunk, even the thief, is part of the cosmic dance of God Śiva. Not that you should ever think of being a thief, for there is much difficult *karma* there. Just realize that he, too, is evolving. He, too, is Śiva's creation, and what he does is, for him, somehow necessary. ¶ Just look at the world. Warriors have to fight their battles. Priests have to take care of their temples. Businessmen must sell their goods. Farmers must grow their crops and tend their flocks. Teachers must pass on knowledge. Each one has to do what he has to do in the great cosmic dance of Śiva. Each one follows the path of service leading to devotion, which leads to spiritual disciplines of *yoga*. Finally, that *yoga* culminates in the attainment of Truth, or God Realization. These are the four *mārgas* leading the soul to its very Self. ¶ For Hindus, the path is seen as divided into four stages or phases of inner development. Some say *karma yoga*, *bhakti yoga*, *rāja yoga* and *jñāna*; others say *charyā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna*. Either way, it is basically the same—progressive stages followed by the soul in its quest for God. We are speaking here of the way the ancients attained their realizations, how they lived their lives, suffered, went through mental pain in their *tapas*, walked the San Mārga path through life—*charyā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna*—and in that process unwound the *karmanas* of the past, learned to live fully in the present, abashed the person of themselves to be the soul of themselves. They practiced true *yoga* to obtain release from rebirth, *moksha*, which only the realization of

the Absolute Truth can give. There is, of course, no action too great to render to persist on the path of enlightenment, once the path has clearly been defined. ¶ *Jñāna* is the last stage. Most people don't understand *jñāna*. They think it is little more than intellectual study of the path, a simple kind of wisdom. But *jñāna* does not mean simplistic reading of scriptures or understanding of philosophical books and knowing pat answers to stereotyped questions. *Jñāna* is the blossoming of wisdom, of enlightened consciousness, of true being. *Jñāna* is the state of the realized soul who knows Absolute Reality through personal experience, who has reached the end of the spiritual path after many, many lifetimes. ¶ *Yoga* is the path of *sādhana*, or discipline, leading the advanced soul toward *jñāna*. *Yoga* is divided into eight parts, ranging from the simple physical disciplines and diet, up to the deepest contemplation gained through perfect control of mind. *Yoga* does not mean just sitting in lotus for half an hour each day in a penthouse or doing *haṭha yoga āsanās* for health and beauty. It means *yoga* as performed by the *yogīs* of yore, the renegades from society, *tapasvins* ready to face the fire of *sādhana*, brave souls who have given up all else in their search for Truth, persevering with an iron will until they accomplish what they seek. ¶ *Kriyā* is basically worship and devotion, or the expression of our love of the Divine through various ceremonies and rituals. *Kriyā* does not mean mindlessly or superstitiously attending temple services to look good in the community, to be with friends, to gossip or talk of politics and other human affairs. It is a genuine communion with the inner

worlds, a profound stage in which the heart swells and eyes overflow with internalized worship, love and surrender. ¶ *Charyā* is service, but it does not mean empty service, unthinking performance of traditional rites or just marrying off daughters, thus forestalling premarital affairs. It is service done selflessly, it is *dharma* performed consciously, it is worship offered wholly and it is goodness in thought, word and deed.

WEDNESDAY
Devotion and
Guru Guidance

Of course, our most cherished theology is monistic Śaiva Siddhānta, the *advaitic* teachings inherited from our *guru paramparā* who outlined the course we are on. This teaches us that

God and man are ultimately one. This teaches us that our Supreme God, Śiva, is the creator of the universe, and He is also the creation. He is not different from it. ¶ We must go to the temple and worship, with all our heart, God in form before our *karmas* are cleared, our responsibilities paid, and we realize the formless perfection of God Śiva. The *guhā*, the cave of consciousness, opens its doors for us to sit comfortably, mentally undistracted, within the cavity within the head, there to begin the *yoga* of union for personal, spiritual, everlasting attainment. Śaiva Siddhānta outlines the path that we are on. It tells us how to attain these goals. ¶ The saints who sang the hymns of *Tirumurai* inspire us onward and inward. The illustrious, venerable Rishi Tirumular captured the essence of the *Vedas* and the *Āgamas* in his epistles, promulgating the rules and regulations that we must follow, setting forth the attainments

that we may expect to reach. Over two thousand years ago the great *siddha*, Saint Tirumular, taught, “Offer oblations in love. Light the golden lamps. Spread incense of fragrant wood and lighted camphor in all directions. Forget your worldly worries and meditate. Truly, you shall attain rapturous liberation.” ¶It is said in our Hindu scriptures that it is necessary to have a *satguru*. However, it is also possible for an individual to accomplish all of this by himself without a *guru*. Possible, but most difficult and exceedingly rare. There may be four or five in a hundred years, or less. Scriptures explain that perhaps in past lives such a soul would have been well disciplined by some *guru* and is helped inwardly by God in this life. With rare exceptions, a *guru* is necessary to guide the aspirant on the path as far as he is willing and able to go in his current incarnation. Few will reach the Ultimate. The *satguru* is needed because the mind is cunning and the ego is a self-perpetuating mechanism. It is unable and unwilling to transcend itself by itself. Therefore, one needs the guidance of another who has gone through the same process, who has faithfully followed the path to its natural end and therefore can gently lead us to God within ourselves. Remember, the *satguru* will keep you on the path, but you have to walk the path yourself. ¶All *gurus* differ one from another depending on their *paramparā*, their lineage, as well as on their individual nature, awakening and attainments. Basically, the only thing that a *guru* can give you is yourself to yourself. That is all, and this is done in many ways. The *guru* would only be limited by his philosophy, which outlines the ultimate

attainment, and by his own experience. He cannot take you where he himself has not been. It is the *guru's* job to inspire, to assist, to guide and sometimes even impel the disciple to move a little farther toward the Self of himself than he has been able to go by himself.

THURSDAY

Duties of The Disciple

It is the disciple's duty to understand the sometimes subtle guidance offered by the *guru*, to take the suggestions and make the best use of them in fulfilling the *sādhanas* given. Being with a *satguru* is an intensification on the path of enlightenment—always challenging, for growth is a challenge to the instinctive mind. If a *guru* does not provide this intensification, we could consider him to be more a philosophical teacher. Not all *gurus* are *satgurus*. Not all *gurus* have realized God themselves. The idea is to change the patterns of life, not to perpetuate them. That would be the only reason one would want to find a *satguru*. ¶Some teachers will teach ethics. Others will teach philosophy, language, worship and scriptures. Some will teach by example, by an inner guidance. Others will teach from books. Some will be silent, while others will lecture and have classes. Some will be orthodox, while others may not. The form of the teaching is not the most essential matter. What matters is that there be a true and fully realized *satguru*, that there be a true and fully dedicated disciple. Under such conditions, spiritual progress will be swift and certain, though not necessarily easy. Of course, in our tradition the *siddhas* have always taught of Śiva and only Śiva. They have taught the

Śaiva Dharma which seeks to serve and know Śiva in three ways: as Personal Lord and creator of all that exists; as existence, knowledge and bliss—the love that flows through all form—and finally as the timeless, formless, causeless Self of all. ¶When we go to school, we are expected to learn our lessons and then to graduate. Having graduated, we are expected to enter society, take a position comparable to our level of education. We are expected to know more when we leave than when we entered, and we naturally do. When we perform *sādhana*, we are expected to mature inwardly, to grow and to discipline ourselves. And, in fact, we do become a better, more productive, more compassionate, more refined person. ¶But when we perform *yoga*, we are expected to go within, in and in, deep within ourselves, deep within the mind. If *yoga* is truly performed, we graduate with knowledge based on personal experience, not on what someone else has said. We then take our place among the *jñānīs*—the wise ones who know, and who know what they know—to uplift others with understanding in *sādhana* and in *yoga*.

FRIDAY

Attaining

The Ultimate

In other words, the practice of *yoga* well performed produces the *jñānī*. The *yogī* has the same experiences, if he is successful, and comes out with the same independent knowledge which, when reviewed, corresponds perfectly with what other *jñānīs* discovered and taught as the outcome of their *yogic* practices. This kind of knowledge surpasses all other knowing and is the basis of all Hindu scriptures. The *jñānī*

is a rare soul, a highly evolved soul. He speaks of Truth from his experience of it and gives it a personal touch. As Sri Ramakrishna said, you go into yourself a fool, but through the practices of *yoga* you come out a wise man. That is the *jñānī*—the knower of the Unknowable. ¶The *yogī* who is in the process of *yoga*, who has not graduated to God Realization, is not yet a *jñānī*, though he has all kinds of realizations along the way, some sustained, others yet to be sustained. The *yogī* is seeking, striving, changing, unfolding, trying with all his heart to become, to know his ultimate goal. When the merger has become complete, when two have become one, he is no longer a *yogī*, he is a *jñānī*. When the student graduates from college, he is no longer a student, he is a graduate. The merger of which I speak is Paraśiva, to be experienced by the *sannyāsin* who has turned from the world and into himself. ¶There is yet another realization which can be described as experiencing God Śiva as Satchidānanda, as light and love and consciousness. This also may be achieved through *yoga*. When one experiences this expanded state of being, this cosmic consciousness, he comes back knowing he has had a fantastic experience, but no *jñāna* persists, for he has yet to attain the Ultimate. Family people can attain this second state through diligent effort, and even attain to Paraśiva at the point of death, or before if the path of renunciation is entered upon fully after life's obligations have been fulfilled. But there are few, very few, who have attained the highest of the high, Paraśiva, after having been householders, having fulfilled their family *dharma*, freed from

any and all worldly endeavors, plunged into total, total abandonment of spouse, family, friends, associates of all kind, taking no disciples, shunning devotees and forever living alone on alms, to seek the highest of the high. As said, even following such a strict path, there are few, very few, who attain to Absolute Reality. But all who strive have done powerful preparation for their next life. ¶ My *satguru*, Siva Yogaswami, often said, “Lord Śiva is within you. You are within Lord Śiva. Lord Śiva, with all of His powers, cannot separate Himself from you.” Siva Yogaswami told us to go to the temple, to worship at the temple. He also told us to go within ourselves, into Śivajñāna. He did not tell us *not* to go to the temple. He did not try to break our faith. He tried to build our faith and make us strong. He guided us on the straight path, the path of the Śaivite saints, leading us to the feet of Śiva. ¶ Siva Yogaswami himself, though completely Self realized, went regularly to the temple, worshiped Śiva there, then plunged within himself in the aftermath of holy *pūjā*, drawing near to Śiva through meditation. He never advocated, nor has any traditional Śaivite *satguru* advocated, that advanced devotees give up *bhakti*, give up the temple. No! Never! They taught that Śiva is within and cannot be separated from you, but they also wisely directed us to seek Him and worship Him in the temple.

SATURDAY
The Nature
Of God Śiva

Śiva has a form. He is also formless. But He does have a form, and He exists in the realm of highest consciousness called the Śivaloka. Śiva has a mind, a superconscious mind that permeates like a plasma all the forms that He creates, all the forms that He preserves and all the forms that He absorbs back into Himself. Śiva is very close to each and every one of us. Śiva's mind permeates all of us. But when we want to see Śiva's form and receive His *darshan*, we go to the Śiva temple, and when the holy priest invokes God Śiva, God Śiva hovers in His body of golden light over the Śivaliṅga. In deep meditation, Śivajñāna, we can, within the temple of our own heart, see God Śiva's Holy Form. ¶ God Śiva creates. God Śiva preserves all His creations and, when the creation is no longer needed, absorbs it back into Himself, to create again. Śaivites all over the world love God Śiva. God Śiva loves His devotees. For each step the devotee takes toward Śiva, Śiva takes nine steps toward the devotee. Such are the final conclusions of Śaiva Siddhānta. ¶ There is no reason to ever become confused about the many Deities in our wonderful Hindu faith. Is Lord Gaṇeśa our Supreme God? No. Is Lord Murugan our Supreme God? No. They are Gods, two of the many Gods that God Śiva has created. But God Śiva is Supreme God, timeless, formless, spaceless, permeating all form, and yet having a form. He is the fullness of everything that fills people from within out. ¶ In Śaivism we become strong, we become fearless, through our worship of Śiva. Members of the Śaiva

Samayam, the Śaivite religion, do not fear death, for they know about rebirth. Members of the Śaiva Samayam do not fear an eternal hell; there is no eternal hell. Members of the Śaiva Samayam do not fear their ministers, their priests, *swāmīs* or *gurus*. Members of the Śaiva Samayam do not fear God. The lack of fear, therefore, makes you strong. Our saints tell us in the sacred hymns of the *Tirumurai* that the worship of Śiva makes you strong. The worship of God Śiva brings you intelligence. The worship of God Śiva will bring you knowledge of your divine, inner Self. Remember this as you go forth in life: we do not use weapons in our religion. We follow the path of nonviolence, noninjury to other beings. Our only weapon is our mind, our intelligence. ¶ Unfortunately, in some, though not all, of the Judaic/Christian sects, the fear of God is prevalent. The distinction between good and bad, heaven and hell, is predominant, causing fears, apprehension and deep mental conflict. Hence, this psychological set-up is not conducive to the practice of *yoga*, for it arbitrates against the very idea of oneness of man and God which the *yogī* seeks. Those who have been so indoctrinated often try to meditate, but necessarily do not succeed in its deepest attainments, because of subconscious barriers placed there by a dualistic philosophy.

SUNDAY

When the Quiet Comes

In order to really meditate to the depth of contemplation, and not merely to quiet mind and emotion and feel a little serenity, you have to be a member of a religion that gives the hope of

nondual union with God, that teaches that God is within man, only to be realized. Meditation, if it is to lead to *jñāna*, must begin with a belief that there is no intrinsic evil and encompass the truth of *karma*, that we are responsible for our own actions. Such meditation must be undertaken by a member of a religion that gives a hope of a future life and does not threaten failure with eternal suffering, should failure be the result. Such meditation is possible, in fact required, of those who follow the Hindu Dharma. Hence, the practice of *yoga* is the highest pinnacle within our most ancient faith. ¶If you go through the entire holy scriptures of Śaivism, you will not find our saints singing hymns to Adonai-Yahweh, Buddha or Jesus. Our saints told us to worship God Śiva, the Supreme God, to worship Gaṇeśa first before worshipping Śiva, to worship Lord Murugan. In the old days, there were millions of Śiva temples, from the Himalayan peaks of Nepal, through North and South India, Sri Lanka and what is now Malaysia and Indonesia. Everyone was of one mind, worshipping Śiva together, singing His praises with a one voice. As a result, India was spiritually unified. It was then the wealthiest country in the world. The worship of Śiva will give you wealth. The worship of Śiva will give you health. The worship of Śiva will give you knowledge. The worship of Śiva will fill your heart with love and compassion. ¶The Śaiva Samayam is the greatest religion in the world. The Śaiva Samayam is the oldest religion in the world. The Śaiva Samayam has *yoga*. It has great temples, great *pandits*, *rishis* and scriptures. All the saints who sang the songs of Śiva told us how to wor-

ship Śiva and how we should live our Śaivite lives. We must all follow those instructions. In singing those songs to Śiva, Śiva will give you everything that you ask for. He will give you everything that you ask for, because Śiva is the God of Love. Our saints have sung that Śiva is within us, and we are within Śiva. Knowing that, fear and worry and doubt are forever gone from our mind. ¶When the mind has resolved all of its differences through worship, penance, *dhāraṇā*, *dhyāna*, then the inner which is stillness itself is known. Then the inner is stronger than the outer. It is then easy to see every other person going through what has to be gone through during his or her particular stage on the path. Opposites are there, but no opposites are seen. This is why it is easy for the wise—made wise through spiritual unfoldment—to say, “There is no injustice in the world. There is no evil, no sin.” ¶We only see opposites when our vision is limited, when we have not experienced totally. There is a point of view which resolves all contradictions and answers all questions. Yet to be experienced is yet to be understood. Once experienced and understood, the Quiet comes. The *karmas* are quiet. This is the arduous path of *charyā*, *kriyā* and *yoga* resulting in *jñāna*. This is the path of not only endeavoring to unfold the higher nature but, at the same time and toward the same end, dealing positively and consciously with the remnants of the lower nature. Following this spiritual path, we find ourselves effortlessly replacing charity for greed and dealing with, rather than merely suppressing, the instinctive feelings of jealousy, hatred, desire and anger.

Punarjanma

पुनर्जन्म



Reincarnation

Like the prancing steed that leaps forward, the *jīva* also traverses near and far. Like those who doff and don one garment and another, the *jīva*, too, moves from one body to another.

Tirumantiram 2131

MONDAY**The Transition
Called Death**

Death—what is it? The dropping off of the physical body is the time when all of the *karma*-making actions go back to seed in the *mūlādhāra chakra*, into the memory patterns. All of our actions, reactions and the things we have set in motion in the *prāṇic* patterns in this life form the tendencies of our nature in our next incarnation. The tendencies of our nature in the present incarnation are the ways in which awareness flows through the *idā*, *piṅgalā* and *sushumṇā* currents. ¶ These tendencies of man's nature also are recorded in the astrological signs under which he is born. Man comes through an astrological conglomeration of signs, or an astrological chart, according to his actions and reactions and what he set in motion in the seed-*karma* patterns of his past life. So, we are always the sum total, a collection, of all the *karmic* experiences, a totality of all the seed patterns, that have happened to us, or that we have caused to happen, through the many, many lives. We are now a sum total, and we are always a continuing sum total. ¶ A past life is not really so many years ago. That is not the way to look at it. It is now. Each life is within or inside the other. They exist as *karmic* seeds that appear in the *prāṇic* force fields in our life now and, like seeds, when watered they grow into plants. These seeds are nourished by *prāṇa*. When we die, when we discard the physical body, that is the end of a chapter of experience. Then we pick up a new physical body. This begins a new chapter that is always referring back to the last chapter for direction. These are tenden-

cies. ¶ This is the entire story of what happens after we die. We simply step out of the physical body and are in our astral body, going on in the mind as usual. The awareness does not stop simply because the physical body falls away. The *idā* force becomes more refined, the *piṅgalā* force becomes more refined, the *sushumṇā* force is there like it always was, but all are in another body that was inside the physical body during life on Earth. ¶ One great peculiarity about man is that he individually feels that he is never going to die and goes on through life planning and building as though he were going to live forever and ever. The fear of death is a natural instinctive reflex. We encounter it sometimes daily, once a month, or at least once a year when we come face to face with the possibility of obliteration of our personality and of leaving the conscious mind. The fear of change or fear of the unknown is an ominous element in the destiny of a human being. The study and comprehension of the laws of reincarnation can alleviate this fear and bring an enlightened vision of the cosmic rhythms of life and death. It is a simple process, no more fantastic, shall we say, than other growth problems we experience daily. A flower grows, blossoms and withers. The seed falls to the ground, is buried in the earth, sprouts and grows into a plant and a flower.

TUESDAY
Desire, Death
And Rebirth

Where are we born after we die? How do we become born again? You are born again in the same way you died. After some time, the astral body cannot stay on the astral plane anymore,

because the seeds of *prāṇic* motion have to be expressed on the physical plane again due to one's activity on the astral plane. A new physical birth is entered. Generally, this happens through a newborn child's body, but a more advanced soul who has his spiritual body well developed can pick up a body which is fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty years old and go right along in life from that point. ¶In what country do you become born? It all depends upon what country you were thinking about before and when you died. If you had a desire to go to Canada, most likely you will be born in Canada next time around. If you had been thinking about going to South America a year or two before you passed away, you would be reincarnated in South America, because that was your destination. If you were very much attached to your own particular family and you did not want to leave them, you would be born back in that immediate family again, because your desire is there. The astral body is the body of desire. ¶Students probing the mysteries of reincarnation often ask, "If reincarnation is true, why can't I remember my past lives?" They might just as well ask another question: "Why do we not remember everything in detail in *this* life?" The memory capabilities, unless highly trained, are not that strong, especially after having endured the process of creating a new body through another family and establishing new memory patterns. However, there are people who do recall their past lives, in the very same way that they remember what they did yesterday. Former-life memory is that clear and vivid to them. ¶However, it

is neither necessary nor advisable to pursue events, identities or relationships that may have existed in previous lives. After all, it is all now. We don't think it important to remember details of our childhood years, to wallow in happy or unhappy nostalgia. Why pursue the remembered residue of what has already come and gone? Now is the only time, and for the spiritual seeker, past life analysis or conjecture is an unnecessary waste of useful time and energy. The present now is the sum of all prior thens. Be now. Be the being of yourself this very moment, and that will be the truest fulfillment of all past actions. ¶The validity of reincarnation and its attendant philosophy are difficult to prove, and yet science is on the threshold of discovering this universal mechanism. Science cannot ignore the overwhelming evidence, the testimony of thousands of level-headed people who claim to remember other lives or who have actually died and then returned to life, and the impressive literature spanning Hindu, Tibetan, Buddhist and Egyptian civilizations. Thus, the pursuit of various theories continues in an effort to bring theory into established law according to the reason and intellectual facilities of man. Those living in the heart *chakra*, *anāhata*, are able to cognize and know deeply the governing mechanism of rebirth from their own awakening.

WEDNESDAY
Theories of
Reincarnation

There are at least three basic theories or schools of thought related to reincarnation. At first they may seem to conflict or contradict one another, but further elucidation indicates that they

all have merit. They are just different aspects of a complex mechanism. According to one theory of reincarnation, life begins with sound and color. Sound and color produce the first forms of life in the atomic structure of our being through binding the seed atoms together. At this point, life as we know it begins. It remains in a seed state or state of conception until the instinctive and intellectual cycles evolve into maturity through the process of absorption of more atoms into the astral body. This process continues until a physical body is formed around the astral body. But that is not the culmination of this theory. The cells and atoms of these bodies themselves evolve, becoming more and more refined as cycles of experience pass until complete maturity is reached in a physical body which is refined enough to attain *nirvikalpa samādhi* and begin the next process of building a golden body of light. According to this theory, the soul takes on progressively more advanced bodies, evolving through the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms, slowly acquiring knowledge through experience. There may even be a life that seems to regress, such as a man incarnating as a cow to gain needed lessons of existence. ¶A second concept in this theory explains the lower evolutionary stage of animals, insects, plants and minerals. According to this principle, animals and lower forms of life function under what is called a “group soul.” They do not have an individual astral identity, but share a group astral atomic structure. That is one reason for the lack of so-called individuality among these groups and why animals move about in herds and birds live

together in flocks—indicating the movement of the one group soul, so the theory goes. ¶In another theory, when man dies, he goes on to the astral plane after breaking the silver cord which binds him to the physical body. During out-of-the-body experiences, this silver cord is often seen as a cord of light connecting the physical, astral and spiritual bodies. When awareness leaves the physical body, it passes through one of the *chakras*. If our life has been one of baser emotion and reason, we would exit through one of the *chakras* near the base of the spine, either the *mūlādhāra* or *svādhishṭhana*, and begin a conscious existence on a lower astral plane. From there we would work out various experiences or reactionary conditions caused by congested mental and emotional forces which impressed our subconscious mind during the course of our lifetime. On the astral plane, we relive many experiences by reactivating them, creating for ourselves heavens or hells. When the lessons of that life had been learned and the reactions resolved, we would be drawn back into a family, into a new physical body, in order to gain more experience in the light of the new knowledge acquired while on the astral plane. ¶If we have evolved to the point that our life was one of service, understanding and love, then we would exit through the next higher *chakras*, for that is where awareness has been polarized, and our astral existence would be of a deeper, more refined nature. However, if we had discovered and practiced a dedicated spiritual life, then our exit would be through the top two *chakras*, which do not lead awareness onto the astral plane but take it into

the Third World of divine existence, never to reincarnate again into the physical world. After *nirvikalpa samādhi* is attained and perfected so that the *mahāyogī* can go into it at will, he leaves the body consciously through the door of Brahman, the center of the *sahasrāra chakra* above the pituitary gland at the top of the head. This depends on whether or not the golden actinic causal body, which has been developed after Self Realization, is mature enough to travel in actinic force fields on its own.

THURSDAY

Earth Peoples' Shared Wisdom

Reincarnation is a refining process, contributing to the evolution of consciousness. To the watchful observer, the evolution of man's inner bodies can be seen reflected in the tone and form of his physical vehicle. Being a reflection of the inner bodies, the physical shell can and does pass through radical transformation as the spiritual path is followed. Some people seem to reincarnate within this very life, changing themselves so deeply through *tapas* and *sādhana* that they are totally renewed or reborn on the physical plane. Their new light and energy pass through the very cells of the body, invigorating and strengthening it. Still, the inner bodies are more malleable than the physical forces and generally evolve more quickly, becoming quite different and more refined in this life than the physical shell. In the next life, the physical structure will be entirely different, as the spiritual body manifests a new physical body more like unto itself. ¶Other theories propose that the soul remains on the astral plane after death. After reviewing all

of our Earthly experiences on the playback, we release the astral body and enter the heavenly realms of consciousness, never coming back to the physical plane, or at least not for a long time. Many cultures, such as the Native American Indian culture, recognize this basic law of reincarnation in their “Happy Hunting Grounds” concepts. Also related to this theory is the belief that when something is destroyed through fire on the physical plane, whether animate or inanimate, it will be found again on the astral plane. For example, when an Indian brave died, his saddle, clothing and valuables were buried and sometimes burned along with his body so that he might continue using these possessions to live well on the inner, astral, plane. These theories of reincarnation assure us that we will meet our loved ones and friends on the inner planes after death. Similar traditions exist among the Hindus in Bali and the Shintoists in Japan. ¶By exploring the theories of various civilizations, we discover that man can either incarnate soon after his death, with little or no interlude, or he may remain for thousands of years on the astral plane, evolving in those force fields, just as on Earth he evolved from experience to experience. How long he will spend on the astral plane depends on how he has created or chosen what he wants to do while on Earth. If he left things undone and felt compelled to accomplish more, to see more, then he would return quickly to another body in fulfillment of the desire for Earthly experience. However, were he satisfied that life had taught him all of its lessons and wished to exist away from the physical plane in mental and spiritual

spheres, he might never return to inherit another body. ¶If we study the Pyramids and explore the intricate ceremonies which the Egyptians provided for their dead, we find that they kept the body preserved with elaborate chemical and environmental treatment. When the elements of the physical body are kept intact and not allowed to decompose, the departed may remain consciously on the astral, mental or spiritual plane for as long as he wants. A contact can even be maintained on the physical plane through these laws. However, as soon as the physical body begins to disintegrate, awareness is polarized once again and pulled back to the lower *chakras* and the physical plane. Actually, as the elements of the previous body disintegrate, all of the instinctive-mind atoms form a force field around that body. This generates a power center. When the body is completely disintegrated, the force field is dissolved, and the soul reincarnates at that time. The Egyptians believed that if a body could be durably mummified, the deceased could enjoy a fine life on the inner planes for thousands of years. Modern science can freeze bodies and thus preserve them perfectly, thus opening up possible research into these principles one day.

