

DECEMBER 2017

WHAT IS CONSCIOUSNESS?

Heartfulness

COLLECTOR'S EDITION

DAAJI ON

The Inner
JOURNEY

Matter,
Energy and
THE ABSOLUTE

The Science of
SPIRITUALITY

Evolution of
CONSCIOUSNESS



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evolution of consciousness

Dear Readers,

During 2016 and 2017, Heartfulness Magazine has featured a series of articles entitled 'The Evolution of Consciousness' by Kamlesh D. Patel, also known as Daaji. The articles explain a range of perspectives on the evolution of consciousness and its central role in any practice or philosophy of human development.

Starting with an understanding of the vibrational qualities of the three bodies that make up all life forms, including human beings, Daaji goes on to describe the importance of the subtle body in our evolution. He links this with meditation practices and how they help the subtle body to evolve.

Daaji explores the vital role of Yogic Transmission in catalyzing that process, leading to the expansion of consciousness along the spectrum from the deepest recesses of the subconscious mind to the subtlest realms of superconsciousness, opening human potential.

Daaji also describes the basics of the chakra system of the human being in his series, 'March to Freedom', and the journey we make through this system as we evolve our consciousness. He also challenges us to ask, "Why should we want to expand our consciousness to a higher destiny?" and "How much freedom to do we have to choose our destiny?" At every stage throughout the series, he consistently comes back to the inner practice that is the key to the essence of our existence.

Finally, throughout these articles, Daaji ties our consciousness with the space-time continuum of the universe, linking science and spirituality in a natural way.

Enjoy this inspiring series! We will be back in January with a new look. All the best, and see you in 2018.

The Editors



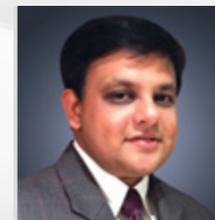
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Articles by Kamlesh D. Patel (Daaji)

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THE SCIENCE OF SPIRITUALITY



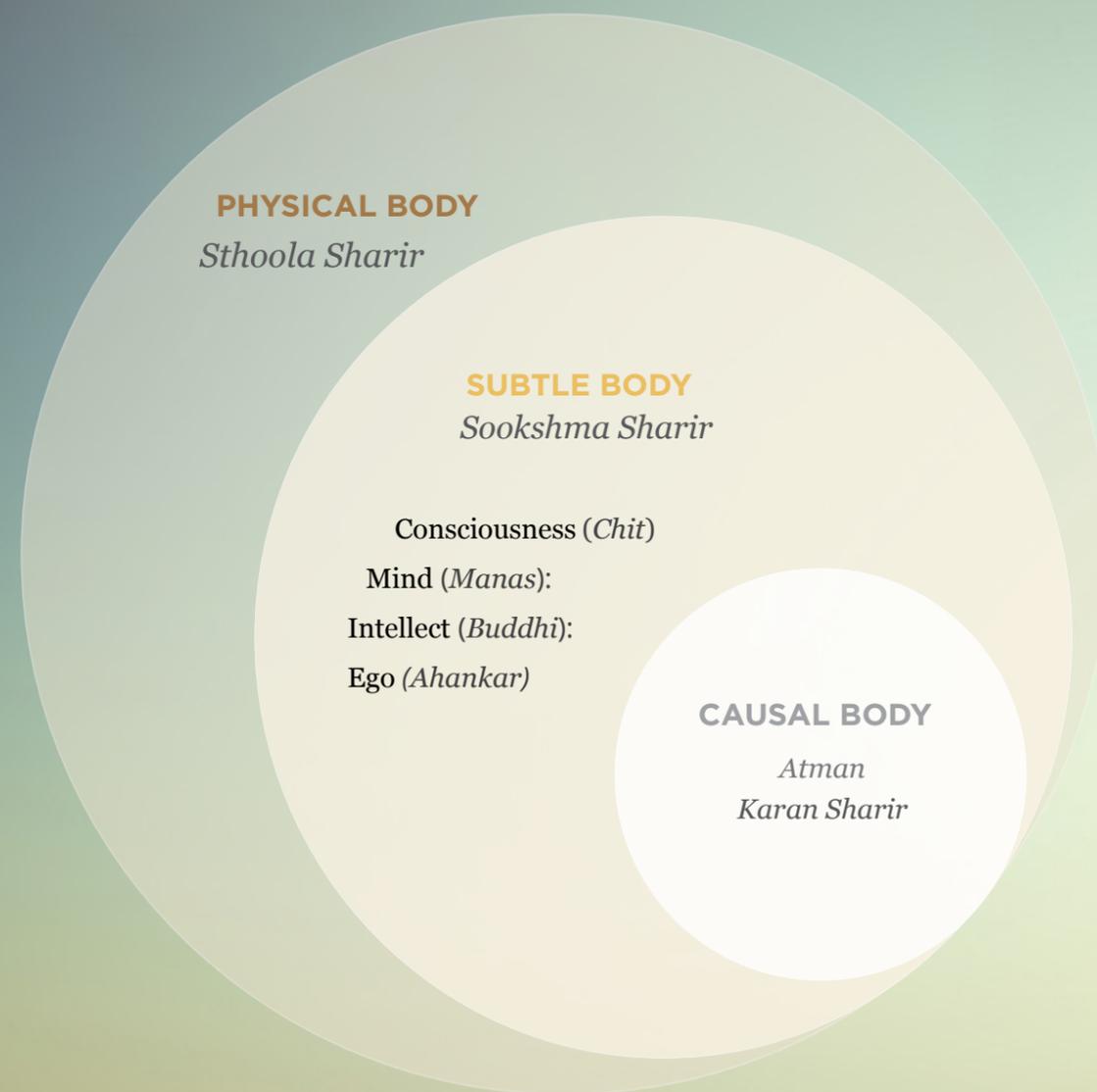
Evolution of CONSCIOUSNESS



ABOUT KAMLESH D. PATEL

Kamlesh Patel is the world teacher of Heartfulness, and the fourth spiritual Guide in the Sahaj Marg system of Raja Yoga. He oversees Heartfulness centers and ashrams in over 130 countries, and guides the thousands of certified Heartfulness trainers who are permitted to impart Yogic Transmission under his care.

Known to many as Daaji, he is also an innovator and researcher, equally at home in the inner world of spirituality and the outer world of science, blending the two into transcendental research on the evolution of consciousness. He is expanding our understanding of the purpose of human existence to a new level, so necessary at this pivotal time in human history.



THE PHYSICAL BODY, SUBTLE BODY AND SOUL

THE THREE BODIES

DAAJI describes the three main bodies of a human system, and how spiritual practices are designed to help our consciousness expand and evolve.

When we talk about weaving a destiny, a future for ourselves, what do we mean? In the worldly sense, we want a good life. From my one-bedroom apartment, I want a five-bedroom house; from owning one factory I hope to own ten factories; I dream of being promoted from the position of a clerk to that of a CEO; I want a happy and fulfilling family life, and to raise children who also have fulfilling lives.

From the spiritual perspective, we are concerned with a much bigger picture. In order to explore this further, we need to first describe the human make-up. We have a physical body, made of flesh and blood that is the most solid part of us. While it changes a little bit, according to how we live our lives, it doesn't change much. Physical evolution happens over longer periods than one lifetime, so we don't expect our physical body to evolve in this life. The physical body is associated with matter.

We also have a subtle body, also known as the astral or mental body, that is associated with energy and vibration. This is what we call the heart and mind.

The third body we have is our causal body, the cause of our existence, which is also known as the soul. The causal body is associated with the absolute state of nothingness, the substratum of existence. This causal body is pure, unchanging and immutable, so it does not need to evolve.

Spiritual destiny has everything to do with the purification of the subtle body by removing the layers that surround it.

With the physical and the causal bodies, we cannot expect to find evolutionary changes. When we want to change our thinking and our patterns of behavior, during any process of self-development, be it psychological or spiritual, what evolves or transforms is the middle layer, the subtle body. Spiritual destiny has everything to do with the purification of the subtle body by removing the layers that surround it.

In the mineral kingdom, all three bodies are so closely tied together that it is difficult to separate them; they don't have much freedom. To the extent to which they can free themselves vibrationally, they have different qualities and we give them names like Gold, Lead, Osmium, etc.

In the plant kingdom, the three bodies are a little looser. Look at a tree. How do you know it has a subtle body that responds? Have you seen flowers that open up when the sun comes? How do they know? They respond so nicely, turning as the sun moves. There is also a plant called *Lajvanti*, and when you touch it the leaves fold in. When there is a breeze, or even a storm, the leaves and branches of trees dance, but the moment someone tries to cut the branch of a tree, it becomes agitated. You can feel it. In plants, the subtle body and the causal body are very tightly tied together, and the subtle body cannot express much.

In animals, there is a still greater separation, and in human beings all the three bodies are labile or loosely connected. Among different human beings, there are also differences in separation. The three gunas in Vedic philosophy – *tamasic*, *rajasic* and *sattvik* – are based on how loosely or how strongly the bodies are connected.

In a *sattvik* person, the subtle body can move around, whereas a *tamasic* person is more stone-like. One person can think of something somewhere else, but another person with limited mental capacity may not grasp what is happening around them. Even if you tell them about it, their mind cannot

So at the level of the subtle body, we can choose to evolve and go beyond the animal level of existence to the human level to the divine level, by expanding our field of consciousness.

reach there. Sometimes, when we communicate, certain concepts are not understood by the other person because of the subtle body's inability to grasp them.

So at the level of the subtle body, we can choose to evolve and go beyond the animal level of existence to the human level to the divine level, by expanding our field of consciousness.

How can we describe the subtle body, and how does it evolve? There are four main functions of the subtle body that we will consider and they are:

Chit or consciousness,
Manas or our contemplative faculty,
Buddhi or intellect, and
Ahankar or ego.

They all have a role to play in our evolution, and in the next article we will explore them further ●



Bliss is the characteristic of the soul. Seeking that bliss outwardly through the senses, we become subject to pleasure and pain.

KAMLESH PATEL

PHOTOGRAPHY: GUILHERME STECANELLA

THE SUBTLE BODY

DAAJI explores the subtle body in depth, and how it evolves.

WHICH BODY EVOLVES?

Understanding that we have these three bodies – physical, subtle and causal – we can then ask, which of these bodies is evolving?

The soul is immutable. It is pure, absolute and unchangeable, and so the causal body does not evolve.

The physical body cannot change much. Its structure is fixed, although some minor changes can occur in weight, posture and fitness etc., but we cannot grow extra arms, wings to fly or a tail in this lifetime.

It is the subtle body that can evolve, so that we can design our destiny. It changes according to how we purify and simplify it, so that the joy of the soul shines and radiates from within, and through this process we find the evolution of consciousness.

THE SUBTLE BODY

The subtle body is a vibrational field; the heart-mind field. Depending on how we manage this field, it can either be turbulent and complex, like a roaring ocean during a storm, or, at the other extreme, it can be like a still pond where even a feather landing on the surface creates ripples. This is where a spiritual practice has a vital role to play, as it gives us the techniques to regulate, purify and simplify this field, bringing clarity, stillness and peace.

In yogic philosophy the heart is known as the field of action for the mind. This is a vast topic. Let's start to explore what this means.



There are four main functions of the subtle body within this vibrational field – consciousness (*chit*), thinking and feeling (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahankar*). They work in an interactive way together to make up what we know as the mind.

Of these four, consciousness is our focus here. The other three have their existence in consciousness. Consciousness is as good as a canvas to a painter, and within consciousness the play of the other three bodies is orchestrated daily.

How do we actively allow our consciousness to expand and evolve? It is not enough just to wish it so. We need to understand how a spiritual practice contributes towards this evolution by creating the conditions for stilling the mind progressively at deeper and deeper levels, and opening up the inner universe.

At a physical level, when I want to strengthen my body muscles I have to exercise my body. Similarly, for the mind to evolve so that consciousness can expand, I must use what belongs to that subtle plane of existence. First, it is important to understand that the evolution of consciousness has nothing to do with the acquisition of knowledge. Second, consciousness in itself will not expand or evolve without the help of *buddhi*, *manas* and *ahankar* to free it. Intellect has to evolve to help expand consciousness and ego must evolve, contributing to the evolution of consciousness.

MEDITATION

What does meditation have to do with this? We meditate to regulate our minds. An unregulated mind is pulled by wishes and desires, fears and habits, in many different directions. The mind becomes weak as it scatters in many different channels. In contrast, a regulated mind brings focus, and promotes well-being. Unless and until we meditate properly, and unless and until we regulate our minds properly, our consciousness will not evolve.

Manas, *buddhi* and *ahankar* are all refined and developed through meditation, especially *manas* as we learn to simplify our thinking process from many channels to one channel, then deepen it to feeling. Thus the habit of 'feeling' is slowly cultivated from 'thinking'.

DEVELOPING THE MEDITATIVE STATE FURTHER

Holding and nurturing the condition received in meditation throughout the day is a byproduct of good meditation, and helps us regulate and deepen the mind to an even higher level. When we are in this state of constant awareness or remembrance of the inner state, we do not allow our canvas to be spoiled, so consciousness remains afresh. The canvas remains clean and is not destroyed by the multifarious impressions we form.

Imagine the vibrational field of the heart and mind having a spectrum of consciousness spanning the subconscious, conscious and superconscious states. Swami Vivekananda once said, "Consciousness is a mere film between two oceans, the subconscious and the superconscious." Or you can imagine the subconscious as being like the ocean, consciousness like the surface of the land, and superconsciousness like the sky going out into the universe. As we evolve, our consciousness expands into both the



Unless and until we meditate properly, and unless and until we regulate our minds properly, our consciousness will not evolve.

subconscious and superconscious realms, traveling through the vast infinity of the human potential. Another way of saying this is that we go deeper and deeper into the vastness of the heart, from our starting point at the surface.

BUDDHI AND PRAYER

In this process of diving deeper, the intellect, *buddhi*, becomes more and more heart-based. Intuition and inspiration develop, and *buddhi* becomes fine-tuned, like a sensitive antenna picking up the signals of the heart. Intellect evolves into a state of wisdom. Often we think of a wise person as someone who makes wise choices, but here we go further into a different dimension where choice is no longer required, as the heart's wisdom is pure and correct.

There is a big difference between an intellectual person and a wise person, and here the spiritual practice of prayer helps us to move from mere intellect to wisdom. Prayer takes us into the heart, connecting us to the Source, where we are able to let go of any mistakes we have made, deciding not to make the same mistakes again. Is this not wisdom? Whereas if we succumb to making foolish

Wisdom is to utilize all our faculties at their best. Wisdom is to have the maximum output with the minimum input.

mistakes day after day, hour after hour, we are not becoming wiser. We become wiser when we wish to change from the bottom of our hearts and ask for help to do so. When we live with this attitude every moment, wisdom flourishes.

Wisdom is to utilize all our faculties at their best. Wisdom is to have the maximum output with the minimum input. With minimum action we have the maximum result. Only with a meditative mind, only through meditative acts in our day-to-day life, can we expect to have such good results.

PURIFYING AND SIMPLIFYING THE SUBTLE BODY THROUGH CLEANING

For this to happen, the heart-mind field has to be purified, otherwise it is like expecting to see the bottom of a lake through muddy, turbulent water. There is no clarity in a turbulent mind. The spiritual practice of cleaning past impressions is therefore also necessary for consciousness to evolve.

Ego can be like a black hole. It can have the greatest gravitational pull upon our consciousness. It will not allow consciousness to expand.

AHANKAR

The third aspect of the subtle body is ego, *ahankar*. Ego plays a vital role in whether or not expansion or evolution of consciousness occurs. Ego is often seen as the bad guy by spiritual practitioners of all traditions, but ego is also essential for our evolution. It is the active function of the mind – the doing, thinking function – and we need it in every aspect of daily life, even to have the craving to evolve. It gives us our identity. It is the activating or initiating force. If it is used wisely, it serves us well, like any other resource, but it is often misused, and this is what we commonly refer to as being egotistical. When ego is used for selfish purpose, we become arrogant and self-important, whereas if we constantly refine the ego, consciousness develops very rapidly.

What does it mean to refine the ego? The more humility we have, the less the egotistical proliferations. All great spiritual teachers have given so much importance to this aspect of character formation. They have valued this quality so highly that humility at any cost must be maintained, whether towards a child, a poor person or a stranger. The philosophy here is that there is nothing wrong in thinking yourself to be great, but always think the other person in front of you is greater.

Ego can be like a black hole. It can have the greatest gravitational pull upon our consciousness. It will not allow consciousness to expand. Just as the Earth's gravitational pull does not allow us to fall into infinite space, likewise our ego can hold consciousness to its core. An example of this is a very narcissistic person, who is undergoing a devolutionary process where consciousness contracts in on itself to its core, and can become like a stone. In contrast, by transcending the relationship with the ego by refining it, becoming more and more humble, consciousness can expand infinitely.

Ego manifests in many ways. For example, in a music concert, when I am happily playing my flute as a performer, it gives so much joy and the audience reciprocates accordingly. But as an artist, I will not be happy unless I surpass my previous performances all the time. The manifested ego makes me perform well. But to think that no one can play the flute better than myself is not a welcome manifestation of ego. Ego can be our best friend in helping us outperform our own past records.



MANAS

The fourth function of the subtle body is *manas*, which is the function of contemplation. During meditation, the first step is to bring the mind from many and varied thoughts to one thought, for example in Heartfulness it is the source of Divine Light in the heart. But it is not necessary that all throughout the meditation this thought should haunt us. The thought should leave at some point so that the object of thought can be felt in the heart.

If all you do is think this one thought throughout the meditation, you will have a headache and consciousness will not expand. This initial thought is just the springboard, to take us deeper so that we dissolve in the feeling of the presence of the Divine Light. You have to feel that presence and while you are feeling that presence slowly you disappear, and even feeling is gone. The ego is gone; you are not even there to experience it.

So as *manas* evolves through a meditation practice, feeling develops, and eventually we go beyond feeling to a state of being, then to a state of becoming, and finally unbecoming to merge into the Absolute state of existence.

CHIT

So *buddhi*, *manas* and *ahankar* evolve through spiritual practice, and with this the subtle body becomes lighter, purer and simpler, like the still pond with minimal ripples. With this, consciousness is able to expand and evolve.

What do we then do with this expanded consciousness we receive? Let's say I have a particular state of mind, and I am aware that the condition is so good. After meditation, I go off to work. It is not enough just to hold that condition; I must be able to radiate that condition wilfully, consciously, and with the confidence that wherever I go it will spread its fragrance on its own.

So after meditation think for a while that, "The condition which is within me is also outside me. Everything around me is absorbed in a similar state. When I look at people, or talk to them, or listen to them, or I am silent, let that condition spread everywhere." Let consciousness expand wherever it can go ●

THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

DAAJI introduces us to the inner journey that expands consciousness and the role of Yogic Transmission in that journey.

Just to recap, it is the subtle body that evolves, and as a result consciousness evolves, allowing us to transform and design our destiny. As we purify and simplify the subtle body, the joy of the soul radiates from within, and we are able to expand our consciousness into higher states, revealing more and more of our human potential.

Earlier, we looked at the process of refinement and purification of the subtle body, so that consciousness can expand and evolve. The purer and simpler our vibrational field, the more we can observe, explore, and expand across the spectrum of subconsciousness, consciousness and superconsciousness. In fact, without this cleaning of the subtle body, there is no real inner journey! As we progress, our ego becomes more and more refined, we develop wisdom and uncover the world of feeling and beyond, all of which are possible through a system of heart-based meditation with cleaning of the subtle body.

The purer and simpler our vibrational field, the more we can observe, explore, and expand across the spectrum of subconsciousness, consciousness and superconsciousness.

There is also a second process that aids our journey into higher and higher states of consciousness. Without it, we would not maneuver the obstacles, like with any journey into unknown universes. That vital ingredient is Yogic Transmission, known in the yogic literature as *pranahuti*. More particularly, it is Yogic Transmission utilized by a teacher of caliber.

We often think of spiritual teachers – yogis, mystics, saints, sufis and shamans – as being full of wisdom and love. They speak wisely, and inspire us with wonderful words and insights. But words on their own are not catalysts for inner transformation. Wisdom can encourage and inspire us to want to change and evolve, but it does not make the transformation happen.

While love is transformative, as we know from worldly life – love can work miracles, conquer all, and make the world go round – the love required for inner evolution of consciousness is a universal love that is beyond anything we normally understand in worldly life. Here the teacher’s role is paramount.

The transformative effect of Yogic Transmission has been one of the greatest mystical secrets throughout the ages. What was once passed down only from heart to heart by spiritual teachers of caliber to their immediate disciples, is now openly available to all humanity. And this process requires explanation.

The transformative effect of Yogic Transmission has been one of the greatest mystic secrets throughout the ages. What was once passed down only from heart to heart by spiritual teachers of caliber to their immediate disciples is now openly available to all humanity.

¹Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh, 2015. *Truth Eternal*, Shri Ram Chandra Mission, India

²Research by HearthMath, Paul Pearsall and others.

SOME BASIC SPIRITUAL ANATOMY

In the first article of this series, we spoke about the three bodies of a human being – the physical, mental and causal; body, mind and soul; matter, energy and absolute; the three major states of existence in physics also – energy solidified into matter, energy as vibrational field, and potential energy in its unmanifested state.

It starts to become really interesting when we realize that the center or connecting link of these three bodies is the heart.¹ That is why scientists these days are finding that the electromagnetic field of the heart is the dominant field in the human body.²

From this vibrational heart, currents radiate out into worldly life. Some are directed towards the physical world of matter – we need energy to exist and perform actions in the physical plane, e.g. walking, lifting, gardening, dancing, exercising, and so on.

Some of the heart’s currents are also directed into the mental sphere of existence: thinking, studying, teaching, research, problem-solving, or engaging in any other way in the field of knowledge and wisdom.

Now, in a person who wants evolution of consciousness, some of the heart’s current needs to turn inward, away from the external world.

We can also explain it like this: the stream of thoughts we constantly receive from the universe comes from the cosmic realm, where everything originates, what we call *Brahmanda Mandal* in Yoga. Imagine the stream is descending from above, down through the crown of the head into our system. The thought stream descends into the heart and in most people 99 percent of it goes outwards from the heart, to be used in worldly life.



When the inner journey starts, one stream of the heart’s current is diverted inwards. Not all, as we still have to live in the world, look after a family, manage a job etc., but enough so that the pull of the soul is felt.

On the left side of the chest, the currents are radiating outwards into worldly life from the point where the physical heart is found. When one stream is turned inwards, it turns towards the right side of the chest, to the point in the human spiritual anatomy known as the *atman chakra* or soul point. This is the spiritual heart of a human being.

