

My True Reality

for little people

Dr. Huzan S. Daver



Illustrations/Drawings
by Sherzan S. Daver







Dedicated to the Divine One

Shri Satya Sai Baba

Divine Father, Mother, Thank you for your unconditional **love, wisdom** and **guidance**. I am one of the countless pebbles that have been swept away with the tide of human errors. O Divine One, make me the wave of **love** that transports lost stones of humankind, myself included to your shores forever. Make Our Reality, One with Yours.

Huzan S. Daver and Sherzan S. Daver



About Huzan



Huzan was born in India and has been drawn towards spirituality from an early age.

She completed a Doctorate Degree from the University of Manchester, England and has also worked and lived in Toronto, Canada.

Huzan's 21 years of experience span from working in Mother Teresa's home for the destitute and the slums of Mumbai, India; to AIDS and healing work in Toronto, Canada; to mental health counselling work and lecturing and teaching in colleges and schools in Sydney, Australia.

She now has her own private practice - "Sohum Sai Solutions", where she undertakes a holistic approach to Well-Being, incorporating her own brand of counselling and healing utilizing ancient techniques of meditation and regression.

Huzan offers practical meditation approaches to dissolve people's fear, anger and sadness and minimize the causation of physical and mental illnesses. She has dedicated her life to serving others by empowering them to discover their true divine reality.

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About Sherzan





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Education is the light that dispels ignorance and doubt. It confers humility and discipline. The highest discipline is to bring about unity in one's thoughts, words and deeds.

Shri Satya Sai Baba

What is the purpose of life?

Draw pictures in the box below

To learn to love self and others.
To learn and grow with wisdom.

Life is full of difficulties – ups and downs, good times and bad times, just like being on a roller coaster ride. Good times and bad times are necessary for learning, just as the ups and downs are necessary for the adventure and excitement of a roller coaster ride. We are divine spiritual beings who have chosen physical bodies to come into the earth school mainly for learning.

We all have a life plan. A life plan is an agreement we have made with God of our own free will prior to our physical birth. We choose our earth mother who brings us to this physical world. In



choosing our mother we also choose our earth father, our brothers and sisters, our grandparents, aunts and uncles, our country of birth, and therefore our life's lessons. Our every thought, word and deed creates our life. If we think positively, speak positively, and act positively, we will create a positive life for ourselves. We have come to this school many times in many bodies. We keep advancing in our soul development every time we come.

How do I fulfill my life's purpose?

Live fully in the present. To live in the past or the future is to worry. Learn from the past and plan the future, but live in the moment.

Be aware of your true nature and self. You are divine and immortal. You are part of God.

Happiness is union with God. Who is God? God is pure LOVE.

Meditation exercise 1.1 Learning is the purpose of life.

Close your eyes and relax your body – feel safe and protected. Go back in time and think of the best time in your life, now think of a difficult time that you have experienced. How did you feel during this difficult period: sad, angry, or fearful? How was this situation or experience resolved? What did you learn from this difficult experience?

1.2 Read the below statements Are they true or false?

Have a discussion with your parents or teachers concerning the statements:

- 1) Earth is a school. T/F
- 2) We are all spirits. T/F
- 3) Life has no purpose; we are here to have fun. T/F
- 4) God forces us to come into this world. T/F
- 5) God is Love. T/F
- 6) Your real nature comes from your parents T/F





Humans have unlimited power within them

We are Divine, therefore we have access to the Infinite Mind - all knowledge and Wisdom is available to us at any point. Therefore we have unlimited power within us to access this wisdom. Furthermore, there is abundance in the Universe and enough for all of humanity and God's creations. However, we see that there is inequality and uneven distribution of wealth and resources around us. This is largely because of the attitude of some to accumulate, collect and hoard. There is an imbalance in the distribution of resources on the planet; twenty percent of the world's population consumes more than eighty percent of the earth's resources. *"The world holds enough to satisfy everyone's need but not everyone's greed,"* Mahatma Gandhi once observed.