FRIDAY

The Yoga Adept's Special Pattern

These first laws of reincarnation dealing with the astral plane governed by the powers of the first three *chakras* seem to be quite valid when man is living in his instinctive mind. However, when he passes from the physical body through the will, cognition, or universal love *chakras*, he comes into a dif-

ferent reincarnation law. He then is living on two planes at the same time and, according to this theory, would have representative bodies on both planes. His evolution on the physical plane would be quick, since his only physical, conscious expression would be a small animal, perhaps a little bird or cat or some extremely sensitive animal. This creature would represent and polarize the advanced soul's instinctive mind on the physical plane while he evolved at an accelerated pace on vast inner planes. This dual existence would continue until such time as the process of reincarnation was intensified and the vibration of the Earth was strong enough in his mind to pull awareness back dynamically to another human life. This might take years, and it might take centuries. ¶In a sense, this mystic would be held through the power of the higher *chakras* in a very subtle force field and only touch into physical consciousness sporadically by using different bodies of animals and people for a few minutes or hours to contact the Earth. He would not necessarily be conscious of doing this. His awareness would exist predominantly on the inner planes. ¶This is one reason we find some of the Indian religions forbidding the killing of animals of any kind. They believe an animal may be a great saint or *jñānī* who has passed on. Nonkilling of animals, especially cows, is widely observed in India even today. Of course, many consider such a theory senseless, ridiculous, fraught with superstition. However, we could look at everything which we don't yet understand as superstitious until we comprehend the intricate mechanism of the laws of the governing

force fields. ¶Another postulate of this theory is that an advanced being living in his inner bodies, having left consciousness through one of the higher *chakras*, would be working out a certain amount of *karma* by helping others who are still in physical bodies to work out their *karma*. For various reasons, this being would not be able to return to Earth consciously. What, then, would cause him to reincarnate? It would be the intellectual clarity and spiritual intensity of the mother and father in the process of conception or planned conception. They would have to reach very deeply into the inner planes in order to provide the channel for a high reincarnation, whereas couples cohabiting in lust or free-for-all sex more or less take potluck off the astral plane. This indicates briefly an ancient but neglected law: that the parents—through their love for one another, through their devotion and through their states of consciousness during the days of conception—attract to themselves either old souls or young souls. ¶Generally, the soul, at the time of conception, chooses the body he will inhabit but does not actually enter the womb until the infant body takes life and begins to move and kick. Similarly, on the physical plane we may buy an acre of land and plan the house we wish to live in, but not actually move in until months later when the house is completed.

SATURDAY

Reincarnating Prior to Death

The next theory of reincarnation, governed by the throat, brow and crown *chakras*, states that when an advanced soul leaves the body through the brow *chakra*, or third eye, he enters a highly

refined force field world from which he is able to pick and choose exactly when and where he will return. At this point he does not have to reincarnate as an infant, but could take an already well-matured physical body. In such a case, the soul inhabiting the body would have *karmically* ended this life and be involved in the reincarnation process, either dead or preparing to die. The advanced *yogī* would flow his awareness into the nerve system of the body, revitalizing it with the spark of his will and consciously bring it back to life. ¶He would face the problem of amalgamating himself with the memory cell patterns still resident within the mature brain. Affectionate detachment would have to be practiced as he adjusted to his new family and friends who wouldn't feel as close to him anymore. They would sense that he had changed, that he was somehow different, but would not understand why. Once his mission in that body had been completed, he could leave that body consciously, provided he had not created too much *karma* for its subconscious while inhabiting it. All such *karma* would then have to be dissolved before dropping off the body. This practice is exercised only by souls who have sufficient mastery of the inner forces to leave consciously through the *ājñā chakra* at death. Those who leave through that force center unconsciously would then reincarnate as an infant. ¶A related law, for those far advanced inwardly, states that the reincarnation process can begin before actual death takes place. While still maintaining a body on this planet and knowing that death is imminent, the inner bodies begin their transition into a new body at

the time of conception. After a three-month period, the first signs of life appear and the advanced being enters the newly forming physical body. During the nine-month gestation cycle, the waning physical body is in the slow process of death, and exactly at the time of birth, the death finally comes. ¶ If evolution continues on the astral and other inner planes, and is in some ways more advanced in these realms, then do we need a physical body at all to unfold spiritually? Is it perhaps an unnecessary burden of flesh? According to classical *yoga* precepts, you must have a physical body in order to attain *nirvikalpa samādhi*—the highest realization of God, the Absolute. This is due to the fact that on the refined inner planes only three or four of the higher *chakras* are activated; the others are dormant. For *nirvikalpa samādhi*, all seven *chakras*, as well as the three major energy currents, have to be functioning to sustain enough *kuṇḍalinī* force to burst through to the Self. The very same instinctive forces and fluids which generate material involvement, uncomplimentary *karma* and the body itself, when transmuted, are the impetus that propels awareness beyond the ramification of mind into the timeless, spaceless, formless Truth—Śiva.

SUNDAY

To Die

Consciously

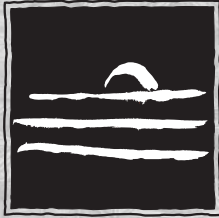
If you were to die at this very moment, where would what you call *you* go? Where would your awareness be drawn? The laws of death and reincarnation tell us that your awareness would go into

various refined force fields of the mind, similar to some states of sleep, according to where you are in the mind

at the time of death. By a similar law on this plane, when a wealthy executive and a mendicant enter an unfamiliar town, one finds himself lodged at the finest hotel among other businessmen of his caliber, and the other is drawn of necessity to the slums. The entire process of reincarnation is the inner play of magnetic force fields. ¶ Should you reincarnate now, you would undoubtedly enter a force field which would approximate where you are inside yourself, unless, of course, you had broken through barriers into a force field different from the one in which you are now living. In other words, to use an analogy that can also be applied to states of instinctive, intellectual and superconscious awareness, if you were living in America, but had your mind centered in the force field called France, owned things imported from France and spoke fluent French, you would undoubtedly reincarnate in France and act out that drama to its conclusion. ¶ Reincarnation and *karma* in its cause-and-effect form are practically one and the same thing, for they both have to do with the *prāṇic* forces and these bodies of the external mind. The *sannyāsin's* quest is Self Realization. To make that realization a reality, he always has to be conscious consciously of working out these other areas. Why? Because the ignorance of these areas holds and confuses awareness, preventing him from being in inner states long enough to attain the ultimate goal of *nirvikalpa samādhi*. ¶ Little by little, as he goes on in his esoteric understanding of these mechanics, he unwinds and reeducates his subconscious. He conquers the various planes by cognizing their function and under-

standing their relation one to another. This knowledge allows him to become consciously superconscious all the time. He has sufficient power to move the energies and awareness out of the physical, intellectual and astral bodies into *sushumṇā*. Then the *kuṇḍalinī* force, that vapor-like life force, merges into its own essence. ¶It is therefore the great aim of the aspirant on the path of enlightenment to live a well-ordered life and control the forces of the mind that propel him into cycles of life and death. He must strive to gain a fundamental knowing of the life-death-reincarnation processes, and to be able at the point of death to leave the body consciously, as a matter of choice, depending upon the consciousness leading to the moment of transition. He must throw off the false identification with this body or that personality and see himself as the ageless soul that has taken many, many births, of which this is only one, see deeper still into the total unreality of life and death, which only exist in their seeming in the outer layers of consciousness, for he is the immortal one who is never born and can never die.

Mṛityur Maraṇam cha
मृत्युर्मरणं च



Death and Dying

Blessed indeed are those who die. If in death they unite as one with Śiva, then, even dead, they are alive. They who are dead to the bonds of *karma*, *māyā* and *āṇava* are the true *siddhas*, who merge into Śiva.

Tirumantiram 1907

MONDAY
Preparations
For Transition

People ask, “What should a person do to prepare to die?” Everyone is prepared to die, and whether it happens suddenly or slowly, intuitively each individual knows exactly what he is experiencing and about to experience. Death, like birth, has been repeated so many times that it is no mystery to the soul. The only problem comes with conflicting beliefs, which produce fear and anxiety about death. This temporary ignorance soon subsides when the failing forces of the physical body reach a certain level. At this point, the superconscious intelligence, the soul itself, is there. We can compare this to restless sleep and deep sleep. ¶When one knows he is going to depart the physical body, he should first let everybody know that he knows and give relatives security by explaining to them that soon they won’t be seeing him in a physical body anymore. He should consciously go over his wealth, his properties, be the executor of his own will. From the Hindu point of view, the knowledge of one’s imminent departure begins the *sannyāsa āśrama* for the individual. In this *āśrama*, the devotee traditionally divests himself of all material belongings, effecting a conscious death before the actual death. He is the executor of his own will, taking care of everybody and not leaving these things to others to deal with after his passing. ¶After everything is settled, all personal possessions disposed of, then he begins meditation and awaits the fruitful hour, trying to exit through the highest *chakra* of the attainment of this life. Each *chakra* is a door through which we can

depart. The dying should always remember that the place where one will reincarnate is the place that he is thinking about prior to death. So, choose your desires wisely. The last thoughts just before death are the most powerful thoughts in creating the next life. One must also realize that if he and others are aware that he will soon depart, others in the inner worlds also realize he will soon be making his transition and are busy making adjustments and preparations for his arrival. ¶With a sudden death—uncalled for, unbidden and unexpected—a totally different sequence of events occurs. There is no settlement of affairs, and the chaotic situation, emotional and otherwise, persists in the inner worlds and even into the next life. Property is not distributed, and nothing is settled. Negative *karmas* and positive *karmas* are all cut short. The situation can be summed up in one word, *unfulfillment*. Once in the inner world, the deceased feels this unfulfillment and is restless and anxious to get back. He is in a place he did not intend to be, and does not want to stay. So, in the inner world he is with a whole group of those who almost immediately reenter the flesh, for he is too agitated to stay very long on the inner planes. It's like an emergency ward or intensive care unit. ¶Chances are, it would be difficult for such a soul to get a birth. Perhaps there would be an abortion or miscarriage a couple of times before there was a successful birth. These are the disturbed children we see, emotionally distraught, needing special care. They cry a lot. Some of the damage that occurred in the previous birth, some dramatic event experienced in the past life, perhaps the cause of death

itself, may even show up in this life as a birthmark. ¶In preparation for death, one can soften the *karmas* of future births by making amends with others, settling scores, doing everything to tie up loose ends, seeking the forgiveness of those harmed, to get the mental-emotional matters of this life all worked out. ¶In some cases, this process may prolong life, for with the release of old tensions and conflicts there comes a new freedom which may reflect even in the health of the body. Here one's *guru* and community elders would advise the appropriate course of action, discerning whether *dharma* will be best fulfilled by returning to worldly responsibilities or, as a mendicant, distributing all worldly possessions and leaving the community, going off to Varanasi or some other holy place and awaiting the fruitful moment. For one with no family ties, it would be creating an unnecessary *karma* to return, taking everything back that one gave away and then continue on as before. If people he knew visit him at this time, he should not know them. He is like a *sannyāsin*, free to give of his wisdom. His eyes see them; his mind does not. This traditional practice is for the attainment of *moksha*, or an exceptional birth of one's own choosing as a herald of *dharma*.

TUESDAY

Sudden Death, Boon or Bane?

As the physical forces wane, whether at sudden death or a lingering death, the process is the same. All the gross and subtle energy goes into the mental and emotional astral body. In the case of a sudden death, the emotions involved are horrendous. In the case of a lingering death, the increasing mental abilities

and strength of thought is equally so. As we know, intense emotion manifests intense emotion, and intense thoughts manifest intense thoughts. These intensities would not remanifest until entering a flesh body again. This is why it was previously explained that sudden death—with its intense emotion, the intellect not having been prepared for it—would produce difficulties in getting born and in the first few years of getting raised, leading to miscarriage and abortion and later child abuse. All these experiences are a continuation of the emotional upheaval that happened at the sudden departure. The emotional upheaval of the person is compounded by the emotional upheaval of the friends, family and business associates when they finally hear of the sudden departure. Similarly, when that person reincarnates, the family and friends and business associates are aware of the special needs of the child, anticipating the crying and emotional distress, which eventually subsides. ¶ However, if the person was prepared for death, no matter when it might arrive, sudden or otherwise, his mental and emotional astral body would have already been well schooled in readiness. Sudden death to such a soul is a boon and a blessing. The next birth would be welcoming and easy, one wherein he would be well cared for and educated by loving parents. ¶ Nevertheless, the thought force of the departing person is very strong, as his energy transmutes into the mental body. That's why nobody wants the departing person to hate them or curse them, because the thought force is so strong. Even after he has departed, that same thought force will radiate many blessings or their opposite

on the family or individuals. In the case of blessings, this is the basis of ancestor worship. Ancestors are even more immediate than the Gods, so to speak. They will help you hurt somebody, or to help somebody, depending on who they are. Ancestors are even more accessible than the Gods, because you don't have to be religious to contact them. ¶People wonder whether death is a painful process, such as in the case of cancer victims. Cancer, which produces a lot of pain, is a process of life which results in death, but death itself is not painful. Death itself is blissful. You don't need any counseling. You intuitively know what's going to happen. Death is like a meditation, a *samādhi*. That's why it's called *mahā* (great) *samādhi*. A Hindu is prepared from childhood for that *mahāsamādhi*. Remember, pain is not part of the process of death. That is the process of life, which results in death. ¶When somebody is about to have a tremendous accident and, for example, sees his car is going to run into a truck or his plane is going to crash, he experiences no pain whatsoever, as he dies before he dies.

WEDNESDAY

Disrupting Death's Timing

People always lament when someone dies quickly, saying, "His life was cut short so suddenly." But with such a death there is no pain, as the soul knows it's coming. It's really so much better than a slow, lingering death. The problem comes when doctors bring the dying back. Then a lot of pain is experienced. The doctors should let them die. ¶To make heroic medical attempts that interfere with the process of the patient's departure is a grave responsibility, similar to

not letting a traveler board a plane flight he has a reservation for, to keep him stranded in the airport with a profusion of tears and useless conversation. Prolonging the life of the individual body must be done by the individual himself. He needs no helping hands. Medical assistance, yes, is needed to cauterize wounds, give an injection of penicillin and provide the numerous helpful things that are available. But to prolong life in the debilitated physical body past the point that the natural will of the person has sustained is to incarcerate, to jail, to place that person in prison. The prison is the hospital. Prison is the sanitarium. The guards are the life-support machines and the tranquilizing drugs. Cellmates are others who have been imprisoned by well-meaning professionals who make their living from prolonging the flickering life in the physical body. The misery of the friends, relatives, business associates and the soul itself accumulates and is shared by all connected to this bitter experience to be reexperienced in another time, perhaps another lifetime, by those who have taken on the grave responsibility of delaying a person's natural time of departure. ¶ *Āyurvedic* medicine seeks to keep a person healthy and strong, but not to interfere with the process of death. Kandiah Chettiar, one of the foremost devotees of Satguru Yogaswami, explained to me fifty years ago that even to take the pulse of a dying person is considered a sin, inhibiting the dying process. In summary, we can see that the experience of dying and death is as natural as birth and life. There is little mystery there to be understood. ¶ To perpetuate life, you perpetuate will, desire and the fruition

of desire. The constant performing of this function brings the actinic energies of the soul body into physical bodies. To give up one's own personal desires is the first desire to perpetuate. Then to help others to fulfill their highest aspirations is the next challenge. Then to seek for ultimate attainment and fulfill that lingering desire takes a tremendous will. Then to lay a foundation for the betterment of peoples everywhere, in spreading the Sanātana Dharma to those open and ready to receive it and make it available to those who are not, is the ultimate challenge. This perpetuates life within the physical body, which of itself renews itself every seven years.

THURSDAY

Exit via the Highest Chakra

Many have asked what is meant by leaving through a certain *chakra* at the point of death? Let's take an example of a person of whom people say, "His mind is in his butt." They mean his awareness is down at the bottom, so to speak. He is ogling pornography. He's swearing, angry, self-indulgent all the time. That is the world he would go into if he died in this state of mind, the lower world of selfish self-gratification, where lust is not lust, but a way of life, for nothing else is happening but that—just lust, twenty-four hours a day. Or it is sometimes said, "She is such a motherly woman. She is all heart, really a sensitive lady." That is where she would go at the moment of death—out through the throat *chakra*, the universal love *chakra*, and experience a heaven world beyond expectations, beyond descriptions of any kind. Just as a traveling businessman would go to a hotel

where others have come for similar purposes, she would go to a world where everybody is a heart person. That is why you cannot spiritually unfold so much in the inner world, because everybody is the same in each stratum of consciousness. You would have to study and do disciplines to get into the next *chakras*, but you would never have the lower ones to contend with if you had not been in the lower ones during your physical life. ¶If somebody dies in the states of anger and fear, he goes into the lower worlds of those states of consciousness. And in that realm there would be hundreds of thousands of people in that same state of consciousness. Whatever is in the mind at that moment—a country, a family, community—will have a strong impact on where he goes in the inner world, and on the nature of future *saṁskāras*. The thoughts at death are the next *saṁskāras* of the astral body. Even if you have the thought, “When you’re dead, you’re dead,” your astral body might just float over your physical body and be “dead.” Someone would have to revive you and explain to you that you are in your astral body and are as alive as you ever were, but not physically. ¶At death, you leave through a nerve ganglia of consciousness, a *chakra*. Most people live in about three *chakras*, and they see-saw back and forth among those states of mind. Each one is a window, and at death it becomes a portal, a doorway. So, it is the state of mind at death that gets you into one *loka* or another within the Śivaloka, Devaloka, Pretaloka or Narakaloka. ¶The ideal is to leave through the top of the head, through the door of Brahman, to get into the Brahmalo-

and not have to come back. The dying person should at the time of transition concentrate awareness at the top of his head and willfully draw up into it all the energies from the left and right legs and arms, one after another, then the energy within the entire torso, and all the energies within the spine, from the *mūlādhāra chakra* up into the *ājñā* and *sahasrāra*. With all the energies gathered at the top of his head, he will leave through the highest *chakra* he experienced this lifetime. This would put him in a great place in the inner world. ¶ Maybe at age eighteen he reached the *viśuddha chakra* for a very short time. He will revive that experience just before death as he is going through the playback of his life, and he will go out through that *chakra*. But if he is thinking about lower things, he will go out through the lower *chakras*. If he goes out through a lower *chakra*, or portal, he can in the inner world eventually work his way back to the *viśuddha chakra*, with a lot of help from the *devonic* guides and their advisors, but he cannot go beyond it until he gets a new physical body. ¶ The portal is where the physical eyes hook into or go into. Through that portal you go into that world. This is why a departing person, in the spirit of *kaivalya*, perfect detachment or aloneness, gazes at pictures of God, Gods and *guru*, and sings or listens to hymns sung by loved ones, so that the experience of death truly does take him to the highest plane he experienced in this birth, or even higher if he experienced a higher state in a previous birth. ¶ The astral body carries the *chakras*. The *chakras* are in the astral body. The astral body lives in the physical body, and when death

comes, it is going to live without the physical body. The same *chakras* are within it. At the moment of death, you have the opportunity to stabilize yourself in the highest *chakra* you have experienced in this life.

FRIDAY

An Event Worth Celebrating

The tunnel of light that is experienced by so many people at the point of death is the portal they are going through, the window, the *chakra*. It is a tunnel, and it has distance, because it takes time, consciousness, to go from one end to the other. Passing through the tunnel is leaving this world and going into another. You do that in meditation, too. You leave the light of the physical plane and go into the light in the inner world. Death takes place in a short period, but is a foreboding affair to those who have never meditated. But dying is not such a dramatic experience really. Every night you “die” and leave your physical body. It is very similar. Every night mystics leave their physical body, go and meet and converse with other mystics on the inner planes. That’s why they know each other when they meet on the physical plane. *Samādhi*, the exalted meditative state, which literally means “holding together completely,” is also a word used to describe dying. Why is that? Because deep contemplation is similar to a death experience; only the silver cord is not separated. This cord is an astral-*prānic* thread that connects the astral body through the navel to the physical body. It is a little like an umbilical cord. The only full separation comes when the cord is cut at *mahāsamādhi*, the true death of the physical body. People die all the time, but

if the cord is not broken, they come back. You die all the time. The cord being broken makes for a twenty-four-hour consciousness in the inner world, as compared to a sixteen-hour consciousness in the physical world. ¶ Many people wish that they were dead and give up on life, look at death as an escape rather than a fulfillment. These cumulative thoughts and desires can create the near-death experience. The welcoming *devonic* helpers of Lord Yama, the benevolent God of the death experience, don't pay any attention, because they know the person is not going to die. The person thinks he is going to die, but they know he is not. He has just conjured it up. Just like a conjured illness. ¶ If a person knows he is terminally ill, that knowledge is a blessing, for he can prepare. He should not hesitate to tell his relatives he is going to die, and that is a wonderful blessing for them, as they can prepare for his great departure. Now all know he has finally arrived at the end of his *prārab-dha karmas* and is going to fly. In turn, family and friends should release him, be happy—he is going to be happy with no physical body—for they know they will be as close to him in his astral and soul body as they were in his physical body. They will visit him every night when they sleep, in the inner worlds, and learn many things from him as to how to prepare for their own great departure, be it sudden or prolonged. Don't cry; you will make him unhappy. You should be happy for him, because he is going to be happy. It is not a sad occasion. For Hindus, death is a most exalted state, an incredible moment that you spend your whole life preparing for. Birth is the unhappy occasion. Death

should be a big party. He has just gone through his day of Brahma. ¶The sadness at death comes from Western attitudes. Western thought has to be reversed. Here a child comes into birth. It is sad, because he was all right before he was born. Now his *prārabdha karmas* are going to start to explode. He has to deal with his past, which he did not have to deal with in the Devaloka. He has a chance to make new *karmas*. The time of birth is the grave time. When he dies, that means that section of the *jyotisha* is finished and he can go and have a great rest and be with intelligent people. It is great inside there and difficult out here. ¶When people tell me they or a loved one have cancer, AIDS or some other incurable disease, my counsel is this. Everyone dies, but it is a blessing to know when you are going to die, because then you can prepare for it, make a decision whether you are going to be reborn, do intense *sādhanas*, make preparations. Eastern men don't fight terminal cancer or AIDS. They go to an astrologer or palmist, ascertain their time of death, then prepare themselves. It's really a blessing. It's best not to fight it or "cure it," since you are interrupting your timing. Just let it happen. Heed the wisdom of the *Vedas*, "When a person comes to weakness, be it through old age or disease, he frees himself from these limbs just as a mango, a fig or a berry releases itself from its stalk." ¶Hindus go to special sacred places to die, because that's where holy people live, in that part of the astral plane. That place has access to other planets, or to the moon. A lot of people go to the moon when they die and live there. Jews who die go to Israel. That's their holy land. You can

get caught in the astral plane or some *bardo* mind-flow that would contain you for a long time, and then get a bad birth if you do not go to a special place to die. So, you want at least to die near a temple. A temple is connected to the three worlds. We brought India to the West with our temples and by encouraging more to be built. These days, Indian Hindus don't mind dying in the West since all the temples are here. They love all the temples they have built, especially our Kadavul Temple, for it feels so sacred to them. All of the temples in the West are connected to other temples in Sri Lanka and India.

SATURDAY
Death Rites
And Rituals

A lot of people who are about to die do not believe in life after death, so they remain hovering over their physical body when it is lifeless. Astral-plane helpers have to come and “wake them up” and tell them that their physical body is dead and explain that they are all right and are alive in their astral body. It is often not an easy process getting them readjusted. ¶Is there really a Lord Yama, a Lord of Death, devotees often wonder? The answer is yes, not only He, but there are a lot of Lord Yamas, a wide group of well-trained helpers. These tireless inner-plane attendants work, as part of the Yama group, with the doctors and nurses who are involved with terminal cases, those who assist in the transition process, those who take care of disposing of bodies. These are the Yama helpers in the physical world. Executioners, murderers and terrorists are a less noble part of the Yama group. Anyone, other than family and close friends

and religious helpers, who is involved in the transitional process two weeks before and after death is part of the Yama group, including ambulance drivers, hospice staff, nurses, morticians, medics, autopsy staff, insurance agents, grave diggers, wood cutters who prepare fuel for funeral pyres, body baggers and coffin makers. Medical doctors and nurses who secretly err in their practice, after dying, join Lord Yama's recruits in the inner world as *prāyascitta* to mitigate the *karma* they created. ¶I am speaking especially about modern doctors who operate too freely, even when sometimes it may not be necessary. It is not uncommon that the patient dies on the operating table due to a known mistake on the surgeon's part. Yet, somehow or other, physicians are regarded by the public as monarchs, Gods, above the law. But the *karma* relating to manslaughter nevertheless is constant and unfailingly takes effect in this life or another. A common civilian, or the same doctor, running down a pedestrian would naturally be prosecuted to the full extent of the law, fined and maybe jailed. But the secret manslaughters are never admitted, never accounted for; no one is held accountable—except that the unrelenting law of *karma* reigns as supreme judge and jury. ¶There is an entire industry that lives on the fact of death. If a doctor says, "Two weeks to live," then the inner-plane Yamas are alerted and step in. Lord Yama is Lord Restraint, restraining life and getting it started again on the other side. Then the Yama workers, who are like nurses, say, "You are Catholic; you go to Rome. You are Jewish; you go to Jerusalem. You are Muslim; you go to Mecca. You

are Hindu; you go to Varanasi,” and so forth. In the lower astral it’s all segregated. In the higher worlds it is all oneness. ¶In preparing the body for cremation, embalming should not be done. It is painful to the astral body to have the physical body cut or disturbed seriously within seventy-two hours after death. The soul can see and feel this, and it detains him from going on. As soon as you tamper with his physical body, he gets attached, becomes aware that he has two bodies, and this becomes a problem. Ideally, when you die, your physical body goes up in flames, and immediately you know it’s gone. You now know that the astral body is your body, and you can effortlessly release the physical body. But if you keep the old body around, then you keep the person around, and he is aware that he has two bodies. He becomes earthbound, tied into the Pretaloka, and confused. ¶Embalming preserves the physical vehicle. For a *jīvanmukta*, he might want to leave, but some people might want to keep him around for a while for their own benefit. The best way for him is to go off into the hills, to die in the forests where no one knows and none of these questions arise. More than many great *sādhus* have done this and do this to this day. For my *satguru*, Siva Yogaswami, they did the right thing by cremating him; they released him and did not try to tie him to the Earth. To come and go from the Śivaloka to the Pretaloka is his choice and his alone. To me, embalming or entombing is a divisive way to hold on to the holy man, and I feel it will draw him back into birth. True, in our scriptures it is recommended that the body of a perfectly liberated saint not be cremated but

interred instead in a salt-filled crypt. This may be done so that devotees can continue to be served, but in our lineage it is not the way. In our tradition, the body of the departed is cremated within twenty-four hours. This purifies the physical elements and releases the deceased to the inner worlds. In contrast, the Egyptians wanted their Pharaoh to be born again as a king. They didn't want a young soul to be their king. So all their preparations helped him to be born into the royal family. The Hawaiians did the same thing, royalty perpetuating royalty.