The catalyst for this inward movement is a teacher of caliber, who utilizes Yogic Transmission for this purpose. As we then continue to meditate, we are drawn towards the inner universe and start to integrate it with worldly life, so that both continue side by side.

In a person who wants evolution of consciousness, some of the heart’s current needs to turn inward, away from the external world.

But this inward movement can be a difficult transition. It is like moving from one galaxy to another, and as with any change the mind rebels, feeling uncomfortable at first, much like when we move from one house, one city or one job to another. It takes a while to settle in. This is itself the first hurdle in our journey of expansion of consciousness. If we can cross that hurdle, the first step in the battle is won! Now we enter the realm of a different type of human consciousness – that of the immense peace and calm of the soul point. ... But this is just the beginning of our journey.

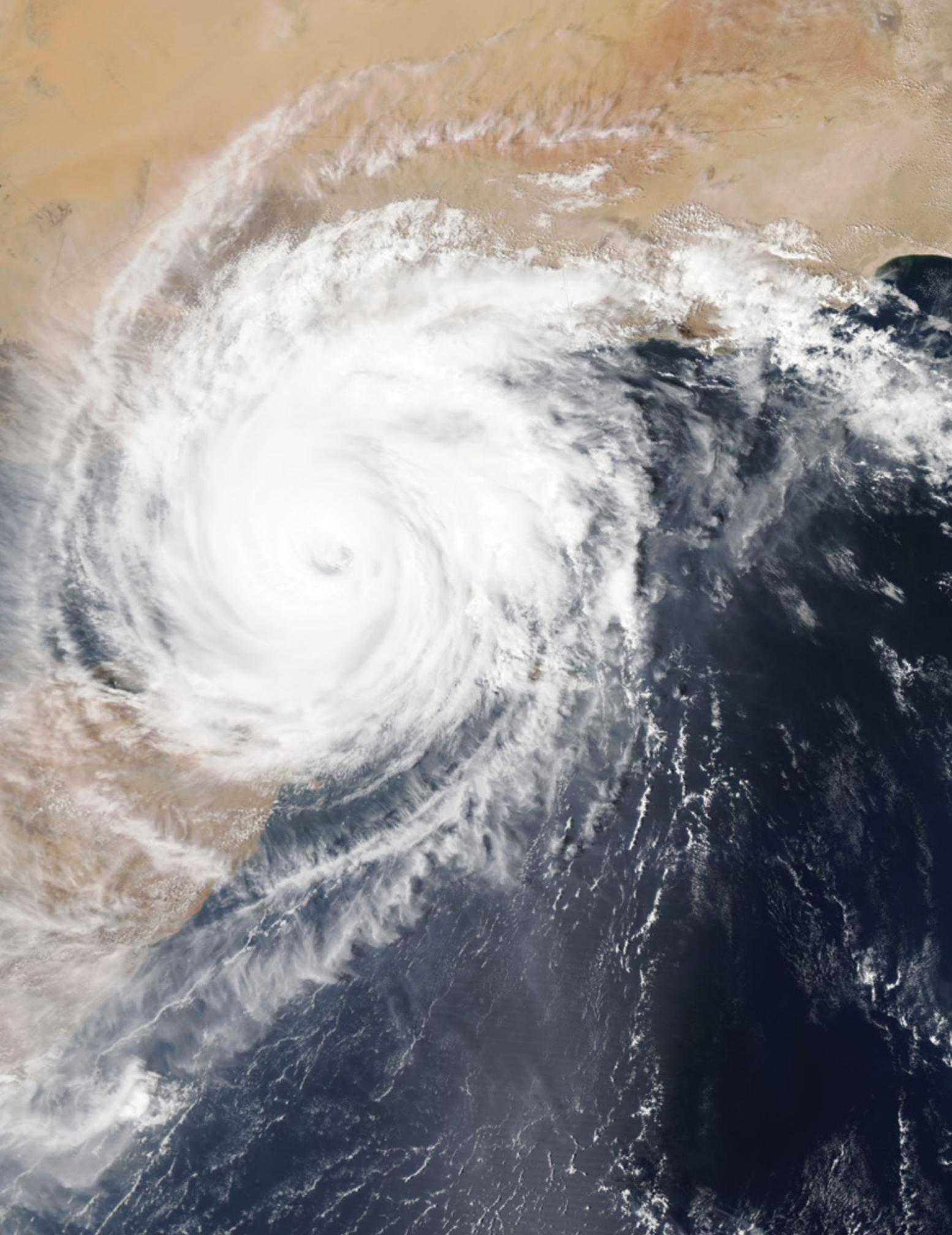
Next, we will explore in more detail how our minds keep us entangled in worldly issues that stifle the expansion of consciousness, and how we can address this through spiritual practice ●



**BE LIKE
THE
BAMBOO;**

the higher you grow
the deeper you bow.

CHINESE PROVERB



SPIRITUAL ANATOMY

DAAJI explores in more detail how we become entangled in worldly issues, how that affects our inner life, and what we can do to remove the impressions that form.

We have earlier explored the need to refine and purify the subtle body, so that consciousness can expand and evolve. In fact, without this cleaning of the subtle body, there is no real evolution. What needs to be cleaned from the subtle body?

Close your eyes for a moment and imagine the subtle body, the heart-mind field of a human being, as a vast field of subtle energy, of consciousness. If it helps, imagine it is like a large body of water. When the field is pure, it is absolutely still and calm, like a glassy lake. When it is disturbed by turbulence, it is choppy and rough, and the water is moving in all directions. Eddies of water form, creating currents.

Similarly, the subtle body can also be filled with turbulence, due to the many impressions that form on a daily basis. When these impressions become more fixed, they lodge in our system creating heaviness and knots of energy that eventually solidify. They are known in the yogic literature as *samskaras*, and because of their materiality they are the cause of our coming again and again into this

physical plane of existence through birth and rebirth.

So how do we form impressions in the subtle body? Let's understand the way they form, and how each impression is drawn by its vibration to a particular center in the human system. When we read the works of Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, he gives a beautiful example. You are walking home and you notice a beautiful rose flower blossoming, so you admire its beauty. The next time you are passing, you go near and admire its beauty in more detail. The next day, you feel like holding that flower in your hand and smelling it. Progressively a day may come when you say, "Let me take this rose bush home."

We are attracted to some things, like the beautiful rose flower and its fragrance, and we dislike others, like the thorns of the rose bush. Our orientation – our attraction or repulsion – creates an emotion in our heart. That emotion is not in the mind; it is always in the heart. It forms an impression. When we repeat that emotion again and again, it forms a deeper habitual pattern in our heart, that becomes more and more fixed as a *samskara*:

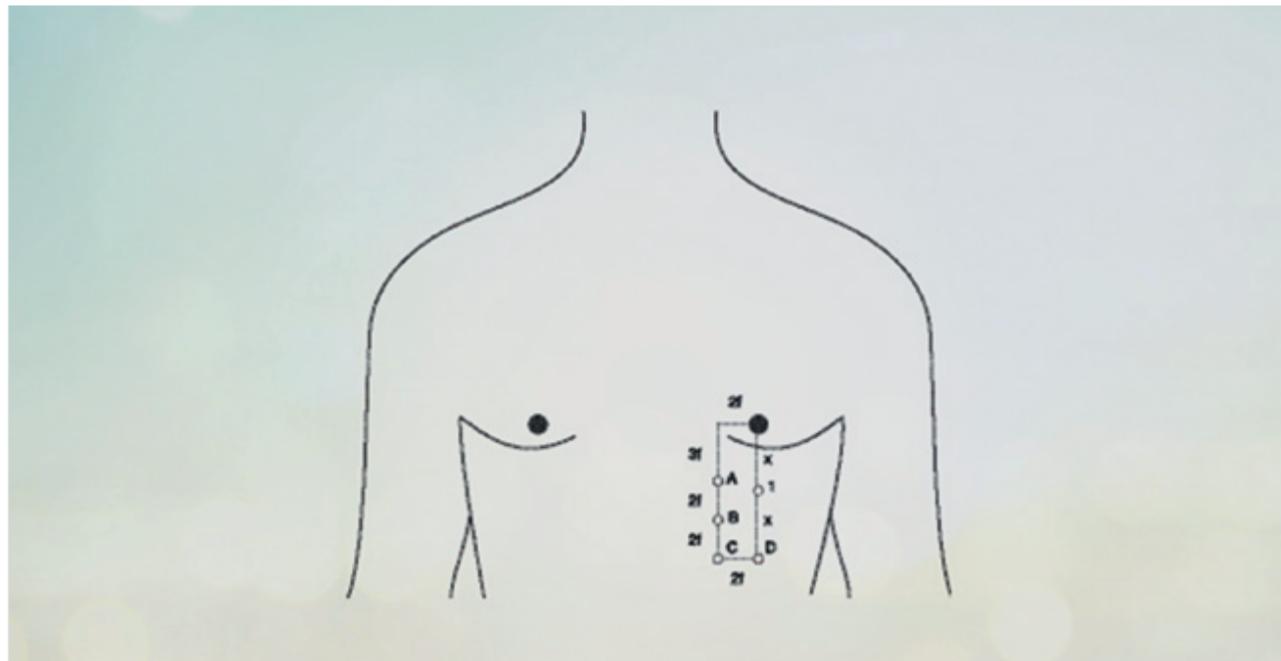
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“I don’t like spaghetti,” “I am scared of my boss,” “I love to go swimming,” “I do not trust men,” etc. etc. This belief then affects the way we live our daily life, coloring our perception and decisions.

We face different types of problems, issues, likes and dislikes in worldly life. When we are constantly worrying about our worldly problems, a level of anxiety and worry builds up, and accordingly this forms heaviness in the heart. No one can escape worldly worries and everything in moderation is tolerable. When we worry about something it is a good indication that we have to act upon it, but worrying about it perpetually, without acting to solve the problem, is only going to make it worse. When we constantly think about worldly problems and brood over them it affects point A, which is found close to the heart on the left side of the chest.

Another part of human existence is our attraction towards the opposite sex. Again, when it is in moderation it is tolerable, but when it overburdens us those impressions form at point B.

When we have strong likes and dislikes, what we also call prejudices for and against certain things and people, we may not speak about them but we are constantly



playing with them in our hearts, and they affect our thinking often without us knowing they are doing so. Those impressions are deposited at point C.

Guilt is one of the heaviest impressions we can form. It arises out of something we did not do but should have done, or something we did but should not have done. Guilt gives rise to so much heaviness in the heart and this heaviness is deposited at point D.

To find point A, measure two finger widths to the right side to your left nipple, and then three fingers down.

Go two finger widths further down from point A to find point B.

Go two finger widths further down from point B to find point C. It will be on the lowest rib, directly underneath points A and B.

Go two finger widths to the left to find point D, exactly below the nipple.

This is the anatomical aspect of these points to which we attract certain impressions. These are not the only points in the human system where impressions lodge, but they are some of the most important and a good place to start.

Why is it helpful to share this knowledge? So that we become more aware. When we notice impressions lodging, we can adjust ourselves and clean ourselves, instead of judging things all the time.

Self-acceptance is a very vital attitude in any process of personal transformation. Without it, we stay stuck in judgement and it is difficult to then let go of the impressions; instead we go round and round thinking about them, making them deeper. It also becomes difficult to develop love for ourselves without self-acceptance. Without self-love, we are handicapped, and love for others will also not develop. We will not get to first base.

Self-acceptance is a very vital attitude in any process of personal transformation. Without it, we stay stuck in judgement and it is difficult to then let go of the impressions; instead we go round and round thinking about them, making them deeper. It also becomes difficult to develop love for ourselves without self-acceptance.

The process of cleaning removes these impressions that form around the heart, creating lightness and a carefree feeling. With this we can happily work on changing ourselves, and the journey begins.

Cleaning is an integral part of the daily Heartfulness practice, and is done in the evening after the day’s work. It complements meditation by purifying the subtle body. It is one of the most incredible tools we have for self-development, as it removes those habits and patterns that keep us stuck in our own little world and prevents us expanding our consciousness into the vastness that is waiting us on our journey of self-discovery ●

THE SPECTRUM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

DAAJI explores in more detail how we become entangled in worldly issues, how that affects our inner life, and what we can do to remove the impressions that form.

‘Consciousness’ is a popular word these days in the field of mind-body medicine, and also at the cutting edge of research in science and spirituality and the quantum field. The idea of a spectrum of consciousness is not new. Yogis and mystics have written about it since time immemorial, and more recently also western psychoanalysts and psychologists like Carl Jung and Ken Wilbur¹.

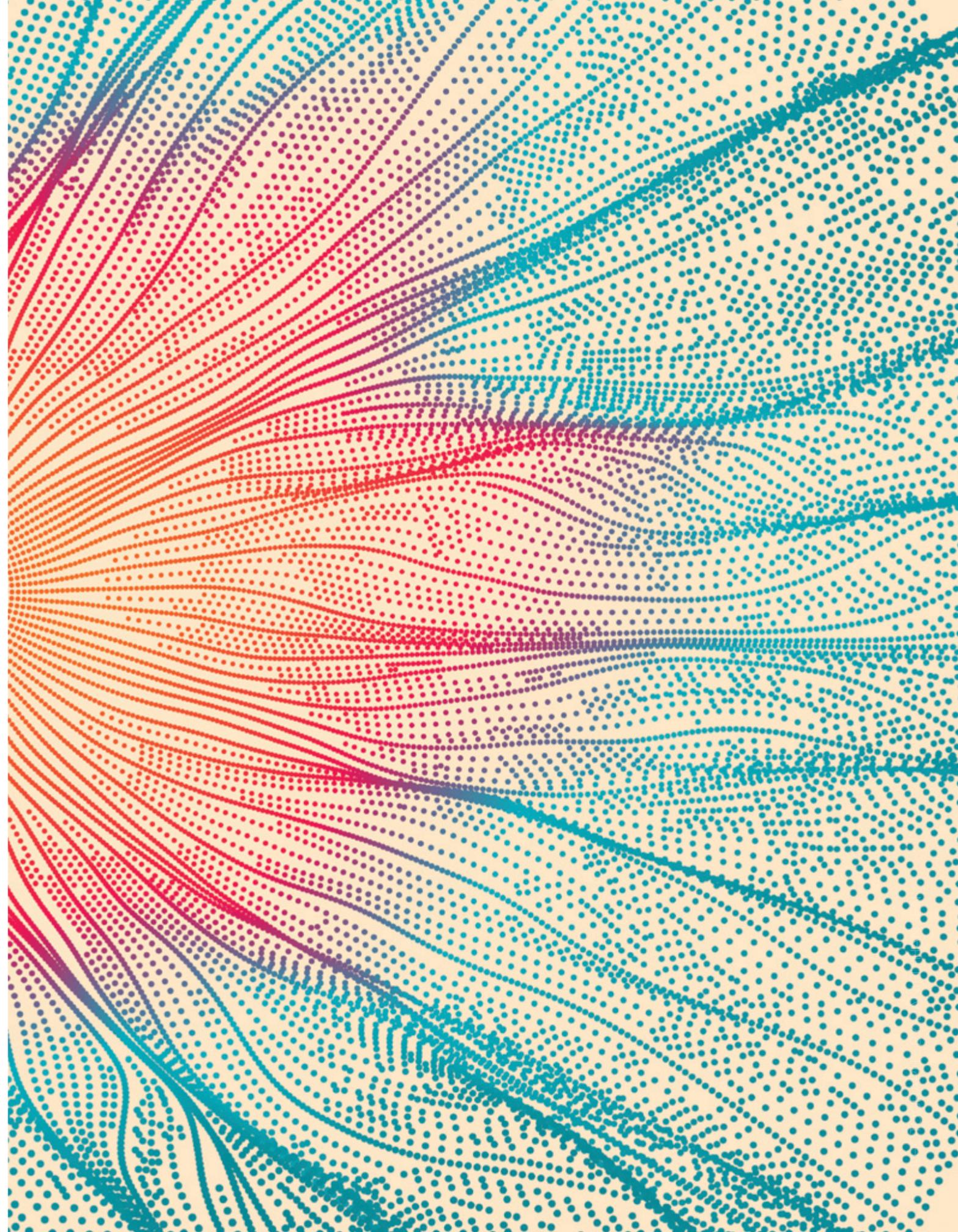
What do we learn from this literature? It tells us there is a vast spectrum of consciousness in a human being, spanning the subconscious mind through consciousness and all the way to the superconscious realm, most of which we don’t understand.

As we discussed earlier, the great Swami Vivekananda once said, “Consciousness is a mere film between two oceans, the subconscious and the superconscious.”² He understood the infinite, limitless nature of this spectrum, because his own state had expanded across that spectrum. He could observe and describe exactly what he found.

This was also the case with Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, who researched and described the states of consciousness and superconsciousness of the various chakras in the Heart Region, the Mind Region and the Central Region of a human being. In the light of these findings, science still lags a long way behind Yoga in describing the spectrum of consciousness.³

If you meditate with Yogic Transmission or *pranahuti*, you will experience more and more deeply and broadly this spectrum of consciousness, and go beyond experience into the realm of direct perception and knowledge. Gradually more and more of this vast field of consciousness will open up to you.

Swami Vivekananda once said: “What does consciousness matter? Why, it is nothing compared with the unfathomable depths of the subconscious and the heights of the superconscious! In this I could never be misled, for had I not seen Ramakrishna Paramahansa gather in ten minutes, from a man’s subconscious mind, the whole of his past, and determine from that his future and his powers?”⁴





a heart-mind field, known as the subtle body or *sookshma sharir*⁷. This vibrational field spreads outwards from the center of our existence, the heart, into every aspect of our spiritual and worldly life.

The field of the heart and mind can extend across the full spectrum of consciousness, from the depths of subconsciousness all the way to the heights of superconsciousness. In the middle sits our conscious mind, affected at every moment by what is happening along the full spectrum, from both the subconscious and superconscious states. There is always a dynamic interplay.

For example, even when we are fully aware and alert to the present moment, our fears, likes and dislikes from past experiences affect the way we feel. We may fear a specific situation that stops us from embracing an opportunity, or our desires pull us towards other activities. So at no time is the conscious mind unaffected by our subconscious past. Similarly, inspiration from our superconscious can come at any moment. We may have some unexpected insight or inspiration that drives a decision that we would not normally consider. All three levels are always operating at any moment in time.

This interplay is known in Yoga as the interplay of the subtle bodies – *chit*, *manas*, *buddhi* and *ahankar*. We have explored these four subtle bodies in the second article of the series. *Chit* is consciousness, *manas* is our contemplative mind, *buddhi* is intellect and *ahankar* is ego. As they become refined and purified, through the process of yogic cleaning, our awareness expands to encompass more and more of the spectrum of consciousness.

When you meditate intensely with Yogic Transmission, your heart opens and you develop the ability to experience the spectrum of consciousness as an integrated field. This is what ‘Yoga’ actually means – integrating, unifying the

These days, scientists measure brainwave frequencies and electromagnetic frequencies of the heart in order to try to describe and understand various states of consciousness, e.g. normal waking consciousness, various stages of sleep, a relaxed mind, and a meditating mind, just to name a few. They have already realized that the electromagnetic field of the heart is much stronger than that of the brain.⁵ This is in line with the findings of those yogis of caliber, who have considered the heart as the center of our being.⁶

Yogis have also told us that the heart and mind are not two separate entities, but instead there is

In sahaj samadhi we see everything to the extent possible – front, back, past, present, future – everything is in our view. The extent to which one can expand in consciousness is nothing but the reflection of evolution.

field. You become aware of all dimensions at the same time. Your consciousness expands.

The mind is capable of being fully awake and in the world, and yet deeply absorbed in the Absolute at the same time. This is the state known as *sahaj samadhi*, where everything can be known through superconscious perception – the direct perception of Nature. Traditional *samadhi* is often defined as a stone-like consciousness where you don’t feel anything, but that is not as subtle as *sahaj samadhi*, where we develop a 360-degree consciousness all around.

In *sahaj samadhi* we see everything to the extent possible – front, back, past, present, future –

everything is in our view. The extent to which one can expand in consciousness is nothing but the reflection of evolution. So while we are working, we are focused on work, on the surroundings, on the TV if it is on in the room, on something happening outside the office, and also on the Source. We are focused on the transmission that is happening inside, and the condition that is prevailing within, on something that is about to come into our system, on the thoughts that are arising, and on the next step we should be taking; and yet we remain peaceful seeing all these things at the same moment.

Automatically, this consciousness becomes 360-degree consciousness. We are not focusing on any particular thing. The moment we focus on a particular thing, it is no longer meditation, but concentration instead.

So in this state you see how our consciousness can expand and we are able to utilize our minds in such a dynamic way.

There is also another way of looking at the spectrum of consciousness, and that is from personal, or individual, to collective. This is the spectrum of mind to heart. Our mind gives us our individual identity through the ego, *ahankar*, whereas the heart is collective. In the words of Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh, “What is this ‘we’ of ours? It is our heart.”⁸ It is through the heart that we are all connected. This is the hope of our future and Yoga is the key to unlocking this whole spectrum of consciousness ●

¹ Wilbur, Ken. 1974. *Psychologia Perennis, The Spectrum of Consciousness*. Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, Vol. 7, No. 2.

² Swami Vivekananda. 1947. *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. 8, ‘Saying and Utterances’.

³ Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur. 1989. *Complete Works of Ram Chandra*, Vol. 1.

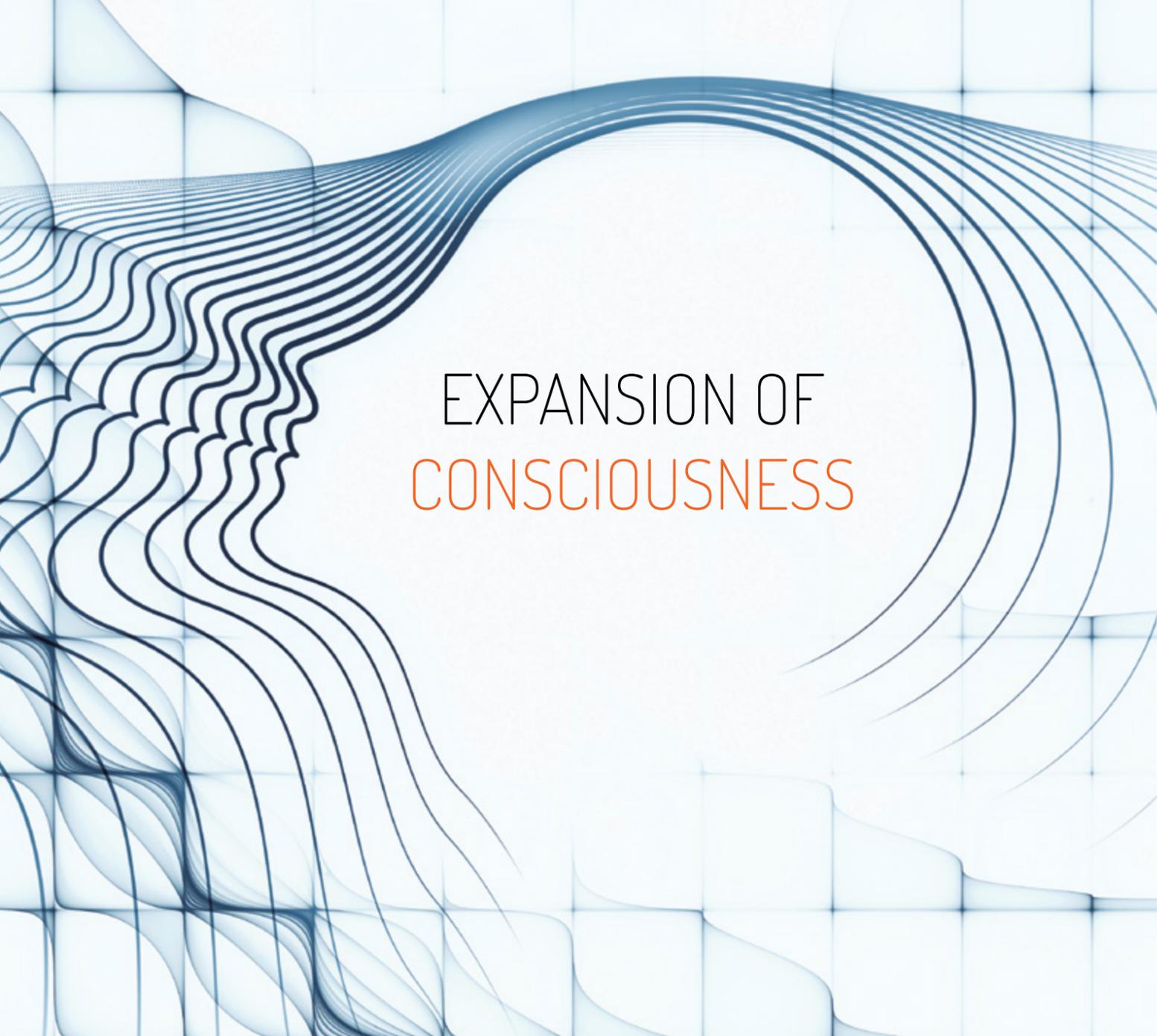
⁴ Swami Vivekananda. 1947. *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. 8, ‘Saying and Utterances’.

⁵ McCraty, Rollin. 2015. *Science of the Heart*, Vol. 2.

⁶ Patanjali. *Yoga Sutras*

⁷ Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh, 1973. *Truth Eternal*, ‘Karma’.

⁸ Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh, 1973. *Truth Eternal*, ‘Brahman’.



EXPANSION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

DAAJI explores the purpose of expanding our consciousness towards a higher destiny. What has this to do with human evolution?

We have been talking so much about the evolution of consciousness, but what is the purpose of all this? Why should we be so interested in this field of evolution of the mind? Why do we need to purify our consciousness and heart?

Well, for a start, it is to get to first base. There is a growing wellness industry that has grown up around the search for peace, inner calm and better sleep. This in itself is a good indicator that we are not satisfied with the state of our minds. We are not happy!

During the last 50 years, there have been so many scientific and medical studies on the effects of relaxation and meditation on the physiology and psychology of human beings, citing meditation as reducing blood pressure, depression and anxiety, and positively affecting heart rate, oxygen consumption, immunity, sleep patterns, and the natural functioning of the brain.¹

Current medical research on meditation² goes one step further, using the latest neuroimaging technology and genomic methodology to study how the practices of Yoga and meditation affect genes and brain activity in chronically stressed people, and how these techniques can switch genes on and off that are linked to stress and immunity.

Scientists are starting to realize what yogis have known for thousands of years: that meditation can bring about stillness and balance in the mind and the physiology and psychology of the human being are altered remarkably.

So it is not surprising that today meditation has become mainstream, and offered by corporates to their employees all around the world. Yoga and exercise classes everywhere finish with a few minutes of relaxation or meditation, and we find blogs and books on the bestseller lists about meditation and happiness.

A calm balanced mind gets us to first base, but is that the only reason we meditate? No, it is just the start. Having a mind that is still is great, but then what will you do with that still mind?

What is our human existence all about? We have always strived for more than peace and calmness. Think of a gold medal Olympian, a Nobel Prize winning scientist, a master violinist, a world-renowned chef, or a small child learning to walk. When we strive to excel at anything in life, we are willing to undergo struggles and discomfort to attain our goals. Life on Earth is about evolution. Every life is an evolution in developing wisdom,

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skills and attitudes. Inventions and discoveries are about evolution. Evolution is growth, change and transformation, and anyone who has ever had any goal or purpose in life knows that this instinct to excel and to push past the boundaries into the unknown is part of being human. It is in our DNA.

Peoples of all ages and cultures have asked some very fundamental questions:

Who are we?
Where have we come from?
What is the purpose of life?
Where are we going after this life?

These questions form the base of enquiry in science, religion, psychology, philosophy, and the mystical traditions of the world. They have led to our theories of the creation of the universe, and our exploration of the building blocks of matter and life on earth. Without these questions, we would never have discovered the structure of the atom or the stars and planets of our galaxy and beyond.

Life on Earth is about evolution. Every life is an evolution in developing wisdom, skills and attitudes. Inventions and discoveries are about evolution. Evolution is growth, change and transformation, and anyone who has ever had any goal or purpose in life knows that this instinct to excel and to push past the boundaries into the unknown is part of being human. It is in our DNA.

The very fact that we ask these fundamental questions is because we are human. *Homo sapiens* means 'wise man', and the word 'man' comes from the original Sanskrit '*manas*' meaning mind, one of the subtle bodies that we have been speaking about throughout this series. Even our taxonomic description of ourselves is concerned with the mind. So logic says that our purpose as human beings is all about the mind, and thus about consciousness.

Actually, our lives are led day in and day out trying to fulfill that higher purpose, even though most of the time we are unaware we are doing so. In this pursuit, we search to eclipse ourselves in love, we search for meaning, and we often search to escape the boundaries of everyday mundane existence, into an expanded state of consciousness, whether by healthy or unhealthy means.

This is what Yoga is all about too, as we explored in the last article of the series – going through all the steps of refinement to the state of *sahaj samadhi*. But in the last 150 years, we have been undergoing an even greater transformation in our understanding of this evolution. The meditation practices of Yoga used to focus on an individual's evolution to the highest pinnacle of human existence, whereas now the focus is on our collective evolution. This is the field of the heart, where consciousness expands across its full spectrum of existence.

When we sit in meditation and feel our consciousness expanding into unknown dimensions, observe our intellect evolve into intelligence and then into wisdom, our thinking transform into feeling, our ego subdue and become so humble and refined, and our skills improve, is it only for our own growth and transformation? No, the effect touches everyone and everything with which we are connected. We do not have to actively create this, as it happens without our conscious participation. That is how we change the outside environment. It happens automatically. Wherever the rose goes, the fragrance goes. Wherever I go, whatever I carry goes with me.

We just have to let things happen without interfering in the process. This connection will automatically happen once we start purifying ourselves. We will then feel that what we create within ourselves merges with the collective feeling, and we will become part of the entire scheme of things.

So our preparation has a great effect, a great echo into the future. The egregore that we prepare, the field that we prepare, will have its impact. Whatever the future has in store for us, we can accelerate the process by meditating regularly and well, wherever we are, together or alone. It is a wonderful time to be alive! ●

¹ <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/meditation/overview.htm>

² <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-11-22/harvard-yoga-scientists-find-proof-of-meditation-benefit>

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SPACE, TIME & THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

DAAJI shares with us some of the outcomes of an expanded consciousness, including the ability to understand the universe.

The purpose of life is to facilitate expansion of available consciousness to its fullest potential. This expansion eventually takes us to a state of lightness and joy, where the subtle body is pure, simple and refined, where there is no longer any separation between the heart and the mind – they are one, with the heart as the field of action for the mind and vice versa. This integrated, holistic state of being is known as Yoga. All the practices of Yoga are designed to bring about this state of oneness, or unity with the Source of all existence.

In mystical or religious terms, this Source of all existence is given the name God or divinity. In science, it is called the absolute, ultimate reality or original state of existence. It is the Base on which everything exists, the substratum of the existence of the universe. Yoga unites the two fields of human thought, as Yoga deals with pure knowledge. Yogis of high caliber are able to do this based on their direct experience, and have described God in a scientific way. This direct perception is possible because of the expansion of consciousness that comes from yogic practice.

For example, in physics, scientists speak of the space-time continuum, and yogis describe the same thing – the interplay of *akasha* and *avakasha*, the Sanskrit words meaning space and time.

Here is a brief description by the great yogi of the 20th century , Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur:

Before creation there was only 'space' all over. Thus the being of God (Isha) was a later development, and it took some time for its appearance. We see space as endless and eternal, so we conclude God as well to be eternal. Time followed after God had come into being. Thus space served as the mother of creation of God, and time was the negative state of it. Everything must have its end in Endlessness. Motion was also there in everything, however fine or invisible it might be. One might also ask, who created space, then? The only possible answer can be that the need for creation of God and of the universe led to be the cause of the existence of space. It is and shall ever be, and is therefore eternal. ...

If one develops within him the state of akasha, he has then reached the highest point ... Akasha, or space, is the Absolute. It is not composed of particles, nor is there any action in it. It is perfectly pure and unalloyed. ...

Akasha is space, while avakasha is time – both widely different from each other. Time – the creation of space – may be taken as the grosser state of akasha. As a matter of fact the universe is the manifestation of time or avakasha, while God is that of akasha or space. ...

At the time when there was only the Absolute, and no creation, the question of time did not arise at all. When the thought of creation got enlivened in the Base, it was perfectly free from everything. It proceeded on and, due to the effect of motion, got transformed into power, with its tendency directed towards action. But for the action it must naturally stand in need of a field or base. Now the brief pause intervening the original thought and subsequent being, or in other words between cause and effect, was already there. This can appropriately be interpreted as 'duration' or 'time', and it served for the field of its action. Thus time, having merged into the power, got itself transformed into power, for further actions towards creation.

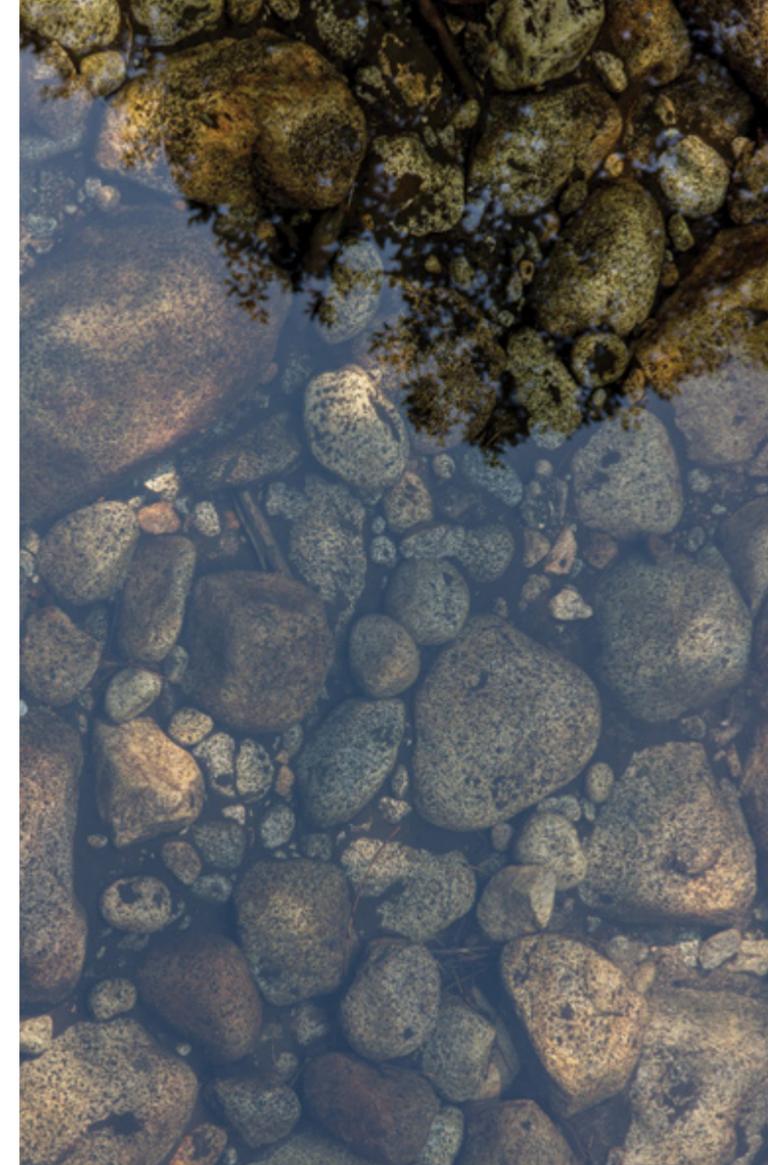
As a general rule a thought when it becomes deep brings into effect something like a pause, which has a tremendous force. In the case of the Centre, the question of depth does not arise at all, because of perfect uniformity there. The idea of velocity of force, the direct action of the mind, was also absent there, since the Centre or the Ultimate Brahman, though Absolute, did not possess mind.

Thus whatever existed between thought and action was power, which is termed as 'time'. The same power we too got into our share but in accordance with our limited capacity. Now, in order to utilise this power we have to merge it in the greater power of the Centre, which is all and absolute. ... To my view, the science of physics cannot be taken as complete without a full knowledge of this great power which is in fact the root of all powers.

Perception is purified. It is like looking through a still, clear pond to the substratum below instead of trying to see through murky turbulent water. There is clarity and discernment as a result of purifying the subtle body of all its complexities.

This description was written in the 1940s, based on Ram Chandra's direct experience of the relationship between space and time and the creation of the universe. His ability to perceive such knowledge directly was because of his highly evolved consciousness. He could just as easily penetrate matter and describe in detail the internal structure of an atom without any study of physics. Likewise, the great mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan was able to perceive pure mathematical functions in nature through direct perception, which were later proved by western empirical methods.

This capacity for direct perception can be developed by the three main yogic practices which were covered in Parts 2, 3 and 4 of this series.



The first is the removal of all of the complexities or impressions that we have accumulated by Yogic Cleaning, which is supported by Yogic Transmission. As a result, perception is purified. It is like looking through a still, clear pond to the substratum below instead of trying to see through murky turbulent water. There is clarity and discernment as a result of purifying the subtle body of all its complexities.

The second process is the refinement of the functions of the subtle body – intellect, thinking and ego – so that consciousness can expand and evolve. Intellect matures to wisdom, thinking deepens to feeling and beyond, and ego lets go of its focus on 'I' to exist for the good of all. These

When we ponder over the great scientific discoveries and yogic findings, the source of such research is always found in the overall relaxed state of the individuals.

changes happen through meditation with Yogic Transmission.

Mathematically:

Expansion of consciousness is directly proportional to the refinement of ego, intellect and mind. The heavier the burden of ego, the lesser the chance for consciousness to expand.

The third process is the connection of consciousness with the Source through the heart. This is a sign of expanding wisdom and is activated like a switch through the practice of prayer.

Over time, by doing these three simple daily practices of meditation in the morning, cleaning in the evening, and prayer at bedtime, our inner capacities are awakened, including intuition from the subconscious and inspiration from the superconscious. We realize our true potential.

Mainstream science today recognizes how little of our human potential we utilize, but has not been able to give us the tools for increasing that capacity. It is the scientists of the inner universe, the great saints, yogis and mystics of the world, who have shown us how to do this. Isn't it interesting that these great beings have often described as unscientific!

Actually the same has also been true in the world of the science of matter. Galileo Galilei is today considered to be the father of observational astronomy, the father of modern physics, the father of the scientific method, and even the father of

science. Yet when he was alive he was put under house arrest for the last thirty years of his life for stating that the Earth was not the center of the universe. It is hard to believe today, but in the early 17th century he was proclaimed a heretic for his astronomical discoveries! Those who have been at the forefront of knowledge have often challenged the status quo. Thankfully, science is now starting to validate what yogis of caliber have long known as a result of expanded consciousness.

When we ponder over the great scientific discoveries and yogic findings, the source of such research is always found in the overall relaxed state of the individuals. Let us recall the great discoveries of the Archimedes Principle, the fundamental principle of gravitation by Sir Isaac Newton, radioactivity by Madame Curie, the discovery of the structure of the benzene molecule and the double helix structure of DNA. Spiritual findings and scientific findings share the same source. They are not at all opposed or different in their approach.

When we really go into them, so many spiritual practices will reveal their true scientific basis. It is only when we do not understand their significance that we become skeptics, which is unfortunate. It would be wonderful to peep into the scientific basis behind so many religious rituals which have found their place in the daily routines of many cultures.

In earlier times, such expanded consciousness was only the domain of those yogis and mystics who renounced everyday life, but today it is available to all through the practice of Heartfulness. And it brings qualitative changes to our lives.



Our available consciousness expands from:
selfishness to selflessness,
mindful reactivity to heartfelt responsiveness,
passion to compassion,
anger to love,
egotism to a higher identity,
moment to moment to timelessness,
contraction to expansion,
restlessness to peace,
imbalance to balance,
darkness to light,
heaviness to lightness,
grossness to subtlety,
complexity to simplicity,
impurity to purity,
desire to desirelessness,
attachment to non-attachment,
thinking to feeling, feeling to experience, experience to being, being to non-being,
'I, me and mine' to 'we, us and ours',
intellectualizing to wisdom,
everything that we have to everything that there is: LOVE,
mundane consciousness to divine consciousness,
freeing us even from freedom ●

THE STILLNESS PARADOX

DAAJI describes the paradox of stillness that manifests with an expanding and evolving consciousness.

*He who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe,
is as good as dead; his eyes are closed.
—Albert Einstein*

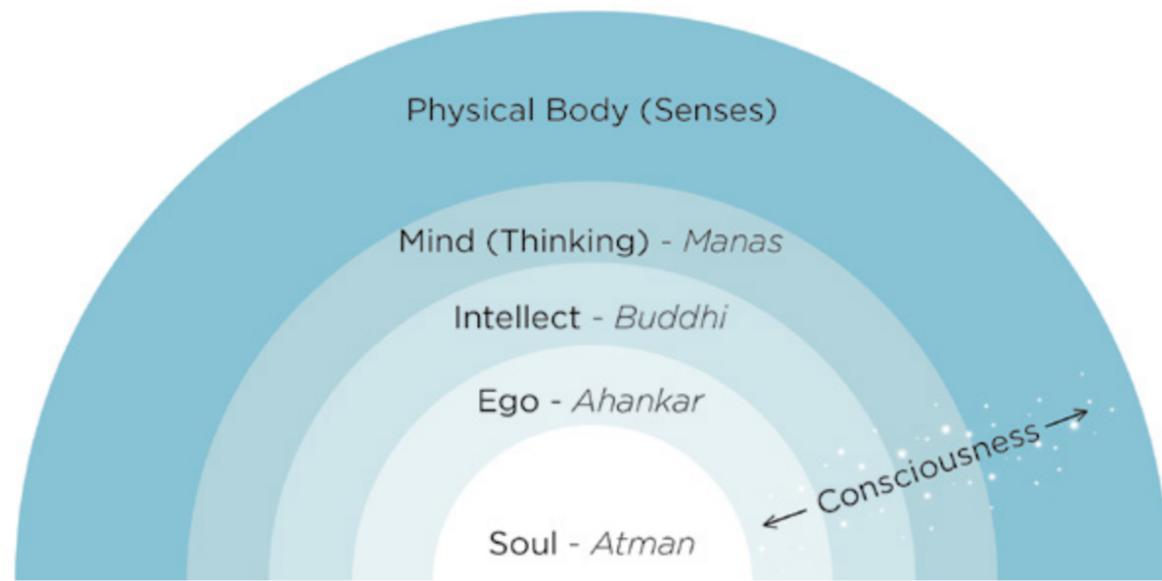
The above quote of Einstein resonates with some ideas I have been thinking about lately on consciousness. Imagine a beautiful flower blooming in the garden. If you run past it you will not be able to appreciate its beauty, whereas if you are walking by you can enjoy it more, and if you stand still in front of it you will appreciate its beauty even more. If you are flying, then you will not even see the flower below you on the earth. So when we are moving rapidly, we miss out on many things.

The mind is even faster than any physical movement. When the mind is moving rapidly from one object to another, one subject to another, one venture to another, what you miss is the blooming of the flower that is inside you. You are not merely missing out on the details, you miss out completely on the existence of the flower itself.

Now what is that flower? It is your soul.

Let's explore this idea further and ask a question: is it possible to move at speed and still be present in each moment? Can we reach a critical speed where we stand still in movement?

To understand this better, let's revisit the diagram we have of the various bodies of a human being.



The soul is the center of our being, around which we have the four main subtle bodies that we know as the mind. The first is consciousness, the canvas that is the field or fabric of the subtle body. Then there is the ego, which is our identity, so it is also deeply entwined with the individual soul. Then comes intellect, which allows us to discern and make choices, and then at the surface level of the mind we have the thinking function. And then there is the physical body, which is the outermost layer. If noticed keenly, it is always the 'subtle' that supports the 'less subtle' in its wake. The soul is the subtlest, followed by consciousness, ego, intellect, mind and finally the physical body, and hence the origin of the sequence in the order mentioned above.

Think of a wheel. The very center of the wheel is quite steady, without movement, whereas the circumference of the wheel experiences maximum movement. Similarly, the center of a tornado, the eye, is in utter stillness. If you want to be calm, position yourself in the center of the tornado and keep moving along with it, and then nothing will affect you.

And what is our center, around which the vortex of life exists? It is the soul.

Let's explore the physical end of the spectrum. The five senses are given to us for a noble purpose, but we are so busy using them for our pleasures at the physical level that we misuse them. For example, we have eyes so that we can look around and protect ourselves and see things better; that is their main purpose. But we use the eyes for a different purpose that is desire-based, drawing us outwards, creating a vacillating mind and disturbance. Then we are unable to focus on our center. If we focus on the steadiness of the soul, we will stay centered.

Consider it from another angle: the Earth is revolving around the sun while spinning on its own axis at a very high speed. If you are seated at the Equator you will have maximum exposure to that movement at almost 1000 miles per hour, whereas if you are at the North Pole you will feel as if you are stationary, as you are on the top of the axis. So the key is to find that axis within yourself.