SUNDAY

Beyond Liberation

In the later stages of evolution, physical life can be so joyous that one might ask, "Why wish for liberation?" But not wanting to be reborn is not the goal.

Obtaining the stability of mind and spirit so that you can function even on the physical plane better, without the necessity of having to do so, is a better goal. After *mukti*, liberation, one still has responsibilities to complete certain *karmic* patterns. Even the *sapta ṛishis*, seven sages, have their offices to perform in guiding the Sanātana Dharma, though they do not have to be reborn in a physical body to do their job. *Mukti* does not call an end to intelligence, does not call an end to duty. *Mukti* calls an end to the necessity for a physical birth. It's like death—you don't want to die, but you do anyway. When on the inner plane, you don't want to be reborn, but you are anyway. You have to do these things. The ideal is to live out one's Earthly life to its full extent, not to shorten it in any way, for during the elderly years, after ninety and the twenty

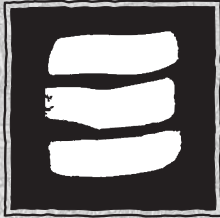
or thirty years thereafter, the *sañchita karmas* in the great vault which are waiting to come up in another life begin to unfold to be lived through and resolved in this one. By no means should suicide ever be considered, for it cuts short all *karmic* developments of the current life and may require additional births to work through the lowest possible experiences still held in the great *sañchita* vault. Many incarnations may elapse after an untimely self-inflicted death before the soul returns back to the same evolutionary point at which the suicide was committed. Suicide is no escape. It only prolongs the journey. ¶The goal is realization of Paraśiva as the ultimate personal attainment. This is *nirvikalpa samādhi*. *Savikalpa* is the by-product of this. Even having had this experience, if the *sādhana* and *tapas* and discipline are not maintained, *mukti*, liberation, will not be the product of effort. The knowledge of Paraśiva, in its total impact, must impact every area of mind, every nook and cranny of the mind. Therefore, the goal is realization; and liberation from rebirth is the by-product of that essential goal. If a soul becomes realized but still has the desire to come back to finish something, he will come back partially enlightened. Hinduism will be an open book to him, and he will understand all of the basic truths and be able to explain it all naturally. He will find his enlightenment later in life and go on, having experienced what he had to. ¶There is a choice one makes upon becoming illumined and understanding the whole process—whether to be a *bodhisattva* or an *arahat*, an *upadeśī* or a *nirvāṇī*. This is based on a belief and an attitude in the heart and

soul. A *nirvāṇī* says, “I’ll move on and wait for everyone to catch up with me.” An *upadeśī* says, “I’ll help everyone on the path.” Occasionally an *upadeśī* has tasks to fulfill, but they are self-assigned, for this is a personal choice. Likewise, a *nirvāṇī* will work and make a great attainment. Then he will spin out his own *karmas* and make his transition. The *upadeśī* will make his attainment and then work with his own *karmas* slowly while helping others along the path. Who is to say which is the best choice? It’s a totally individual matter. I personally am an *upadeśī*. No detail is too small for me to handle. A *nirvāṇī* would not take that attitude. ¶ In the inner worlds, one who has transcended the need for a physical birth is there like he is here. He has a twenty-four-hour consciousness. He does not have to eat unless he wants to, and he doesn’t have to sleep, so he has a total continuity of consciousness. He has Paraśiva at will and is all-pervasive all of the time. He does have duties. He does relate to brother souls in the same stratum, and he does evolve, continuing in evolution from *chakra* to *chakra* to *chakra*, for there are *chakras*, or *nāḍīs*, above the *sahasrāra* for which he does not need a physical body. This, again, is for the *upadeśī*. The *nirvāṇī* would not turn back, but proceed onward. The first realization of Paraśiva, the impact of the aftermath, allows you the decision to choose between the dispassion of the *nirvāṇī* and the compassion of the *upadeśī*. ¶ The Śaiva Siddhānta perspective is that Śiva’s wonderful universe of form is perfect at every point of time, complete and totally just, and every soul, in all stages of evolution, is an intrinsic part of it, even Śiva

Himself. The true *mukti* of everyone and of the universe itself would be at *mahāpralaya*; but meanwhile, *mukti* is defined in our vocabulary as freedom from rebirth in a physical body. But many other bodies drop off, too. There are more intelligences to come into, great creations of form. Upon death, even a Self-Realized soul does not necessarily “disappear” into nothingness or Allness. The absolute goal, Paraśiva—timeless, formless and causeless—is a release, but not an end. There is, of course, an end, which we call *viśvagrāsa*. This is total merger, a union with That from which the soul never returns—*jīva* became Śiva. So, whatever inner body the *jīvanmukta* is functioning in, in the thereafter, he has no need for Self Realization, the seal has already been broken and never mends. So, claiming “I am That, I am”—That being the Absolute, Paraśiva—is the total stabilizing one-ment of all the *māyās* of creation, preservation and destruction of the individual mind, as well as the mind of reality it goes through.

Mānava Mātrakṛite Antima Siddhāntāḥ

मानव मात्रकृते अन्तिम सिद्धान्ताः



The Final Conclusions For All Mankind

I freed myself from the fetters the Creator bound me with. I learned the way of reaching Śiva. I destroyed my *karmas* with the sharp sword of realization and stood ego-lost. And now I hasten toward the city of God.

Tirumantiram 2962

MONDAY
Wisdom of
The Ages

Religion as it is known today is an offshoot of various ethnic groups that gathered together in the twilight of human history and forged systems of law, worship, culture and belief. The unique circumstances of geography, language, communications and race isolated one group from another, and differences were born and preserved: differences of belief and custom. As these small communities varied, so did the systems which satisfied each one. From their inception they absorbed the singular thought patterns postulated by their culture and their leaders, and these distinctions were perpetuated from father to son, from *guru* to disciple, from one generation to the next. The leader was the shaman, the priest, the *āchārya*, the philosopher-king. He was well versed in religious matters among them and naturally became the authority, the tribal priest. Religion in the early days was tribal, for man's early experience was tribal. Being tribal, religion was political. The political character has been preserved, as we find it today, in the world's many religions, which are, for the most part, the common beliefs of the various races and/or nations on the Earth. ¶Five, ten thousand years ago in the Himalayas and across to the Indus Valley, ancient *rishis* and sages studied and meditated upon the eternal truths passed down to them and in conclaves jointly concurred as to the results of their personal findings on the inward path. Following an already ancient tradition, they were sent on missions—to Kashmir, China, Greece, Egypt, Arabia, Mesopotamia, South India,

Southeast Asia and to every traversable part of the world—with the same message, digested and concise, given out with the power and force of their personal realizations of the final conclusions. ¶ Today I am going to speak about Hinduism and the conclusions drawn by its early sages and saints as to the orderly evolution of man's soul and the ultimate spiritual goal of that evolution, the culmination of the countless accumulated passages of the soul on its journey to Truth. The ancient ones, the *ṛishis* and sages who formulated these final conclusions, recorded them as scriptures which still exist today. They were not interested in preserving a sectarian view of religion. Rather, they laid down their conclusions for all mankind. They had realized God within themselves, and from that inner realization they spoke out with boundless humility and undeniable authority. These teachings were recorded in the early *Vedas*. They blossomed in the *Upanishads*. They were detailed in the *Āgamas*. They came to be known as the Sanātana Dharma, the Eternal Path. ¶ According to ancient Hinduism, all is Śiva, all is God. God is both immanent and transcendent, both *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*, with and without form. There is but one God. He manifests variously as the formless and Absolute Reality, as the rarefied form of Pure Consciousness, Satchidānanda, Pure Energy or Light flowing through all existence, and as the personal Lord and Creator, the Primal Soul. As the Immanent Lord, Śiva created the soul, and the world of form and experience, that it might evolve toward and merge with the Absolute. ¶ The *Śvetāśvatara Upanishad* (2.16; 3.1-2 UPP, p. 121) speaks of God as both

immanent and transcendent, and I would like to quote for you from it. “He is the one God, present in the North, the East, the South and the West. He is the Creator. He enters into all wombs. He alone is now born as all beings, and he alone is to be born as all beings in the future. He is within all persons as the Inner Self, facing in all directions. The One Absolute, impersonal Existence, together with His inscrutable *māyā*, appears as the Divine Lord, the personal God, endowed with manifold glories. By His Divine power He holds dominion over all the worlds. At the periods of Creation and Dissolution of the universe, He alone exists. Those who realize Him become immortal. The Lord is One without a second. Within man He dwells, and within all other beings. He projects the universe, maintains it, and withdraws it into Himself.” Elsewhere the *Śvetāśvatara Upanishad* (3.8-9 VE, p. 734) speaks of God as the Primal Soul, “I have come to know that mighty Person, golden like the sun, beyond all darkness. By knowing Him, a man transcends death; there is no other path for reaching that goal. Higher than Him is nothing whatever; than Him nothing smaller, than Him nothing greater. He stands like a tree rooted in heaven, the One, the Person, filling this whole world.” And the *Muṇḍaka Upanishad* (2.1.2 MC, p. 57) speaks of God as the unmanifest, *Nirguṇa Brahman*: “Self-resplendent, formless, unoriginated and pure, that all-pervading Being is both within and without, anterior both to life and mind. He transcends even the transcendent, unmanifest, causal state of the universe.”

TUESDAY

**Impetuous,
Impatient**

The final goal of human life is realization and liberation—realization of the Absolute, Unmanifest, Paraśiva, Nirguṇa Brahman, and liberation from birth. This realization cannot be brought about solely by an effort of the mind, by any discipline or method. *Sādhana* and *tapas* and *bhakti* are necessary for purifying the mind and body in preparation for God Realization, but it is by the grace of the *satguru* that it is attained. ¶The North American Hindu—and in these words we include the Indian Hindu who lives in America, whether in the first generation, the second, the third or the fourth—often wants to begin at the end of the path rather than at the beginning. There is a distinct lack of patience on this side of the planet. Our desire, our lack of knowledge which breeds undue desire, impels us beyond our abilities and before our time. We want everything right now. We are impatient and perhaps unwilling to wait for the natural fulfillment of desire, for the natural unfoldment of the soul. We seek to force it, to strive for greater attainments than we are prepared to sustain. We want illumination, and we want it now. But results cannot be obtained unless we have the patience to begin at the beginning and to follow through systematically. We must take one step and then another. There are no shortcuts to enlightenment, but there are detours. Impatience with the natural process is one of them. ¶If you find a green melon in an open field, will it help to expose it to more sun? To more heat? Will it ripen faster and taste sweeter?

No, it will not. It ripens from the inside out. The process cannot be forced. The melon will grow ripe without intervention. Similarly, the soul will mature in its time. I am not saying that you should not strive, should not make even great inner efforts. I am saying that impatient striving, the kind of striving that puts aside all common sense and says “I am going to get realization no matter what” is itself an obstacle to that realization which is not a something to get. Hindus in the West have much to learn from Hindus in the East when it comes to contentment with their *karma* and *dharma*. We must work to perfect an inner serenity that can accept spending a lifetime or several lifetimes in search of Truth, that can accept that some of us are by our nature and unfoldment better suited to service and devotion, and others to *yoga* and the various *sādhanas*. This is a far more enlightened perspective than the Western notion which subtly maintains that there is but a single life in which all the final goals must be reached. ¶The eternal path, the Sanātana Dharma, has been well charted by the great illumined minds, developed minds, spiritually unfolded minds, realized minds on this planet. No one can skip, avoid, evade or abstain from any part of that path. As Euclid could find for his impatient crowned pupil no special “royal road” to geometry or philosophy, so there is no privileged “royal road” to spiritual illumination. Similarly, a marathon runner cannot begin the race twenty miles from the starting point. A mountain climber cannot refuse to climb the lower, perhaps less challenging, cliffs. The natural laws known to all men do not allow

it. The natural law, known to himself, his own conscience, does not allow it. It is the same on the spiritual path. ¶The eternal spiritual path, the way of God, is broad. It accepts all and rejects none. No matter where a seeker is in his inner development, the eternal path embraces and encourages him. If he is a simple man, the path for him is simple, unsophisticated, answering the needs of his everyday life, yet opening him to more and more subtle ways of worship and living. If he is an advanced soul, a mature soul, he will find within Hinduism the San Mārga, the pure path to the Absolute.

WEDNESDAY
The Process
Of Evolution

When a beginning devotee comes to the temple to worship Śiva, he sees Śiva as a man, a person, not unlike himself, yet more than a man, for He is a God, the God of Gods, so powerful, so aware and complete within Himself that He is the center of endless universes. In coming to worship Śiva, this devotee prostrates himself before the Deity just as if he were in the presence of the grandest potentate or majesty imaginable. Śiva is that to him. We know how wonderful it can be to approach a distinguished and honored personage. It makes us feel special. It brings out the best within us. The same thing happens to this man. He feels himself in the presence of the Supreme Lord, and he brings the best of himself to the temple. ¶If he has a problem, if something is not going well in his family or in his business, he will come to the temple with special offerings. The priest takes that offering into the inner sanctum for the *pūjā*. During the *pūjā* it is

blessed and then some of it is returned to the worshiper to take back to his home, carrying the vibration of the temple into his everyday life. During *pūjā* he will concentrate his efforts on opening himself to the divine influence of Lord Śiva. And as he leaves the temple, he will look for a break in the problem, for a new perspective to arise as a result of his worship in the temple. He will look for some telling signs from his environment—the way the lizard chirps, how many crows come down, and even what kind of people walk by his house. Perhaps the solution to his problem is simply a new way of seeing it, a different perspective that gives him the insight to handle the matter, or there may be a change in his external circumstances. ¶As this man worships, he grows more and more devoted, becomes capable of a profound understanding of the rituals and practices of his early *samskāras*. From the practice of putting holy ash on his forehead and the feeling that goes through his nervous system whenever he does that, he begins to discover sound reasons for doing it, reasons he can confidently tell his children. His worship leads him little by little into new realms of consciousness. ¶Another man, more refined and awakened, may have worshiped during the exact same *pūjā*. This devotee came to worship the same Deity, but to him it was not only an ethereal being external to himself. He perceived it also as an essence pervading the universe, a oneness of pure consciousness flowing through all form, and he worshiped that Satchidānanda in the sanctum and equally within himself. As the energies of the *pūjā* reached their crescendo, he could feel that pure essence

of consciousness as himself. After the *pūjā*, he went to a secluded corner of the temple, there to meditate, to bask in the *kuṇḍalīnī* energy awakened in him through his temple worship until he knew himself as one with that vast sea of pure life energy and light. He went home feeling peaceful and calm and just at one with everyone and everything that came along in his life. He has no awareness of time and just lives fully in the intensity of the moment. When he applies holy ash at the temple or in his shrine room at home before he sits down to meditate, he sees it as the ash of those forces which hold him in individual consciousness—the forces of *karma* and ego and desire. He applies the ash so that it makes three distinct lines across his forehead. They are lines to impress him with the need to keep these three forces subdued in his life. ¶ This man lives in tune with the worship of Lord Śiva and the *darshan* he receives, and opens up within himself from that worship. Everything in his life flows smoothly and harmoniously. He is in touch with a divine voice within himself and he follows it as his own will. His life is simple. And he feels himself complete. Neither fretting over the past nor worrying about the future, he lives totally in the present. His evolution is steady and graceful. He grows greater in his capacity to hold those moments of *darshan* he feels until he carries that *darshan* steadily through every aspect of his life. That is his only experience. He is a witness to what goes on around him—doing it perfectly but detached from the doing. He sees light within his head when he meditates. And that grows until he knows that the light is more real

than anything he considers himself. That way his unfoldment continues. He comes to be purer and purer, more and more aware of the real. ¶A third man, living under strict vows and the guidance of his *satguru*, having long ago perfected the harmony and discipline that allowed him to see himself as the Pure Consciousness within all beings, is immersed within states of contemplation, whether in a mountain cave or before a temple sanctum. His goal is to find the source of that energy, and the source of that source, and the source of that, until he realizes That, Paraśiva, the Absolute, beyond all form. He experiences himself and Śiva as one.

THURSDAY

From Caterpillar To Butterfly

To all these devotees, in their different stages of spiritual evolution, Lord Śiva is the Supreme God. To the first, He is the Primal Soul, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of existence. To the second He is the Primal Soul as well as Pure Consciousness, the substratum of existence, the divine energy coursing through and animating every atom within the microcosm and the macrocosm. To the third He is the manifest Primal Soul and Pure Consciousness and the unmanifest Absolute, Paraśiva, that transcends form itself. These three perspectives are not exclusive of one another, but encompass one another as the lotus of the mind opens to an ever widening understanding of God. Each is true according to where the devotee is on the path. ¶This Eternal Path is divided naturally into four separate categories. The *Bhagavad Gītā*—the popular book which you all know from your

studies in Vedānta and which has made Hindu philosophy well known in America—defines these as four separate nonprogressive paths, called *karma yoga*, *bhakti yoga*, *rāja yoga* and *jñāna yoga*. In Āgamic scripture these are defined a little differently and are considered to be four stages of a progressive path, termed *charyā*, *kriyā*, *yoga* and *jñāna*. These are all Sanskrit terms. According to the Āgamic tradition, these four categories are the natural sequence of the soul's evolutionary process, much like the development of a butterfly from egg to larva, from larva to caterpillar, from caterpillar to pupa, and then the final metamorphosis from pupa to butterfly. Every butterfly, without exception, will follow this pattern of development, and every soul will mature through *charyā* to *kriyā*, through *kriyā* to *yoga* and into *jñāna*. *Charyā*, or *karma yoga*, may be simply defined as service. *Kriyā*, or *bhakti yoga*, is devotion. *Yoga*, or *rāja yoga*, is meditation, and *jñāna* is the state of wisdom reached toward the end of the path as the result of God Realization and the subsequent enlivened *kuṇḍalinī* and unfoldment of the *chakras* through the practices of *yoga*. The soul does not move quickly from one stage to another. It is a deliberate process, and within each stage there exist vast libraries of knowledge containing the sum of thousands of years of teachings unraveling that particular experiential vista. ¶The evolution of the soul through the stage of *charyā*, or service, may itself take many, many lives. We see people every day who are working to be of service, to be more efficient, to be more useful to others. They are not necessarily inclined toward devotion, yet

they may be deeply concerned with humanitarian programs, with selflessly helping their fellow man. An entire life may be spent in *charyā*, and the next life and the next. It is a slow process, with its own timing. Not every stage of experience can be accepted at once. ¶The path of *charyā* begins with the avoidance of wrongful action, and can be likened to the early training of a child in which he is told, “Don’t do this. Do this instead. Don’t behave in that way. This is the proper behavior.” In early life, a child learns what is right by being told what not to do. In spiritual life, too, we have these avoidances, these restraints. The seeker is advised to avoid over-eating, criticism of others, anger, hatred, envy and deceit. This gives him guidelines that stabilize him in the beginning, controlling the instinctive mind. These inner reins help him to know what is right, help him to control his *karma* and educate his intellect by laying a foundation of quiet within the instinctive mind, a foundation upon which the intellect may build a knowledgeable structure. ¶*Charyā* is the state of overcoming basic instinctive patterns and learning to work for the sake of work rather than the fruits of our labor. It is the simple fulfillment of right action and the first step on the spiritual path in our religion. Our duty to our parents, to our community, to the wife and children, to the temple in the town or village—all this must be fulfilled for *charyā* to be perfected. One goes to the temple at this stage of unfoldment because it is expected of him. He goes there not to practice *yoga*, not to evolve a personal relationship with the Deity, but because he must. It is his duty. His instinctive

mind at this stage of his evolution is so strong that it must be governed firmly by external laws, external forces. He either obeys or suffers the consequences of disobedience. It is his fear of the consequences that motivates him more than anything else. Certainly he may feel guilty or fearful when he approaches the temple, for he is aware of his own transgressions and omissions. But little by little he gains confidence and understanding. His conscience begins to take the place of outer sanctions and gradually becomes his guideline. Whereas before he never felt guilty even for his worst transgressions, now he begins to feel remorse for misdeeds. Tendencies toward selfishness lose their hold on the devotee as he strives to become the perfect servant to God and mankind.

FRIDAY

Service, Worship, Understanding

The sequential pattern of evolution is experienced by each individual in a microcosmic sense in each lifetime. Even if they have been experienced in a previous life, the lessons contained in each stage are, in a sense, relearned in childhood. If we have previously learned them, then they will be quickly mastered. But if we have not learned these lessons in another life, we draw to ourselves in this life the experiences that we need to do so. This knowledge is an inheritance that comes along with the physical body. In other words, experiences from other lives affect the patterns of experience in this life. With basic inherited knowledge, the soul develops an intellectual mind through the good graces of its own personal *karma* and destiny, provided his

intellectual mind is in accordance and in harmony with the precepts of his religion. If not, he has problems. Those problems can be overcome, but they are problems while they are being overcome. If his beliefs are not in harmony with his religion, that conflict can stagnate and congest his natural advancement and must be resolved before he can move on to the second stage. ¶In the stage of *charyā*, similar to *karma yoga*, the devotee naturally awakens a desire to work for the sake of work, to serve for the sake of service. He does this in his daily life and through helping in the temple in practical ways—through sweeping the marble floors, polishing the brass oil lamps, weaving fragrant garlands for the *pūjās*, helping other devotees in their lives, and in general through a humble and unseen kind of service. This humble service is itself a means to break the stagnant congestion of erroneous beliefs. Worship during the *charyā* stage is entirely external, yet it is entirely meaningful to the devotee. In *charyā* the devotee looks upon the stone image in the temple sanctum with his physical eyes, and to him *darshan* of the Deity is the physical sight of the stone image of God. ¶As the devotee unfolds into the next stage, of *kriyā* or *bhakti yoga*, he will want to worship and serve in the temple in more internalized ways. He will seek to understand why a stone image is a stone image, why stone images are needed at all. He will begin to think about the purpose of worship, the meaning of worship, the experience of worship. He will wonder to himself about the ancient customs and protocol and why these customs are followed in his community. He will

delve into the scriptures, learning and studying about his religion. Singing the sacred hymns, chanting the names of the Lord and performing *japa* will become an important part of his devotion, which is partly internal and partly external. Devotion will well up from the recesses of his soul as he purifies himself. His heart begins to open as he evolves out of the instinctive mind into a spiritualized intellect, an intellect that is developed from within himself. His instinctive nature is subsiding, and his intellectual nature is emerging as he comes into a full understanding of the laws of *karma*. As his intellect controls the instinctive mind, he understands for the first time the cause and effect, the action and reaction, of his physical and mental activities. ¶ *Kriyā* blossoms into its fullness when there arises in his heart a desire, a strong desire, to know and experience God, to penetrate into the realms of consciousness and reality beyond the physical plane revealed by his grosser senses. He expresses this desire through continued worship in the very special environment of the Hindu temple or his home shrine. He worships the personal aspect of God, and his attitude is no longer one of fear, of a servant to a master, as it was in *charyā*. In *kriyā* he looks upon God as a dutiful son to his father. He perceives that God is his personal Lord, concerned for the welfare of mankind, and he approaches God in a human, personal way. He wants to serve God not because he fears the consequences of being an infidel, but because he wants to be in harmony with a higher reality which he reveres, to be attuned to the *darshan* of the Deity.

SATURDAY

**The Blossoming
Of Devotion**

For those in *kriyā*, *darshan* is not only the physical sight of the stone image in the temple. It is also an inner communion, a receiving of the blessings and the messages and the rays of Second and Third World beings, who are actual conscious entities and whose consciousness is canalized through the sacred image by esoteric temple practices. This is a deeper perception of the *darshan* of the Deity. Other forms of religious expression naturally come forth for the devotee in this stage of unfoldment, such as attending *pūjās* regularly, chanting, undertaking pilgrimages to temples and holy places and studying the scriptures. ¶Midpoint in this stage of development of the soul, the devotee may psychically experience an aspect of God that he has been worshiping in the temple. He may see the Deity in a dream or have a vision of Him during a quiet period when he is sitting with his eyes closed after a *pūjā*. After this experience, he centers his life fully around God and learns to psychically attune himself to His *darshan*, His will. Once he fully understands his religion, if he has sufficient means he may express his eagerness to serve through building a temple, or participation in such a project. Indeed, this is the great culmination of *kriyā*. It is through the devotees in the *kriyā*, or *bhakti yoga*, stage of the unfoldment of the soul that we have all over the world today magnificent Hindu temples, built by people who have performed well, who have controlled their thoughts and actions, who have understood the laws of *karma* and the penalties of wrong action. They

have avoided wrong action not out of fear, but because they have evolved into performing right action. Having released themselves from the dense fog of the instinctive mind, they can now build temples of great beauty which reflect the beauties they have discovered within themselves in their personal communion with God, who to them is not an awesome master who might punish and discipline, but a loving father. ¶As he matures in *kriyā*, the devotee unfolds a more and more intense love of God, to the point that he may well shed joyful tears during intense moments of worship. When that love is constant from day to day, when it is strong enough that he is capable of surrendering his individual will to God's Cosmic Will, then *kriyā* or *bhakti yoga* has reached its zenith. This giving up of his own will is a slow process as he unwinds the last remaining strands of his external will from the instinctive mind. His will was born of intellectual concepts, and these concepts, too, he releases unto God, feeling within his inmost being that he knows little of the grand mysteries of existence, an admission he could not make earlier. He realizes that he receives his inspiration, his energy, his very life, from God. ¶At this stage of *kriyā* the devotee learns patience. He learns to wait for the proper timing of things in his life. He is in no hurry. He is willing to wait for another life, or for many more lives. There is no urgency. He trusts God and trusts the path he is on. He settles down, and his life comes into a balance. He observes that he is in an evolutionary process along with thousands and millions of others. He embraces other devotees with renewed love and apprecia-

tion. He patterns his life in such a way that the temple is the hub of his culture, his religious activity and observance, his very thinking. From the temple or his home shrine, he goes forth to spend his days in the world, and to the temple or shrine he returns from the world. His life comes and goes from that sacred place. ¶In the stages of *charyā* and *kriyā*, the deep-seated impurities of the mind are cleansed as past *karmas* are resolved and a foundation laid for the third stage on the divine path, that of *yoga*. *Yoga* is a very advanced science. It cannot be sustained except by the soul that has unfolded into the fullness of *charyā* and *kriyā* and maintains the qualities of service and devotion as meditation is pursued. The devotee who has served God well now embarks upon finding union with God in his sanctum within. He remains enveloped in the *darshan* of the personal Lord he carefully cultivated during *charyā* and *kriyā*, and on the power of that *darshan* he is drawn within by the Primal Soul Himself to rarefied states of consciousness and the stillness of meditation.