So settledness is the key. When you meditate you must feel settled. Or putting it another way: if the meditation is done correctly you will automatically feel settled.

How is this possible? It is possible only when you match your movements with those of your axis. And what are those movements all about? The ability of your mind to settle down.

The great yogi, Ram Chandra of Fatehgarh, said that it is the settledness of the mind on a subject that brings happiness. If that settledness is not there, then you will be jumping from one thing to another without any resolution. You will not have any closure, you will not have any satisfaction, and you will not have any peace. You will still be vacillating and dissatisfied all your life, and you will not have learned anything from all your activities.

So settledness is the key. When you meditate you must feel settled. Or putting it another way: if the meditation is done correctly you will automatically feel settled.

Now settledness does not mean inactivity; in fact it is activity at a dimension we have never conceived of before. When you have a subject to study, a business venture to work upon and a

conversation with your child, your mind should be steady on them. At the same time your mind should also be steady on any other thing that you need to attend to. The steadiness should be there. It is not that when you are fully attentive to one thing you are less attentive to another. One does not rob your mind of capacity for the other.

It depends on how you develop your capacity to expand your consciousness. As you progress, you will not feel that you are thinking or contemplating, as it just becomes a part of your nature. It is like developing any other capacity. For example, when little children have to add 2+2 a lot of thinking is involved, but as a teenager you can have a complex equation in your mind and work on it, no longer needing to think. You are able to contemplate. When you advance a little more, you are neither thinking nor contemplating, as the answer comes just like that.

The nature of the soul is movement and thinking, and in the early stages of a spiritual practice, you learn to focus and think clearly. Later on comes expansion, which means you develop 360-degree consciousness. Still later, when you reach higher realms of human consciousness, it is 'as if' you are everywhere at the same time. Consciousness is of a nature where you have gone beyond expansion, and that is why there is stillness, which happens when things are moving extremely fast.

So let's look at it from the perspective of infinite movement versus perfect stillness. What is infinite movement? We can understand this by considering the physics of movement. If you go from Detroit to New York by car, you will go at a certain speed; let us say you take eight or nine hours. If you take a flight, you will arrive there in an hour and fifteen minutes. If you take one of those old supersonic flights, by the time they announce you are taking off you are already landing. If you fly at the speed of tachyon particles¹, you can be in New York and Detroit at the same time. Now why is this relevant to infinite movement?

As we move inwards towards our center, something similar happens; we become subtler. As we become subtler and subtler, the frequency within also changes. The transformation follows the progression from matter to energy to Absolute. In such a profound state of being, it appears as if nothing is happening inside. But actually so much is happening at the same time! The 360-degree awareness is so rapid that it is almost real time.

When we go beyond certain frequencies in Nature, it seems as if there is nothing happening because of the enormity of the speed with which things are moving. You can think of it like a child's spinning top. When it is spinning the fastest, and is perfectly balanced, it looks as if it is not moving at all.

As we move inwards towards our center, something similar happens; we become subtler. As we become subtler and subtler, the frequency within also changes. The transformation follows the progression from matter to energy to Absolute. In such a profound state of being, it appears as if nothing is happening inside. But actually so much is happening at the same time! The 360-degree awareness is so rapid that it is almost real time.

For example, even before another person speaks, you have felt what they are going to say, understood and responded. Nothing is holding your mind, or you can say that your mind is able to settle on everything simultaneously. You can be absolutely

settled on your spirituality, and you are also settled on your business decisions without becoming either disturbed or elated about them. There may be 100 things that you are planning in your life, but if you have the ability to move from one to another at lightning speed, why worry?

The idea of all yogic practices is to make the mind still and steady so that it can resonate with the stillness of the soul. So all our efforts towards the eight steps of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga – *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana* and *samadhi* – are for the single purpose of creating stillness in the mind.

The outer stillness of the mind is then able to match the inner stillness of the soul. Everything is integrated.

This is the state known as *sahaj samadhi*, and to achieve this state is why we meditate ●



LIFE IN LIFE

DAAJI explores a different facet of the evolution of consciousness: the importance of love, the heart and the need for connection and communion along the way.

What do most people want more than anything else in the world?

If you examine the research about this question, you will find a number of answers, including happiness, peace, trust, appreciation, freedom, money, etc., but the most fundamental of all is love. Love is the center of life. Most poetry is created in the name of love, most music, art and film. "God is love," "Love conquers all," and so on. All great mystical teachers have extolled the importance of love. All the great saints have loved God and loved humanity. The Buddha did not speak about love, but one of his most famous statements is that he would keep coming back again and again until every human being is liberated. Is this not love?

In this series we have focused on the evolution of consciousness and the other subtle bodies, as a result of doing a spiritual practice. So how does love enter into this domain of the science of spirituality?

It is vital to understand, because in fact it is only love that can propel us to the end of this journey of expansion of consciousness, with all its ups and downs. Of course it is possible to go part of the way without love, just by wanting to grow individually, and even for that you need enough interest to commit to the process. But to reach that state of stillness, the center of our being, love is essential. Love makes the path smooth.

Let's take a worldly analogy. Marriage. What happens in a marriage where there is no feeling, no love for the other? Is it easy to accept the foibles and funny habits of another person at close quarters if there is no love? In contrast, what happens when we love? Even the faults of the other person seem so adorable. We accept so much

¹ Purported to travel faster than the speed of light

more when love is there. It softens the way forward. Love overcomes obstacles with ease.

In a marriage or partnership, love brings connection and eventually communion and oneness. We are genuinely interested in the well-being of the other person. We put them first, we care about how they are feeling, what happens to them, and support them in all ways. We feel their feelings and know their thoughts. We finish each other's sentences and respond to each other's needs instantaneously. You have probably seen elderly couples who have been together a lifetime, who are so merged together that they understand each other completely without saying a word.

With motherhood, the state of connection and communion moves to an even more profound level; the feeling of giving defines a mother's relationship with her children. Giving is the quintessence of motherhood. Mothers do not sacrifice anything for their children – whether it be giving birth, staying up all night with a sick child or loving a rebellious, disobedient teenager. It is natural for a mother to love.

Loving is connection. Love creates empathy, compassion, and the awareness to 'feel' the other person's needs at the deepest level. At such moments, everything we have flows from our heart into the heart of the other, naturally, without our needing to do anything.

We don't have to look far to know that love opens our hearts. Even at the most human level, the experience of falling in love, or loving your newborn child, is instantly understood. The world appears rosy, and we exude a vibrancy that is easily recognizable.

The heart has a very interesting property – in its purest state it is actually an infinite universe of potentiality. The more it opens to deeper levels through a spiritual practice, the more we expand its field of existence, the spectrum of consciousness, and the more we become aware of our connection with the hearts of others. A pure heart feels connection with every other heart. A vacuum can be created in the heart by love, which results in a flow of current from heart to heart.

So let's relate this now to the spiritual journey of expanding consciousness. What happens if the practice we do is mechanical, routine and dry? You could compare it to a dry, loveless relationship. There is no spark, no interest, because there is no communion. So



there is no expansion. Instead, there is resistance, and the practice is ego-driven, just like a loveless relationship is ego-driven. When interest is there, a spiritual practice comes alive and there is wonder, experience, opening and magic in every moment.

We are given enormous support to develop this interest in our spiritual practice in today's world. How? With the help of Yogic Transmission. Transmission is the most sublime, subtle love. Transmission is from the Source, so it is the purest love possible. As the heart opens to love, the flow of Transmission nourishes us from the inside, like a mother's love nourishes a child. While Transmission itself has no qualities, it dissolves boundaries and removes separation. It transmutes the grossest of forms to the subtlest of states. It loosens the knots of our entangled existence, making way for joy and bliss. Transmission is the ultimate catalyst.

Where does Transmission come from, this potent love that seeks out the very core of our being? Transmission is always there, and it is infinite in its nature and application. It is there in the fabric of existence as the subtlest forceless force emanating from the Source.

But knowing it is there is one thing; it is quite another thing to be able to utilize Transmission for the expansion of consciousness and spiritual evolution of others. That requires a special relationship with the Source itself. And that is the real role of a Guru, a spiritual Guide of the highest caliber. Because such a Guru can transmit that subtlest essence into our hearts, so that consciousness expands with the purity of true love.

The Guru is like a mother, giving us birth into a higher dimension of existence, and filling us with a love that passes understanding. Perhaps this is what Swami Vivekananda meant by saying, "The Guru is the bright mask which God wears in order to come to us. As we look steadily on, gradually the mask falls off and God is revealed."

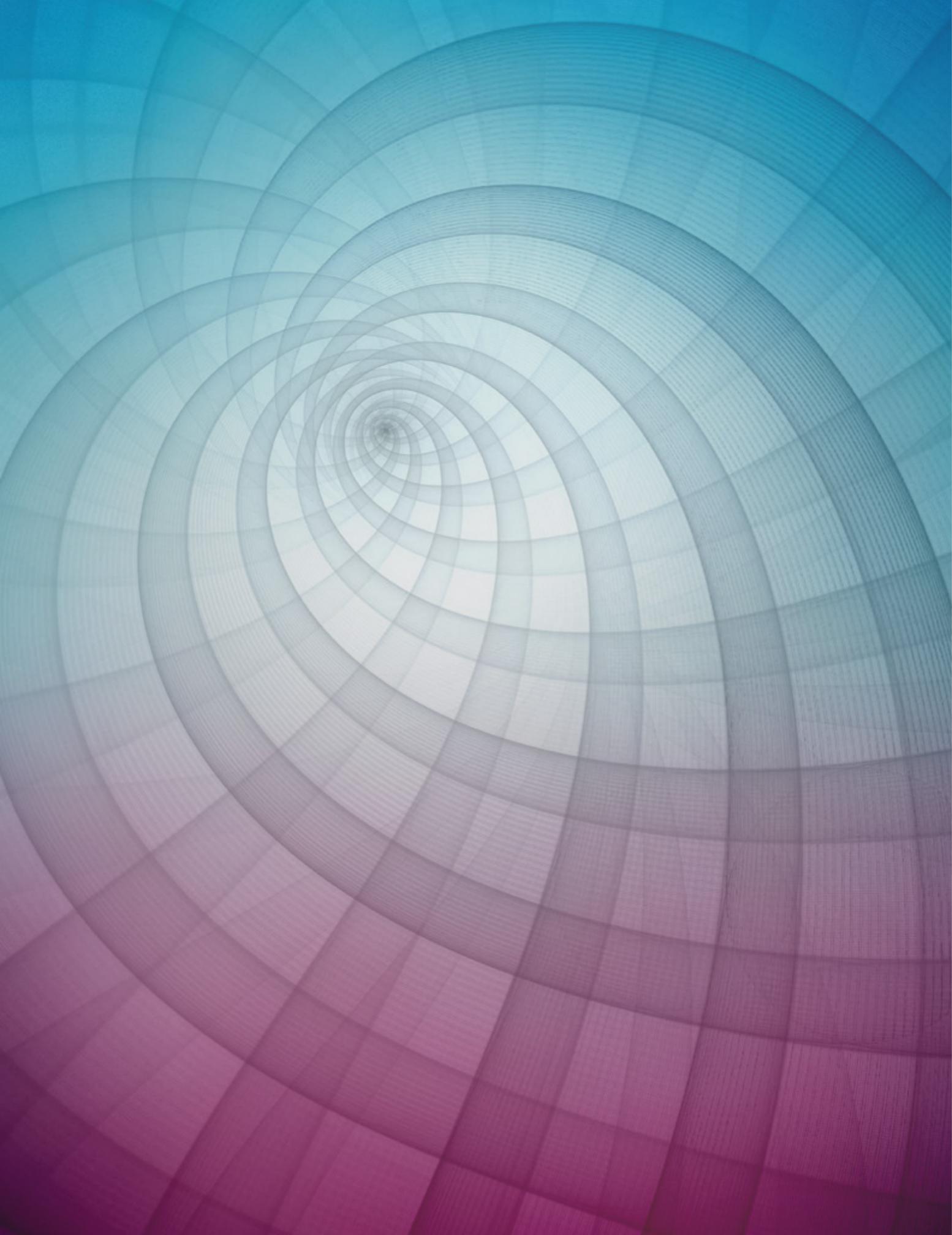
With Transmission, there is life in life. The heart, the canvas of consciousness upon which the subtle bodies of the mind play, is nourished. We thrive, we blossom, and eventually our consciousness expands to its fullest potential of complete Oneness. And thus our life takes on a meaning that is otherwise only found in dreams ●



TOLERANCE

can give us that quantum of time which will permit us to probe below the surface and see the underlying truth. This is the minimum benefit that tolerance confers - time to study and understand things.

PARTHASARATHI RAJAGOPALACHARI



TRAVERSING THE TERRAIN OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The journey towards infinite consciousness is vast and full of wonder, as well as ups and downs. DAAJI gives us some tips on how best to be successful on the journey.

A simple process of meditation with Yogic Transmission can help us traverse all levels of consciousness. The terrain along the journey goes up and down, right and left, in all directions. So just as a person who is not used to walking gets tired journeying across such a rugged terrain, a person who is not used to the ups and downs of the superconscious and subconscious states also gets tired and finds it very difficult.

But with the help of Transmission, a person can traverse the various states of consciousness with much more ease. Take for example the heart chakra, which is like a galaxy in itself, with many constellations, including five major ones. The way we move from one to another happens in a most wonderful way. We remain awestruck in disbelief at times while witnessing the inner wonders unfold in front of our heart's eye. With the help of Transmission we are able to move at lightning speed.

The atmosphere at each point or station varies enormously, just as it would from galaxy to galaxy. And that gives us the temporary experience due to the conditions prevailing at each spiritual station.

This constant change can be frustrating for us as we move on the spiritual journey. After all, we like the feeling of steadiness and constant familiarity. But if we are to evolve, if consciousness is to evolve, this change is a must. The idea of remaining comfortable in a particular state will slow down our evolution.

And as we move on, after years and years of spiritual practice we realize that each successive stage is more and more refined and expansive. Then we truly appreciate the need for a little inconvenience raising its head now and then during our journey. It is precisely at this time, when we feel uncomfortable with the inconvenience, that we need to increase our efforts to cross to the next phase. If we can do that on our own, it strengthens

us to cross more and more spiritual states as we proceed on our journey.

Help is always available from a Guide of caliber who supports us as we cross the spiritual stages. And that support becomes more and more necessary as we journey to higher and higher states, just like a Sherpa becomes more necessary the closer the mountain climber is to the peak of Everest. We can only really appreciate the inner beauty of all these stages when they are experienced; it is not possible to know it by just reading about in a book or imagining it.

Even states like peace, love, restlessness, contentment, fearlessness and courage exist across wide spectra. They are not absolute states but continually evolving and deepening. For example, we may feel peace soon after starting a spiritual practice, but the peace we feel many years later is of a higher order all together. Only through the inner spiritual journey can we experience all the various levels of contentment, stillness, restlessness and love. And then finally, we move to a different focus altogether – when we are able to appreciate the osmosis between our Maker and ourselves.

As we move forward on the journey, our subtle bodies – mind (*manas*), intellect (*buddhi*) and ego (*ahankar*) – become more and more refined through spiritual practice coupled with an attitude

of continuous improvement, and this leads to the refinement of our consciousness. But what happens if we do not work on our refinement? What if, instead, our ego becomes more and more inflated because we think we have reached some great spiritual height and are better than others? Will our consciousness still be refined and continue to evolve? No, it is not possible. We will instead regress.

An ego that is colored by the filter of “I am great,” or “I have reached the pinnacle,” or even “I am unworthy and useless,” will become so rigid and contracted that consciousness will devolve into a compacted state. Then the rest tumbles like a domino effect: intellect no longer expands to include intuitive wisdom, and thinking does not evolve into feeling. We will be stuck in a very narrow mental process and worldview.

When the intellect and thought processes are limited by education only to reasoning and rote learning, without the intuition and inspiration of the heart, then again we remain stuck in a narrow worldview. Consciousness cannot expand and evolve.

So even if we are on a spiritual journey, doing regular practice, as long as these subtle bodies are not refining and becoming more and more subtle, we will continue to spin in one place, like mice do in spinning wheels in the cages of pet shops. Or

even worse, our consciousness will contract and harden. It will become more and more compacted, like the consciousness of minerals and rocks. And this dullness is known as a *tamasic* consciousness in Yoga.

So how do we avoid these pitfalls?

The first way is to meditate with Transmission. It helps us regulate the mind, dive deep into the heart, and move from thinking to feeling, intellect to wisdom.

The second is to remove the habits and behavior patterns that keep us stuck in a rigid worldview through the process of cleaning of the underlying impressions from the past that have caused them.

The third is to create a vacuum in the heart, the prayerful state, so that we connect with the inner Self.

The fourth is to refine and perfect our character. A characterless person has a limited view of existence, and this restricts consciousness. He steals, lies or cheats as he has lost his radar, his center. He is off-center. A person who is off-center cannot easily traverse the terrain of consciousness.

Continuous improvement is necessary. When ego manifests as an arrogant attitude – “I am the best” or “I know” – there is no room for improvement. When intellect does not evolve to wisdom, there is no inspiration, and again consciousness is restricted. When thinking does not deepen to feeling, when desires and thought remain predominant, there can be no evolution of consciousness.

It is easy to observe this evolution in outer behavior. For example, when passion dominates, we are only interested in satisfying our own desires, no matter how noble they may be. When compassion dominates, we sacrifice our own desires for the sake of others – automatically consciousness has expanded to encompass the other. As we receive, we keep giving more and more. There is generosity of heart.

So meditation is for strong-minded people who want to evolve faster than others. The practical tools are all there for refinement – we just have to want it! ●



The jewel is lost in the mud, and all are seeking for it;
Some look for it in the East, and some in the West; some in the
water and some amongst stones.

But the servant Kabir has appraised it at its true value, and has
wrapped it with care in the end of the mantle of his heart.

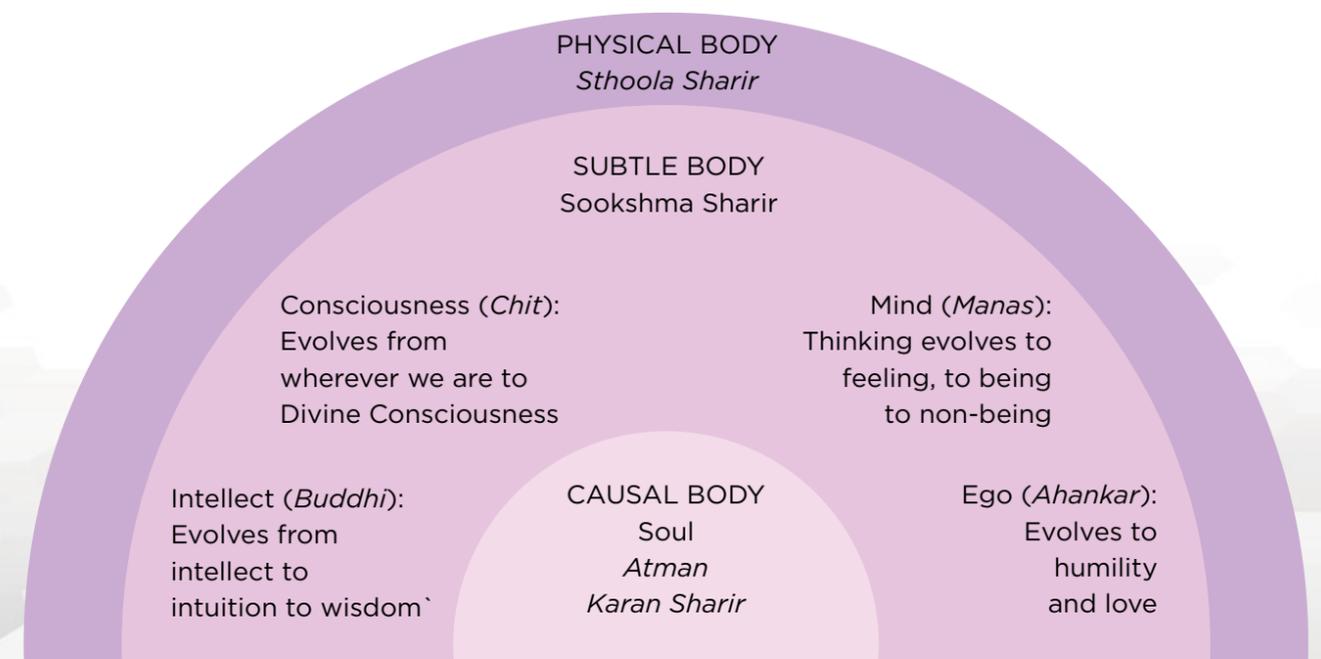
KABIR (TRANSLATED BY TAGORE)

MATTER, ENERGY AND THE ABSOLUTE STATE

DAAJI explores the various states of existence in the universe and in the
make-up of the human body. What is the role of consciousness in all this?

MOVEMENT AND STILLNESS

As we have seen earlier, the causal body is the center of our being, around which we have the subtle
body or mind. Within this subtle body the main canvas is our consciousness upon which the other
three functions play out: the ego, then the intellect, and then the thinking mind, from the center
outwards to the surface level of conscious thinking.



Faster than the speed of light is thought. It can take light years for light to reach another galaxy, but the mind can reach there in no time at all. And consciousness is different again: consciousness is always there. There is no effort involved. Consciousness is not limited by space and time.

Beyond the subtle body, the physical body is then outermost, the most solid, material aspect of the layers that make up our being. We can understand the physical body with reference to the senses: it is through our senses that our physical being relates to the world around us.

We can understand the mind with respect to its faculty of thinking, as thought is the energetic expression of the subtle body. As we go deeper into the levels of the mind, we discover feeling, intuition, inspiration, and eventually the pure identity associated with the most refined ego.

We can understand the soul, the causal body, through its quality of inactivity. This also means it resists movement, and yet the nature of the soul is movement. This appears to be a paradox: movement and inactivity both define the soul. What is the meaning of this paradox?

Let's look at it from a few perspectives. First consider the movement of the Earth on its axis. If you are sitting at the equator, the surface of the Earth moves at a speed of roughly 1,000 miles per hour, so you are moving very fast as the Earth spins. But if you are sitting at the North Pole, you will be very steady.

Another example is a spinning top – when it is moving fastest it appears to be standing still. The soul, though its nature is movement, behaves as if it is still. Like the top that is spinning very rapidly, consciousness can also move very rapidly. Or take another example: when you move from one room to another, if you go at a normal walking speed it appears as if you are moving, whereas if you go at the speed of light you appear to be in all the rooms at the same time.

Faster than the speed of light is thought. It can take light years for light to reach another galaxy, but the mind can reach there in no time at all. And consciousness is different again: consciousness is always there. There is no effort involved. Consciousness is not limited by space and time. The stillness paradox can be understood in this way.

When we go from the physical body to the subtle body to the causal body, we go from physical to subtler to the subtlest, in layers. The physical is here and now, as the body cannot travel into the past or the future, but the mind and consciousness can. When we think about things from the past or imagine them in the future, consciousness and the mind experience time travel. The mind goes there and consciousness registers the whole thing.

Now, the nature of the soul is steadiness, the stillness of the Absolute, which we gradually expose through a spiritual practice. When we want to dive deep into that stillness in meditation, to expose the inner soul, and externalize it through the mind, we have to be still. We cannot have a monkey mind jumping from idea to idea, and object to object. Only when there is stillness will the mind find resonance with the inner soul. Then we can say, "What was hidden is now exposed."

MATTER, ENERGY AND NO ENERGY

Let's explore this from another perspective. Consider the element sodium. Alone it is explosive. Combined with chlorine, which on its own is very toxic, it becomes the common salt we eat every day! Sodium is known as the terrorist element in the Periodic Table, because it is so highly reactive with the moisture present in air, but when it combines

with chlorine it forms salt, without which there is no existence possible. So two opposites come together to create a compound that is very stable.

Two frequencies coming together in the same direction, with the same amplitude, are able to potentiate each other, whereas, a wave coming in the opposite direction nullifies or neutralizes the first one. Now, in order to expose the soul in our existence, our lifestyle should reflect and amplify the divinity in our being by resonating in the same direction. And how can we do that in daily life? With what should we be resonating to take us in the direction we want to go?

We have to tune our thoughts, ideas and actions to the frequency of another person who has already reached the destination. This is one role of the Guide: we tune to the Guide's frequency like the instruments of an orchestra tune to the first violinist before playing a symphony. If we go in the same direction as the Guide's frequency, then the amplitude grows. If we go in the opposite direction, we nullify the effect, just like waves are neutralized. It is simply a matter of being in tune. Resonate to potentiate.

There is another interesting concept with the elements of the Periodic Table. How many elements are there? There are 118 currently, of which 94 occur naturally, whereas in the Vedas our ancients said that we are made up of only five 'elements' – the *pancha bhutas*. Obviously these five elements are not the elements of the Periodic Table; they are more like states of matter. For example one of the five *bhutas* is water, and pure water is itself made up of two elements, hydrogen and oxygen, as H₂O.

These days, science is more refined than it was thousands of years ago; as you would hope, scientific knowledge has evolved. It may look as if science is refuting the Vedas, but it is not so. Science continues to give us more and more refined knowledge. Do you disprove particle theory once you introduce wave theory in physics? No, you have added something more, built upon what was previously understood.

Now, let's look more deeply into matter by studying the *bhutas* and their components – the elements, then the atoms, and then the subatomic particles, etc. The five *bhutas* are earth, water, fire, air and *akasha* or ether. Water is a compound made up of hydrogen and oxygen. Air is made up of so many gases, such as oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, helium, argon, etc., which are made up further of elements, atoms and subatomic particles. Then there is earth, containing even more elements. The word 'earth' is primarily used to help us understand and describe the solidity of that *bhuta*.

Then comes *akasha*. What is it made of? Nothingness. It is like consciousness, upon which everything is based. In the same way, *akasha* is the substratum, the fundamental base. It was never created as it was always there. The soul is also like that. No one can create it. The soul partakes of the nature of *akasha*.

Now, what happens when we try to dissect these *bhutas*? When we break water into hydrogen and oxygen, for example, and then we break the hydrogen atom itself, what happens? So much energy is generated that hundreds of thousands of people can be killed.

Now where does that energy come from? It comes from splitting the nucleus of an atom, which contains protons and neutrons. And what is a

proton? It is a positive charge. What is an electron? It is a negative charge. They say there is no weight in an electron, and yet it has a charge, whereas a proton has both weight and charge. What is it that gives weight to the proton as well as the charge? It is the way it spins; the way the vibrations are made. It spins so fast that weight is created. The movement of neutrons is also so fast that weight is created. But within the neutron the movements are of an opposing nature, so the charge is neutralized. Thus there is only weight.

When we go further into this, we see that the cause of the charge and weight in these subatomic particles is vibration. In a proton, vibrations are positive, in a neutron they are positive and negative, and in an electron they are negative. So energy is behind the formation of atoms, and thus the formation of matter. Behind matter there is nothing but positive and negative charge – what the Vedas called *Purusha* and *Prakriti*. *Prakriti* is the dazzling part, the luminous part, the negative charge of the electrons.

And this positive and negative polarity is necessary in this world. Everything in Nature partakes of these opposing characteristics for it to exist, move and expand. Take for example a current of electricity: it requires a positive and negative charge for it to flow. Without the opposites playing their part there is no movement, and there is no expansion.

Can we call this level of subatomic vibration consciousness? Not yet, although consciousness also has a vibrational frequency of some order.

Hydrogen is the simplest element of all: in hydrogen we find only one proton and one electron. In helium there is more complexity – there are two electrons, two protons and one or two neutrons, depending upon which helium isotope we are talking about. Sodium has still more complexity,



and the elements go on becoming more and more complex. In 1,000 years perhaps we will see even more complex elements than we have now, and in fact they may already exist somewhere, waiting to be discovered.

And there was something there before hydrogen came into being, and that something goes on supporting everything. And perhaps behind all this is consciousness. And consciousness is supported by the fundamental substratum, *akasha*, the Absolute.

EFFORTLESS EFFORTS

Now, let's come back to this idea of the soul with its absolute steadiness. When we are so busy with the material world, fulfilling desires one after the other, the mind is active. Even the idea that "I want to reach the pinnacle of the spiritual journey" creates disturbance inside. Why would we be disturbed by this thought when it is our goal? It is because we make so much effort, like using a crane to lift up a tiny needle!

That is why Patanjali told us to relax all our efforts, because when we make efforts we get too 'involved' and that creates deviation, keeping us restricted to the process. Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle says the same thing – if we make an effort to determine the speed of a particle, we will not find the position of the particle, and if we find the position we will not be able to determine the speed. It is in the nature of things. Why is it so? In order to measure something, it has to be done by something subtler than the thing being measured, so as not to disturb it. Grosser cannot measure the subtler, so what can measure the position of an electron? Only something subtler and thus more potent than an electron!

Until the union of
Yoga happens, there
is no stability, there is
incompleteness, whereas
the completeness that
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Yoga brings stability and
balance.

But who can say that efforts are not needed? Only a person who has reached the pinnacle. We do need to make efforts until we reach that point, but in such a way that our balance is not tilted. Because when it is tilted, the play of desires will dominate. The more desires we have, the more disturbances there will be in the mind and the mind will play havoc.

A better way is like the element sodium: if you leave it alone in the air it will explode, it is a terrorist, but when it joins with chlorine it is stabilized. And so it is with the mind; so it is with the soul. Until the union of Yoga happens, there is no stability, there is incompleteness, whereas the completeness that arises from the union of Yoga brings stability and balance.

THE EFFECT OF 'NO ENERGY' ON THE FIELD OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Yogic Transmission has no energy in it. As described above, the elements are made up of pockets of energies, and within each element there are so many pockets of positive and negative energies moving in many complex directions at various levels of frequency. When we are trying to remove the impressions at a certain chakra or plexus in the human system, certain molecules or compounds in the cells are affected, and the vibratory levels of the subatomic particles within the molecules are also affected in some way. And this Transmission, in which no energy is transmitted, works its magic and removes things.

So, to summarize, we understand that the physical body is supported by the subtle bodies. Within the subtle bodies, the thinking mind is supported by a subtler body, which is called the intellect, and the intellect is further supported by an even subtler body called the ego. All these are supported by the soul, which is even subtler.

All these levels of subtlety are there; the chakras or plexuses are formed, multiple compounds are there, which are supported by vibrations of a complex nature. Transmission has no energy, it is a forceless force, which is subtler than consciousness. It is this Transmission that can alter consciousness.

So we can say that there are three states:

Matter
Energy
No energy (Absolute)

Also there is subtle, subtler and subtlest. In the universe we can say that matter is manifested, and it is supported from behind by energy, which is supported from behind by the Absolute state, which has no energy.

The ultimate state of the Absolute cannot be described by giving worldly examples. In this world there is nothing comparable and as perfect as the Absolute. So how can it be described? Hence the ancient sages said, "Neti! Neti! Neti!" – not this, not this, not this. Nothingness. This is the realm of God ●

CALL FOR GRANT APPLICATIONS

The mission of the Heartfulness Institute's research department is to support and facilitate a scientific approach toward contemplative practices and advance our understanding of meditation and consciousness.

The Institute invites grant applications for meditation research from individuals who will conduct independent, empirical, rigorous research. Heartfulness Institute will support grant applications ranging from \$5,000 up to a maximum of \$100,000 on a non-renewable basis.

OBJECTIVE OF THE HEARTFULNESS RESEARCH GRANTS

Heartfulness Institute teaches meditation and contemplative practices based on Raja Yoga. Heartfulness Research funding is intended to provide resources to support foundational experiments on Heartfulness practices.

These include, but are not limited to, studies investigating behavioral, physiological, metabolic, epigenetic and neurobiological responses to the practice of Heartfulness meditation, through cross-sectional and longitudinal studies on Heartfulness practitioners compared with appropriate control subjects.

We encourage applications from researchers in other contemplative practices who are interested in applying their expertise to study Heartfulness meditation.



Heartfulness Institute
Research Department

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must hold a PhD, MD or equivalent degree and have an official affiliation with a college, university, institute, medical school or other research facility.

APPLICATIONS

The application should include:

Biosketches/CVs of the principal investigator and collaborators,

Research project description, including specific aims and hypotheses to be tested, experimental design, method of analysis of the data, and the significance and potential impact of the study,

Preliminary Data may be included if available, including data related to other meditation practices. [< 3 pages]

Resources available, budget and justification. [1 page]

REVIEW PROCESS

We will accept applications for 2017-2018 on a rolling basis. Criteria for evaluation include significance, relevance and impact of the proposed study, applicant's research experience, and appropriateness of budget.

WHAT IS HEARTFULNESS?

It is a modern-day system of Raja Yoga, using meditation to regulate and balance the mind. Heartfulness is a heart-based meditation practice. To learn more, please visit www.heartfulness.org.

The basic practices are Heartfulness relaxation, meditation, cleaning and connection with the Source. Weekly individual and group meditation sessions with a trainer (either in person or via the LetsMeditate App) are recommended in order to bring about effective results.

Heartfulness Institute is a non-profit organization founded in 2016 in USA, India, France and Denmark. They are the sister organizations of Shri Ram Chandra Mission (SRCM), founded in 1945, and Sahaj Marg Spirituality Foundation, together present in 130 countries, with 8,000+ certified trainers, serving more than a million meditators.

SRCM is formally associated as a non-governmental organization with the United Nations Department of Public Information and works globally to advance the goals of peace, harmony and sustainability through yoga and meditation.

PLEASE DIRECT ALL ENQUIRIES TO RESEARCH@HEARTFULNESS.ORG.



INFINITE VEILS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

DAAJI describes the spectrum of consciousness from another perspective, giving us a new level of understanding about our subtle human anatomy.

Generally we think of human anatomy as being about the physical body, including the nervous system, the organs, the circulatory system, the structure and functioning of cells and DNA, etc. There has been so much scientific research in this field, especially during the last 500 years; we have really specialized in this knowledge.

But this is only one aspect of human anatomy. As we have discussed in previous articles, we have three main bodies – the physical, subtle and causal. Over the centuries, the knowledge of these three bodies has developed, and today research in the dynamic field of integrative body-mind-spirit science is unfolding faster than ever before. So we are better able to understand the dynamics of the physical, subtle and spiritual anatomies. This is the juncture of science and spirituality.

For example, we know that the subtle bodies came into existence for the continuous improvement of consciousness. In other words, they arose for our evolution, and they support each other. First of all it was for the survival of the ‘I’, for our identity. The ‘I’ could not survive without the discrimination of the intellect and the thinking capacity of the mind. These functions of the mind support each other in a coordinated effort for existence and growth.

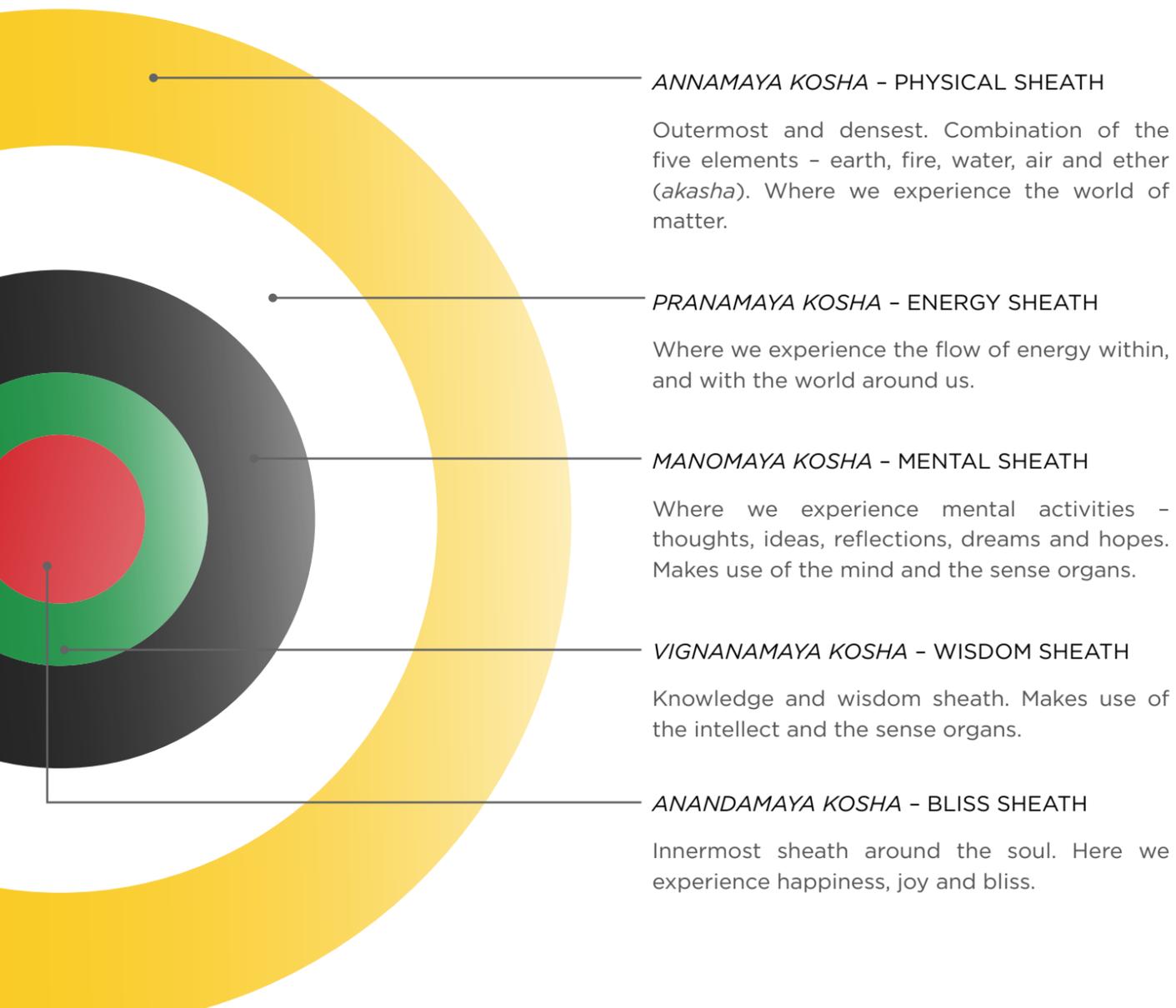
These subtle bodies can be used for our betterment or for our undoing, as they are functions of the mind that can be used in any way we choose. The purpose of a heart-based meditation practice with transmission is to learn to use them so that consciousness evolves.

Yogis also describe our complex human system in another way: the *koshas*, sheaths or coverings. In this description, a human being is made up of layer upon layer of coverings, from the outermost to the innermost. The five elements, or *pancha bhutas*, are yet another way of describing the human make-up – earth, fire, water, air and ether (*akasha*). Still another classification is that of the seven regions – the Heart Region, Cosmic Region, Para-cosmic Region, *Prapanna*, *Prapanna-Prabhu*, *Prabhu* and the Central Region.

So in Yoga, a description of human anatomy combines all these things – the elements, points, regions, bodies and sheaths.

Let's explore what the *koshas* tell us about consciousness. There are an infinite number of coverings or sheaths in the human system, the densest being the physical at the outside, with progressively finer and finer coverings as we approach the center of our being. They are indicators of the infinite layers of consciousness we potentially have at our disposal. They are usually presented as five main *koshas*.

The first text describing them is the Taittiriya Upanishad, written around the 6th century BCE, where they are described as lying one inside the other, like the layers of an onion or Russian matryoshka dolls:



ANNAMAYA KOSHA - PHYSICAL SHEATH

Outermost and densest. Combination of the five elements - earth, fire, water, air and ether (*akasha*). Where we experience the world of matter.

PRANAMAYA KOSHA - ENERGY SHEATH

Where we experience the flow of energy within, and with the world around us.

MANOMAYA KOSHA - MENTAL SHEATH

Where we experience mental activities - thoughts, ideas, reflections, dreams and hopes. Makes use of the mind and the sense organs.

VIGNANAMAYA KOSHA - WISDOM SHEATH

Knowledge and wisdom sheath. Makes use of the intellect and the sense organs.

ANANDAMAYA KOSHA - BLISS SHEATH

Innermost sheath around the soul. Here we experience happiness, joy and bliss.

The *annamaya kosha* is one kosha where we undergo or play out the effect of *karma*. We find a lot of variation in the physical sheaths of people.

PHYSICAL SHEATH

The quality of the *annamaya kosha* depends a lot on the type of food we eat and how we eat it. It also depends on how our mother ate during pregnancy, the quality of that food, the environment, and her habits. These maternal influences contribute heavily towards the make up of our *annamaya kosha*.

When we are in the company of a saint we feel energetic, because the *kosha* of the saint is radiating energy. There are some other people who draw energy from us, so that we feel drained. To avoid draining others, our intake of food and the quality of the food we eat must be light. That is why fasting is prescribed now and then, to balance and regulate this *kosha*. But too much fasting can damage the *annamaya kosha*, just as too much food can damage it. This is not related to having a lean or a heavy body.

Regarding the quality of food:

Tamasic foods make us feel lazy and lethargic,

Rajasic foods make us active, but also sometimes irritable, short-tempered and anxious, if we eat them too often and late in the day. They are best eaten around noon,

Sattvik foods promote lightness, calmness and peace of mind, and

Food consumed with gratefulness has a very special impact.

Preoccupation with this sheath can have a negative effect, but we do need to pay enough attention to the body to support a healthy life. It functions best when it is under the influence of the subtler *koshas*.

The *annamaya kosha* is one kosha where we undergo or play out the effect of *karma*. We find a lot of variation in the physical sheaths of people.

The next three *koshas* are all associated with the subtle bodies:



ENERGY SHEATH

The *pranamaya kosha* is our vital body, where we experience the flow of energy in our system, and with the world around us. It is subtler and more refined than the *annamaya kosha*.

Yogis have described the energy flow in the human system according to five energetic processes (*karmendriyas*) and five energy flows (*pranas*).

The five energetic processes are elimination, reproduction, movement, grasping with our hands, and speaking.

This energy sheath is usually affected before any physical ailment appears in the body ... Whenever an imbalance or illness happens, the first kosha to be compromised is often the *pranamaya kosha*.

The five flows of energy within the human body are known as the *vayus* or 'winds'. These are:

The inward flow that governs respiration and the reception of everything, from air and food to ideas and impressions,

The downward and outward flow of elimination – excretion, urination and menstruation on the physical level, and anything that needs to be removed mentally,

The balancing and integrating flow at the meeting point between the inward and outward flows, associated with assimilation and digestion,

The ascending flow that directs energy towards higher levels of consciousness and governs self-expression through communication, and

The flow through the *nadis*, the circulatory system, the nervous system, the lymphatic system, the movement of muscles and joints, and thoughts and emotions.

Hatha yoga is often prescribed to develop this *kosha*, as it is regulated by breathing exercises. But the sheath of *prana* is subtle and not glued to the physical system. It envelops us like an energy bubble, creating the field of the aura. The *chakras* of the subtle body are also associated with this *kosha*, so spiritual practices are needed to refine the *pranamaya kosha*.

This energy sheath is usually affected before any physical ailment appears in the body. That is why acupuncture and acupressure treatments work on our energy meridians. Whenever an imbalance or illness happens, the first *kosha* to be compromised is often the *pranamaya kosha*.

Sometimes we can predict the health of a person just by looking at the aura around their face. We feel the difference – someone is angry, a lover in the company of her beloved, a tender mother with her baby, or someone not happy about the work they are doing. It is our attitude that affects our *pranamaya kosha* to a large extent. When this *kosha* is shining, our overall health is benefited. We radiate whatever state we have in our energy sheath, including a loving joyous feeling in certain situations; love is something very palpable.

When we are stressed, angry, or emotionally reactive, we need more energy. So we activate the *pranamaya kosha* by activating the sympathetic nervous system: our heart rate goes up, our breathing changes, and our body goes into its stress response.

This is one of the reasons why *pranayama* came into being in Yoga – to balance the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems. When our sympathetic nervous system is activated by stress, we can calm ourselves by activating the parasympathetic system through the *Chandra nadi*. And when we need to be more active and engaged, we can activate the sympathetic system through the *Surya nadi*. We are able to bring about balance.

This energy *kosha* is quite forbidding to refine, because here consciousness mixes with ego, and that can be like sodium metal exposed to moisture – explosive. All our energetic processes and cognitive senses derive their energy from this sheath, our waking consciousness is regulated by this sheath, and the natural emotions of passion and anger are nourished by this sheath.

Individual contentment and true peace are possible only when we are freed from the demands of these mental disturbances. And when more and more of us join in this ennobling endeavor, individual peace will lead to world peace.

Fights and conflicts at work and at home with dear ones are due to the maladjustment of this sheath. When it is spoilt, we can be terribly egotistical whereas if rightly used it supports Self-Realization.

Obsessive attention to pleasure as well as excessive materialism can distort the finer balance of the energy sheath. In contrast, moderation of our emotions and all our faculties harmonizes the *pranamaya kosha*, and this in turn helps to harmonize the *annamaya kosha*. The Heartfulness practices of meditation on point A and cleaning of point B1 also refine this *kosha*.