SUNDAY

The Journey Called Yoga

To the meditating *yogī*, *darshan* is more than a communication radiating out to him from an external God or Mahādeva. It is a radiant light shining from the sanctum sanctorum of his own *sahasrāra chakra*. Worship for him becomes completely internal as he follows that light, that *darshan*, seeking to know its source. In *yoga*, the devotee worships the transcendent aspect of God. He strengthens his body and nerve system. He disciplines the energies of mind and body. He learns

to regulate his breath and to control the *prāṇas* that flow as life's force through his nerve system. In this process, the *kuṇḍalinī śakti* is lifted and the multi-petaled *chakras* unfold in all their splendor. The subtle realms within the devotee are revealed layer by layer as he methodically perfects attention, concentration, meditation and contemplation. ¶ Lord Śiva now brings the earnest devotee to meet his *satguru*, who will guide him through the traditional disciplines of *yoga* on his inward journey. It is his spiritual preceptor, his *guru*, who takes care that he avoids the abysses and psychic pitfalls along the path. ¶ In this stage of *yoga*, the devotee looks upon God as a friend, a companion. He strives with a diligence and energy he never knew he possessed, with a dedication he once thought impossible, and as he strives his willpower is awakened. Finally, one day, in his first *samādhi*, he penetrates to the essence of being. In this ultimate experience, which remains forever beyond description, he has reached the union which is *yoga*. ¶ Returning from this state of ineffable fulfillment, the devotee brings back into his life a new understanding, a new perspective. He is never the same after that experience. He can never again look at life in the same way. Each time he enters into that God Realization, that *samādhi*, he returns to consciousness more and more the knower. His knowing matures through the years as his *yoga sādhana* is regulated, and as it matures he enters ever so imperceptibly into the fourth and final stage of unfoldment, into *jñāna*. ¶ One does not become a *jñānī* simply by reading philosophy. That is a great misconception. Many people believe that

you can spiritually unfold or evolve into a *jñānī* through reading books, through understanding another's unfoldment or performing meditations that he once performed. Understanding another person's wisdom does not make us wise. Each has to experience the fullness of the path to enlightenment himself. ¶The *jñānī* becomes one who postulates that what he has himself realized are the final conclusions for all mankind. His postulations are filled with assuredness, for he has experienced what the *Vedas*, the *Āgamas* and the *Upanishads* speak of. He has awakened the power and force of his own realization. He knows. He becomes the embodiment of that knowing, of the Truth he once sought as something other than himself. He finds within the scriptures confirmation of his realization echoed in the verses of *rishis* written at the dawn of human history. This matured soul sees reflected in their writings that same state of complete merging with the Divine that he himself has come to know as the timeless, formless, spaceless Absolute which he once worshiped symbolically as a stone image in previous life wanderings within the instinctive mind, or avoided and resented because the temple to him represented an awesome and fearful threat to his impurities. ¶He has removed the veils of ignorance, removed the obstacles to understanding. He has come into his true being, union with God, union with Śiva, and in this serene state he sees God as his beloved, as that which is dearer to him than life itself, as he is consumed by that all-encompassing love. There is for him no more an inner and an outer life and consciousness, for they have melted

and merged into a single continuum. He is That, and for him it is clear that all are That. Unknown to himself, he has become the temple of his religion, capable of imparting knowledge merely by the power of his silent presence. He has become the source of light and *darshan* which radiate out through the *nāḍīs* and *prāṇas* of his being. This great soul is found in his reveries sweeping the temple floor, polishing brass lamps, weaving fragrant garlands, expounding *smṛiti* and being the humble Sivanadiyar, slave to the servants of the Lord, as he lives out the final strands of *karma* of this last birth. ¶The final conclusions of the world's most ancient religious tradition, the Sanātana Dharma, are that mankind is on a spiritual path as old as time itself, that this journey progresses from birth to birth as the soul evolves through the perfection of *charyā* into the perfection of *kriyā*, and from there into the perfection of *yoga*, emerging as a *jñānī*. This is the path followed by all souls. Whatever religion they espouse, whatsoever they may believe or deny, all of mankind is on the one path to Truth. It begins with the *dvaita* of *charyā* and ends in the *advaita* of *jñāna*—the *advaita* postulated in Vedānta and in the Śuddha Siddhānta of Śaiva Siddhānta.

MONDAY
Eternal
Questions

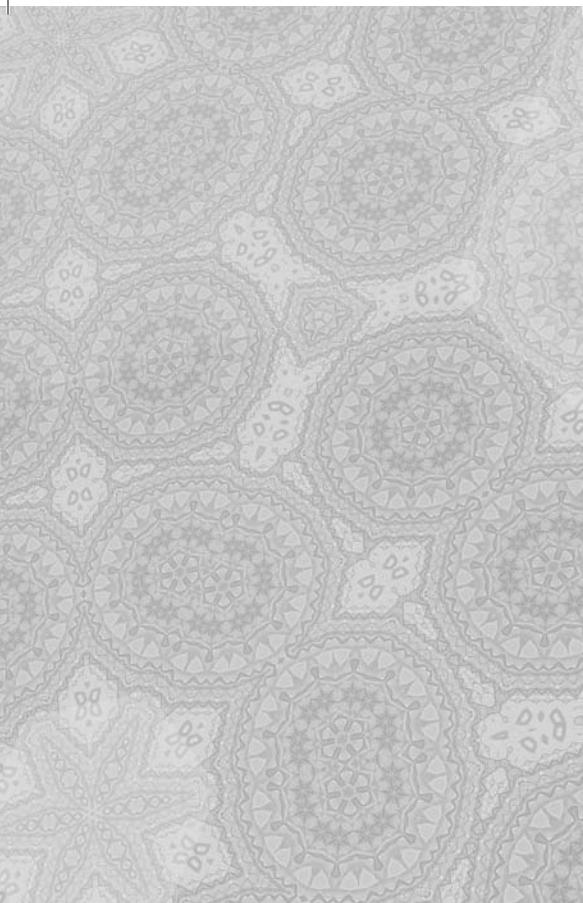
Many people think of the realization of timeless, formless, spaceless Paraśiva, *nirvikalpa samādhi*, as the most blissful of all blissful states, the opening of the heavens, the descent of the Gods, as a moment of supreme, sublime joyousness; whereas I have found it to be more like cut glass, diamond-dust *dar-*

shan, a psychic surgery, not a blissful experience at all, but really a kind of near-death experience resulting in total transformation. The bliss that is often taught as a final attainment is actually another attainment, Satchidānanda, an aftermath of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, and a “before-math.” This means that Satchidānanda, *savikalpa samādhi*, may be attained early on by souls pure in heart. It also means that one need not gauge the highest attainment on the basis of bliss, which it transcends. ¶In my experience, the *anāhata chakra* is the resting place of dynamic complacency, of thoughtful perception and quietude. Those of a lower nature arriving in the bloom of this *chakra* are released from turbulent emotions, conflicting thoughts and disturbances. This to many is the end of the path, attaining peace, or *śānti*. Once one attains *śānti* as just described, in my experience, this marks the beginning of the path, or part two, the second level. It is from here that the practices of *rāja yoga* take hold, once *śānti* is attained. In the *anāhata chakra* and *viśuddha chakra*, Satchidānanda, the all-pervasive being of oneness, of the underlying being of the universe, is attained, experienced. ¶But unless *brahmacharya*, chastity, is absolutely adhered to, the experience is not maintained. It is here that relations between men and women play an important part, as in their union temporary oneness occurs, followed by a more permanent twoness and ever-accumulating distractions, sometimes along with insolvable difficulties. Those who practice sexual *tantras*, seeking Self Realization through this path, will agree with this wisdom. ¶Does Self Realization bring bliss to the

realized one? Self Realization is in several stages. Realizing oneself as a soul—rather than a mind, an intellectual and emotional type, or a worthless person—gives satisfaction, security, and this is a starting point. Realization of the Self as Satchidānanda gives contentment, a release from all emotions and thoughts of the external world, and the nerve system responds to the energies flowing through the *viśuddha* and *anāhata chakras*. Realizing the Self that transcends time, form and space, Paraśiva, is a razor-edged experience, cutting all bonds, reversing individual awareness, such as looking out from the Self rather than looking into the Self. ¶ There are many boons after this transforming experience, if repeated many times. One or two occurrences does make a renunciate out of the person and does make the world renounce the renunciate, but then, without persistent effort, former patterns of emotion, intellect, lack of discipline, which would inhibit the repeated experience of Paraśiva, would produce a disoriented nomad, so to speak. Therefore, repeated experiences of the ego-destructive Paraśiva, from all states of consciousness, intellectual, instinctive, even in dreams, permeates the transformation through atoms and molecules even in the physical body. It is then that the bliss can be enjoyed of Satchidānanda—and simultaneously, I would say, Satchidānanda and the rough, unrelenting, timeless, formless, spaceless Paraśiva merge in a not-merging way, such as light and darkness in the same room. This is different than the concept of *sāyujya samādhi*, which is maintaining the perpetual bliss within the fourth and fifth *chakra* and stimulating the

sixth and seventh. For this to be maintained, a certain isolation from worldly affairs and distracting influences is required to prevent the reawakening of previously unsatisfied desires, repressed tendencies or unresolved subconscious conflicts. ¶Someone asked, “If realization in and of itself is not blissful, then what impels a soul that has arrived at bliss to strive for further realizations?” We are all moving forward to our ultimate goal of merging with Śiva. Bliss quiets the senses. It is the natural state of the mind when unperturbed by previous desires unfulfilled, desires yet to be fulfilled and the desires known to not be fulfillable. As long as the *anāhata* and *viśuddha chakras* spin at top velocity, the senses will be quieted, few thoughts will pass through the mind unbidden, and the understanding of the *Vedas* and all aspects of esoteric knowledge will be able to be explained by the preceptor. Many choose to remain here, as the explainers of the inexplicable, and not go on—deep into the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh *chakras*, into the beyond of the beyond, the quantum level, the core of the universe itself. There comes a point when the powers of evolution move one forward, and even these desireless ones desire the greatest unfoldment, once they have found out that it is there to be desired. ¶Realizing Paraśiva is merging with Śiva, but it is not the end of merging. At that pinpoint of time, there are still the trappings of body, mind and emotions that claim awareness into their consciousness. Ultimately, when all bodies—physical, astral, mental, even the soul body—wear out their time, as all forms wear out in time, bound by

time, existing in time, as relative realities, then *viśvagrāsa*, the final merger with Śiva, occurs, as the physical body drops away, the astral body drops away, the mental body drops away, and the soul—a shining, scintillating being of light quantum—merges into its source. As when a drop of water merges into the ocean, it can never be retrieved, only Śiva remains. Aum Namaḥ Śivāya.



Conclusion

Nirvahaṇam

निर्वहणम्

THE END OF THIS BOOK, *MERGING WITH ŚIVA*, IS THE BEGINNING, AS THE BEGINNING WAS THE END. THE CONUNDRUMS OF CYCLES CONTINUE until *viśvagrāsa*, full merger of the soul in God, happens. *Viśvagrāsa* is not an experience; it is a permanent happening, as are birth and death, but even more permanent than both, for there is no singular experience that occurs after *viśvagrāsa* except, of course, constant unrelenting creation, preservation and dissolution, all occurring simultaneously. Merging with Śiva is the inevitable destination and conclusion of the evolution of all souls. As all water returns back to the ocean, all captured air when released finally returns to the sky, as all organic matter returns to earth, and as all fire merges into fire, all *ākāśa*, both inner space and outer space, merge together and become the grand relative reality, stemming from the Absolute Reality—so will it be for you, as the physical body is needed no more, as the astral body is needed no more, as the *prāṇic* body holding both together is needed no more, as the mental body is needed no more, and lastly as the ever-watching, all-knowing, self-contained soul body is needed no more. Where else to go but into the all of the All, the Self, Śiva? For you, then, merging with Śiva has become a conclusive reality. ¶Even

at the beginning stages, merging with the Divine within oneself requires a great deal of resolve and commitment. This is called *sankalpa*, the preparation for the final merger with Śiva, which takes lifetimes. First, we must dance with Śiva, meaning accept consciously, subconsciously, subsubconsciously and subsuperconsciously the Advaita Īśvara-vāda philosophy, or outlook on life, and live by its tenets. This is the *charyā pāda*, not to be ignored. To do otherwise would be merely following a path of words, not the experiential path of living according to the wisdom of this profound Śaiva Siddhānta perspective. Then, before we can really, fully experience merger, which is well explained in this book, it is absolutely necessary that living with Śiva be perfected in every department of life, physically, emotionally, intellectually and culturally. This is the *kriyā pāda*, also not to be ignored. This means molding one's life according to the culture of Hindu Dharma so that the physical, emotional and mental bodies are all in perfect synchronicity with the great, Divine, master plan, the ultimate computer program of Śiva's perfect universe.

So, now we are aware of the path toward *viśvagrāsa*, final, irrevocable merger of the soul with Śiva, the Lord of Lords, God of Gods, above all, in all, below all, on all sides of all and within all—and all of the many prior levels of merging with the Divine.

The first two books of the trilogy, *Dancing with Śiva* and *Living with Śiva*, are the preparation that make merging with Śiva, even in the beginning stages, a reality in one's life. It is a progressive path. The first book is the foundation

and the ground floor, the second is the upper stories, the third forms the penthouse at the top. To get to the penthouse takes time and effort, and so a secure foundation of *sādhana* is the necessary prerequisite. First dance, learn and become transfixed with the philosophy, then live the culture and obey its protocols, then all will become clear from the inside out. If you do, your life will be a model for all to follow. There is no doubt about it. Without such preparation, this book is, to the seeker, merely another path of metaphysical words—words that are inspiring, to be sure, but may easily be forgotten when other metaphysical instruction comes along.

The trilogy of *Dancing, Living, Merging with Śiva*—which took many, many lives to experience before recording in this life—is my heritage and my legacy. They are now your inheritance, dear seeker, a most precious inheritance. Read them well. Read them often. Read them all. Live them fully. Live them fully. Experience the truths herein for yourself, step by step, and be transformed, never to be the same again.

Self Realization

Man came from God, evolves in God and ultimately merges into God. Thus, whether you fully know it or not, you are the story of God. Your life is the story of evolution. Now, in this book, that story becomes more conscious and purposeful than ever before.

Inwardly, people intuit that they are special, as indeed they are. They know, perhaps not consciously, but still they know deep down, that there is a profound meaning

to life, a profound purpose for being here. The rare few find this purpose consciously and begin to pursue life as a great spiritual adventure. You may be one of these fortunate souls, these old souls, for whom the *yogas* here are familiar, for whom the inner light and sounds are like old friends, for whom the world's material opportunities are like the sand that could never quell the hunger of the famished villager. You may well be such an old soul, on a journey within. If so, this book will perhaps change your life forever. Certainly the spiritual experiences narrated in it changed mine!

There is nothing more wonderful than knowledge about oneself that improves self-image. Everyone almost everywhere has this foremost on his agenda. But, still, there are those who are content to remain forever as they have been schooled to be. This division between those who are on the spiritual path of enlightenment and those who are not has existed for as long as I remember, and have been told much longer.

How do we know when someone is “on the path” or not? Well, there are signposts, and the biggest and most obvious is this one: people on the spiritual path will not argue. They will accept, meditate and draw their own conclusions. It now is obvious that those not on the path, when faced with challenging concepts, which can only be proven by personal realization and transformation, will endeavor to argue them out of their existence. These are those who resist selfless service of any kind of a spontaneous nature, always harboring an excuse of why they cannot and how they can't.

Realization is a signpost of finality. The question is often asked, "How do we know we have realized something?" The answer is easy: you just know, for realization is deeper than belief. Beliefs can be changed more easily than not. Realization is much deeper than faith. That can be taken away, too. But personal realization, especially of the spiritual kind, becomes stronger as the years pass by and is the foundation for personal transformation. It is some of these spiritual realizations that *Merging with Śiva* has just explained in utmost detail.

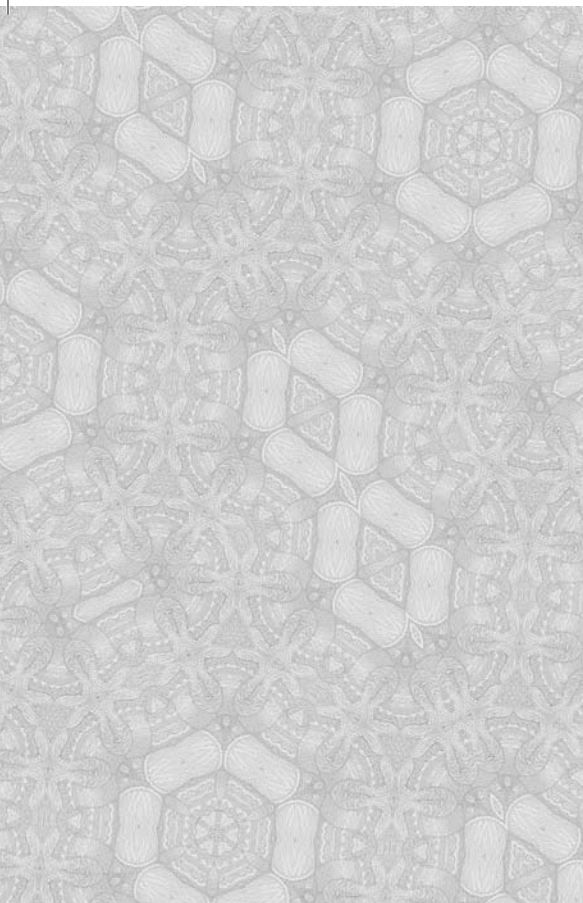
This Self of which we speak is subtle and elusive. To the ordinary man it is a fiction. To him, sex, money, food and clothes are more real. To him, the ego is a reality that cannot be transcended. To him, the ineffable Absolute Truth in all men, which is the Source of all things, is a fiction, a silliness, no more or perhaps even less real than an animated story by Disney or a special-effects film by Spielberg.

But to those who know this Truth, It is the All in all. It is the essence of life and love. The heart itself, with its every beat, sleeping and waking, touches instantaneously into this Self and thus continues its life-giving work. Thought and feeling could not be if the Self were not. Nor the senses, nor the stars, nor time and space. It is there, underlying all, sustaining all, giving existence to all, silently and without notice.

In fact, this Self is so subtle as to be hidden from all but the most awakened. How can it remain so unknown? Simplicity is the answer. The Self is so simple, so uncomplicated, that the ramified external mind overlooks it. From birth to death and back to birth, we live in the ocean of Be-

ing and see only the fishes of objective perception. We neglect to notice that these swim in the ocean of Being. When man comes to a point, as he must, when the things of this world possess less attraction for him than the path toward merging with Śiva, then only will he begin to detach himself enough to see the obvious, the Ocean of Śivaness that lies on every side, inside, outside, above and below. Then only will the merging we speak of here become meaningful to him. Then only will he be able to simplify his life and his thinking, his very perceptions, his hour-to-hour way of looking at things, enough to quiet the mind, for this Self can only be known in a quieted consciousness. Not even a thought can remain. Not a feeling. Not a hope or a question. One must be very pure for this realization to come, very pure indeed. The Self reveals itself, by the *satguru's* unique grace, to a mind that has, in a mystical but very pragmatic manner, eliminated itself. "You must die before you die," my *satguru*, Siva Yogaswami, said. That is all that needs to be said.

Merging with Śiva—what is done by the soul is what is done: being and becoming. The soul establishes its identity and strengthens each *chakra*, from the soles of the feet to the top of the head and the seven above, through the stages of its evolution, referred to as three *avasthās*. All souls are in the process of evolution toward merging with Śiva, and that is the conclusive conclusion of this book.



Glossary

Śabda Kośaḥ

शब्दकोशः

- A** *aadheenam*: ஆதீனம் A Hindu monastery-temple complex in the South Indian Śaiva Siddhānta tradition. The *aadheenam* head is called the *guru mahāsannidhānam* or *aadheenakartha*.
- Absolute**: Lower case (absolute): real, not dependent on anything else, not relative. Upper case (Absolute): Ultimate Reality, the unmanifest, unchanging and transcendent Paraśiva. See: *Paraśiva*.
- āchārya**: आचार्य A highly respected teacher.
- actinic force**: Spiritual, creating light. Adjective derived from the Greek *aktis*, “ray.” Actinic force is the superconscious mind and not a force which comes from the superconscious mind. Commonly known as life, spirit, it can be seen as the light in man’s eyes; it is the force that leaves man when he leaves his odic physical body behind. It is not opposite to odic force, it is different than odic force as light is different than water but shines through it. Actinic force flows freely through odic force. See also: *odic force*.
- actinic prāṇa**: Actinic force, spiritual energy, of which one manifestation is the dynamic force of the spiritual will, or *ātma śakti*, soul force. See: *actinic force*, *prāṇa*.
- actinodic**: Spiritual-magnetic. Describes consciousness within *śuddhāsuddha māyā*, which is a mixture of odic and actinic force, the spectrum of the *anāhata chakra*, and to a certain degree the *viśuddha chakra*. See: *actinic force*, *odic force*.
- adept**: A highly skilled person; expert.
- adharmā**: अधर्म Negative, opposite of *dharma*. Thoughts, words or deeds that transgress divine law. Unrighteousness, irreligiousness; demerit.
- advaita**: अद्वैत “Non-dual; not twofold.” Nonduality or monism.

The doctrine that Ultimate Reality consists of a one principle substance, or God. Opposite of *dvaita*, dualism. See: *dvaita-advaita*.

Advaita Īśvaravāda: अद्वैत ईश्वरवाद “Nondual and Personal-God-as-Ruler doctrine,” *monistic theism*. The philosophy of the *Vedas* and *Śaiva Āgamas*, which believes in the ultimate oneness of all things and in the reality of the personal Deity.

Advaita Siddhānta: अद्वैत सिद्धान्त “Nondual perfect conclusions.” Śaivite philosophy codified in the *Āgamas* which has at its core the nondual (*advaitic*) identity of God, soul and world. with a strong emphasis on internal and external worship, *yoga sādhanas* and *tapas*. *Advaita Siddhānta* is a term used in South India to distinguish Tirumular’s school from the pluralistic Siddhānta of Meykandar and Aghorasiva. It is the philosophy presented in *Merging with Śiva*.

Āgama: आगम The tradition that which has “come down.” An enormous collection of Sanskrit scriptures which, along with the *Vedas*, are revered as *śruti* (revealed scripture). The primary source and authority for ritual, *yoga* and temple construction.

agni: अग्नि “Fire.” 1) One of the five elements, *pañchabhūta*. 2) God of the element fire, invoked through Vedic ritual known as *yajña*, *agnikāraka*, *homa* and *havana*; the divine messenger who receives prayers and oblations and conveys them to the heavenly spheres. See: *yajña*.

ahimsā: अहिंसा “Noninjury,” nonviolence or nonhurtfulness. Not causing harm to others, physically, mentally or emotionally. See: also *yama-niyama*.

ājñā chakra: आज्ञाचक्र “Command wheel.” The third-eye center. See: *chakra*.

ākāśa: आकाश “Space.” The sky. Free, open space. Ether, the fifth and most subtle of the five elements—earth, air, fire, water and ether. Empirically, the rarefied space or ethereal fluid plasma that pervades the universes, inner and outer. Esoterically, mind, the superconscious strata holding all that exists and all that potentially exists, wherein all happenings are recorded and can be

read by clairvoyants.

all-pervasive: Diffused throughout or existing in every part of the universe. See: *Satchidānanda*.

Amman: அம்மன் “Mother.” Usually refers to Mariyamman, the “smallpox Goddess,” protectress from plagues, a popular Grāmadevatā (“village Deity,” or local tutelary Deity). In the Tamil tradition, *amman* is the epithet of various Goddesses, as in Kālī Amman or Draupadī Amman.

amṛita: अमृत “Immortality.” Literally, “deathless,” “without death” (*mṛita*). The nectar of divine bliss which flows down from the *sahasrāra chakra* when one enters very deep states of meditation.

anāhata chakra: अनाहतचक्र “Wheel of unstruck [sound].” The heart center. See: *chakra*.

ānanda: आनन्द “Bliss.” The pure joy—ecstasy or enstasy—of God-consciousness or spiritual experience.

ānandamaya kośa: आनन्दमयकोश “Bliss body.” The body of the soul, which ultimately merges with Śiva. See: *kośa*, *soul*.

āṇava: आणव “Fragment; atom; minuteness, individuality.” God’s veiling power that provides individuality, or separate ego, to each soul, making the soul seem apart and distinct from God and the universe. See: *āṇava mala*.

āṇava mala: आणवमल “Impurity of smallness; finitizing principle.” God’s individualizing veil of duality that enshrouds the soul. It is the source of finitude and ignorance, the most basic of the three bonds (*āṇava*, *karma*, *māyā*) which temporarily limit the soul.

āṇava mārga: आणवमार्ग “Path of ignorance.” The path of egoity, separateness, self-indulgence, self-interest and selfishness.

Anbe Sivamayam Satyame Parasivam: அன்பே சிவமயம் சத்தியமே பரசிவம் Tamil for “God Śiva is Immanent Love and transcendent Reality,” the affirmation of faith which capsulizes the entire creed of monistic Śaiva Siddhānta.

anchorite: “Hermit.” A monk or aspirant who lives alone and apart from society, as contrasted with *cenobite*, a member of a

religious order living in a monastery or convent. See: *monk*.

annamaya kośa: अन्नमयकोश “Food sheath.” The physical body. See: *kośa*.

Antarloka: अन्तर्लोक “Inner or in-between world.” The astral plane. See: *loka*.

apsarā: अप्सरा Female Second World beings, nymphs, the counterpart to astral male lovers called *gandharvas* in the *Vedas*.

arahat: (Pali) “Worthy one.” (Sanskrit: *arhat*) See: *nirvāṇī and upadeśī*.

ardha-Hindu: अर्धहिन्दु “Half-Hindu.” A devotee who has adopted Hindu belief and culture to a great extent but has not formally entered the religion through ceremony and taking a Hindu first and last name. See: *Hindu*.