The play of opposites is very strong with this sheath. The ever-weighing attitudes of likes and dislikes, attraction and repulsion, make this sheath even more formidable. Moderation is hard to come by when such is the case. We have to remain vigilant with speech, body language, and inner attitude. It means being humble and respectful towards everyone, including young ones and elders. Constantly delving into a state of insignificance, curbing the ego, is the surest way to refine this sheath. It finds its true luster only after we have totally refined the ego to its original purity.

MENTAL SHEATH

The next sheath is the even subtler *manomaya kosha*, the mental sheath that makes use of the mind, *manas*, and the five cognitive sense organs – sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. It is vaster than the previous two and is all about mental processes – thoughts, ideas, reason, logic, contemplation, feelings, dreams, hopes, and the feelings of good and bad, joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain.

While the *manomaya kosha* is largely dormant in other animals, it is well developed in humans. This *kosha* defines our human species, along with the heart, and is the bridge between human life and divine life.

By developing this *kosha*, we are able to arrive at our own conclusions. We exercise it by questioning, experiencing, observing, analyzing, exploring and inferring. We need direct experience in anything we do, including spirituality, for our *manomaya kosha* to remain functional and healthy. Will our hunger be satisfied by someone else eating? Will we grow mentally by someone else attending college on our behalf?

The *manomaya kosha* grows even when we make mistakes. When we make efforts to analyze things, we sometimes come to wrong conclusions, but that is how we learn, by exercising our *manomaya kosha*.

It is important to remember this in the education of children. When an education system is based solely on rote learning, we are not helping children develop this sheath.

Even as adults, we will also remain stuck if we only read, watch videos and go on quoting other people, no matter how profound the knowledge, because it is all borrowed knowledge. It must be applied practically and experienced for it to have any benefit.

The *manomaya kosha* develops when it is challenged by day-to-day events. That is why family life is good for the evolution of consciousness. There are challenges every day, and consciousness evolves when the *manomaya kosha* is challenged. So running away from society and problems does not help us grow.

Struggles and sufferings benefit this *kosha*, as they challenge us to find solutions, experience things for ourselves, accept and move forward. They help us if we accept them graciously, and they change our lives instantly, with a quantum leap into a higher level of consciousness, if we accept them cheerfully and with gratitude.

But the *manomaya kosha* can also develop logic to defend our actions, whether right or wrong, justifying our anger, inactions, lethargy, envy, jealousy and mistakes. When it is not pure, this *kosha* will condescend to any extent to justify moral turpitude for the sake of fulfilling desires, resorting to unjust means. If we succumb to a compromised mind, we compromise what is vital for our evolution.

A Heartfulness trainer can easily set such tendencies right in a few sessions by diverting the flow of thoughts towards the next chakra, the seat of the soul or *atma* chakra. Over a period of time, and with practice, our thoughts are regulated so that we remain in a state of acceptance. The Heartfulness practices of meditation on point A and cleaning of point B around the heart also help.¹ Heartfulness practices are such a boon in refining this troublesome sheath.

Individual contentment and true peace are possible only when we are freed from the demands of these mental disturbances. And when more and more of us join in this ennobling endeavor, individual peace will lead to world peace.

It is the *manomaya kosha* that offers us the most satisfaction as well the greatest discontent or restlessness. When unrefined and heavy, this sheath adds to our confusion and disasters. When its focus is in the higher realms, it helps us perform extraordinary mental marvels, including the much-talked-about astral travels.

The *vignanamaya kosha* is mostly about self-awareness. Through this sheath our consciousness can expand into the sky of superconsciousness and the depths of subconsciousness. As this sheath becomes more and more refined, it helps us access finer levels of superconsciousness.

WISDOM SHEATH

Next is the *vignanamaya kosha*, the sheath of knowledge or the wisdom sheath, which makes use of our intelligence and discriminative abilities (*buddhi*), and the five cognitive senses. As this sheath is refined, our intellect expands to encompass intelligence, intuition, wisdom and beyond. It is sometimes described as the 'witness mind', because here consciousness is no longer entangled in our thoughts, emotions and actions, so it can witness everything.

It is subtler than the previous three sheaths, and based on previous cognates is able to become cognizant and to re-cognize. At its best, it remains in tune with the highest consciousness. At the very least, it guides us to discriminate between what is ephemeral and what is eternal. This wisdom is needed in spirituality. When this state of discernment matures, we automatically develop non-attachment to temporary things, resulting in a state of unattached-attachment. The mind can remain actively involved in daily activities; the trick is to have the conviction that we are not the doer. If we allow our Maker to be the performer of any act we do, then we are free of attachment.

The *vignanamaya kosha* is mostly about self-awareness. Through this sheath our consciousness can expand into the sky of superconsciousness and the depths of subconsciousness. As this sheath becomes more and more refined, it helps us access finer levels of superconsciousness. Once again it is worth mentioning here that it is the practice of meditation with the aid of Transmission that makes such an expansion possible.



This *kosha* also helps us to decide on any course of action. Based on previous cognates, we learn to choose wisely, for example, not to play with snakes, not to put our hand in the fire, etc. The mind receives the cognates, consciousness feeds us with memory (recognition), and intelligence and wisdom help us to choose.

When this discernment results in right and favorable results, we become more confident. When it fails to yield favorable results, we lose confidence. Then we retrace our steps and see where we went wrong. This step of back tracking is important for continuous self-improvement. In due course we learn to listen to the heart. At times the heart tells us to avoid something but we don't listen, and then we see the consequences, resulting in regret. Never mind! Let it not repeat.

Heartfulness meditation accelerates the purification of the *koshas*, the chakras, and the overall physical system at a vibratory level. The help of the three *koshas* associated with the subtle bodies is an asset in any pursuit. They perform at their best when there is constant inward attention towards the heart, so that the heart becomes the guide. An innocent pure heart is helped. It is worth recalling the statement of Lord Christ: "Be ye like little children." That childlike state reflects innocence and purity. Children have no ego to say, "I know it all." Such claims prevent the expansion of consciousness.

The trio of subtle bodies and their associated *koshas* also play a major role in the formation and dissolution of *samskaras*, thoughts, memory storage, and recalling of cognates, thus providing information as and when needed.

BLISS SHEATH

Then finally we have the *anandamaya kosha*, the sheath around the soul or causal body, associated with a yet finer level of consciousness. It is the sheath of happiness, joy and bliss, and its food is joy. This *kosha* is beyond knowledge and experience, beyond the mind. It is about 'being', where we are bliss.

It is the subtlest of the five sheaths. On our journey we come across various spiritual stages offering us various levels of experiences, exposing our consciousness to more and more. We express joy at the level of the other four sheaths depending upon the resonance arising from the *anandamaya kosha*. Even this fifth *kosha* is not the end of the journey, although *sat-chit-anand* is considered to be such a high state.

During the spiritual journey all these sheaths are transcended. And this transcendence is another way of describing the journey of human evolution, the expansion of consciousness.

All the *koshas* have their inherent limitations, however subtle they may be. They are all interwoven, in fact, and not like the wooden Russian matryoshka dolls, one inside the next in a strictly sequential fashion. During meditation, we often have thoughts. Based on the kinds of thoughts we have, we can deduce the *koshas* where we are more or less restricted.

So regarding the alignment between the subtle bodies and *koshas*, we can say that:

Ahankar, ego, is the subtle body of willpower and vitality, and is most closely associated with the *pranamaya kosha*.

Manas, the thinking mind, is most closely associated with the *manomaya kosha*.

And *buddhi*, intellect, is most closely associated with the *vignanamaya kosha*, the wisdom sheath.

What about *chit*, consciousness? Remember that consciousness is the canvas upon which the other three subtle bodies play out their functions, so it is associated with all three *koshas* of the subtle bodies – *pranayama*, *manomaya* and *vignanamaya*. But consciousness is also there in every organ and every cell of the physical body, and at the other end of the spectrum it is also closest to the soul. So where is it?

Consciousness is everywhere. In a fully realized Yogi, consciousness is a 360-degree affair, flowing wherever it is needed in the moment. Consciousness spans all the *koshas* of the human being.

Even if we are not fully realized, and not aware of the full reach of our consciousness, that is only because we have not yet expanded it across the full spectrum of subconsciousness and superconsciousness. The *koshas* are another way to describe this spectrum of consciousness that we expand into as we go further and further on our journey.



Yoga is for this – a set of practices that refine our energy centers or chakras, refine the sheaths or *koshas*, and help us traverse through the various levels of consciousness.

Each one of us displays a consciousness based on its play within the complex web of these five sheaths, which are purified through the practice of meditation and cleaning. This purifying process is greatly accelerated by *pranahuti*. When we are able to harmonize our consciousness across all the five sheaths, we will see joy in life flowering on its own ●

¹ Ram Chandra, 2014. *Efficacy of Raja Yoga in the Light of Sahaj Marg*. Shri Ram Chandra Mission, India.

² Ram Chandra, 2014. *Efficacy of Raja Yoga in the Light of Sahaj Marg*. Shri Ram Chandra Mission, India.



DESTINY & FREEDOM OF CHOICE

DAAJI explores the topics of destiny and freedom of choice in the light of expanding consciousness. He shares some tips on how to embrace change and weave our destiny.

Our lives are guided by our hearts, and our hearts are constantly changing like the weather, based on our *samskaras* – the impressions, habits, likes and dislikes we have accumulated in the past.

Sometimes I am caught up in a whirlpool of troubling thoughts: Why do tragedies happen to noble people who are so good? Especially, I have been thinking about the life of Mother Sita from the ancient Indian epic tale, the Ramayana. The Ramayana is the classic hero's journey, as described by Joseph Campbell; a tale of good versus evil, where good eventually triumphs over evil in a great battle. But it is not a 'happily ever after' tale by any means. After being abducted by the evil Ravana, and rescued by her noble husband, the avatar Lord Rama, Mother Sita was then humiliated by him in public and who knows how many times behind closed doors in the palace. Eventually she was exiled to the forest without her husband, and finally swallowed up by Mother Earth.

Swami Vivekananda said about her, "To say that she was pure is a blasphemy. She was purity itself embodied – the most beautiful character that ever lived on Earth."

Despite everything that happened in the epic, she did not mind her sufferings or the injustice that was dealt to her. She stayed centred in her Lord. It was a tragic

story on par with any of the greatest love stories of world literature. Lord Rama never remarried, always remained faithful to her, and ended his life by voluntarily walking into the Sarayu River.

Now, was this tragedy foretold? None other than the great Saptarishi Vashistha – one of the seven sages – prophesied her marriage to Lord Rama as the perfect match. According to this great Rishi nothing could go wrong, but instead their whole life was packed with misery to the extent that Lord Rama, the ‘all-knower’, rejected his wife so many times. Philosophers give all sorts of logical reasons and explanations, but nothing satisfies the heart. This fundamental question keeps coming to me – how is it possible that Rishi Vashishta fixed a supposedly perfect marriage and yet so many people suffered, especially the main actors in the epic, Lord Rama and Mother Sita?

Nothing makes any sense until we discover the understanding that Heartfulness gives to us about destiny and the consequences of our choices. And even then, many things are often misunderstood. For example, many people come to a spiritual path and Guide to relinquish all responsibility for their destiny, with the hope that the Guide will somehow wave a magic wand and their lives will become peaceful and harmonious, and all their troubles disappear. Times of crisis are also when most people turn to God, in desperation, with the hope that somehow he will fix their misery. But that is not what this life is about. It is one extreme end of the spectrum of possibilities and is a big misunderstanding.

Our lives are guided by our hearts, and our hearts are constantly changing like the weather, based on our *samskaras* – the impressions, habits, likes and dislikes we have accumulated in the past. But



if *samskaras* are everything, if our destinies are everything, if the Gods have decided our futures, we would be like robots responding to a program. There would not be any need to take birth after birth; it would have ended a long time back.

Think about this: If our destiny is completely fixed, then why would we need to make choices? And are the choices that we make every day also determined by our destiny? If it were so, then why would we need to be concerned about ethics and the consequences of our actions? Why would we need to relinquish our desires?

Desires create problems; in fact the problems they create are what prevent our evolution. Many of these stem from our *samskaras* that have come from our past, and they trouble us.

But what about the desires we create in the present environment? It is these desires that interfere with our destiny.

We always have the freedom to choose. Let me give you an example: say you want an iPhone, can that desire come from the past? There were no iPhones earlier to create that *samskara* in you, so where does your wish come from? It falls into a category of *samskaras* called ‘acquisitiveness’. It could be for an iPhone or a big house or a million dollars. This acquisitiveness in turn creates many other impulses or tendencies. It diverts us from our main destiny.

Going back to the Ramayana, could Lord Rama have chosen differently? Could he have done something for his wife? He could have announced, “I accept her

as she is. I have full confidence in her purity,” but he did not. Instead he abandoned her and she was exiled to the forest for a second time, because he was influenced by his people, by their judgments and his sense of duty to them.

He tested Mother Sita’s purity by asking, “You were with Ravana for almost a year. Can you prove that you did nothing wrong?” Why did he ask this? He wanted his people to see and be convinced that the king’s wife was pure. She had no argument, for she knew that she was pure. She could walk through fire with confidence, and prove her sanctity and purity.

She also could have asked Lord Rama, “My beloved, you were also a year away from me. What did you do in the jungle alone?” but she kept quiet; she could not believe it. Lord Rama interrogated Mother Sita publically because of the pressure he felt to please his people. In this case, destiny was altered by the interference of others and the consequences of his choice.

Earlier in the epic there was another instance of interference, this time from family members, leading to the first exile of Rama and Sita. Rama’s father, King Dasharatha, had a younger wife who wanted her son to rule the kingdom instead of Rama. As a result of her influence over her husband, and Rama’s obedience and sense of duty, the couple were exiled to the forest where Ravana kidnapped Sita. Once again we could ask: Could Lord Rama have chosen differently?

In a similar way, we are also not islands. We are influenced by others and decisions are made on our behalf by so many people. Such interference changes destinies. Lord Rama did not have a

difficult destiny in his fortune, but others created turbulence and the rest of the epic speaks for itself.

The second avatar of ancient India, Lord Krishna, tried to change people's notion of duty. He said, "Yes, you must perform your duty as a king, as prescribed," but hundreds of times during the great epic of the Mahabharata, he told Bhishma, "You are doing the wrong thing by pledging an oath of loyalty to the throne of Hastinapur. There is nothing like loyalty to a kingdom. Our loyalty is to the truth, to dharma. Take the side of right."

Bhishma didn't understand these concepts because he was still living with the old values, with his sense of loyalty to the throne of Hastinapur.

Lord Krishna introduced a great concept: even if you perform a good action, with very noble, pious intentions, if it is done with some motive it will turn out to be a sinful action. Why? Because at the base of it is the desire of gratification for doing something good. This aspect, of doing good things for self-satisfaction, promotes and fuels the ego, and the ego is the biggest culprit that keeps us separate, not only from each other, but also from the Source itself.

Imagine there is a big ocean and we put an earthenware pot in it. It will quickly fill up with water, and the water inside the pot and outside is the same. Imagine balloons floating in the sky – there is air inside and outside, separated by plastic. We are like those earthenware pots and balloons,

Our dream is to bring about such oneness, such unity, though we are separate individuals, so that we dissolve into each other, with harmony and mutual respect at the very least. And with this harmony, with this unity, we will trigger a new society.

with our own individual existence immersed in the universal existence. We remain individuals floating in the entire existence, and we are like that because of our own individualized creation, which began with the first separation.

So how can we re-unite with the original Source once again? Heartfulness comes to our rescue with methods to transcend all that separates us, and it gives us a higher purpose to life, the ultimate destiny of re-uniting with the Source.

It is easy to read the following passage from the Bhagavad Gita: "You have the right to work only but never to its fruits. Let not the fruits of action be your motive, nor let your attachment be to inaction."

We can understand the concept, but it is difficult to implement. Even for simple things like going to a restaurant to have lunch, we must plan; we must decide to walk or drive, choose which way to go, and go in a way that will not disturb the people around us.

The goal of our choices is always in sight, whether it is big or small. It is always there. How can I not think of the fruits before I engage myself in any action? Why would I not think of my higher goal before I attempt to meditate? We practice Heartfulness with this higher goal in mind. Is not the goal the fruit of our actions? We do not forget the result – we keep the goal in mind, and lead a lifestyle suitable for fulfilling that goal. Anything less and we fail. It is the same principle for an athlete, an astronaut or a spiritual seeker.

The fruit of our meditation and lifestyle changes is union with the highest principle – to be one with that Ultimate state. It is only possible when the drop merges with the ocean, and how can the water in the earthenware pot merge in the ocean? When the earthenware pot breaks.

The earthenware pot within us is related to consciousness. There is no special entity called the ego that we can pinpoint and say, "The ego is here." The ego has a lot to do with consciousness. If the sun and other stars were not there in the sky, what would happen? Imagine the color of space before creation; there was utter darkness, no light. The Vedas and Upanishads praise light so much, and that makes sense when we understand light as knowledge, light as Realization, light as understanding, light as a function of consciousness.



The oneness within us will create oneness all around, just as the world can only be at peace if we are individually at peace. The world may be in a state of unrest, but when each one of us is at peace it is a lot better. And when there are many of us at peace there will be world peace.

And knowledge and understanding are not absolute – they come in stages of enlightenment, as we continue on our inner journey towards a higher destiny. When we meditate for the first time, the oneness we feel is a certain experience. We feel peace, but that peace at the beginning is different from the peace we feel when entering the Cosmic Region, or the peace we feel at chakra 12. In chakra 2 of the Heart Region, the peace we feel is very intense, yet the peace we feel at chakra 12 is sublime and so different. There is no contradiction in it, no opposite to it. In the heart region, from chakras 1 to 5, all the worldly polarities or opposites remain. As we move into the cosmic region, there is a unity of a different

order, and some time after crossing chakra 8, we can truly appreciate the meaning of *brahmacharya*.

What is *brahmacharya*? One who dwells in Brahman all the time. It has nothing to do with celibacy. We transcend, by unifying the duality of the masculine and feminine currents within, the positive and negative polarities within. Everything settles down and we find absolute oneness from inside, though there may be so many contradictions all around us. Thus the state of *brahmacharya* finds its true meaning when we start dwelling in the cosmic region, *Brahmanda Mandal*.

Sublimating the ego dissolves all barriers so that we can become one with everything. We become one wholesome entity, no longer partisan towards this or that, no longer affected by likes and dislikes, and no longer suffering the gravitational pulls of the heart region. Our dream is to bring about such oneness, such unity, though we are separate individuals, so that we dissolve into each other, with harmony and mutual respect at the very least. And with this harmony, with this unity, we will trigger a new society.

There is a lot of talk about mutation, as mutation is the fastest way of evolution. Whatever genetic pattern we have inherited from our parents is fixed – as fixed as our destiny. But we have freedom of choice to change our destiny, and similarly we can also change our genetic pattern. For example, when we are angry, our thoughts become erratic. What happens to our heart rate? What happens to our blood pressure? All this affects the mind. The mind is not a neutral witness to what happens

inside; even the physical structure of the brain is affected.

What happens when we are afraid, depressed or anxious? What happens when we are happy, joyful and inwardly peaceful? What happens to the fetus inside a mother who is reverential, understanding, wise, peaceful and compassionate? Neurotransmitters are released that promote well-being, so imagine the lasting effects mothers can have, not just by transferring their genetic code to their child, but also by their thoughts and behavior. This is called the science of epigenetics. The effects of the mother's thoughts, the father's thoughts, their behavior, environmental circumstances and television can change everything.

That is why the tradition in India was always to send a pregnant woman to her parents' home. She was happier there, and did not have to work so hard in the fields. She could give creative time, quality time to the child growing inside her, and give birth in familiar, comfortable, loving surroundings. Our elders were wise and scientific, but they made a rule out of it so people would follow, and this became a religious ritual. This is how most rituals came into being.

Although the genes from parents are fixed, the environment plays a major role in the development of a fetus. External things change the epigenetic pattern. Likewise, although our destiny, our fate, our *samskaras* may be fixed, they can also be changed. It depends upon how flexible we are. We have the freedom to choose. And what brings about this flexibility? A mind and heart free of the rigidity of *samskaras* from the past.

If you want your destiny to be oneness, the first step is to be truthful. That is a choice you can make. Whatever you have in your heart, recognize it, become aware of it. It is a simple exercise to start with, and you will soon see how being truthful helps you to evolve so fast.

And if you like meditation, expand the possibilities that meditation can bring by remembering the five vowels – **a, e, i, o, u**. First acquire the condition by meditating. Then hold onto it, enrich it, give life to it by remembering it again and again; enliven it. Then imbibe it in every cell and ultimately in your heart. And then bring about oneness; unite with the one who gives it to us. It is very simple:

With every meditation,
with every condition that we **acquire**,
we must be able to **enliven** it,
imbibe it
and then be **one** with it,
unite with it.

The oneness within us will create oneness all around, just as the world can only be at peace if we are individually at peace. The world may be in a state of unrest, but when each one of us is at peace it is a lot better. And when there are many of us at peace there will be world peace. It is sufficient that we change ourselves – that is more than enough. If we try to change the world we will fail. The Heartfulness movement is not about changing the world, but the world will change when people embrace meditation ●

¹ Bhagavad Gita, chapter 2, verse 47.

THE MARCH TO FREEDOM

PART 1

DAAJI takes us on a journey – the ultimate journey to freedom. In the process he explains why freedom is of such importance to humans worldwide.

If we study history, we realize that there are some fundamental principles and values that the peoples of all cultures, backgrounds and walks of life have considered important. We can call them universal principles. One of the most highly valued is freedom.

In the words of Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, “The natural yearning of the soul is to be free from bondage.” This yearning or craving for freedom is the core of our human purpose. You could say, in fact, that the march to freedom is our true human purpose.

But what freedom is Ram Chandra talking about in this statement? Is it the license to do whatever we want on this earth for our own happiness, at the expense of other people, other species and our environment? The ancient Greek philosopher Plato said “No”, and argued that with freedom comes a responsibility to align our choices with goodness. In the 17th century, John Milton said the same thing. In the teachings of all religions, philosophies and spiritual traditions, we find the idea of choosing what is right over what is pleasurable. The Buddha’s noble eightfold path is based on the same premise, as are the ethical precepts of Yoga – *yama* and *niyama* – and the Ten Commandments of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

So let’s explore further Ram Chandra’s statement, “The natural yearning of the soul is to be free from bondage.” What bondage? What is the bondage of the soul? All throughout this series on the

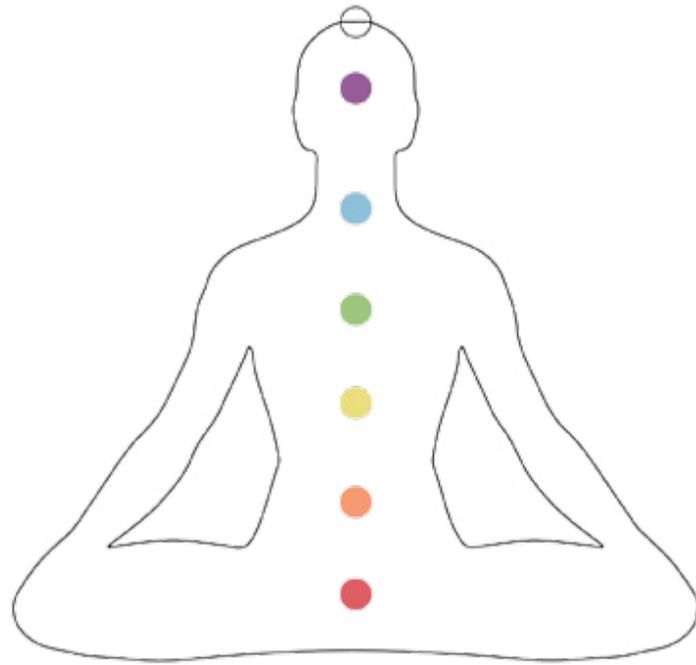
evolution of consciousness we have been very close to this theme. The evolution of consciousness is the expansion that comes step-by-step, as we transcend the bondages of the soul. We have explored the three bodies of a human being: the soul is at the center of our existence, and then there are coverings around the soul. There are an infinite number of coverings around the soul, all of which can become heavy with complexities and impurities.

Our real march to freedom is to purify these coverings so that they no longer bind the soul. To let the soul be free of all heaviness, so it can soar and become one with the universal soul we call the Divine or God. To live in universal consciousness.

This march to freedom is the spiritual journey, and there is a map to give us guidance and directions. This map is the spiritual anatomy of the human system. In earlier articles of this series we started to explore spiritual anatomy, but now we will explore it in more depth.

Many of you will have heard of chakras, which are often described as centers of concentrated energy in the human system. The traditional view is that there are 7 main chakras: the root chakra at the base of the spine, the sacral chakra just below the navel, the solar plexus chakra in the upper abdomen, the heart chakra, the throat chakra, the brow chakra and the crown chakra at the top of the head.

TRADITIONAL CHAKRAS

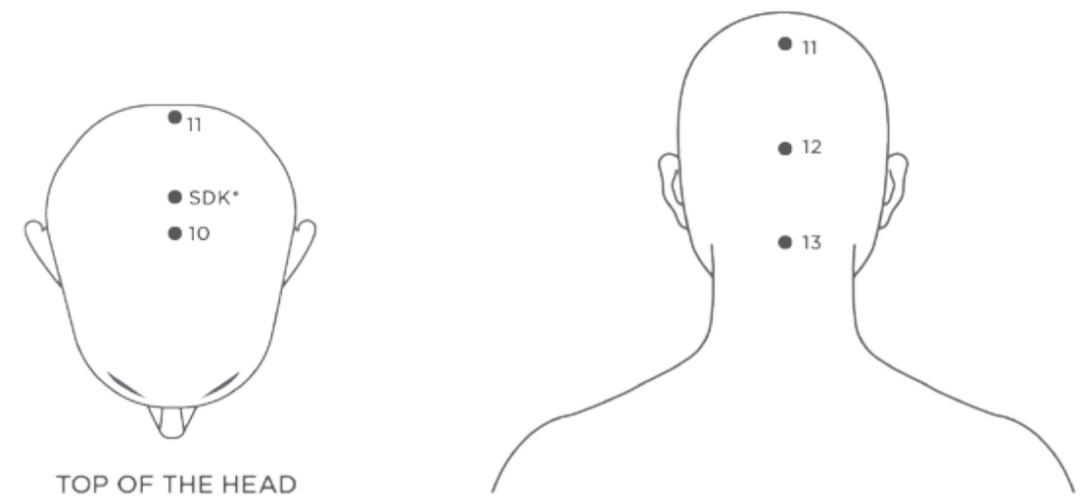
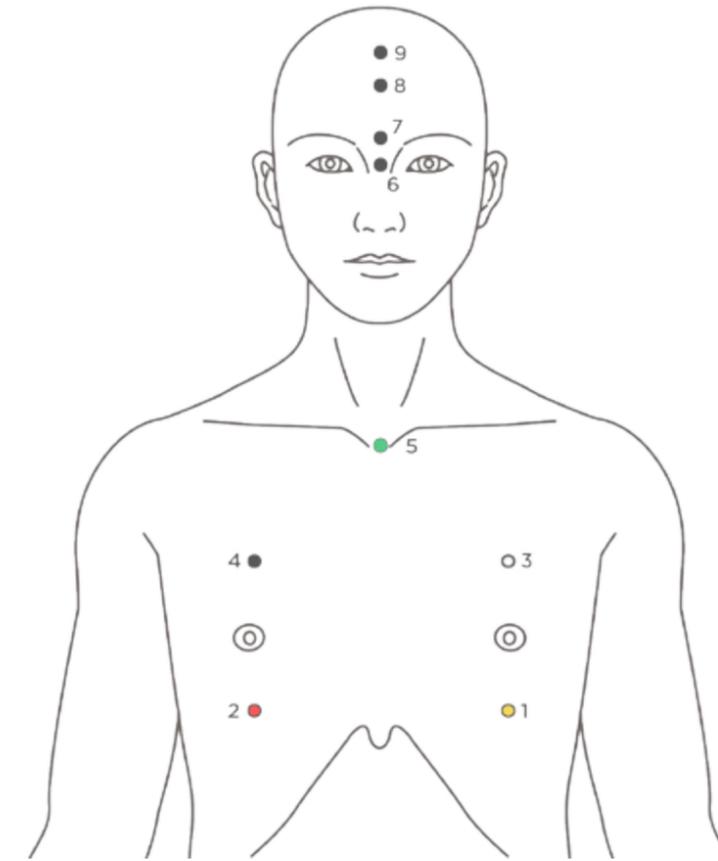


- Sahasrara dal kamal - Thousand - petaled Lotus
- Ajna - Third Eye Chakra
- Vishuddhi - Throat Chakra
- Anahata - Heart Chakra
- Manipura - Navel Chakra
- Svadhisthana - Sacral Chakra
- Muladhara - Root Chakra

But we now know that the spiritual anatomy of a human being is made up of many more chakras than these 7, and that they extend to the occipital prominence at the back of the head.

The 3 lower chakras are common to all higher animal species, while human beings also have the possibility of awakening and developing the capacity of the chakras from the heart upwards. These 13 chakras are shown in this image:

LOCATION OF THE CHAKRAS FROM THE HEART TO THE CENTRAL REGION



SDK : Sahasra dal kamal

BACK OF THE HEAD

The heart chakra is not just one star; it is a constellation of many stars, and the 5 major ones belong to the 5 elements that manifest throughout the universe – earth, air, fire, water and ether, also known as *akash* or space. Our bodies are also made from those 5 elements, which are present in the heart chakra, starting with chakra 1 of the heart, which has the qualities of earth dominant. The other four elements exist here to a lesser degree. Chakra 1 is on the lower left side of the chest near the physical heart.

Chakra 2 is the soul chakra on the lower right side of the chest. It has the quality of space or *akasha* dominating. Chakra 3 is where the fire element dominates, on the upper left side of the chest. Chakra 4 is where the water element dominates, on the upper right side of the chest, and chakra 5 is at the throat and has the air element dominating. All of this is within the Heart Region or *Pind Pradesh*, and it is a vast region in itself.

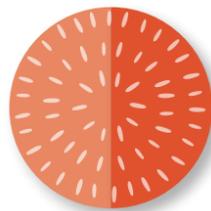
Through the practice of Heartfulness, the first step is to purify and awaken these 5 chakras of the *Pind Pradesh* so that consciousness can expand through this vast region.

What does this mean for us? One thing it means is that we learn to purify and master the feeling side of life. We can clear away the overlays of emotional distortion around the soul that color our perception, so that purity, wisdom and clarity become our natural state of being. We develop the confidence to listen to the heart. Our lives become simpler and purer.



On this journey through the Heart Region, at chakra 1 we learn to work with our likes and dislikes, with the pull of our desires, including worldly worries, greed and jealousy, resentment and self-pity, sensuality and lust, guilt and shame. When we master these emotions, as a result of purifying and traversing chakra 1, a natural feeling of contentment and lightness develops. The beautiful thing about the earth element at *chakra* 1 is that it supports and allows everything. It is utterly accepting, without judgment. For instance, the earth will allow a murder to take place and when it does there is no earthquake. The earth does not swallow up the murderer. We walk on Mother Earth and she tolerates our weight. We can create a beautiful garden or burn the garden, and all is witnessed by the earth. She tolerates us. She accepts us. She is like a mother to us.

When a person develops this quality, at its pinnacle that person becomes like a mother, becoming so loving and accepting of everything.



Chakra 2 is the spiritual heart. At chakra 2 we experience the feelings of peace, lightness, stillness, and the bliss of the soul. Compassion reaches its zenith here. At first it is difficult to integrate this experience with daily life, as the feelings are so enticing that all we want to do is meditate and stay in that state of peace. On one side, there is immense calmness and peace, and on the other side a very subtle level of yearning to move onwards. Gradually, as we journey through chakra 2 and balance chakras 1 and 2, we learn to be both grounded in the earthly plane and soar in space at the same time. We start to integrate matter and spirit in our lives.

This creates our base for moving onwards to the upper chakras in the chest area where we encounter the other elements – fire, water and air. Fire is vital energy, and at chakra 3 we dive deeper into this element.



Fire purifies. When you see gold ore heated up it is purified to produce gold. If you heat ice, what happens? It melts – it becomes water, which then becomes steam, powerful enough to move locomotive engines. Let's focus on these two principles of fire: purifying and melting. What is the solidity that melts in us? When we interact with people, sometimes we are vibrant and feel like moving and at other times we don't feel like doing anything, we are frozen. It is just this. When the fire of love is there, we can move easily because love makes things easier and better. It is difficult to move around with complexities and heaviness.

Fire has another quality. Even when you keep a match or a lighter pointing downwards, the fire will always rise upwards. Our love, the fire of love, must ascend. When we talk of ascension we always talk of divinity. Love connects us with our Source and with the Guide who is leading us to our Source, and so love facilitates our march to freedom.

At chakra 3 we learn to use love and anger so that both are transformative guiding emotions for the onward journey. Anger in its pure form is also for our benefit, as it alerts us to the fact that something is wrong, and reminds us to change our tendencies and behaviors to continue on the right path. As we feel the inner friction we know something needs refining.

So at this chakra, the purifying effect of fire helps us to transform so that we evoke love in others. What is being transformed in us? The worst in us is being transformed; things like hatred. It is transformed into love, and that's what helps us to ascend. Fire helps us to melt our heart. Here true devotion develops and true love develops. We don't have to pretend to be in love, as we cannot help but love. Love becomes our very nature.

When anger and love are directed elsewhere, when their focus is outwards towards other people and things, these two emotions can drag us into entanglements and complexities, creating a diversion and causing emotional turbulence. That is not to say we should not love in a worldly sense, or that we should not utilize anger to improve ourselves in a worldly sense, but it is important to keep the field of consciousness clear and pure, as opposed to muddying it with turbulent emotions. Hence we have the process of cleaning in Heartfulness – to refresh and rejuvenate the field of consciousness, to purify the subtle body on a daily basis.



Moving to chakra 4, what does the water element evoke in us? Water has a very soothing and tranquil effect. It refreshes our mind and soothes our heart.

The state that we experienced with fire, always restless to love, now becomes quieter. The intensity of love is reduced considerably. Love becomes like a deep flowing river towards the Source. It is less expressive and more inwardly transporting. The emotional excitement of love found at chakra 3 is ennobled when it combines with the water element and becomes subtler.

Strength develops from within as love flows deeper, and this manifests at chakra 4 as courage and confidence in everything that we do. Courage is very beneficial when a healthy level of humility and concern for others is present, but when it is reckless and ego-driven it can be destructive.

At chakra 4 we also experience and learn to master fear. Let's say you are all alone on the ocean and there are thirty-foot waves, you will feel afraid. Fear balances courage, preventing us from doing things that could be reckless. It keeps us on track, if you like, in its pure form. But when it is weighed down with impressions, fear can become negative and crippling.



Chakra 5 is dominated by the air element, and has qualities of lightness, clarity and intelligence. Air is always in flux – we don't know which direction it is heading. In the same way, our mind, our

moods, our emotions also keep on fluctuating. At chakra 5 there can be a lot of illusion. When heaviness or emotional turbulence exists in the heart, the air element manifests this confusion and illusion. When confusion is present, it means that we must pause and wait until the confusion has shifted and the heart is able to truly guide us with clarity.

In our journey through the Heart Region, we purify all these feelings. Each one has its purpose and we learn how to use them constructively for our onward evolution. Once we have traversed the chakras in the Heart Region, the journey then continues into higher and higher realms. To go further, the important quality that we need is generosity. Generosity of heart is able to drop the differences, the opposites or the *dwandwas*, and is able to discern things with just the right perspective.

Transcending this *Pind Pradesh* means going beyond this earthly plane of existence to the Mind Region, and finally beyond the Mind Region to the Central Region. We will explore these regions next time in the quest to understand more of the march to freedom ●

Humility, like darkness, reveals the heavenly lights.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

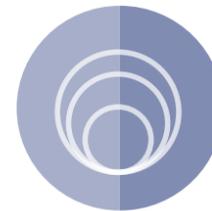
THE MARCH TO FREEDOM

PART 2

DAAJI continues with the ultimate journey to freedom. In this issue he takes us further into a whole new realm of experience, the road less traveled.

In part 1 we explored the evolution of our consciousness through the chakras of the region of heart – those associated with our physical existence on this Earth. After mastering these five chakras we then move on, expanding our consciousness into the region of mind, also known as the region of the Super-Mind of God. To step into this region, there is one important prerequisite: we first must embody that generosity of heart that emerges as we purify the heart and master the emotions of worldly life.

In this new realm we experience a different level of freedom; we are free from the cycle of birth and death. In other words, we transcend the need for reincarnation, and this is commonly known as liberation. Our consciousness is free to soar in a completely new way, and actually we go beyond consciousness to the potentiality that creates consciousness. The soul has passed through its first great rite of passage on its way back home to the Source.



So let us now continue on our journey and see where it takes us. This new realm of mind is beyond dualities, *dvandwas*, of everyday physical existence, and yet it is always there behind everything we do in daily life. We continue our journey by entering the Cosmic Region, also known as *Brahmanda Mandal* and *Virat Desh*, which starts at chakra 6 between the eyebrows. This is such a vast region that normally thousands of years would not be long enough to traverse it, what to say of its grandeur. Here we feel holiness and piety, and become conscious of every power that is present.

The Cosmic Region is the storehouse of the inexhaustible energy that supplies power to the earthly plane and keeps our material life going. When we journey through it, we feel immense power similar to that of electricity throughout our whole being. We feel electrified.

Here the movement we find is that of expansion and contraction, multi-directional and multi-dimensional movement. Our mind expands, and we develop the quality of limitlessness. Our consciousness expands in a 360-degree manner. Our expansion here continues until we realize that we are expanded all over the world. The universe seems too small for us as we develop a corresponding expansion within ourselves.

It is at this stage in the journey that the Guide's role becomes so important, because how can a liberated soul, a purified soul, remain in a body unless that body is also purified? The Guide helps us to purify each cell. How does this happen? It is a matter of experience, and I hope you will all practice and see for yourself.



Within this Cosmic Region we find chakras 6 and 7, and the first half of chakra 8. Chakras 6 and 7 are almost intertwined, forming a figure 8, with the lower circle (chakra 6) smaller than the upper circle (chakra 7), and the lower circle slightly in front of the upper circle. Chakra 7 is the storehouse of the great powers, and chakra 6 is the place from which power is distributed.

Certain traditions advise meditation at chakra 6 between the eyebrows, and even in the Bhagavad Gita Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to meditate at this point. The reason is very specific: Arjuna was a warrior during the Mahabharata war. He had been wavering on the battlefield, and in order to fight he needed strength and energy. The Cosmic Region is all about power and Arjuna needed power.

But we are not going to war. We are leading a family life and for that we need love, understanding, compassion and empathy – all qualities of the heart. Later in the Gita, Krishna says that the Divine resides in the heart of all beings. This is a big hint for those who seek Realization. The need of the hour is to meditate on the heart.

I have given the name Durvasa to chakra 7 because Durvasa was a character in the Mahabharata epic who was enormously powerful and prone to fits of rage during which he would curse people. Because of the enormous power prevailing in this region, we can become careless at times. When someone annoys us, we may lash out because we have power at our command. But we don't have to become like Durvasa if love backs our spiritual journey, and as a caution I have given this name so that we are aware of the possibility. Powers will be there, but the Guide is also there to protect us. Even then, we need to be alert to the way we treat others.

If we are sensitive, we will discover the presence of those great powers that govern various parts of the universe, but such powers are not for us to enjoy for ourselves. They are made available for the universal good, for universal peace not individual peace, and for the welfare of all.

Reaching chakra 7 produces a very pleasant feeling of ecstasy. It feels as if we have reached the destination, and it is so charmingly attractive that often even the most sincere seekers will come to a halt. The Guide then has to take us forward. The condition of chakra 7 is seemingly marvelous, but for a true yogi it is child's play.

The Cosmic Region is where we are really able to transform our character from reactive to responsive. Responsiveness arises from a pure heart and a balanced mind. Transmission tunes the mental tendencies and changes the intentions of the heart. Here, the lower self becomes the universal Self, moving from selfishness to selflessness.

With interest and the help of a capable Guide, we then proceed to chakra 8. The first half of this chakra is within the Cosmic Region, and the second half is the Supra-Cosmic Region, also known as the *Para-Brahmanda Mandal*. *Para* means 'above', so we transcend the Cosmic Region within this chakra and feel a sort of freshness like that which a sun-stricken person feels on taking a cool bath in summer.



Having transcended the Cosmic Region, we are no longer enamored of the powerhouse associated with chakra 7, because we realize the worthlessness of accumulating power. We start to dance to a different tune – that of refining and transcending anything to do with power, and of course that means the ego. Instead, we become enamored of humility and wish to surrender to what is higher than ourselves, as we understand that we will only continue on our journey to higher realms with a supplicant heart.

We often hear that the world is *maya*, illusion, and here at chakra 8 we feel that state, so we lose interest in unnecessary things. This renunciation is not forced or imposed, but totally natural. The world no longer remains a playground, and we feel that it is like a dream. Everything here feels very light. Thought loses its weight and we begin to enjoy peace and settledness. Here peace has a different frequency to the peace we experienced at chakra 2 in the heart. It is more sublime, but only the seeker who feels restlessness for realization of the Ultimate within this peace can master this point. We require a restless heart that is willing to forgo the peace of chakra 8, in order to continue onwards.



Then we move to chakra 9, and the new region into which we enter demands a higher level of submission, a higher level of surrender. In Sanskrit, surrender is known as *Prapanna*, the name of this region. The 9th chakra is all about surrender and humility, as symbolized by Lord Krishna surrounded by cows and Lord Jesus Christ with a little lamb in his arms. The lamb is very comfortable there, and that becomes our state too. In that prayerful humble state a vision of Divinity is always present in our heart, so all around we see Divinity.

We have come to terms with the world, and feel neither attraction nor aversion. We remain fully surrendered, just as Hanuman did with Lord Rama in the Ramayana, and like the cows of Krishna and the lamb of Christ. The name 'Hanuman' reflects his nature: *maan* means 'honor and respect', and *hanu* means 'without'. He demanded no respect, no honor. So I have named this point after Lord Hanuman. The 9th chakra is about more and more of the Lord, and less and less of the individual self.

The heart gains enormous purity. Real attachment starts here, every moment remains pregnant with His being, and we regret any moment that is spent away from this communion. In fact, that is the original meaning of sin: separateness from that noble communion with the Lord. We remain naturally absorbed in the Lord, without effort, and rest in a state of surrender.

There is also no illusion when approaching Divinity at this stage. We face circumstances with courage, respect and reverence, and any feelings of dislike or hatred are too remote to worry about. The play of ego in these higher realms can be very torturous, but if we resolve it we are granted extraordinary bliss. And we can only resolve it once we have started merging with the Ultimate.

At this stage, if we even consider ourselves to be a notch higher than anyone else we are thrown into darkness, and realize that nothing can punish us more than our own conscience. And to even think about achievement or talk about our association with the Beloved feels arrogant and vain. The breeze of divine consciousness starts flowing. The feeling of the supremacy of the Lord is drowned in love. There is a perfect sense of naturalness. Reverence towards the Lord simply takes hold.

At this chakra, our thoughts and will are synchronous with those of our Guide, and we feel completely dependent upon him, in osmosis with him, and our love for him is intense. The world appears as neither real nor unreal. Our individual consciousness merges with our Guide's consciousness.

In our day-to-day life we ask ourselves, "How would my Lord feel if I do this or don't do this, if I think this or behave like that?" We become extra sensitive in this way at the 9th chakra, so imagine the level of etiquette and reverence that is required now to journey to the 10th chakra, which is where the Lord prevails. In reality the preparation for such an attitude of 'let thy will be done' begins in the very early stages of the spiritual journey. Such is the need for a strong foundation based on faith.

Chakra 9 is all about surrender to the Lord, whereas at chakra 10 that changes to extreme proximity to the Lord. We move into a new region, and a game is going on here in which the extent to which we surrender is the extent to which the Lord prevails in us. We oscillate between our own presence as a devotee and His total presence. This oscillating condition is a region in itself known as *Prapanna-Prabhu*.

As we move through this region, we start feeling that we are one with the Lord, and there is no difference between us. Everything that He possesses is ours. It is not that we own the world but it is like being a prince: all the things in the palace belong to the king, yet we feel them to be ours too. Similarly, there is no feeling of separation. Eventually the Lord emerges supreme in this oscillating game, and we continue on to the next region of *Prabhu*.

The Lord's presence is so profoundly felt here and there is intimacy beyond belief. If we raise our hand we feel that it is the Lord's hand; we see through the Lord's eyes. It is a beautiful state. And yet another beautiful thing happens. Since we have become so identical with the Lord and with our Guide, we are able to spread the Lord's vibrations, the Guide's vibrations. We become vehicles like sandalwood. What does sandalwood do? Whenever wind passes through the sandalwood forest, the fragrance of sandalwood spreads everywhere. Something similar happens to us as we remain absorbed in God.