āsana: आसन “Seat; posture.” In *haṭha yoga*, *āsana* refers to any of numerous poses prescribed to balance and tune up the subtle energies of mind and body for meditation and to promote health and longevity.

ashṭāṅga yoga: अष्टाङ्गयोग “Eight-limbed union.” The classical *rāja yoga* system of eight progressive stages: restraints (*yama*), observances (*niyama*), postures (*āsana*), breath control (*prāṇāyāma*), sense withdrawal (*pratyāhāra*), concentration (*dhāraṇā*), meditation (*dhyāna*) and contemplation (*samādhi*/Self Realization).

ashram (āśrama): आश्रम “Place of striving.” Hermitage; order of the life. Holy sanctuary; the residence and teaching center of a *sādhu*, saint, *swāmī*, ascetic or *guru*; often includes lodging for students. Also names life’s four stages.

astral body: The subtle, nonphysical body (*sūkshma śarīra*) in which the soul functions in the astral plane, the inner world also called Antarloka. See: *kośa, soul*.

astral plane: The subtle world, or Antarloka, spanning the spectrum of consciousness from the *viśuddha chakra* in the throat to the *pātāla chakra* in the soles of the feet. In the astral plane, the soul is enshrouded in the astral body, called *sūkshma śarīra*. See also: *astral body, loka, three worlds*.

astrology: Science of celestial influences. See: *jyotisha*.

asura: असुर “Evil spirit; demon.” (Opposite of *sura*: “*deva*; God.”)

A being of the lower astral plane, Naraka. *Asuras* can and do interact with the physical plane, causing major and minor problems in people’s lives. *Asuras* do evolve and do not remain permanently in this state. See: *Naraka*.

atala: अतल “Bottomless region.” The first *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, at the hip level. Region of fear and lust. See: *chakra*, *Naraka*.

ātman: आत्मन् “The soul; the breath; the principle of life and sensation.” The soul in its entirety—as the soul body (*ānandamaya kośa*) and its essence (Parāśakti and Paraśiva). See: *kośa*, *soul*.

attachments: That which one holds onto or clings to with the energy of possessiveness, which is a natural function of the inner and outer ego of an individual. As one unfolds through the *chakras*, the force of attachment naturally diminishes through *sādhana*, *tapas* and the grace of the *guru*.

Aum: ॐ or ओम् Often spelled *Om*. The mystic syllable of Hinduism, associated with Lord Gaṇeśa, placed at the beginning of sacred writings. In common usage in several Indian languages, *aum* means “yes, verily” or “hail.” See: *Praṇava*.

aura: The luminous colorful field of subtle energy radiating within and around the human body. The colors change according to the ebb and flow of one’s state of consciousness, thoughts, moods and emotions.

avasthā: अवस्था (Tamil: *avasthai*.) “Condition or state” of consciousness or experience. 1) Any of three stages of the soul’s evolution from the point of its creation to final merger in the Primal Soul. 2) The states of consciousness as discussed in the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad*: *jāgrat* (or *vaiśvānara*), “wakefulness;” *svapna* (or *taijasa*), “dreaming;” *sushupti*, “deep sleep;” and *turīya*, “the fourth” state, of superconsciousness. A fifth state, “beyond *turīya*,” is *turīyātīta*.

awareness: Individual consciousness, perception, knowing; the

witness of perception, the “inner eye of the soul.” *Sākshin* or *chit* in Sanskrit.

avidyā: अविद्या Spiritual “ignorance.” Wrongful understanding of the nature of reality. Mistaking the impermanent for the everlasting.

āyurveda: आयुर्वेद “Science of life,” “science of longevity.” A holistic system of medicine and health native to ancient India. The aims of *āyurveda* are *āyus*, “long life,” and *ārōgya*, “diseaselessness,” which facilitate progress toward ultimate spiritual goals. Health is achieved by balancing energies (especially the *doshas*, bodily humors) at all levels of being.

Ayyappan: ജയപ്രപ്പൻ The popular God of a recently formed sect that focuses on pilgrimage to the top of Sabarimalai, a sacred hill in Kerala, where He is said to appear as a divine light. Ayyappan is revered as a son of Vishṇu and Śiva (*Hari-Hara putra*). His *vāhana*, or mount, is the tiger.

B Being: When capitalized, *being* refers to God’s essential divine nature—Pure Consciousness, Absolute Reality and Primal Soul (God’s nature as a divine Person). Lower case *being* refers to the essential nature of a person, that within which never changes; existence. See: *Śiva*.

Bhagavad Gītā: भगवद् गीता “Song of the Lord.” One of the most popular of Hindu writings, a conversation between Lord Kṛishṇa and Arjuna on the brink of the great battle at Kurukshetra. It is a central episode of the epic *Mahābhārata*, discussing *yoga*, asceticism, *dharma* and the manifold spiritual path.

bhakta: भक्त (Tamil: *bhaktar*.) “Devotee.” A worshiper. One who is surrendered in the Divine.

bhakti: भक्ति “Devotion.” Surrender to God, Gods or *guru*.

bhakti yoga: भक्तियोग “Union through devotion,” devotional disciplines, worship, prayer, chanting and singing, awakening love in the heart and opening oneself to God’s grace.

bhāshya: भाष्य “Talking over, discussion.” Commentary on a text

or scripture.

Bhūloka: भूलोक “Earth world.” The physical plane. See: *loka*.

bhūmikā: भूमिका “Earth; ground; soil.” Preface; introduction to a book. From *bhū*, “to become, exist; arise, come into being.”

Bodhinatha (Bodhinātha): बोधिनाथ “Lord of Wisdom.” The current preceptor of the Nandinātha Sampradāya’s Kailāsa Paramparā, and Guru Mahāsannidhānam of Kauai Aadheenam, Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami, ordained by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami in 2001.

bodhisattva: बोधिसत्त्व See: *nirvāṇī and upadeśī*.

Brahmā: ब्रह्मा God in His aspect of Creator.

brahmachārī: ब्रह्मचारी An unmarried male spiritual aspirant who practices continence, observes religious disciplines, including *sādhana*, devotion and service and who may be under simple vows. Also names one in the student stage, age 12–24, or until marriage.

brahmachārīṇī: ब्रह्मचारिणी Feminine counterpart of *brahmachārī*.

brahmacharya: ब्रह्मचर्य “Divine conduct.” Sexual purity. Controlling lust by remaining celibate when single, leading to faithfulness in marriage.

Brahman: ब्रह्मन् “Supreme Being; Expansive Spirit.” From the root *bṛih*, “to grow, increase, expand.” Name of God or Supreme Deity in the *Vedas*.

brāhmin (brāhmaṇa): ब्राह्मण “Mature” or “evolved” soul. The class of pious souls of exceptional learning. From *Brāhman*, “growth, expansion, evolution, development, swelling of the spirit or soul.”

Causal body: *Kāraṇa śarīra*, the inmost body; the soul form, also called *ānandamaya kośa*, “bliss sheath,” and actinic causal body. See: *kośa*, *soul*.

causal plane: The highest or most subtle realm of existence, Śivaloka. See: *loka*.

cenobite: A member of a monastery community.

chaitanya: चैतन्य “Spirit, consciousness,” especially “higher consciousness;” “Supreme Being.” A widely used term, often preceded by modifiers, e.g., *sākshī chaitanya*, “witness consciousness,” or *bhakti chaitanya*, “devotional consciousness,” or Śivachaitanya, “God consciousness.”

chakra: चक्र “Wheel.” Any of the nerve plexes or centers of force and consciousness located within the *inner bodies* of man. In the physical body there are corresponding nerve plexuses, ganglia and glands. The seven principal *chakras* are situated along the spinal cord from the base to the cranial chamber. Additionally, seven *chakras* exist below the spine. They are seats of instinctive consciousness, the origin of jealousy, hatred, envy, guilt, sorrow, etc. They constitute the lower or hellish world, called *Naraka* or *pātāla*. Thus, there are 14 major *chakras* in all. The seven upper *chakras* are: 1) *mūlādhāra* (base of spine): memory, time and space; 2) *svādhishṭhāna* (below navel): reason; 3) *maṇipūra* (solar plexus): willpower; 4) *anāhata* (heart center): direct cognition; 5) *viśuddha* (throat): divine love; 6) *ājñā* (third eye): divine sight; 7) *sahasrāra* (crown of head): illumination, Godliness. The seven lower *chakras* are 1) *atāla* (hips): fear and lust; 2) *vitala* (thighs): raging anger; 3) *sutāla* (knees): retaliatory jealousy; 4) *talātāla* (calves): prolonged mental confusion; 5) *rasātāla* (ankles): selfishness; 6) *mahātāla* (feet): absence of conscience; 7) *pātāla* (located in the soles of the feet): murder and malice.

chandra: चन्द्र “The moon.” Of central importance in Hindu astrology and in the calculation of the festival calendar. Considered the ruler of emotion.

charyā mārga: चर्यामार्ग A term used interchangeably with *charyā pāda* in *Merging with Śiva*. See: *charyā pāda*.

charyā pāda: चर्यापाद “Conduct stage.” Stage of service and character building. See: *pāda*.

chitta: चित्त “Mind; consciousness.” Mind-stuff. On the personal level, it is that in which mental impressions and experi-

ences are recorded. Seat of the conscious, subconscious and superconscious states.

clear white light: See: *light*.

cloistered: Secluded, as in a monastery.

cognition: Knowing; perception. Knowledge reached through intuitive, superconscious faculties rather than by intellect alone.

concentration: Uninterrupted, sustained attention. See: *rāja yoga*.

conscience: The inner sense of right and wrong, sometimes called “the knowing voice of the soul.” However, the conscience is affected by the individual’s training and belief patterns, and is therefore not necessarily a perfect reflection of *dharma*. It is the subconscious of the person—the sum total of past impressions and training—that defines the credal structure and colors the conscience and either clearly reflects or distorts superconscious wisdom.

conscious mind: The external, everyday state of consciousness. See: *mind*.

consciousness: *Chitta* or *chaitanya*. 1) A synonym for mind-stuff, *chitta*; or 2) the condition or power of perception, awareness, apprehension.

contemplation: Religious or mystical absorption beyond meditation.

conundrum: A paradoxical problem, riddle or mystery.

Cosmic Dance: See: *Naṭarāja*.

cosmos: The universe, or whole of creation, especially with reference to its order, harmony and completeness. See: *loka*, *three worlds*.

cranial chakras: The *ājñā*, or third-eye center, and the *sahasrāra*, at the top of the head near the pineal and pituitary glands. See: *chakra*.

crown chakra: *Sahasrāra chakra*. The thousand-petaled cranial center of divine consciousness. See: *chakra*.

D *dakṣiṇā*: दक्षिणा A fee or honorarium to a priest given at the completion of any rite; also given to *gurus* as a token of appreciation for their spiritual blessings.

Dakṣiṇāmūrti: दक्षिणामूर्ति “South-facing form.” Lord Śiva de-

picted sitting under a banyan tree, silently teaching four *ṛishis* at His feet.

darśana: दर्शन “Vision, sight.” Seeing the Divine. Beholding, with inner or outer vision, a temple image, Deity, holy person or place, with the desire to inwardly contact and receive the grace and blessings of the venerated being or beings. Also: “point of view,” doctrine or philosophy.

Deity: “God.” The image or *mūrti* installed in a temple or the Mahādeva the *mūrti* represents.

deva: देव “Shining one.” A being inhabiting the higher astral plane, in a subtle, nonphysical body. *Deva* is also used in scripture to mean “God or Deity.”

Devaloka: देवलोक “Plane of radiant beings.” A synonym of Mahaloka, the higher astral plane, realm of *anāhata chakra*. See: *loka*.

Devī: देवी “Goddess.” A name of Śakti, used especially in Śāktism. See: Śakti, Śāktism.

devonic: Of or relating to the *devas* or their world.

dhāraṇā: धारणा “Concentration.” From *dhṛi*, “to hold.” See: *rāja yoga*.

dharma: धर्म From *dhṛi*, “to sustain; carry, hold.” Hence *dharma* is “that which contains or upholds the cosmos.” *Dharma*, religion, is a complex and comprehensive term with many meanings, including divine law, law of being, way of righteousness, ethics, duty, responsibility, virtue, justice, goodness and truth. Essentially, *dharma* is the orderly fulfillment of an inherent nature or destiny. Relating to the soul, it is the mode of conduct most conducive to spiritual advancement, the right and righteous path.

dhyāna: ध्यान “Meditation.” See: *rāja yoga*.

dīkshā: दीक्षा “Initiation.” Solemn induction by which one is entered into a new realm of spiritual awareness and practice by a teacher or preceptor through bestowing of blessings. Denotes initial or deepened connection with the teacher and his lineage and is usually accompanied by ceremony.

Divine Mother: Śakti, especially as Personal Goddess, as con-

ceived of and worshiped by Śāktas. See: *Śakti*.

door of Brahman: Brahmarandhra, also called *nirvāna chakra*. A subtle or esoteric aperture in the crown of the head, the opening of *sushumṇā nāḍī* through which *kuṇḍalinī* enters in ultimate Self Realization, and the spirit escapes at death. Only the spirits of the truly pure leave the body in this way. *Saṁsārīs* take a downward course.

doordarshan (dūrdarśana): दूरदर्शन “Vision from afar;” “far seeing.” Hindi for television.

dosha: दोष “Bodily humor; individual constitution.” The three bodily humors, which according to *āyurveda* regulate the body, govern its proper functioning and determine its unique constitution. These are *vāta*, the air humor; *pitta*, the fire humor; and *kapha*, the water humor. *Vāta* humor is metabolic, nerve energy. *Pitta* is the catabolic, fire energy. *Kapha* is the anabolic, nutritive energy. The three *doshas* (*tridosha*) also give rise to the various emotions and correspond to the three *guṇas*, “qualities:” *sattva* (quiescence—*vāta*), *rajas* (activity—*pitta*) and *tamas* (inertia—*kapha*). See: *āyurveda*.

dualism: See: *dvaita-advaita*.

dvaita-advaita: द्वैत अद्वैत “Dual-nondual; twoness-not twoness.” *Dvaita* and *advaita* define two ends of a vast spectrum. —**dvaita:** Dualism, according to which reality is ultimately composed of two irreducible eternally separate principles, entities, truths, etc. God and soul, for example. —**dualistic:** Of or relating to dualism, concepts, writings, theories which treat dualities (good-and-evil, high-and-low, them-and-us) as fixed, rather than transcendable. —**pluralism:** A form of non-monism which emphasizes three or more eternally separate realities, e.g., God, soul and world. —**advaita:** The doctrine of nondualism or monism, that reality is ultimately composed of one whole principle, substance or God, with no independent parts. In essence, all is God. —**monistic theism:** A dipolar view which encompasses both monism and dualism.

E enlightenment: For Śaiva monists, Self Realization, *samādhi* without seed (*nirvikalpa samādhi*); the ultimate attainment, sometimes referred to as Paramātmā *darśana*, or as *ātma darśana*, “Self vision.”

ether: *Ākāśa*. Space, the most subtle of the five elements.

F folk-shamanic: Of or related to a tribal/village tradition in which the mystic priest, shaman, plays a central role, wielding powers of magic and spirituality.

formless: Philosophically, *atattva*, beyond the realm of form or substance. In describing the Self as formless, the words *timeless* and *spaceless* are given also to fully indicate this totally transcendent noncondition. See: *Paraśiva*.

G gandharvas: गन्धर्व Astral male lovers, counterparts to the female *apsarā*, mentioned in the *Vedas*.

ganglia: Groups of nerve cells that form a nerve center outside of the brain or spinal cord. A center of power, activity, or energy. (Singular: ganglion.) See *chakra*.

Gaṇeśa: गणेश “Lord of Categories.” Or: “Lord of attendants (*gaṇa*),” synonymous with *Gaṇapati*. Gaṇeśa is a Mahādeva, the beloved elephant-faced Deity honored by Hindus of every sect.

God: Supernal being. Either the Supreme God, Śiva, or one of the Mahādevas, great souls, who are among His creation.

Goddess: Female representation or manifestation of Divinity; Śakti or Devī. *Goddess* can refer to a female perception or depiction of a causal-plane being (Mahādeva) in its natural state, which is genderless, or it can refer to an astral-plane being residing in a female astral body.

God Realization: Direct and personal experience of the Divine within oneself. It can refer to either 1) *savikalpa samādhi* (“ecstasy with form”) in its various levels, from the experience of inner light to the realization of Satchidānanda, pure consciousness, or 2) *nirvikalpa samādhi* (“ecstasy without form”), union

with the transcendent Absolute, Paraśiva, the Self God, beyond time, form and space. In *Dancing with Śiva*, the expression *God Realization* is used to name both of the above *samādhis*, whereas *Self Realization* refers only to *nirvikalpa samādhi*.

Gods: Mahādevas, “great beings of light.” In *Dancing with Śiva*, the plural form of *God* refers to extremely advanced beings existing in their self-effulgent soul bodies in the causal plane.

grihastha: गृहस्थ “Householder.” Family man or woman. Family of a married couple and other relatives. Pertaining to family life.

grihastha dharma: गृहस्थधर्म “Householder law.” The virtues and ideals of family life.

gross plane: The physical world. See: *loka, three worlds*.

gulika kāla: गुलिक काल An auspicious period of time (about 90 minutes) which occurs at a different time each day according to the astrological configuration indicated on the *pañchaṅga* calendar.

guru: गुरु “Weighty one,” indicating an authority of great knowledge or skill. A teacher or guide in any subject, such as music, dance, sculpture, but especially religion. Often preceded by a qualifying prefix. Hence, *kulaguru* (family teacher), *vīnaguru* (*vīṇa* teacher) and *satguru* (spiritual preceptor).

guru bhakti: गुरुभक्ति Devotion to the teacher. The attitude of humility, love and ideation held by a student in any field of study. In the spiritual realm, the devotee strives to see the *guru* as his higher Self.

guru mahāsannidhānam: गुरु महासन्निधानम् Spiritual head of a traditional *aadheenam*, or monastery/temple complex.

guru paramparā: गुरुपरंपरा “Preceptorial succession” (literally, “from one to another”). A line of spiritual *gurus* in authentic succession of initiation; the chain of mystical power and authorized continuity, passed from *guru* to *guru*. Cf: *sampradāya*.

guru-śishya system: गुरुशिष्य “Master-disciple system.” An important education system of Hinduism whereby the teacher conveys his knowledge and tradition to a student. Such knowledge,

whether it be Vedic-Āgamic art, architecture or spirituality, is imparted through the developing relationship between *guru* and disciple. See: *guru*, *guru bhakti*.

H Hanumān: हनुमान् (Hindi) “Large jawed.” The powerful monkey God-King of the epic, *Rāmāyaṇa*, and the central figure in the famous drama, *Hanumān-Nāṭaka*. This popular Deity is the perfect devoted servant to his master, Rāma.

haṭha yoga: हठ योग “Forceful yoga.” A system of physical and mental exercise developed in ancient times as a means of rejuvenation by *ṛishis* and *tapasvins* who meditated for long hours, and used today in preparing the body and mind for meditation. Esoterically, *ha* and *ṭha*, respectively, indicate the microcosmic sun (*ha*) and moon (*ṭha*), which symbolize the masculine current, *pingalā nāḍī*, and feminine current, *idā nāḍī*, in the human body.

heart chakra: *Anāhata chakra*. Center of direct cognition. See: *chakra*.

heaven: The celestial spheres, including the causal plane and the higher realms of the subtle plane, where souls rest and learn between births, and mature souls continue to evolve after *moksha*. See: *loka*.

hell: Naraka. An unhappy, mentally and emotionally congested, distressful area of consciousness. Hell is a state of mind that can be experienced on the physical plane or in the sub-astral plane (Naraka) after death of the physical body. In the Hindu view, the hellish experience is not permanent, but a temporary condition of one’s own making.

himsā: हिंसा “Injury; harm; hurt.” Injuriousness, hostility—mental, verbal or physical. See: *ahimsā*.

Hindu: हिन्दु A follower of, or relating to, Hinduism. See: *Hinduism*.

Hinduism (Hindu Dharma): हिन्दुधर्म India’s indigenous religious and cultural system, followed today by nearly one billion adherents, mostly in India, but with the large diaspora in many other countries. Also called Sanātana Dharma, “Eternal Religion” and Vaidika Dharma, “Religion of the *Vedas*.” It is a family of myriad

faiths with four primary denominations: Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism, Śāktism and Smārtism.

holy ash: See: *vibhūti*.

I *idā nāḍī:* इडानाडी “Soothing channel.” The feminine psychic current flowing along the spine. See: *kuṇḍalinī, nāḍī*.

imkāif: (Shūm) No awareness, state beyond that of singular awareness. Not a word for Self Realization, but the entry into that nonexperience. Pronounced *eem-kaw-eef*. See: *Shūm-Tyeif*.

immanent: Indwelling; inherent and operating within.

inanimate: See: *animate-inanimate*.

incantation: *Japa* or *mantraprayoga*. The chanting of prayers, verses or formulas for magical or mystical purposes. Also such chants (*mantra*). See: *mantra*.

inner light: A moonlight-like glow that can be seen inside the head or throughout the body when the *vṛittis*, mental fluctuations, have been sufficiently quieted. To be able to see and bask in the inner light is a milestone on the path. See: *light, vṛitti*.

innerversity: Learning from within. A word coined by Sivaya Subramuniyaswami which indicates turning inward, through *yoga* concentration and meditation, to the vast superconscious state of mind; whence knowledge can be unfolded.

instinctive: “Natural” or “innate.” From the Latin *instinctus*, “impelling, instigating.” The drives and impulses that order the animal world and the physical and lower *astral* aspects of humans—for example, self-preservation, procreation, hunger and thirst, as well as the emotions of greed, hatred, anger, fear, lust and jealousy.

instinctive mind: *Manas chitta*. The lower mind, which controls the basic faculties of perception, movement, as well as ordinary thought and emotion.

internalized worship: *Yoga*. Worship or contact with God and Gods via meditation and contemplation rather than through external ritual.

intuition (to intuit): Direct understanding or cognition, which bypasses the process of reason.

invocation (to invoke): A “calling or summoning,” as to a God, saint, etc., for blessings and assistance. Also, a formal prayer or chant.

Ishta Devatā: इष्टदेवता “Cherished or chosen Deity.” The object of one’s special pious attention.

Ishta Mārga Saṁskāra: इष्टमार्ग संस्कार “Path-choosing rite.” A temple ceremony held around age 18 in which a young man voices his decision to either enter the *grihāstha āśrama* and accept the *dharma* of the householder, or in rare cases follow the *dharma* of the renunciate, beginning training as a monastic in preparation for taking holy orders of *sannyāsa*.

J jāgrat: जाग्रत् “Wakefulness.” The state of mind in which the senses are turned outward. Conscious mind. One of four states of consciousness, *avasthās*. See: *avasthā*.

japa: जप “Recitation.” Concentrated repeating of a *mantra*, silently or aloud, often counting on a *mālā* or strand of beads. A cure for pride and arrogance, jealousy, fear and confusion.

jīva: जीव “Living, existing.” From *jīv*, “to live.” The individual soul, *ātman*, during its embodied state, bound by the three *malas* (*āṇava*, *karma* and *māyā*).

jīvanmukta: जीवन्मुक्त “Liberated soul.” One who has attained *nirvikalpa samādhi*—the realization of the Self, Paraśiva—and is liberated from rebirth while living in a human body. (Contrasted with *videhamukta*, one liberated at the point of death.)

jīvanmukti: जीवन्मुक्ति “Liberation while living.” The state of the *jīvanmukta*.

jñāna: ज्ञान “Knowledge; wisdom.” The matured state of the soul. It is the wisdom that comes as an aftermath of the *kuṇḍalinī* breaking through the door of *Brahman* into the realization of Paraśiva, Absolute Reality. *Jñāna* is the awakened, superconscious state (*kāraṇa chitta*) flowing into daily life situations.

jñāna mārga: ज्ञानमार्ग A term used interchangeably with *jñāna*

pāda in *Merging with Śiva*. See: *jñāna pāda*.

jñāna pāda: ज्ञानपाद “Stage of wisdom.” The last of four successive *pādas* (stages); the culmination of the third stage, the *yoga pāda*. Also names the knowledge section of each *Āgama*. See: *pāda*.

jñāna yoga: ज्ञानयोग “Union of knowledge.” The esoteric spiritual practices of the fully enlightened being, or *jñānī*. An alternative meaning, popularized by Swami Vivekananda, is the quest for cognition through intellectual religious study, as one of four alternate paths to truth, the other three being *bhakti yoga*, *karma yoga* and *rāja yoga*. See: *jñāna*.

jñānī: ज्ञानी “Sage.” Possessing *jñāna*. See: *jñāna*.

joint family: *Kuṭumba* or *kula*. The Hindu social unit consisting of several generations of kindred living together under the same roof or in a joining compound.

jyotisha: ज्योतिष From *jyoti*, “light.” “The science of the lights (or stars),” Hindu astrology, analyzing events and circumstances, delineating character and determining auspicious moments, according to the positions and movements of heavenly bodies.

jyotisha śāstri: ज्योतिषशास्त्री “Astrologer.” A person well versed in the science of *jyotisha*. See: *jyotisha*.

K ***Kailāsa Paramparā***: कैलासपरंपरा A spiritual lineage of 163 *siddhas*, a major stream of the Nandinātha Sampradāya, proponents of the ancient philosophy of monistic Śaiva Siddhānta. The first of these masters was Maharishi Nandinatha (or Nandikesvara) 2,250 years ago, *satguru* to the great Tirumular, ca 200 BCE, and seven other disciples (as stated in the *Tirumantiram*). The lineage continued down the centuries and is alive today—the first recent *siddha* known being the “Rishi from the Himalayas,” so named because he descended from those holy mountains. In South India, he initiated Kadaitswami (ca 1810–1875), who in turn initiated Chellappaswami (1840–1915). Chellappan passed the mantle of authority to Siva Yogaswami (1872–1964), who in 1949 initiated Sivaya Subramuniaswami (1927–2001), who in

2001 ordained the current preceptor, Satguru Bodhinatha Veylanswami (1942–).

kaivalya: कैवल्य “Absolute oneness, aloneness; perfect detachment, freedom.” Liberation. *Kaivalya* is the term used by Patanjali and others in the *yoga* tradition to name the goal and fulfillment of *yoga*, the state of complete detachment from transmigration. It is virtually synonymous with *moksha*.

Kali Yuga: कलियुग “Dark Age.” The Kali Yuga is the last age in the repetitive cycle of four phases of time the universe passes through. It is comparable to the darkest part of the night, as the forces of ignorance are in full power and many subtle faculties of the soul are obscured.

kapha: कफ “Biological water.” One of the three bodily humors, called *dosha*, *kapha* is known as the water humor. Principle of cohesion. *Kapha* gives bodily structure and stability, lubricates, heals and bestows immunity. See: *āyurveda*, *dosha*.

karma: कर्म “Action,” “deed.” 1) any act or deed; 2) the principle of cause and effect; 3) a consequence or “fruit of action” (*karmaphala*) or “after effect” (*uttaraphala*), which sooner or later returns upon the doer. What we sow, we shall reap in this or future lives. Selfish, hateful acts (*pāpakarma* or *kukarma*) will bring suffering. Benevolent actions (*puṇyakarma* or *sukarma*) will bring loving reactions. *Karma* is threefold: *sañchita*, *prārabdha* and *kriyamāna*. —**sañchita karma:** “Accumulated actions.” The sum of all *karmas* of this life and past lives. —**prārabdha karma:** “Actions begun; set in motion.” That portion of *sañchita karma* that is bearing fruit and shaping the events and conditions of the current life, including the nature of one’s bodies, personal tendencies and associations. —**kriyamāna karma:** “Being made.” The *karma* being created and added to *sañchita* in this life, or in the inner worlds between births.

karma yoga: कर्मयोग “Union through action.” Selfless service.

Kashmīr Śaivism: कश्मीरशैव See: *Śaivism*, *six schools*.

Kauai Aadheenam: Monastery-temple complex founded by

Sivaya Subramuniyaswami in 1970; international headquarters of Saiva Siddhanta Church.

kośa: कोश “Sheath; vessel, container; layer.” Philosophically, five sheaths through which the soul functions simultaneously in the various planes or levels of existence. The *kośas* are —**annamaya kośa:** “Sheath composed of food.” The physical or odic body, coarsest of sheaths in comparison to the faculties of the soul, yet indispensable for evolution and Self Realization, because only within it can all fourteen *chakras* fully function. —**prāṇamaya kośa:** “Sheath composed of *prāṇa* (vital force).” The *prāṇic* or health body, or the etheric body or etheric double, coexisting within the physical body as its source of life, breath and vitality, and is its connection with the astral body. *Prāṇa* moves in the *prāṇamaya kośa* as five primary currents or *vayus*, “vital airs or winds.” *Prāṇamaya kośa* disintegrates at death along with the physical body. See: *prāṇa* —**manomaya kośa:** “Mind-formed sheath.” The lower astral body, from *manas*, “thought, will, wish.” The instinctive-intellectual sheath of ordinary thought, desire and emotion. The *manomaya kośa* takes form as the physical body develops and is discarded in the inner worlds before rebirth. —**vijñānamaya kośa:** “Sheath of cognition.” The mental or cognitive-intuitive sheath, also called the actinodic sheath. It is the vehicle of higher thought, *vijñāna*—understanding, knowing, direct cognition, wisdom, intuition and creativity. —**ānandamaya kośa:** “Body of bliss.” The intuitive-superconscious sheath or actinic-causal body. The inmost soul form (*svarūpa*), the ultimate foundation of all life, intelligence and higher faculties. Its essence is Parāśakti (Pure Consciousness) and Paraśiva (the Absolute). It is the soul itself, a body of light, also called *kāraṇa śarīra*, causal body, and *karmāśaya*, holder of *karmas* of this and all past lives.

Kṛishṇa: कृष्ण “Black.” Also related to *kṛishṭiḥ*, meaning “drawing, attracting.” One of the most popular Gods of the Hindu pantheon. He is worshiped by Vaishṇavas as the eighth *avatāra*,

incarnation, of Viṣṇu.

kriyā: क्रिया “Action.” 1) Doing of any kind. Specifically, religious action, especially rites or ceremonies. 2) Involuntary physical movements occurring during meditation that are pretended or caused by lack of emotional self-control or by the premature or unharnessed arousal of the *kuṇḍalinī*. 3) *Haṭha yoga* techniques for cleansing the mucous membranes. 4) The second stage of the Śaiva path, religious action, *kriyā pāda*. See: *pāda*.

kriyamāna karma: क्रियमानकर्म “Actions being made.” See: *karma*.

kriyā mārga: क्रियामार्ग A term used interchangeably with *kriyā pāda* in *Merging with Śiva*. See *kriyā pāda*.

kriyā pāda: क्रियापाद “Stage of religious action; worship.” The stage of worship and devotion, second of four progressive stages of maturation on the Śaiva Siddhānta path of attainment. See: *pāda*.

kukarma: कुकर्म “Unwholesome acts,” or the fruit thereof.

kulaguru: कुलगुरु “Family preceptor” or “family teacher.” The *kulaguru* guides the joint and extended family, particularly through the heads of families, and provides spiritual education. He may or may not be a *satguru*.

kuṇḍalinī: कुण्डलिनी “She who is coiled; serpent power.” The primordial cosmic energy in every individual which, at first, lies coiled like a serpent at the base of the spine and eventually, through the practice of *yoga*, rises up the *sushumṇā nāḍī*. As it rises, the *kuṇḍalinī* awakens each successive *chakra*. *Nirvikalpa samādhi*, enlightenment, comes as it pierces through the door of Brahman at the core of the *sahasrāra* and enters! *Kuṇḍalinī śakti* then returns to rest in any one of the seven *chakras*. Śivasāyujya is complete when the *kuṇḍalinī* arrives back in the *sahasrāra* and remains coiled in this crown *chakra*.

kuṇḍalinī yoga: कुण्डलिनीयोग “Uniting the serpent power.” Advanced meditative practices and *sādhana* techniques, a part of *rāja yoga*, performed to deliberately arouse the *kuṇḍalinī* power and guide it up the spine into the crown *chakra*, *sahasrāra*. In its highest form, this *yoga* is the natural result of *sādhana*s and

tapas well performed, rather than a distinct system of striving and teaching in its own right.

L **Lakshmi:** लक्ष्मी “Mark or sign,” often of success or prosperity. Śakti, the Universal Mother, as Goddess of wealth. The mythological consort of Viṣṇu. Prayers are offered to Lakshmi for wealth, beauty and peace.

liberation: *Moksha*, release from the bonds of *pāśa*, after which the soul is liberated from *saṁsāra* (the round of births and deaths). In Śaiva Siddhānta, *pāśa* is the threefold bondage of *āṇava*, *karma* and *māyā*, which limit and confine the soul to the reincarnational cycle so that it may evolve. *Moksha* is freedom from the fettering power of these bonds, which do not cease to exist, but no longer have the power to fetter or bind the soul.

light: In an ordinary sense, a form of energy which makes physical objects visible to the eye. In a religious, mystical sense, light also illumines inner objects (i.e., mental images). —**inner light:** light perceived inside the head and body, of which there are varying intensities. —**moon-like inner light:** Inner light perceived at a first level of intensity, glowing softly, much like the moon. —**clear white light:** Inner light at a high level of intensity, very clear and pure. When experienced fully, it is seen to be permeating all of existence, the universal substance of all form, inner and outer, pure consciousness, Satchidānanda.

loka: लोक “World, habitat, realm, or plane of existence.” From *loc*, “to shine, be bright, visible.” A dimension of manifest existence; cosmic region. Each *loka* reflects or involves a particular range of consciousness. The three primary *lokas* are 1) —**Bhūloka:** “Earth world.” The world perceived through the five senses, also called the gross plane, as it is the most dense of the worlds. 2) —**Antar-loka:** “Inner or in-between world.” Known in English as the subtle or astral plane, the intermediate dimension between the physical and causal worlds, where souls in their astral bodies sojourn between incarnations and when they sleep. 3) —**Śivaloka:**

“World of Śiva,” and of the Gods and highly evolved souls. The causal plane, also called Kāraṇaloka, existing deep within the Antarloka at a higher level of vibration, it is a world of superconsciousness and extremely refined energy. See also: *three worlds*.

M macrocosm: “Great world or universe.” See: *microcosm-macrocosm*.

Mahābhārata: महाभारत “Great (Epic) of India.” The world’s longest epic poem. The story of two kingdoms, the Pandavas and Kauravas, and their great battle of Kurukshetra near modern Delhi in approximately 1424 BCE. The *Bhagavad Gītā* is one section of the work. The *Mahābhārata* is revered as scripture by Vaiṣṇavites and Smārtas. See: *Bhagavad Gītā*.

Mahādeva: महादेव “Great shining one; God.” Referring either to God Śiva or any of the highly evolved beings who live in the Śivaloka in their natural, effulgent soul bodies.

mahāpralaya: महाप्रलय “Great dissolution.” Total annihilation of the universe at the end of a *mahākālpa*. The absorption of all existence, including time, space and individual consciousness, all the *lokas* and their inhabitants into God Śiva. Then Śiva alone exists in His three perfections, until He again issues forth creation. During this incredibly vast period there are many partial dissolutions, *pralayas*, when either the Bhūloka or the Bhūloka and the Antarloka are destroyed.

mahāsamādhi: महासमाधि “Great ecstasy.” The death, or dropping off of the physical body, of a great soul, an event occasioned by tremendous blessings. Also names the shrine in which the remains of a great soul are entombed.

Maheśvara: महेश्वर “Great Lord.” The name of Śiva’s energy of veiling grace, one of five aspects of Parameśvara, the Primal Soul. *Maheśvara* is also a popular name for Lord Śiva as Primal Soul and personal Lord.

mahātala: महातल Sixth netherworld. Region of consciencelessness. See: *chakra*.

- maṇipūra chakra:** मणिपूरचक्र “Wheeled city of jewels.” Solar-plexus center of willpower. See: *chakra*.
- manomaya kośa:** मनोमयकोश “Mind-made sheath.” The instinctive-intellectual aspect of the soul’s subtle body (*sūkshma śarīra*), also called the odic-astral sheath. It is the sheath of ordinary thought, desire and emotion. The *manomaya kośa* is made up of odic *prāṇa* and is almost an exact duplicate of the physical body. This is the sheath of the subconscious mind; it can be easily disturbed and is sometimes called the emotional body. See: *kośa*.
- mantra:** मन्त्र “Mystic formula.” A sound, syllable, word or phrase endowed with special power, usually drawn from scripture.
- Mariyamman:** மாரியம்மன் “Smallpox Goddess,” protectress from plagues. See: *Amman*.
- maṭha:** मठ “Monastery.” See: *monastery*.
- maṭhavāsi:** मठवासि “Monastic; monastery dweller.” See: *monk*.
- mauna:** मौन The discipline of remaining silent.
- maya:** मय “Consisting or made of,” as in *manomaya*, “made of mind.”
- māyā:** माया “She who measures;” or “mirific energy.” The substance emanated from Śiva through which the world of form is manifested. Hence all creation is also termed *māyā*. It is the cosmic creative force, the principle of manifestation, ever in the process of creation, preservation and dissolution.
- meditation:** *Dhyāna*. Sustained concentration. Meditation describes a quiet, alert, powerfully concentrated state wherein new knowledge and insights are awakened from within as awareness focuses one-pointedly on an object or specific line of thought.
- mendicant:** A beggar; a wandering monk who lives on alms.
- mental body (sheath):** The higher-mind layer of the subtle or astral body in which the soul functions in the Maharloka of the Antarloka or subtle plane. In Sanskrit, the mental body is *vijñānamaya kośa*, “sheath of cognition.” See also: *kośa*.
- mental plane:** Names the refined strata of the subtle world. It is called Maharloka or Devaloka, realm of *anāhata chakra*. Here the soul is shrouded in the mental or cognitive sheath, *vijñā-*

namaya kośa.

merge: To lose distinctness or identity by being sunk in, immersed or absorbed. To unite or become one with something larger.

metaphysics: 1) The branch of philosophy dealing with first causes and nature of reality. 2) The science of mysticism.

Meykandar: மெய்கண்டார் “Truth seer.” The 13th-century Tamil theologian, author (or translator from the *Raurava Āgama*) of the *Śivajñānabodham*. Founder of the Meykandar Sampradāya of pluralistic Śaiva Siddhānta. See: *Śaiva Siddhānta*.

microcosm-macrocosm: “Little world” or “miniature universe” as compared with “great world.” *Microcosm* refers to the internal source of something larger or more external (macrocosm). In Hindu cosmology, the outer world is a macrocosm of the inner world, which is its microcosm and is mystically larger and more complex than the physical universe and functions at a higher rate of vibration and even a different rate of time. The microcosm precedes the macrocosm. Thus, the guiding principle of the Bhūloka comes from the Antarloka and Śivaloka. Consciousness precedes physical form.

mind (three phases): A perspective of mind as instinctive, intellectual and superconscious. —**instinctive mind.** *Manas chitta*, the seat of desire and governor of sensory and motor organs. —**intellectual mind.** *Buddhi chitta*, the faculty of thought and intelligence. —**superconscious mind:** *Kāraṇa chitta*, the strata of intuition, benevolence and spiritual sustenance. Its most refined essence is Parāsakti, or Satchidānanda, all-knowing, omnipresent consciousness, the One transcendental, self-luminous, divine mind common to all souls.

mind (five states): A view of the mind in five parts. —**conscious mind:** *Jāgrat chitta* (“wakeful consciousness”). The ordinary, waking, thinking state of mind. —**subconscious mind:** *Samskāra chitta* (“impression mind”). The part of mind “beneath” the conscious mind, the storehouse or recorder of all experience (whether remembered consciously or not)—the

holder of past impressions, reactions and desires. Also, the seat of involuntary physiological processes. —**subsubconscious mind:** *Vāsanā chitta* (“mind of subliminal traits”). The area of the subconscious mind formed when two thoughts or experiences of the same rate of intensity are sent into the subconscious at different times and, intermingling, give rise to a new and totally different rate of vibration. —**superconscious mind:** *Kāraṇa chitta*. The mind of light, the all-knowing intelligence of the soul. At its deepest level, the superconscious is Parāśakti, or Satchidānanda, the Divine Mind of God Śiva. —**subsuperconscious mind:** *Anukāraṇa chitta*. The superconscious mind working through the conscious and subconscious states, which brings forth intuition, clarity and insight.

moksha: मोक्ष “Liberation.” Release from transmigration, *saṁsāra*, the round of births and deaths, which occurs after *karma* has been resolved and *nirvikalpa samādhi*—realization of the Self, Paraśiva—has been attained. Same as *mukti*. See: *Purushārtha*.

monastery: “Place of solitariness.” *Maṭha*. The age-old tradition, carried forward from Lemurian times into the Hindu culture of India, a sacred residence where those of the same gender live under strict vows and work out their birth *karmas* in community toward realization of the Self. In monasteries, dedicated to transmutation of the sexual energies, celibacy is strictly upheld and there is no fraternizing with the opposite sex. The purpose of the monastery is to create an environment in which the monastic can balance the male and female energies (*piṅgala* and *idā*) within himself so that he lives in the spiritual, or *sushumṇā*, energy, which cannot be maintained in close association with the opposite sex.

monastic: A monk or nun (based on the Greek *monos*, “single,” “alone”). A man or woman who has withdrawn from the world and lives an austere, religious life, either alone or with others in a monastery. (Not to be confused with *monistic*, having to do with the doctrine of monism.) A monastery-dweller is a *maṭh-*

avāsi; the word *sādhū* is a rough equivalent for mendicant. See also: *monk*, *sannyāsin*.

monism: “Doctrine of oneness.” 1) The philosophical view that there is only one ultimate substance or principle. 2) The view that reality is a unified whole without independent parts. See also: *dvaita-advaita*.

monistic theism: Advaita Īśvaravāda. The doctrine that reality is a one whole or existence without independent parts, coupled with theism, the belief that God exists as a real, conscious, personal Supreme Being—two perspectives ordinarily considered contradictory or mutually exclusive, since theism implies dualism.

monk: A celibate man wholly dedicated to religious life, either cenobitic (residing with others in a monastery) or anchoritic (living alone, as a hermit or mendicant). A synonym for *monastic*. See: *monastic*, *sannyāsin*.

mukti: मुक्ति “Release,” “liberation.” A synonym for *moksha*.

mūlādhāra chakra: मूलधारचक्र “Root-support wheel.” Four-petaled psychic center at the base of the spine; governs memory. See: *chakra*.

mūrti: मूर्ति “Form; manifestation, embodiment, personification.” An image, icon or effigy of God or a God used during worship.

Murugan: முருகன் “Beautiful one,” a favorite name of Kārttikeya among the Tamils of South India, Sri Lanka and elsewhere.

N nāda: नाद “Sound; tone, vibration.” Metaphysically, the mystic sounds of the Eternal, of which the highest is the transcendent, Soundless Sound, Paranāda, the first vibration from which creation emanates. From Paranāda comes Praṇava, Aum, and further evolutes of *nāda*. These are experienced by the meditator as the *nādanāḍī śakti*, “energy current of sound,” heard pulsing through the nerve system as a steady high-pitched *hum*, much like a *tambura*, an electrical transformer, a swarm of bees or a *śruti* box.

nādanāḍī śakti: नादनाडीशक्ति “Energy current of sound.” See:

nāda.

nāḍī: नाडी “Conduit; river.” A nerve fiber or energy channel of the subtle (inner) bodies of man. It is said there are 72,000 *nāḍīs*. These interconnect the *chakras*. The three main *nāḍīs* are *idā*, *piṅgalā* and *sushumṇā*. —*idā*, also known as *chandra* (moon) *nāḍī*, is pink in color. It flows downward, ending on the left side of the body. This current is feminine in nature and is the channel of physical-emotional energy. —*piṅgalā*, also known as *sūrya* (sun) *nāḍī*, is blue in color. It flows upward, ending on the right side of the body. This current is masculine in nature and is the channel of intellectual-mental energy. —*sushumṇā* is the major nerve current which passes through the spinal column from the *mūlādhāra chakra* at the base to the *sahasrāra* at the crown of the head. It is the channel of *kuṇḍalinī*.

Namaḥ Śivāya: नमः शिवाय “Adoration to Śiva.” The supreme *mantra* of Śaivism, known as the *Pañchākshara*, or “five syllables.”

nāmakaraṇa: नामकरण “Name giving.” See: *saṁskāra*.

Nandinatha (Nandinātha): नन्दिनाथ “Lord of Nandi.” A name of Śiva. Also the first historically known *guru* of the Nandinātha Sampradāya. See: *Kailāsa Paramparā*, *Nātha Sampradāya*.

Nandinātha Sampradāya: नन्दिनाथसंप्रदाय See: *Nātha Sampradāya*.

Naraka: नरक Abode of darkness. Literally, “pertaining to man.” The nether worlds. Equivalent to the Western term *hell*, a gross region of the Antarloka. Naraka is a congested, distressful area where demonic beings and young souls may sojourn until they resolve the darksome *karmas* they have created. Here beings suffer the consequences of their own misdeeds in previous lives. Naraka is understood as having seven regions, called *talas*, corresponding to the states of consciousness of the seven lower *chakras*.

Natarāja: नटराज “King of Dance, or King of Dancers,” Śiva, the Primal Soul, Parameśvara, as the power, energy and life of all that exists, Śiva’s intricate state of Being in Manifestation.

Nātha: नाथ “Master, lord; adept.” An ancient Himalayan tradition of Śaiva-yoga mysticism whose first historically known

exponent was Nandikesvara (ca 250 BCE). *Nātha*—Self-Realized adept—designates the extraordinary ascetic masters (or devotees) of this school.

Nātha Sampradāya: नाथसंप्रदाय “Traditional doctrine of knowledge of masters,” a philosophical and *yogic* tradition of Śaivism whose origins are unknown. This oldest of Śaivite *sampradāyas* existing today consists of two major streams: the Nandinātha and the Ādinātha. The Nandinātha Sampradāya has had as exemplars Maharishi Nandinatha and his disciples: Patanjali (author of the *Yoga Sūtras*) and Tirumular (author of *Tiruman-tiram*). Among its representatives today are the successive *sid-dhars* of the Kailāsa Paramparā. The Ādinātha lineage’s known exemplars are Maharishi Adinatha, Matsyendranatha and Gorakshanatha, who founded a well-known order of *yogīs*. See also: *Kailāsa Paramparā*.

New Age: According to *Webster’s New World Dictionary*: “Of or pertaining to a cultural movement popular in the 1980s [and 90s] characterized by a concern with spiritual consciousness, and variously combining belief in reincarnation and astrology with such practices as meditation, vegetarianism and holistic medicine.”

Nirguṇa Brahman: निर्गुणब्रह्मन् “God without qualities.” See: *Brahman. nirvāṇī and upadeśī:* निर्वाणी उपदेशी *Nirvāṇī* means “extinguished one,” and *upadeśī* means “teacher.” In *Merging with Śiva*, these two terms have special meaning, similar to the Buddhist *arhat* and *bodhisattva*, naming the two earthly modes of the realized, liberated soul. After full illumination, the *jīvanmukta* has the choice to return to the world to help others along the path. This is the way of the *upadeśī* (akin to *bodhisattva*), exemplified by the benevolent *satguru* who leads seekers to the goal of God Realization. He may found and direct institutions and monastic lineages. The *nirvāṇī* (akin to *arhat*) abides at the pinnacle of consciousness, shunning all worldly involvement. He is typified by the silent ascetic, the reclusive sage.

nirvikalpa samādhi: निर्विकल्पसमाधि “Undifferentiated trance,

enstasy (*samādhi*) without form or seed.” The realization of the Self, Paraśiva, a state of oneness beyond all change or diversity; beyond time, form and space. See: *samādhi*.

niyama: नियम “Restraint.” See: *yama-niyama*.

Oblation: An offering or sacrifice ceremoniously given to a God or *guru*. See: *yajña*.

obscuration: The power to make obscure, to conceal or veil, as in Śiva’s veiling or obscuring grace.

obscuring grace: See: *tirodhana śakti*.

odic force: Spiritually magnetic—of or pertaining to consciousness within *aśuddha māyā*, the realm of the physical and lower astral planes. It is the force of attraction and repulsion between people, people and their things, and manifests as masculine (aggressive) and feminine (passive.). Odic force is a magnetic, sticky, binding substance that people seek to develop when they want to bind themselves together, such as in partnerships, marriage, *guru-śishya* relationships and friendships. See also: *actinic*.

Om: ओम् “Yes, verily.” The most sacred *mantra* of Hinduism. An alternate transliteration of *Aum* (the sounds A and U blend to become O). See: *Aum*.

P pada: पद “A step, pace, stride; footstep, trace.”

pāda: पाद “The foot (of men and animals); quarter-part, section; stage; path.” Names the major sections of the Āgamic texts and the corresponding stages of practice and unfoldment on the path to *moksha*. According to Śaiva Siddhānta, there are four *pādas*, which are successive and cumulative; i.e. in accomplishing each one the soul prepares itself for the next. —**charyā pāda:** “Good conduct stage.” Learning to live righteously, serve selflessly, performing *karma yoga*. —**kriyā pāda:** “Religious action; worship stage.” Stage of *bhakti yoga*, of cultivating devotion through performing *pūjā* and regular daily *sādhana*. —**yoga pāda:** Having matured in the *charyā* and *kriyā pādas*, the soul now turns

to internalized worship and *rāja yoga* under the guidance of a *satguru*. —*jñāna pāda*: “Stage of wisdom.” Once the soul has attained Realization, it is henceforth a wise one who lives out the life of the body, shedding blessings on mankind.

Pañchākshara Mantra: पञ्चाक्षरमन्त्र “Five-lettered chant.” Śaivism’s most sacred *mantra*.

pañchāṅga: पञ्चांग “five limbs, or parts.” The traditional Hindu almanac, so named for five basic elements—*tithi*, *nakshatra*, *kāraṇa*, *yoga* and *vara* (or *vasara*). It provides vital statistics and interpretations about astrological factors—planets and stars—aspects of our subtle environment which are unseen but strongly influence the subtle environment, the ebb of *karma* and the flow of forces between people. *Pañchāṅgams* are used to determine the optimum times for all activities.

pañcha nitya karma(s): पञ्चनित्यकर्म “Five constant duties:” 1) *dharma*, virtuous living, 2) *upāsana*, worship, 3) *utsava*, holy days, 4) *tīrthayātrā*, pilgrimage and 5) *saṁskāras*, sacraments.

pandit (paṇḍita): पण्डित (Also, *pundit*) A Hindu religious scholar or theologian, well versed in philosophy, liturgy, religious law and sacred science.

panentheism: “All-in-God doctrine.” The view that the universe is part of the being of God, as distinguished from *pantheism* (“all-is-God doctrine”), which identifies God with the total reality. In contrast, panentheism holds that God pervades the world, but is also beyond it. For the panentheist, God is in all, and all is in God. Panentheism is the technical term for monistic theism.

pantheism: “All-is-God doctrine.” Philosophical position in which God and the world are identical. To the pantheist, God is not a Personal Lord, nor a transcendent or formless Being, but is the totality of all existence, including universal laws, movement, matter, etc. See also: *panentheism*.

pāpa: पाप “Wickedness; sin, crime.” 1) Bad or evil. 2) Wrongful action. 3) Demerit earned through wrongdoing. *Pāpa* includes all forms of wrongdoing, from the simplest infraction to the most

heinous crime, such as premeditated murder. Each act of *pāpa* carries its *karmic* consequence, *karmaphala*, “fruit of action,” for which scriptures delineate specific penance for expiation. *Pāpa* is the opposite of *punya* (merit, virtue). See also: *punya*.

Parameśvara: परमेश्वर “Supreme Lord or Ruler.” God Śiva’s third perfection, Supreme Mahādeva, Śiva-Śakti, mother of the universe, the Primal Soul. In this perfection, as personal, father-mother God, Śiva is a person—who has a body, with head, arms and legs, etc.—who acts, wills, blesses, gives *darśana*, guides, creates, preserves, reabsorbs, obscures and enlightens.

paramparā: परंपरा “Uninterrupted succession.” A lineage.

Parāśakti: पराशक्ति “Supreme power; primal energy.” God Śiva’s second perfection, which is impersonal, immanent, and with form—the all-pervasive, Pure Consciousness and Primal Substance of all that exists, Satchidānanda, experienced by the diligent meditator as the underlying oneness flowing through all form. The experience is called *savikalpa samādhi*.

Paraśiva: परशिव “Transcendent Śiva.” The Self God, Śiva’s first perfection, Absolute Reality. Paraśiva is *That* which is beyond the grasp of consciousness, transcends time, form and space and defies description. To merge with the Absolute in mystic union is the ultimate goal of all incarnated souls, the reason for their living on this planet, and the deepest meaning of their experiences. Attainment of this is called Self Realization or *nirvikalpa samādhi*.