As we move through this region, we start feeling that we are one with the Lord, and there is no difference between us. Everything that He possesses is ours. It is not that we own the world but it is like being a prince: all the things in the palace belong to the king, yet we feel them to be ours too.



A stage comes when the Lord merges in us, and so the vibrations of the Lord emanate from us. That is the beauty of the 10th chakra. And yet we tend to become more and more restless. We will explore this restlessness and the rest of the spiritual journey next ●

THE MARCH TO FREEDOM

PART 3

DAAJI continues his narration of the ultimate journey to freedom. In this issue he takes us still further into the realm beyond experience, beyond consciousness, into the realm of God.

Let's first see how far our wayfarer has come on his journey to freedom. In part 1 we explored the awakening of the chakras in the Heart Region, and then in part 2 what happens in the first few chakras of the Mind Region, when he experiences liberation from the ongoing cycle of birth and death. So let's rejoin him at chakra 10, the beginning of the sub-region known as *Prabhu*, and continue onwards in this vast region of mind.

He is now in the realm of God. Stephen Hawking wrote in his book, *A Brief History of Time*, "If we do discover a theory of everything... it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason – for then we would truly know the mind of God." The region of *Prabhu* is all about this, the Super-Mind of God. But reaching here cannot be done through the purely scientific approach of reason: reason is too cumbersome and primitive a mental approach. To know the Super-Mind of God, direct perception is required, through the awakening of the superconscious states. Reason is the indirect route to knowledge, limited by the mental functions of consciousness, thinking, intellect and ego in the best-case scenario, and contaminated with the additional filters of *samskaras* in a worse-case scenario.

Direct perception is unfettered by any of these limitations. Through the purification of the heart and subsequent awakening of the higher chakras, direct perception is the natural state of a true Yogi. It is not that a Yogi cannot use reason, as it is a useful tool, but he also has access to knowledge without filters, the wisdom of the universe. At this stage, Hawking's 'theory of everything' is possible. And the 'ultimate triumph' about which he writes is actually the triumph of Yoga. That is what Yoga is, and it is not just the 'theory of everything', but also the practical experience of everything.

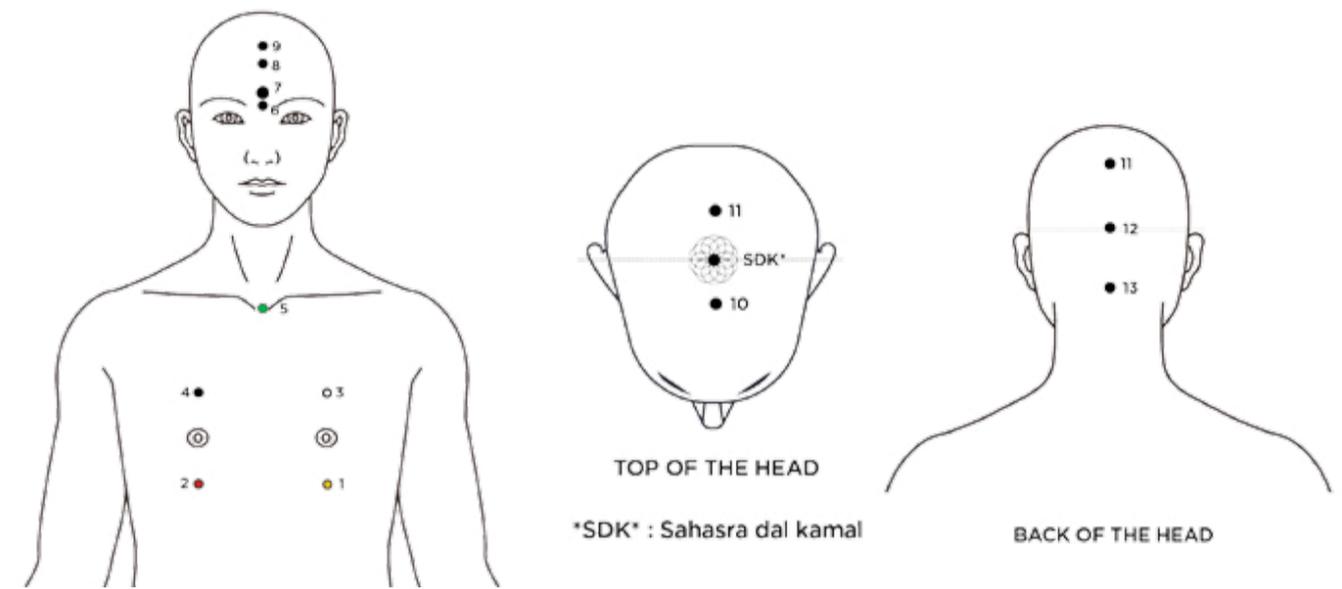
That is why our wayfarer's intense efforts at spiritual practice earlier in the journey were so vital. They were necessary to reach this level. The practical awakening of the chakras of the heart-mind lays the foundation for experiencing the realm of God. Even at the beginning of the journey itself, at chakra 1 of the Heart Region, a lower level of superconsciousness is awakened through Heartfulness practice, and throughout the journey more refined states of superconsciousness are awakened with the Guru's Transmission. We can imagine these initial efforts as an investment that matures at this higher stage. Having built the foundation, now the beauty of the edifice is revealed.

This is only possible once the ego tussle between 'I' and 'He' has exhausted itself through the region of *Prapanna-Prabhu* at chakra 9. Otherwise our wayfarer's perception remains clouded by his mental limitations, especially his ego, which can be like a black hole contracting his perception – he has to break free of these limitations if he wants to experience God directly and realize the infinite potential of the Ultimate. And the Guru's role in this process is crucial. Do you think any of us could traverse this alone? It would be like climbing Mount Everest without a Sherpa's guidance, or Frodo Baggins throwing the ring of power into the fires of Mordor without Gandalf's and Gollum's help. Can the ego dissolve its hold without some higher power to help? In this rarefied realm, our wayfarer needs the guidance and support of a Guru who knows the path.

That is why Osho has said, "A living master is bound to happen to the person who is in search of truth, who wants to know the meaning of life, who wants to go to the innermost core of his being, who wants to know the depth and the height of existence. He will have to hold hands with a master."

"The master is one who has already known. The master is one who has been to the other shore and has come to this shore to show you the path. But only a master can show the path – a living master, remember."

The Lord's presence is felt so profoundly at chakra 10 that there is intimacy beyond belief. And the very holy relationship between Guru and disciple finds its true expression and nourishment in this region of *Prabhu*, which encompasses chakras 10, 11 and 12.



LOCATION OF THE CHAKRAS FROM THE HEART TO THE CENTRAL REGION

Consciousness now dwells in the Lord. The wayfarer becomes less and less, and He becomes more and more. The Lord becomes the doer behind all actions, and the wayfarer becomes a mere witness. It has been expressed so very beautifully by the 15th century Indian mystic poet and saint, Kabir:

*Narrow is the lane of love;
there is space only for one.
When I was, the Beloved was not.
Now He is, I am not.*

Earlier, it was all about 'me'. Later, there was a mixed spectrum of intermingling between 'me' and 'Him'. Finally, only the Lord remains in view, naturally, with love. This is the region of *Prabhū*. The entire human system belongs to the Lord; it has become divinized and sanctified like a temple. Now that the body is the abode of the Lord, there is a strong urge to refrain from doing anything that could sully or lower this consciousness.

Because our wayfarer has become so identical with the Lord, and with the Guru, he now spreads divine vibrations like sandalwood fragrance. Whenever wind passes through the sandalwood forest, the fragrance of sandalwood spreads everywhere. Also, if you take sandalwood paste and smear it on your forehead, you carry that scent with you wherever you go. Something similar happens with a devotee who is so absorbed in the Lord that the Lord actually merges in him. He radiates the vibrations of the Lord wherever he goes and in whatever he does.

This experience of dissolving into the Beloved is expressed in some of the most beautiful, mystical love poetry ever written. Here is an example from the 13th century poet, Rumi:

*When the rose is gone and the garden faded
you will no longer hear the nightingale's song.*

The Beloved is all; the lover just a veil.

The Beloved is living; the lover a dead thing.

If love withholds its strengthening care,

the lover is left like a bird without care,

the lover is left like a bird without wings.

How will I be awake and aware

if the light of the Beloved is absent?

Love wills that this Word be brought forth.

There are also the examples of Radha, who was so deeply immersed in the love of Lord Krishna that he merged into her, and Andal, the south Indian saint from the 7th or 8th century, who disappeared into thin air one day in the temple at the feet of her beloved Krishna. This instinct to merge totally in the Beloved is something that sits deep within the psyche of all human beings, whether we know it or not. It is the most basic, natural instinct of human life. Some might call it the spiritual instinct, or the instinctive urge to return to our Original Home. It is the underlying reason why love is so important to us. Love and mergence go hand in hand. It is our natural birthright as human beings to transcend our individuality and merge into the Source of all life. By journeying in the realm of *Prabhū*, there is the possibility to do so.

But this is not the end. Our wayfarer has reached chakra 10, and how will he continue on his journey when he is already drowned in the Lord? When the Lord is everything, he has no desire left even for spiritual progress. There must be something to reawaken his restlessness to continue, so once again it is the Guru of caliber who comes to the rescue.

Then between chakras 10 and 11 is the thousand-petalled lotus, *Sahasra Dal Kamal* (SDK). The bliss experienced in this environment also has a part to play in him feeling that the destination has been reached. In many Yogic traditions, *sat-chit-anand* is extolled, so seekers of Truth feel justified in thinking, "This is it!" It is easy to want to stay in this blissful state, and no amount of *tapasya* can extricate our wayfarer. Only the capable hand of the Guru can move him on to the next phase in the *yatra* or journey.

Coming out of the bliss experienced at the thousand-petalled lotus can be a shock, as peace completely disappears at chakra 11 and is replaced by restlessness for the Lord. It is here that the spiritual fragrance of Saint Meera, the 16th century Hindu mystic poet and devotee of Lord Krishna, can be appreciated. She was only ever thinking of her Beloved, restless to merge in Him. The crossing of the thousand-petalled lotus also means becoming part of a much higher consciousness – that of the Lord. Our wayfarer does less and less on his part but goes on enjoying the intense longing. No wonder Saint Meera kept singing with joy, "*Mere to Giridhar Gopal, dusaro na koi!*" meaning "There is none other than Lord Krishna for me!"

I would like to share something Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur wrote about chakra 11: "Off goes the veil and the vision of Reality now comes to light. We now feel helpless, beyond control. A constant craving for Him, accompanied by all its aches and pangs, prevails every moment. There is no rest or peace without Him. Truly speaking peace has now departed from us. What remains instead may better be expressed as a condition of peace from which peacefulness is sucked out. That is exactly the condition of the knot [chakra], which we experience and get it finally merged.

"What remains there now? Everything seems lost except the pang which persists still and which is the only thing that helps our onward approach. It ends when we have plunged into the Reality and moved on into the state of identity. When that too is merged we come to a state of refined identity which marks our approach to the twelfth knot."

Having experienced the Creator, our wayfarer becomes restless to see what is behind the Creator. Peace of mind disappears. The restlessness that he felt in the Heart Region is nothing compared to this extraordinary restlessness, even though he is in osmosis with the Lord. Relief only comes when he arrives at chakra 12.

Ram Chandra has described chakra 12 as the merging chakra of all things acquired at the different stages of merging and identity. What is there at this exalted place? He says that it is the state of refined identity, where the panorama is so pure that even simplicity appears to be a hundred times heavier. There is a new form of existence. At this level help can only reach if the ego is truly subdued. To reach chakra 12 is very rare; to go beyond it is even rarer.

And there is another challenge here, created by a chakra called *Brahmarandra* that is almost superimposed on chakra 12. It is the point where the soul enters the physical body at the time of conception and where highly-evolved souls leave the physical body at the moment of death. So when the journey reaches chakra 12, the soul's natural inclination is to leave through the *Brahmarandra* chakra.

But the Guru of caliber will not allow this to happen, and instead helps our wayfarer to bypass *Brahmarandra* and continue onwards to the next stage of the journey, known as the Central Region. And this transition is also an amazing process in itself, as there is a need to accumulate enough escape velocity to be propelled towards chakra 13, into the Central Region.

How does this happen? Within a period of two to three days, the Guru takes our wayfarer through 64 points or chakras, rekindling devotion, craving and restlessness at each one. The cumulative restlessness amassed by journeying through all these 64 points in such a short period creates a potent force that propels him into the Central Region. Without this rocket-like propulsion given by the Guru, he would stay in the region of *Prabhu* forever.

So ends the journey of the Mind Region, of which I have just scratched the surface and given a mere overview. The nuances of this vast region can only be known through experience. Next time, the journey will take us into the Central Region – a region that was undescribed and uncharted territory until the early 20th century, when Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur added it to the map of human consciousness ●



THE MARCH TO FREEDOM

PART 4

DAAJI continues his narration of the ultimate journey to freedom. In this issue he takes us even further, beyond experience, beyond consciousness, even beyond the Super-Mind of God, to the Center of all things.

Let's revisit the journey so far. Our wayfarer has traveled through six regions: the Heart Region (*Pind Pradesh*), the Cosmic Region (*Brahmanda Mandal*), the Supra-Cosmic Region (*Para-Brahmanda Mandal*), the region of surrender (*Prapanna*), the region of transition between surrendering to God and nearness to God (*Prapanna-Prabhu*), and the region of nearness to God, or *Prabhu*. He has traveled from chakra 1 up to chakra 12. By this stage, he has already experienced the Super-Mind of God and reached the point where the soul enters and leaves the body, so what more could there be? The journey doesn't end here, however, as it is infinite and the path dynamic. There is no limit to the extent of evolution and there is nothing static in Nature. We either evolve or devolve.

Up till now, there has always been a polarity at each chakra. This polarity finds its expression in the dualities of positive versus negative and higher versus lower. In the Heart Region, the realm of feelings and emotions, our wayfarer identified this play of polarity with various spectra of emotions, such as desire – contentment, restlessness – peace, anger – love, fear – courage, and confusion – clarity.

In the Mind Region, while crossing the rings of ego between chakras 6 and 12, this play of polarity was experienced between 'I' and the Lord – individual identity and universal identity. It started with the vast power and

capacity of the cosmic region, and became subtler and subtler as he journeyed onwards. Eventually it transmuted into the state of potentiality in the realm of the Super-Mind of God at chakra 12. In between was the process of refinement – the alchemical transformation from matter to energy to Absolute.

Our wayfarer experiences the divine qualities of omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence as a result of his humility. Like God, though he is everywhere he does not make his presence noticed; though he knows everything, he doesn't declare his knowledge; though he is omnipotent, he doesn't interfere with anyone's freedom.

This condition at chakra 13 is like that of a newborn child – absolute innocence. And just as a mother must look after her newborn child, it is the duty of the Divine to look after the wayfarer. Now he can say that he has finally arrived home.

My first Guru, Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, wrote about this region in 1944: "Here is the end of all our activities and we have now entered the Godly region in pure form. Our goal is achieved and we are admitted into it. The Self is realized. We are above actual consciousness, which abides in the region of heart, and its potentiality, which is rooted in the Mind Region. We are now free from the endless circle of rebirth."¹

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Having traveled this journey and gained so much knowledge and enlightenment along the way, the wayfarer is now dumbstruck by the higher ignorance of the Absolute state. There is only harmony within and everywhere in the Universe. He finds superconsciousness of the finest type in this region.

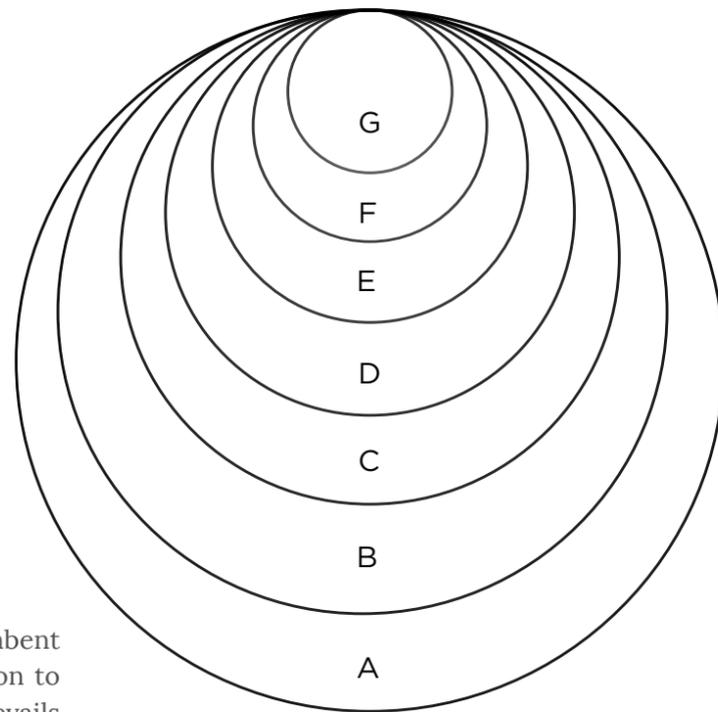
He is in a state of wonder and awe as he witnesses the splendor that emerges on entering chakra 13. Has the journey come to an end? No! The Guru continues to support him and carry him forward like a kangaroo carries a joey in her pouch. As a result, there is a lack of feeling of journey.

Do we feel like we are traveling at great speed around the Sun while living on the surface of our Mothership Earth? The Earth does a complete revolution around the Sun during the course of a year, spinning at a speed of 18.5 miles or 30 kilometers per second on its axis, but does it feel like we are moving? The Guru's support of the wayfarer is like that. Just as we observe the shifts from day to night and witness the seasons coming and going, our wayfarer witnesses inner changes. His descriptions of these shifts are usually very vague, however, because they are so subtle: "It is simpler than before," "There is more purity than before," or "It is what it is."

In this tremendous innocence, he remains unaware of himself and his Guru. The feelings of knowing or loving, of being known or loved, all vanish here. He is now at the Source of enlightenment, from where all knowledge flows. He is now at the Source of love, from where all love flows. He no longer needs to know, and he no longer needs to love, as he is love. In this state, there is the innocence of knowledgelessness. This is the state of higher ignorance, of Nothingness or Zero.

In Heartfulness, Yogic Transmission generally flows from the heart of the trainer to the heart of the seeker. In rare cases, the trainer witnesses the Transmission flowing from the higher chakras. When Transmission flows from chakra 13, the Center, the result of any positive suggestion by the trainer is unailing. Here the will is no longer acting, as where there is ignorance, innocence, knowledgelessness and egolessness, how can there be will? It is not possible. Instead, the work of Nature happens automatically, through the heart and mind of the wayfarer. When he remains absorbed and in tune with the Lord, Nature's commands come naturally and are also fulfilled in the most natural way, like effortless breathing.

- A - HEART REGION
- B - BRAHMAND MANDAL
- C - PARA-BRAHMAND MANDAL
- D - PRAPANNA
- E - PRAPANNA - PRABHU
- F - PRABHU
- G - CENTRAL REGION



And if he needs to offer prayer, it is incumbent upon him to descend from the Central Region to a most supplicant state, like the one that prevails at chakra 9.

Our wayfarer cannot rush matters and say, "I want to have the experience of chakra 13 or chakra 8," as this is not something that can be ordered from a menu. But once the journey has been made, it is easier to go back and forth along the path at will.

I would like to share some very profound and motivating lines of Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur about this region, with respect to consciousness. He writes, "Consciousness is not our goal. It is only a toy for children to play with. We have to reach a point where consciousness assumes its true form ... We have to make a search for the Mother Tincture from which medicines are actually prepared. We are searching for the potentiality which creates consciousness, and if that too is gone, then we find ourselves on the verge of true Reality – pure and simple."

It is here in the Central Region that we go beyond potentiality to true Reality. We have reached the realm of the Absolute, the state that existed before the creation of the universe, and we finally understand what human life is really all about.

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I have a wish, dear readers, that all of you will find this journey enticing enough to experience it. How? By following the path of meditation that assures systematic spiritual expansion. This can be felt on an everyday basis, nay, on a moment-to-moment basis, by those who are eager enough to undertake this simple approach of meditation.

The Guru, in his benevolence and mercy, gives us glimpses of the Central Region long before we truly reach there. We are at times given the experience of the condition prevailing at the various rings of splendor within the Central Region, but this is a virtual experience rather than the real thing.

While journeying through the chakras to the Centre, there is another vital thing: we begin and end our journey in the heart. Everything is encompassed in the heart.

Within the Central Region itself there are seven circles, known as the rings of splendor. Swami Vivekananda communicated to Ram Chandra about them in the following way: "These are the divisions with certain curls in the Central Region. If you start from the first circle and reach the last one, that means you have gained the last point and you come to the landing ground of the Rishis and the liberated souls. What is that? You begin from the heart and end in the Heart, but reach the landing ground. Do you not cross all the regions in that way?"

And the regions that lie within these broad regions can also be of countless varieties. This description of the journey is only an outline, a map to be followed.

¹Ram Chandra of Shahjahanpur, 2015. *Efficacy of Raja Yoga in the Light of Sahaj Marg*. Shri Ram Chandra Mission, India.

Now, please understand that everything I have just shared with you is valueless unless you experience it for yourself. Having a map that tells us how to get from New York to Washington DC is not the same as making the journey. Buying the map and making an itinerary is part of our preparation, so that we know in which direction to move, which plane to take, which train, and then we prepare accordingly. Then we decide what sort of clothes we will need, what food to buy, etc.

How do we prepare for the inner journey? By deciding what is needed in our lifestyle – what sort of qualities, attitudes and behaviors will help to reach the final destination. And then comes the question of where to find a Guide who has undergone the journey himself and knows the way? How to recognize such a being?

We can go on pilgrimages to holy places, but whenever a pilgrimage is made within, sincerely, then only is it the true journey. We must change from within. Have we changed to the extent that under all circumstances of misery or extreme ecstasy we remain centered and equanimous? That is the state of *sthit pragnya*, so highly praised in the Bhagavad Gita. That is the true test.

So while we journey through the chakras and regions, the best benchmark of how far we have come is the degree to which we are able to joyfully accept all situations, where nothing and nobody can shake our inner balance.

As human beings we have this golden opportunity to experience the journey to the Center of all existence! We have been blessed with the possibility of expanding our consciousness to encompass the universe and beyond, as we march towards Infinity ●

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Do this in a gentle and natural way. There is no need to concentrate. If you find your awareness drifting to other thoughts, gently come back to the idea of the light in your heart.

Feel immersed in the light in your heart, and let yourself become absorbed.

Remain absorbed within this deep silence for as long as you want, until you feel ready to come out.

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