Pārvati: पार्वती “Mountain’s daughter,” the Universal Mother. Prayers are offered to Her for strength, health and eradication of impurities. Mythologically, Pārvati is wedded to Śiva.

Pāsupata Śaivism: पाशुपतशैव See: *Śaivism, six schools*.

penance: *Prāyaścitta*. Atonement, expiation. An act of devotion (*bhakti*), austerity (*tapas*) or discipline (*sukṛitya*) undertaken to soften or nullify the anticipated reaction to a past action.

perfections: Qualities, aspects, nature or dimensions that are perfect. God Śiva’s three perfections are Paraśiva, Parāśakti and

Parameśvara. See: *Parameśvara*, *Parāśakti*, *Paraśiva*.

Personal God: See: *Parameśvara*.

pineal gland: A small gland located at the roof of the thalamic region of the brain, scientifically little understood but related to sexual maturation and sleep cycles. It is of considerable importance esoterically as the reception point for external psychic contacts, consciousness expansion and as the terminal of the awakened *kuṇḍalinī* flame. It is masculine, or *piṅgalā*, in nature.

piṅgalā: पिंगला “Tawny channel.” The masculine psychic current flowing along the spine. See: *kuṇḍalinī*, *nāḍī*.

pitta: पित्त “Bile;” “fire.” One of the three bodily humors, called *dośhas*, *pitta* is known as the fire humor. It is the *āyurvedic* principle of bodily heat-energy. *Pitta dośha* governs nutritional absorption, body temperature and intelligence. See: *āyurveda*, *dośha*.

pluralism (pluralistic): Doctrine having three or more distinct and irreducible components, such as God, souls and world. See: *dvaita-advaita*.

prāṇa: प्राण Vital energy or life principle. Literally, “vital air,” from the root *praṇ*, “to breathe.” *Prāṇa* in the human body moves in the *prāṇamaya kośa* as five primary life currents known as *vāyus*, “vital airs or winds.” *Prāṇa* sometimes denotes the power or animating force of the cosmos, the sum total of all energy and forces.

prāṇamaya kośa: प्राणमयकोश “Life-energy sheath.” See: *kośa*.

Praṇava: प्रणव “Humming.” The mantra *Aum*, denoting God as the Primal Sound.

prāṇāyāma: प्राणायाम “Breath control.” Science of controlling *prāṇa* through breathing techniques in which the lengths of inhalation, retention and exhalation are modulated. *Prāṇāyāma* prepares the mind for meditation. See: *rāja yoga*.

prāṇic body: The subtle, life-giving sheath called *prāṇamaya kośa*. See: *kośa*.

prapatti: प्रपत्ति “Throwing oneself down.” *Bhakti*, total, unconditional submission to God, often coupled with an attitude of

helplessness and self-effacement.

prārabdha karma: प्रारब्धकर्म “Action that has been unleashed or aroused.” See: *karma*.

prasāda: प्रसाद “Clarity, brightness; grace.” 1) The virtue of serenity and graciousness. 2) Food offered to the Deity or the *guru*, or the blessed remnants of such food. 3) Any propitiatory offering.

pratyabhijñā: प्रत्यभिज्ञा “Recognition or recollection,” from “knowledge” (*jñāna*) which “faces” (*abhi*) the knower and toward which he eventually “turns” (*prati*). A concept of Kashmir Śaivism which denotes the devotee’s recognition, as a result of the *guru*’s grace, of the Truth that ever was—that Śiva is indeed everywhere, and the soul is already united with Him.

pratyāhāra: प्रत्याहार “Withdrawal.” The drawing in of forces. In *yoga*, the withdrawal from external consciousness. Also a synonym for *pralaya*. See: *rāja yoga*.

prāyaśchitta: प्रायश्चित्त “Predominant thought or aim.” Penance.

prāyopaveśa: प्रायोपवेश “Resolving to die through fasting.” Self-willed death by fasting.

Pretaloka: प्रेतलोक “World of the departed.” The realm of the earth-bound souls. This lower region of Bhuvanloka is an astral duplicate of the physical world. See: *loka*.

Primal Soul: The uncreated, original, perfect soul—Śiva Parameśvara—who emanates from Himself the inner and outer universes and an infinite plurality of individual souls whose essence is identical with His essence. God’s personal aspect of Lord and Creator, depicted in many forms: Naṭarāja by Śaivites, Viṣṇu by Vaiṣṇavites, Devī by Śāktas.

Primal Sound: In Hinduism, sound is the first manifestation, even before light, in the creative scheme of things. The Primal Sound is also known as *Praṇava*, the sound of the *mula mantra*, “Aum.”

prostration: praṇāma: प्रणाम “Obeisance; bowing down.” Reverent salutation in which the head or body is bowed. —*ashṭāṅga*

praṇāma: “Eight-limbed obeisance.” The full body form for men, in which the hands, chest, forehead, knees and feet touch the ground (same as *śashtāṅga praṇāma*.) — **pañchāṅga praṇāma:** “five-limbed obeisance.” The woman’s form of prostration, in which the hands, head and legs touch the ground (with the ankles crossed, right over the left).

protocol: Customs of proper etiquette and ceremony, especially in relation to religious or political dignitaries.

pūjā: पूजा “Worship, adoration.” An Āgamic rite of worship performed in the home, temple or shrine, to the *mūrti*, *śrī pādukā*, or other consecrated object, or to a person, such as the *satguru*. Its inner purpose is to purify the atmosphere around the object worshiped, establish a connection with the inner worlds and invoke the presence of God, Gods or one’s *guru*. *Ātmārtha pūjā* is done for oneself and immediate family, usually at home in a private shrine. *Parārtha pūjā* is public *pūjā*, performed by authorized or ordained priests in a public shrine or temple.

pūjārī: पुजारी “Worshiper.” A general term for Hindu temple priests, as well as anyone performing *pūjā*.

pundit (paṇḍita): पण्डित See: *pandit*.

punarjanma: पुनर्जन्म “Reincarnation.” From *punaḥ*, “again and again,” and *janma*, “taking birth.” See: *reincarnation*.

puṇya: पुण्य “Holy; virtuous; auspicious.” 1) Good or righteous. 2) Meritorious action. 3) Merit earned through right thought, word and action. *Puṇya* includes all forms of doing good, from the simplest helpful deed to a lifetime of conscientious beneficence. *Puṇya* produces inner contentment, deep joy, the feeling of security and fearlessness. See: *pāpa*.

Pure Consciousness: See: *Parāśakti*, *Satchidānanda*.

puruṣa: पुरुष “The spirit that dwells in the body/in the universe.” Person; spirit; man. Metaphysically, the soul, neither male nor female. Also used in Yoga and Sāṅkhya for the transcendent Self. A synonym for *ātman*. *Puruṣa* can also refer to the Supreme Being or Soul, as it sometimes does in the *Upanishads*.

purusha dharma: पुरुषधर्म “A man’s code of duty and conduct.”
See: *dharmā*.

purushārtha: पुरुषार्थ “Human wealth or purpose.” The four pursuits in which people may legitimately engage, also called *chaturvarga*, “fourfold good”—a basic principle of Hindu ethics.
—*dharmā*: “Righteous living.” —*artha*: “Wealth.” —*kāma*: “Pleasure, love; enjoyment.” —*moksha*: “Liberation.” Freedom from rebirth.

Q **quantum:** Quantity or amount. In the quantum theory of modern science: a fixed basic unit, usually of energy.
—**quantum particles of light:** Light understood not as a continuum, but as traveling bundles each of a same intensity. Deeper still, these particles originate and resolve themselves in a one divine energy. —**at the quantum level** (of the mind): Deep within the mind, at the most subtle energy level.

R **rāja yoga:** राजयोग “King of *yogas*.” Also known as *ashtāṅga yoga*, “eight-limbed *yoga*,” the system of eight progressive stages to Illumination: 1) —*yama*: “Restraint.” Virtuous and moral living 2) —*niyama*: “Observance.” Religious practices which cultivate the qualities of the higher nature. 3) —*āsana*: “Seat or posture.” 4) —*prāṇāyāma*: “Mastering life force.” Breath control. 5) —*pratyāhāra*: “Withdrawal.” Withdrawing consciousness from the physical senses. 6) —*dhāraṇā*: “Concentration.” Guiding the flow of consciousness. 7) —*dhyāna*: “Meditation.” 8) —*samādhi*: “Enstasy,” “sameness, contemplation/realization.”
Ramakrishna (Rāmākṛiṣṇa): रामकृष्ण (1836–1886) One of the great saints and mystics of modern Hinduism, and an exemplar of monistic theism—fervent devotee of Mother Kālī and staunch monist who taught oneness and the pursuit of *nirvikalpa samādhi*, realization of the Absolute.

rasātala: रसातल “Subterranean region.” The fifth *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, centered in the ankles. Region of selfishness, self-

centeredness and possessiveness. See: *chakra, loka, Naraka*.

reincarnation: “Re-entering the flesh.” *Punarjanma*; metempsychosis. The process wherein souls take on a physical body through the birth process. See also: *moksha, saṁsāra*.

relative reality: *Māyā*. That which is ever changing and changeable, manifest existence, which is not an illusion but is also not Absolute Reality, which is eternal and unchanging. See also: *Absolute Reality, māyā*.

Rig Veda: ऋग्वेद “*Veda* of verse (*rik*).” The first and oldest of the four *Veda* corpora of revealed scriptures (*śruti*), including a hymn collection (*Saṁhitā*), priestly explanatory manuals (*Brāhmaṇas*), forest treatises (*Āraṇyakas*) elaborating on the Vedic rites, and philosophical dialogs (*Upanishads*).

ṛishi: ऋषि “Seer.” A term for an enlightened being, emphasizing psychic perception and visionary wisdom.

Rudra: रुद्र “Controller of terrific powers;” or “red, shining one.” Śiva as the God of dissolution, the universal force of reabsorption. *Rudra-Śiva* is revered both as the “terrifying one” and the “lord of tears,” for He wields and controls the terrific powers which may cause lamentation among humans. See: *Śiva*.

rudrāksha: रुद्राक्ष “Eye of Rudra; or red-eyed.” Refers to the third eye, or *ājñā chakra*. Marble-sized, multi-faced, reddish-brown seeds from the *Eleocarpus ganitrus*, or blue marble tree, which are sacred to Śiva and a symbol of His compassion for humanity.

S śabda kośa: शब्दकोश “Sheath of sounds, or words.” Vocabulary; a dictionary or glossary of terms.

Sadāśiva: सदाशिव “Ever-auspicious.” A name of the Primal Soul, Śiva, a synonym for Parameśvara, which is expressed in the physical being of the *satguru*. *Sadāśiva* especially denotes the power of revealing grace, *anugraha śakti*, the third *tattva*, after which emerge Śiva’s other four divine powers.

sādhaka: साधक “Accomplished one; a devotee who performs *sādhana*.” A serious aspirant who has undertaken spiritual dis-

ciplines, is usually celibate and under the guidance of a *guru*. He wears white and may be under vows, but is not a *sannyāsin*.

sādhana: साधन “Effective means of attainment.” Religious or spiritual disciplines, such as *pūjā*, *yoga*, meditation, *japa*, fasting and austerity.

sādhana mārṅa: साधनमार्ग “The way of *sādhana*.” A term used by Sage Yogaswami to name his prescription for seekers of Truth—a path of intense effort, spiritual discipline and consistent inner transformation, as opposed to intellectual learning.

sādhū: साधु “Virtuous one; straight, unerring.” A holy man dedicated to the search for God. A *sādhū* may or may not be a *yogī* or a *sannyāsin*, or be connected in any way with a *guru* or legitimate lineage. *Sādhū*s usually have no fixed abode and travel unattached from place to place, often living on alms.

sādhvī: साध्वी Feminine of *sādhū*. See: *sādhū*.

Saḡuṅa Brahman: सगुणब्रह्मन् “God with qualities.” The Personal Lord. See: *Brahman*.

sahasrāra chakra: सहस्रारचक्र “Thousand-spoked wheel.” The cranial psychic force center. See: *chakra*.

Śaiva: शैव Of or relating to Śaivism or its adherents, of whom there are about 400 million in the world today. Same as *Śaivite*. See: *Śaivism*.

Śaiva Āgamas: शैव आगम The sectarian revealed scriptures of the Śaivas. Strongly theistic, they identify Śiva as the Supreme Lord, immanent and transcendent. They are in two main divisions: the 64 *Kashmīr Śaiva Āgamas* and the 28 *Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas*. The latter group are the fundamental sectarian scriptures of Śaiva Siddhānta.

Śaiva Dharma: शैव धर्म Another name for Śaivism. See: *Śaivism*.

Saiva Neri: சைவநெறி “Śaiva path.” Tamil term for Śaivism. See: *Śaivism*.

Śaiva Siddhānta: शैवसिद्धान्त “Final conclusions of Śaivism.” The most widespread and influential Śaivite school today, predominant especially among the Tamil people of Sri Lanka and South

India. It is the formalized theology of the divine revelations contained in the twenty-eight *Śaiva Āgamas*. For Śaiva Siddhāntins, Śiva is the totality of all, understood in three perfections: Parameśvara (the Personal Creator Lord), Parāśakti (the substratum of form) and Paraśiva (Absolute Reality which transcends all). Souls and world are identical in essence with Śiva, yet also differ in that they are evolving. A pluralistic stream arose in the middle ages from the teachings of Aghorasiva and Meykandar. See: *Śaivism*.

Śaivism (Śaiva): शैव The religion followed by those who worship Śiva as supreme God. Oldest of the four sects of Hinduism. The earliest historical evidence of Śaivism is from the 8,000-year-old Indus Valley civilization in the form of the famous seal of Śiva as Lord Paśupati, seated in a *yogic* pose. There are many schools of Śaivism, six of which are Śaiva Śiddhānta, Pāśupata Śaivism, Kashmīr Śaivism, Vīra Śaivism, Siddha Siddhānta and Śiva Advaita. They are based firmly on the *Vedas* and *Śaiva Āgamas*, and thus have much in common, including the following principle doctrines: 1) the five powers of Śiva—creation, preservation, destruction, revealing and concealing grace; 2) The three categories: Pati, *paśu* and *pāśa* (“God, souls and bonds”); 3) the three bonds: *āṇava*, *karma* and *māyā*; 4) the threefold power of Śiva: *icṅhā śakti*, *kriyā śakti* and *jñāna śakti*; 5) the thirty-six *tattvas*, or categories of existence; 6) the need for initiation from a *satguru*; 7) the power of *mantra*; 8) the four *pādas* (stages): *charyā* (selfless service), *kriyā* (devotion), *yoga* (meditation), and *jñāna* (illumination); 9) the belief in the Pañchākshara as the foremost *mantra*, and in *rudrāksha* and *vibhūti* as sacred aids to faith; 10) the beliefs in *satguru* (preceptor), Śivaliṅga (object of worship) and *saṅgama* (company of holy persons). See: *Śaivism (six schools)*.

Śaivism (six schools): Through history Śaivism has developed a vast array of lineages. Philosophically, six schools are most notable: Śaiva Siddhānta, Pāśupata Śaivism, Kashmīr Śaivism, Vīra

Śaivism, Siddha Siddhānta and Śiva Advaita. Śaiva Siddhānta first distinguished itself in the second century BCE through the masterful treatise of a Himalayan pilgrim to South India, Rishi Tirumular. It is Śaivism's most widespread and influential school. Pāśupata Śaivism emerged in the Himalayan hills over 25 centuries ago. Ancient writings chronicle it as a Śiva ascetic *yoga* path whose most renowned *guru* was Lakulisa. Kashmīr Śaivism, a strongly monistic lineage, arose from the revelatory aphorisms of Sri Vasugupta in the tenth century. Vira Śaivism took shape in India's Karnataka state in the 12th-century under the inspiration of Sri Basavanna. It is a dynamic, reformist sect, rejecting religious complexity and stressing each devotee's personal relationship with God. Siddha Siddhānta, also known as Gorakshanātha Śaivism, takes its name from the writings of the powerful 10th-century *yogī*, Sri Gorakshanatha, whose techniques for Śiva identity attracted a large monastic and householder following in North India and Nepal. Śiva Advaita is a Śaivite interpretation of the Vedānta Sūtras, based on the writings of Srikantha, a 12th-century scholar who sought to reconcile the *Upanishads* with the *Āgamas*.

Śaivite (Śaiva): शैव Of or relating to Śaivism or its adherents, of whom there are about 400 million in the world today. See: *Hinduism*, *Śaivism*.

Śakta: शक्त Of or relating to *Śāktism*. See: *Śāktism*.

sākshin: साक्षिन् "Ocular witness." Awareness, the witness consciousness of the soul.

Śakti: शक्ति "Power, energy." The active power or manifest energy of Śiva that pervades all of existence. Its most refined aspect is Parāśakti, or Satchidānanda, the pure consciousness and primal substratum of all form. This pristine, divine energy unfolds as *icchā śakti* (the power of desire, will, love), *kriyā śakti* (the power of action) and *jñāna śakti* (the power of wisdom, knowing), represented as the three prongs of Śiva's *triśūla*, or trident. From these arise the five powers of revealment, concealment,

dissolution, preservation and creation. In Śaiva Siddhānta, Śiva is All, and His divine energy, Śakti, is inseparable from Him. This unity is symbolized in the image of Ardhanārīśvara, “half-female God.” In popular, village Hinduism, the unity of Śiva and Śakti is replaced with the concept of Śiva and Śakti as separate entities. Śakti is represented as female, and Śiva as male. In Hindu temples, art and mythology, they are everywhere seen as the divine couple. Within the Śākta religion, the worship of the Goddess is paramount, in Her many fierce and benign forms. Śakti is most easily experienced by devotees as the sublime, bliss-inspiring energy that emanates from a holy person or sanctified Hindu temple.

Śāktism (Śākta): शक्त “Doctrine of power.” The religion followed by those who worship the Supreme as the Divine Mother—Śakti or Devī—in Her many forms, both gentle and fierce. Śāktism is one of the four primary sects of Hinduism. Śāktism’s first historical signs are thousands of female statuettes dated ca 5500 BCE recovered at the Mehrgarh village in India. In philosophy and practice, Śāktism greatly resembles Śaivism, both faiths promulgating, for example, the same ultimate goals of *advaitic* union with Śiva and *moksha*. But Śāktas worship Śakti as the Supreme Being exclusively, as the dynamic aspect of Divinity, while Śiva is considered solely transcendent and is not worshiped. See: *Śakti*.

samādhi: समाधि “Enstasy,” “standing within one’s Self.” “Sameness; contemplation; union, wholeness; completion, accomplishment.” *Samādhi* is the state of true *yoga*, in which the meditator and the object of meditation are one. *Samādhi* is of two levels. The first is *savikalpa samādhi* (“enstasy with form” or “seed”), identification or oneness with the essence of an object. Its highest form is the realization of the primal substratum or pure consciousness, Satchidānanda. The second is *nirvikalpa samādhi* (“enstasy without form” or “seed”), identification with the Self, in which all modes of consciousness are transcended and Absolute Reality, Paraśiva, beyond time, form and space, is experienced.

- sampradāya:** संप्रदाय “Tradition,” “transmission;” a philosophical or religious doctrine or lineage. A living stream of tradition or theology within Hinduism, passed on by oral training and initiation. Each *sampradāya* is often represented by many *paramparās*.
- saṁsāra:** संसार “Flow.” The phenomenal world. The cycle of birth, death and rebirth; the total pattern of successive earthly lives experienced by a soul.
- saṁsārī:** संसारी “One in *saṁsāra*,” “wanderer.” A soul during transmigration, immersed in or attached to mundane existence, hence not striving for liberation (*moksha*).
- saṁskāra:** संस्कार “Impression, activator; sanctification, preparation.” 1) The imprints left on the subconscious mind by experience (from this or previous lives), which then color all of life, one’s nature, responses, states of mind, etc. 2) A sacrament or rite done to mark a significant transition of life.
- Sanātana Dharma:** सनातनधर्म “Eternal religion” or “Everlasting path.” It is a traditional designation for the Hindu religion. See: *Hinduism*.
- sañchita karma:** सञ्चितकर्म “Accumulated action.” The accumulated consequence of an individual’s actions in this and past lives. See: *karma*.
- sanctum sanctorum:** “Holy of holies.” *Garbhagriha*. The most sacred part of a temple, usually a cave-like stone chamber, in which the main icon is installed.
- saṅkalpa:** संकल्प “Will; purpose; determination.” A solemn vow or declaration of purpose to perform any ritual observance.
- Sankara (Śaṅkara):** शङ्कर “Conferring happiness;” “propitious.” A name of Śiva. Also one of Hinduism’s most extraordinary monks, Adi Sankara (788–820), preeminent *guru* of the Smārta Sampradāya.
- San Mārga:** सन्मार्ग “True path.” The straight, spiritual path leading to the ultimate goal, Self Realization, without detouring into unnecessary psychic exploration or pointless development of

siddhis. *San Mārga* also names the *jñāna pāda*.

sannyāsa: संन्यास “Renunciation.” “Throwing down or abandoning.” *Sannyāsa* is the repudiation of the *dharma*, including the obligations and duties, of the householder and the acceptance of the even more demanding *dharma* of the renunciate.

sannyāsa āśrama: संन्यास आश्रम “Renunciate stage.” The period of life after age 72. See: *āśrama*.

sannyāsa dharma: संन्यासधर्म “Renunciate virtue.” The life, way and traditions of those who have irrevocably renounced prerogatives and obligations of the householder, including personal property, wealth, ambitions, social position and family ties, in favor of the full-time monastic quest for divine awakening, Self Realization and spiritual upliftment of humanity.

sannyāsa dīkshā: संन्यासदीक्षा “Renunciate initiation.”

sannyāsin: संन्यासिन “Renouncer.” One who has taken *sannyāsa dīkshā*. A Hindu monk, *swāmī*, and one of a world brotherhood (or holy order) of *sannyāsins*. Some are wanderers and others live in monasteries.

Sanskrit (Saṁskṛita): संस्कृत “Well-made,” “refined,” “perfected.” The classical sacerdotal language of ancient India, considered a pure vehicle for communication with the celestial worlds. It is the primary language in which Hindu scriptures are written, including the *Vedas* and *Āgamas*. Employed today as a liturgical, literary and scholarly language, but no longer as a spoken vernacular.

sapta ṛishis: सप्तऋषि Seven inner-plane masters who help guide the *karmas* of mankind.

Sarasvatī: सरस्वती “The flowing one.” Śakti, the Universal Mother; Goddess of the arts and learning, mythological consort of the God Brahmā.

Śaravaṇa: शरवण “Thicket of reeds.” Mythologically, a sacred Himalayan pond where Lord Kārttikeya was nurtured; esoterically understood as the lake of divine essence, or primal consciousness.

Śaravaṇabhava: शरवणभव “Thicket of reeds.” The *mantra* which

calls upon Lord Kārttikeya, son of God Śiva and guardian of the spiritual quest, who arose from Śaravaṇa, the sacred lake of primal consciousness. Its mirror-like surface symbolizes a quieted, peaceful mind. This *mantra* is prescribed for Śaivites not yet initiated by a *satguru* into the divine Pañchākshara Mantra, *Namaḥ Śivaya*.

sārī: (Hindi, साड़ी) The traditional garment of a Hindu woman.

śāstra: शास्त्र “Sacred text; teaching.” 1) Any religious or philosophical treatise, or body of writings. 2) A department of knowledge, a science; e.g., the *Dharma Śāstras* on religious law.

Satchidānanda (Sachchidānanda): सच्चिदानन्द “Existence-consciousness-bliss.” A synonym for *Parāśakti*. Lord Śiva’s Divine Mind and simultaneously the pure superconscious mind of each individual soul. Satchidānanda is perfect love and omniscient, omnipotent consciousness, the fountainhead of all existence, yet containing and permeating all existence. See: *Parāśakti*.

satguru (sadguru): सद्गुरु “True weighty one.” A spiritual preceptor of the highest attainment and authority—one who has realized the ultimate Truth, Paraśiva, through *nirvikalpa samādhi*—a *jīvanmukta* able to lead others securely along the spiritual path. He is always a *sannyāsin*, an unmarried renunciate. He is recognized and revered as the embodiment of God, Sadāśiva, the source of grace and liberation.

savikalpa samādhi: सविकल्पसमाधि “Enstasy with form (or seed).” See: *samādhi*.

sāyujya: सायुज्य “Intimate union.” Perpetual God Consciousness.

seed karma: Dormant or *anārabdha karma*. All past actions which have not yet “sprouted.” See: *karma*.

Self (Self God): God Śiva’s perfection of Absolute Reality, Paraśiva—That which abides at the core of every soul. See: *Paraśiva*.

Self Realization: Direct knowing of the Self God, Paraśiva. Self Realization is known in Sanskrit as *nirvikalpa samādhi*; “enstasy without form or seed;” the ultimate spiritual attainment (also called *asamprajñata samādhi*). See also: *God Realization*.

sevā: सेवा “Service,” *karma yoga*, an integral part of the spiritual path, doing selfless, useful work for others, such as volunteer work at a temple, without preference or thought of reward or personal gain. *Sevā*, or Sivathondu in Tamil, is the central practice of the *charyā pāda*. See: *pāda*.

shamanism (shamanic): The religion of certain indigenous peoples of Northeast Asia, based on the belief in good and evil spirits who can be contacted and influenced by priests, or shamans, generally during a state of altered consciousness or trance. Descriptive of many of the world’s native, tribal faiths, of a form of Śaktism, and of various groups that today carry forward the practices and traditions of shamanism.

Shūm-Tyeif: A Nātha mystical language of meditation (also simply known as Shūm) revealed in Switzerland in 1968 by Sivaya Subramuniyaswami. Its primary alphabet looks like this:

~ ॐ ॠ ॡ ॢ ॣ । ॥ ० १ २ ३ ४ ५ ६ ७ ८ ९

siddha: सिद्ध A “perfected one” or accomplished *yogī*, a person of great spiritual attainment or powers. See: *siddhi*.

Siddha Siddhānta: सिद्धसिद्धान्त See: *Śaivism, six schools*.

siddhānta: सिद्धान्त “Final attainments;” “final conclusions.” Ultimate understanding in any field.

siddhi: सिद्धि “Power, accomplishment; perfection.” Extraordinary powers of the soul, developed through consistent meditation and deliberate, often uncomfortable and grueling *tapas*, or awakened naturally through spiritual maturity and *yogic sādhana*.

silver cord: The astral substance that connects the physical body to the astral body which is disconnected at the time of death of the physical body.

sin: Intentional transgression of divine law. Akin to the Latin *sons*, “guilty.” Hinduism does not view sin as a crime against God, but as an act against *dharma*—moral order—and one’s own self. Sin is an *adharmic* course of action which automatically brings negative consequences.

- śishya:** शिष्य “A pupil or disciple,” especially one who has proven himself and been accepted by a *guru*.
- Śiva:** शिव The “Auspicious,” “Gracious,” or “Kindly one.” Supreme Being of the Śaivite religion. God Śiva is All and in all, simultaneously the creator and the creation, both immanent and transcendent. As personal Deity, He is Creator, Preserver and Destroyer. He is a one Being, perhaps best understood in three perfections: Parameśvara (Primal Soul), Parāśakti (Pure Consciousness) and Paraśiva (Absolute Reality). See: *Parameśvara, Parāśakti, Paraśiva, Naṭarāja, Śaivism*.
- Śiva Advaita:** शिवाद्वैत See: *Śaivism, six schools*.
- Śivaliṅga:** शिवलिङ्ग “Mark,” “Token” or “Sign of Śiva.” The most prevalent emblem of Śiva, especially Paraśiva, found in virtually all Śiva temples. A rounded, elliptical, aniconic image, usually set on a circular base.
- Śivaloka:** शिवलोक “Realm of Śiva.” See: *loka, three worlds*.
- Śivamaya:** शिवमय “Formed, made, consisting of” or “full of Śiva.” A part of the Śaivite affirmation of faith, denoting that all of existence consists of and is pervaded by Śiva. See: *māya, world*.
- Sivanadiyar:** சிவனடியார் “Servitor of Śiva.” Conveys a mystic relationship between the devotee and Śiva in which all spiritual, mental and physical actions are perceived as fulfilling the will and design of Śiva. See: *karma yoga*.
- Śivaness:** Quality of being Śiva or like Śiva, especially sharing in His divine state of consciousness.
- Śiva-Śakti:** शिवशक्ति Father-Mother God, both immanent and transcendent. A name for God Śiva encompassing His unmanifest Being and manifest energy. See: *Śakti, Śiva*.
- Śivasāyujya:** शिवसायुज्य “Intimate union with Śiva.” Becoming one with God. The state of perpetual Śiva consciousness; simultaneous perception of the inner and the outer. See: *jīvanmukti, kaivalya, moksha*.
- Sivathondan:** சிவதொண்டன் “Servant of Śiva.” Conveys the same mystic meaning as Sivanadiyar, denoting a devotee who

regularly performs actions dedicated to God Śiva; selfless work in service to others. See: *karma yoga*.

Sivathodu: சிவதொண்டு “Service to Śiva.” Akin to the concept of *karma yoga*. See: *karma yoga*.

śloka: श्लोक A verse, phrase, proverb or hymn of praise, usually composed in a specified meter. Especially a verse of two lines, each of sixteen syllables.

Smārta: स्मार्त “Of or related to *smṛiti*,” the secondary Hindu scriptures. See: *Smārtism*.

Smārta Sampradāya: स्मार्तसंप्रदाय The teaching tradition of Hinduism’s Smārta sect, formalized by Adi Sankara in the 9th century. See: *Smārtism*.

Smārtism: स्मार्त Sect based on the secondary scriptures (*smṛiti*). The most liberal of the four major Hindu denominations, an ancient Vedic *brāhminical* tradition (ca 700 BCE) which from the 9th century onward was guided and deeply influenced by the Advaita Vedānta teachings of the reformist Adi Sankara.

smṛiti: स्मृति That which is “remembered;” the tradition. Hinduism’s nonrevealed, secondary but deeply revered scriptures, derived from man’s insight and experience. *Smṛiti* speaks of secular matters—science, law, history, agriculture, etc.—as well as spiritual lore, ranging from day-to-day rules and regulations to superconscious outpourings.

soul: The real being of man, as distinguished from body, mind and emotions. The soul—known as *ātman* or *puruṣa*—is the sum of its two aspects, the form or body of the soul and the essence of the soul.

Soundless Sound: Paranāda. See: *nāda*.

Śrī Rudram: श्रीरुद्रम् “(Hymn) to the wielder of awesome powers.” Preeminent Vedic hymn to Lord Śiva as the God of dissolution, chanted daily in Śiva temples throughout India. It is in this long prayer, located in the *Yajur Veda*, *Taittirīya Saṁhitā*, in the middle of the first three *Vedas*, that the Śaivite *mantra Namaḥ Śivāya* first appears.

śruti: श्रुति That which is “heard.” Hinduism’s revealed scriptures, of supreme theological authority and spiritual value. They are timeless teachings transmitted to *rishis*, or seers, directly by God thousands of years ago. *Śruti* is thus said to be *apaurusheya*, “supra-human.” *Śruti* consists of the *Vedas* and the *Āgamas*, preserved through oral tradition and eventually written down in Sanskrit. See: *Āgamas*, *Vedas*.

strī dharma: स्त्रीधर्म “Womanly conduct.” See: *dharma*.

subconscious mind: *Sañskāra chitta*. See: *mind (five states)*.

Subramanya: सुब्रमण्य “Very pious; dear to holy men.” A Name of Lord Kārttikeya. See: *kārttikeya*.

Subramuniyaswami: சுப்பிரமணியசுவாமி Author of *Merging with Śiva*, 162nd *satguru* (1927–2001) of the Nandinātha Sampradāya’s Kailāsa Paramparā. He was recognized worldwide as one of foremost Hindu ministers of our times, contributing to the revival of Hinduism in immeasurable abundance. He was simultaneously a staunch defender of traditions, as the tried and proven ways of the past, and a fearless innovator, setting new patterns of life for contemporary humanity.

sub-subconscious mind: *Vāsanā chitta*. See: *mind (five states)*.

subsuperconscious mind: *Anukāraṇa chitta*. See: *mind (five states)*.

subtle body: *Sūkshma śarīra*, the nonphysical, astral body or vehicle in which the soul encases itself to function in the Antarloka, or subtle world.

subtle plane: See: *loka, three worlds*.

superconscious mind: *Kāraṇa chitta*. See: *mind (five states)*, *mind (three phases)*.

surrender: Giving up or yielding. Surrender to the Divine is called *prapatti*, a complete giving over of oneself to God’s will in total trust and abandonment. See: *bhakti, prapatti, sacrifice*.

Sūrya: सूर्य “Sun.” One of the principal Divinities of the *Vedas*, also prominent in the epics and *Purāṇas*. Śaivites revere Sūrya, the Sun God each morning as Śiva Sūrya. Smārtas and Vaishṇavas revere the golden orb as Sūrya Nārāyaṇa. As the source of light,

the sun is the most apparent image of Divinity available to man. **sushumṇā nāḍī:** सुषुम्णानाडी “Most gracious channel.” Central psychic nerve current within the spinal column. See: *kuṇḍalinī, nāḍī, samādhi*.

sushupti: सुषुप्ति “Deep sleep.” A state more refined than the ordinary dream state, the perceptions of which are often too subtle to be remembered upon awakening. This is the state of visionary dreams. One of the four *avasthās* described in the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad*. See: *consciousness*.

sutala: सुतल “Great abyss.” Region of obsessive jealousy and retaliation. The third *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, centered in the knees. See: *chakra*.

svādhishṭhāna: स्वाधिष्ठान “One’s own base.” See: *chakra*.

svapna: स्वप्न Sanskrit word for dream, second of the four states of consciousness, waking, dreaming, deep sleep and “the fourth.” See: *avasthā*.

swāmī: स्वामी “Lord; owner; self-possessed.” He who knows or is master of himself. A respectful title for a Hindu monk, usually a *sannyāsin*, an initiated, orange-robed renunciate, dedicated wholly to religious life. As a sign of respect, the term *swāmī* is sometimes applied more broadly to include non-monastics dedicated to spiritual work.

swāminī: स्वामिनी The feminine form of *swāmī*.

T tala: तल “Plane or world; level; base, bottom; abyss.” Root of the name of the seven realms of lower consciousness centered in the seven *chakras* below the *mūlādhāra chakra*. See: *chakra*.

talātala chakra: तलातल “Lower region.” The fourth *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, centered in the calves. Region of chronic mental confusion and unreasonable stubbornness. See: *chakra*.

Tamil: தமிழ் The ancient Dravidian language of the Tamils, a Caucasoid people of South India and Northern Sri Lanka, who have now migrated throughout the world. The official language of the state of Tamil Nadu, India, spoken by 60 million people.

tāṇḍava: ताण्डव “Exuberant dance.” Any vigorous dance sequence performed by a male dancer. There are many forms of *tāṇḍava*. Its prototype is Śiva’s dance of bliss, *ānanda tāṇḍava*.

tantra: तन्त्र “Loom, methodology.” 1) Most generally, a synonym for *śāstra*, “scripture.” 2) A synonym for the Āgamic texts, especially those of the Śākta faith, a class of Hindu scripture providing detailed instruction on all aspects of religion, mystic knowledge and science. The *tantras* are also associated with the Śaiva tradition. 3) A specific method, technique or spiritual practice within the Śaiva and Śākta traditions. 4) Disciplines and techniques with a strong emphasis on worship of the feminine force, often involving sexual encounters, with the purported goal of transformation and union with the Divine.

tapas: तपस् “Heat, fire; ardor.” Purificatory spiritual disciplines, severe austerity, penance and sacrifice. The endurance of pain, suffering, through the performance of extreme penance, religious austerity and mortification.

tapasvin: तपस्विन् One who performs *tapas* or is in the state of *tapas*. See: *tapas*.

That: When capitalized, this simple demonstrative refers uniquely to the Ultimate, Indescribable or Nameless Absolute. The Self God, Paraśiva.

Third World: Śivaloka, “realm of Śiva,” or Kāraṇaloka. The spiritual realm or causal plane of existence wherein Mahādevas and highly evolved souls live in their own self-effulgent forms. See: *loka*, *three worlds*.

three worlds: The three worlds of existence, *triloka*, are the primary hierarchical divisions of the cosmos. 1) Bhūloka: “Earth world,” the physical plane. 2) Antarloka: “Inner or in-between world,” the subtle or astral plane. 3) Śivaloka: “World of Śiva,” and of the Gods and highly evolved souls; the causal plane, also called Kāraṇaloka.

tirthayātrā: तीर्थयात्रा “Journeying to a holy place.” Pilgrimage. One of the five sacred Hindu duties (*pañcha nitya karmas*), to

journey periodically to one of the innumerable holy spots in India or other countries.

Tirumantiram: திருமந்திரம் “Holy incantation.” The Nandinātha Sampradāya’s oldest Tamil scripture; written ca 200 BCE by Rishi Tirumular. It is the earliest of the *Tirumurai* texts, and a vast storehouse of esoteric *yogic* and *tantric* knowledge. It contains the mystical essence of *rāja yoga* and *siddha yoga*, and the fundamental doctrines of the 28 *Śaiva Siddhānta Āgamas*, which are the heritage of the ancient pre-historic traditions of Śaivism. As the *Āgamas* themselves are now partially lost, the 3,047-verse *Tirumantiram* is a rare source of the complete *Āgamanta* (collection of *Āgamic* lore). See: *Tirumular, Tirumurai*.

Tirumular: திருமுலர் An illustrious *siddha yogī* and *ṛishi* of the Nandinātha Sampradāya’s Kailāsa Paramparā who came from the Himalayas (ca 200 BCE) to Tamil Nadu to compose the *Tirumantiram*. In this scripture he recorded the tenets of Śaivism in concise and precise verse form, based upon his own realizations and the supreme authority of the *Śaiva Āgamas* and the *Vedas*. Tirumular was a disciple of Maharishi Nandinatha. See: *Tirumantiram*.

Tirumurai: திருமுறை “Holy book.” A twelve-book collection of hymns and writings of South Indian Śaivite saints, compiled by Saint Nambiyandar Nambi (ca 1000). The first seven books are known as *Devarams*.

transcendent: Surpassing the limits of experience or manifest form. A quality of God Śiva as Absolute Reality, Paraśiva, the Self. Distinguished from immanent. See: *Paraśiva*.

Truth: When capitalized, ultimate knowing which is unchanging. Lower case (truth): honesty, integrity; virtue.

turiya: तुरीय “The fourth.” The superconscious state beyond waking, dreaming and deep sleep. One of the four states of consciousness, *avasthās*, described in the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad*. See: *consciousness*.

tyāga: त्याग “Letting go, detachment, renunciation.” Described in

the *Bhagavad Gītā* as the basic principle of *karma yoga*, detachment from the fruits of one's actions. See also: *vairāgya*.

U nmanifest: Not evident or perceivable. Philosophically, akin to *transcendent*. God Śiva is unmanifest in His formless perfection, *Paraśiva*. See: *Paraśiva*.

upadeśa: उपदेश “Advice; religious instruction.” Often given in question-and-answer form from *guru* to disciple. The *satguru*'s spiritual discourses.

upadeśī: उपदेशी A liberated soul who chooses to teach and actively help others to reach the goal of liberation. Contrasted with *nirvāṇī*. See: *nirvāṇī* and *upadeśī*.

Upanishad: उपनिषद् “Sitting near devotedly.” The fourth and final portion of the *Vedas*, expounding the secret, philosophical meaning of the Vedic hymns. The *Upanishads* are a collection of profound texts expounding the nature of God, soul and cosmos, exquisite renderings of the deepest Hindu thought. The number of *Upanishads* is given as 108. See: *Vedānta*, *Vedas*.

V vairāgī: वैरागी “Dispassionate one.” An ascetic who lives by the principle of *vairāgya*. Also names a particular class of mendicants, generally Vaishṇavas, of North India who have freed themselves from worldly desires. See also: *sannyāsa*, *tyāga*.

vairāgya: वैराग्य “Dispassion; aversion.” Freedom from passion. Distaste or disgust for worldliness because of spiritual awakening. Also, the constant renunciation of obstacles on the path to liberation. Ascetic or monastic life.

Vaishṇava: वैष्णव Of or relating to Vishṇu; same as Vaishṇavite. A follower of Lord Vishṇu or His incarnations. See: *Vaishṇavism*.

Vaishṇavism (Vaishṇava): वैष्णव One of the four major religions, or denominations of Hinduism, representing roughly half of the world's one billion Hindus. It gravitates around the worship of Lord Vishṇu as Personal God, His incarnations and their consorts. Vaishṇavism stresses the personal aspect of God over the

impersonal, and *bhakti* (devotion) as the true path to salvation.

Vaiṣṇavite: Of or relating to Viṣṇu; same as Vaiṣṇava. A follower of Viṣṇu or His incarnations. See: *Vaiṣṇavism*.

Vallabhacharya (Vallabhāchārya): वल्लभाचार्य “Beloved teacher.” Vaiṣṇava saint (ca 1475-1530) whose panentheistic Śuddha Advaita (pure nondualism) philosophy became the teaching of the nonascetic Vaiṣṇava sect that bears his name.

vāsanā: वासना “Abode.” Subconscious inclinations. From *vās*, “dwelling, residue, remainder.” The subliminal inclinations and habit patterns which, as driving forces, color and motivate one’s attitudes and future actions.

vāsanā dāha tantra: वासनादहतन्त्र “Purification of the subconscious by fire.” The practice of writing down and burning confessions, even long letters to loved ones or acquaintances, describing pains, expressing confusions and registering grievances and long-felt hurts—releasing the suppressed emotion as the fire consumes the paper. It is a magical healing process. See: *vāsanā*.

vāta: वात “Fluctuation.” *Vāyu*, “wind, air-ether.” One of the three bodily humors, called *dosha*, *vāta* is the air humor. Principle of circulation in the body. *Vāta dosha* governs such functions as breathing and movement of the muscles and tissues. See: *āyurveda*, *dosha*.

Veda: वेद “Wisdom.” Sagely revelations which comprise Hinduism’s most authoritative scripture. They, along with the *Āgamas*, are *śruti*, that which is “heard.” The *Vedas* are a body of dozens of holy texts known collectively as the *Veda*, or as the four *Vedas*: *Ṛig*, *Yajur*, *Sāma* and *Atharva*. In all they include over 100,000 verses, as well as additional prose. The knowledge imparted by the *Vedas* ranges from earthy devotion to high philosophy.

Vedānta: वेदान्त “Ultimate wisdom” or “final conclusions of the *Vedas*.” Vedānta is the system of thought embodied in the *Upanishads* (ca 1500-600 BCE), which give forth the ultimate conclusions of the *Vedas*. Through history there developed numerous Vedānta schools, ranging from pure dualism to absolute

monism.

Vedic-Āgamic: Simultaneously drawing from and complying with both of Hinduism's revealed scriptures (*śruti*), *Vedas* and *Āgamas*, which represent two complimentary, intertwining streams of history and tradition.

veiling grace: *Tirobhāva śakti*. The divine power that limits the soul's perception by binding or attaching the soul to the bonds of *āṇava*, *karma*, and *māyā*—enabling it to grow and evolve as an individual being.

vibhūti: विभूति “Resplendent, powerful.” Holy ash, prepared by burning cow dung along with other precious substances, milk, *ghee*, honey, etc. It symbolizes purity and is one of the main sacraments given at *pūjā* in all Śaivite temples and shrines.

videhamukti: विदेहमुक्ति “Disembodied liberation.” Release from reincarnation through *nirvikalpa samādhi*—the realization of the Self, Paraśiva—at the point of death.

vijñānamaya kośa: विज्ञानमयकोश “Sheath of cognition.” The soul's mental or cognitive-intuitive sheath, also called the actinodic sheath. See: *kośa*.

Vira Śaivism (Śaiva): वीरशैव “Heroic Śaivism.” See: *Śaivism, six schools*.

Vishṇu: विष्णु “All-pervasive.” Supreme Deity of the Vaishṇavite religion. God as personal Lord and Creator, the All-Loving Divine Personality, who periodically incarnates and lives a fully human life to reestablish *dharma* whenever necessary. In Śaivism, Vishṇu is Śiva's aspect as Preserver. See also: *Vaishṇavism*.

viśuddha chakra: विशुद्धचक्र “Wheel of purity.” The fifth *chakra*. Center of divine love. See: *chakra*.

viśvagrāsa: विश्वग्रास “Total absorption.” The final merger of the soul in Śiva at the fulfillment of its evolution. It is the ultimate union of the individual soul body with the body of Śiva—Parameśvara—within the Śivaloka, whence the soul was first emanated.

Viśvaguru: विश्वगुरु “World as teacher.” The playful personification

of the world as the *guru* of those with no *guru*. He is headmaster of the “school of hard knocks,” where students are left to their own devices and learn by their own mistakes rather than by following a traditional teacher.

vitala: वितल “Region of negation.” Region of raging anger and viciousness. The second *chakra* below the *mūlādhāra*, centered in the thighs. See: *chakra*.

Vivekananda, Swami (Vivekānanda): विवेकानन्द [1863-1902] Disciple of Sri Ramakrishna, credited, along with Tagore, Aurobindo, Radhakrishnan and others, with sparking the modern Hindu revival.

void: An empty space. Philosophically, emptiness itself. The absence of time, form and space. See: *Paraśiva*.

vṛitti: वृत्ति “Whirlpool, vortex.” In *yoga* psychology, the fluctuations of consciousness, the waves of mental activity (*chitta vṛitti*) of thought and perception.

Yajña: यज्ञ “Worship; sacrifice.” 1) Ritual in which oblations—*ghee*, grains, spices and exotic woods—are offered into a fire. 2) Acts of worship or sacrifice.

Yama: यम “The restrainer.” Hindu God of death; oversees the processes of death transition.

yama-niyama: यम नियम The first two of the eight limbs of *rāja yoga*, constituting Hinduism’s fundamental ethical codes, the *yamas* and *niyamas* are the essential foundation for all spiritual progress. The *yamas* are the ethical restraints; the *niyamas* are the religious practices. Here are the ten traditional *yamas* and ten *niyamas*. —**yamas:** 1) *ahimsā*: “Noninjury.” 2) **-satya:** “Truthfulness.” 3) *asteya*: “Nonstealing.” 4) **-brahmacharya:** “Divine conduct.” 5) *kshamā*: “Patience.” 6) *dhṛiti*: “Steadfastness.” 7) *dayā*: “Compassion.” 8) *ārjava*: “Honesty, straightforwardness.” 9) *mitāhāra*: “Moderate appetite.” 10) *śauca*: “Purity.” —**niyamas:** 1) *hrī*: “Remorse.” 2) *santoshā*: “Contentment.” 3) *dāna*: “Giving.” 4) *āstikya*: “Faith.” 5) *Īśvarapūjana*: “Wor-

ship of the Lord.” 6) *siddhānta śravaṇa*: “Scriptural audition.” 7) *mati*: “Cognition.” 8) *vrata*: “Sacred vows.” 9) *japa*: “Recitation.” 10) *tapas*: “Austerity.” See: *rāja yoga*.

yantra: यन्त्र “Vessel; container.” A mystic diagram composed of geometric and alphabetic figures—usually etched on small plates of gold, silver or copper. Sometimes rendered in three dimensions in stone or metal. The purpose of a *yantra* is to focus spiritual and mental energies, be it for health, wealth, childbearing or the invoking of one God or another.

yoga: योग “Union.” From *yuj*, “to yoke, harness, unite.” The philosophy, process, disciplines and practices whose purpose is the yoking of individual consciousness with transcendent or divine consciousness.

yoga mārga: योगमार्ग A term used interchangeably with *yoga pāda* in *Merging with Śiva*. See: *yoga pāda*.

yoga pāda: योगपाद The third of the successive stages in spiritual unfoldment in Śaiva Siddhānta, wherein the goal is Self Realization. See: *pāda*.

Yogaswami (Yogaswāmī): யோகசுவாமி “Master of *yoga*.” Sri Lanka’s most renowned contemporary spiritual master (1872–1964), a Sivajñāni and Nātha *siddhar* revered by both Hindus and Buddhists. He was trained by Satguru Chellappaswami, from whom he received *guru dīkshā*. Sage Yogaswami was the *satguru* of Sivaya Subramuniyaswami. Yogaswami conveyed his teachings songs called *Natchintanai*, “good thoughts.”

yoga tapas: योगतपस् “fiery union.” Relentless, sustained *yoga* practice that awakens the fiery *kuṇḍalīnī*, bringing the transforming heat of *tapas* and ultimately the repeated experience of the Self God, leading to *jñāna*, the wisdom state.

yogī: योगी One who practices *yoga*.

yoginī: योगिनी Feminine counterpart of *yogī*.

yuga: युग “Eon,” “age.” One of four ages which chart the duration of the world according to Hindu thought: Satya (or *Ṛita*), Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali.

Sanskṛit Pronunciation

Saṁskṛita Ucchāraṇam

संस्कृत उच्चारणम्

VOWELS

Vowels marked like ā are sounded twice as long as short vowels. The four diphthongs, *e, ai, o, au*, are always sounded long, but never marked as such.

अ	a	as in about
आ	ā	...tar, father
इ	i	...fill, lily
ई	ī	...machine
उ	u	...full, bush
ऊ	ū	...allude
ऋ	ṛi	...merrily
ॠ	ṛī	...marine
ऌ	ḷi	...revelry
ॡ	e	...prey
ऐ	ai	...aisle
ओ	o	...go, stone
औ	au	...Haus

GUTTURAL CONSONANTS

Sounded in the throat.

क्	k	...kite, seek
ख्	kh	...inkhorn
ग्	g	...gamble
घ्	gh	...loghouse
ङ्	ṅ	...sing

PALATAL CONSONANTS

Sounded at the roof of the mouth.

च्	ch	...church
छ्	çh	...much harm
ज्	j	...jump
झ्	jh	...hedgehog
ञ्	ñ	...hinge

CEREBRAL CONSONANTS

Tongue turned up and back against the roof of the mouth. (Also known as retroflex.)

ट्	ṭ	...true
ठ्	ṭh	...nuthook
ड्	ḍ	...drum
ढ्	ḍh	...redhaired
ण्	ṇ	...none

DENTAL CONSONANTS

Sounded with the tip of the tongue at the back of the upper front teeth.

त्	t	...tub
थ्	th	...anthill
द्	d	...dot
ध्	dh	...adhere
न्	n	...not

LABIAL CONSONANTS

Sounded at the lips.

प	p	...pot
फ	ph	...path
ब	b	...bear
भ	bh	...abhor
म	m	...map

SEMIVOWELS

य	y	...yet (palatal)
र	r	...road (cerebr.)
ल	l	...lull (dental)
व	v	...voice (labial), but more like <i>w</i> when following a consonant, as in <i>swāmī</i> .
ह	h	...hear (guttural)

SIBILANTS

श्	ś	...sure (palatal)
ष	sh	...shut (cerebral)
स्	s	...saint (dental)

ANUSVĀRA

The dot over Devanāgarī letters represents the nasal of the type of letter it precedes; e.g.: अंग = *aṅga*. It is transliterated as *m̐* or as the actual nasal (*ñ*, *ṅ*, *n*, *ṇ*, *m*). At the end of words it is sometimes म् (*m*).

VISĀRGA (:) ह

Pronounced like *huh* (with a short, stopping sound), or *hih*, after *i*, *ī* and *e*.

ASPIRATES

The *h* following a consonant indicates aspiration, the addition of air, as in *nātha* or *bhakti*. Thus, *th* should not be confused with *th* in the word *then*.

SPECIAL CHARACTERS

ज्ञ jñ ...a nasalized sound, like *gya* or *jya*.
क्ष = क् + ष ksh

CONVENTIONS

1. As a rule, the root forms of Sanskrit words are used (without case endings).
2. च्छ is transliterated as cçh, and च्च as cch.
3. Geographical and personal names (e.g., *Harwar*), are generally marked with diacriticals only as main lexicon entries.
4. Diacritical marks are not used for Tamil words.



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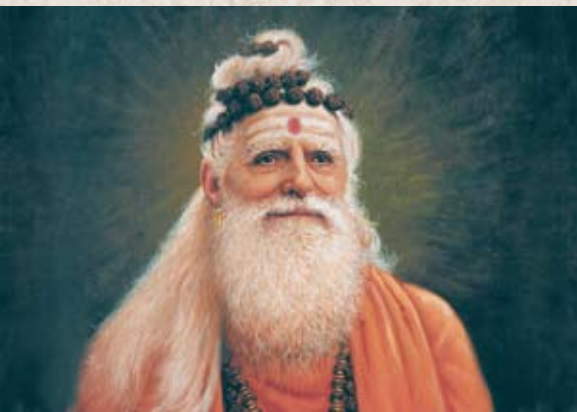
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