The solution lies in something that has been in existence since mankind itself – **Spirituality**. People have to change their attitudes by curbing their desires, reducing wastage and living within universal spiritual principles of sharing, loving and giving. Man is the only creature endowed with the capacity to separate himself from his body, the senses, emotions and the mind. He is the user, owner and master of all these entities. We can get in touch with this inner power by taking responsibility for our thoughts, words and actions. When making decisions, ask yourself, is this decision right for others and me? Is it for the highest good?

The power to change your life is in your thinking. If you are unhappy about your present reality, release the old patterns of thinking that have created this present reality. It is your past thoughts that have created your present and your present thoughts will create your future. Become conscious of your thoughts at **every integrated moment of existence**.

We are talking to our selves all the time. Watch your "self-talk". Do not blame yourself for where you are because you are always doing the best you can with the knowledge and awareness you have at the moment. You are the only person that can think in your mind. No one else has the control over your thoughts and therefore, the only person who is really capable of making a change in your life is you!. We all have dreams – but it is the practice of meditation that channels our thoughts positively and allows us to achieve our dreams.

What are the steps that you can take to achieve anything you want in life?

Connection with divinity – the source of everything.

Articulate clearly your **intention** (state in detail, your aim, desire, will). Please keep in mind that your intention, or wish desire, dream should not impinge on any one else's dream or hurt anyone.

Have a bigger vision picture and **plan** of your goals. Break the goals into bite sized pieces and implement a daily plan or "to do" list which is realistic and achievable.

Put consistent and persistent continuous **energy** to make your goal come true.

Become aware of the obstacles and fears hindering your goal and work at removing them.

Then have patience and "let go", without focusing on the outcome. **Trust and believe** your intention will materialize.

Exercise 1.3 Make your dreams come true.

Look at a dream you have and follow the above steps. Keep a journal and write down your intention, plan and day to day steps that you take to materialize your desire. Become aware of the obstacles and fears hindering your goal and work at removing them. Let go all fears.





Chapter 2 Who made us?...

*Like the fragrance latent in a flower,
like the juice latent in a fruit, like the fire
latent in firewood*

*The divine is immanent in every human
being.*

Shri Sathya Sai Baba

We are God's finest creation. Why? We have the ability to use our minds, the ability to create and help others. We have the ability to make choices and discern using wisdom. We are God in essence.

We come from God through our parents. We do not belong to our parents. Our parents are our guardian angels who have taken on the responsibility to teach us well in this earth school, that is, when we are in the physical body, just as our teachers are our guardians when we are in school. When we die, our soul returns to God. Our real mother and father is God. Who is God? How do you know He really exists?

Who is God?

God is love energy. Energy can be male and female and can have many physical forms and names. God is in everything: plants, animals, fire, sky, water, in you and me. God and nature are one. God is responsible for making everything including you and me and this entire universe. He never punishes us and is our supreme best friend. We need to establish a direct relationship with Him. Meditation teaches you to go within and follow the divine part of God within each of us. When we rebel, act selfishly,

or are in anger, sadness or fear, we act outside of God's plan. When we love ourselves and others we are connecting to the divine.

God is Love, God has many names

God is present in ALL, God is Wisdom

God is all powerful, God never punishes us and never forces Himself on us

God is our kindest mother and father,
God is our best friend

Why do we need to connect with our Creator?

Humankind is destroying itself and other creations because we have moved away from LOVE and understanding that we are part of divinity. God is love. We all need to return to Love and God and bring peace and harmony all around us.

Exercise 2.1: How do I know God really exists?

Close your eyes and watch your breath. See your breath move in and out. Do you see your breath? No. Do you feel it? You can feel the presence of God if you keep praying and meditating and ask Him to reveal His presence to you.

Our Creator...



Some Food for Thought.

Have you ever asked yourself what is FAITH? I think the following conversation provides the perfect answer.

An atheist professor of philosophy is speaking to his class on the problem Science has with God. He asks one of his new students to stand and the following exchange takes place.

Prof: So you believe in God?

Student: Absolutely, sir.

Prof: Is God good?

Student: Sure.

Prof: Is God all-powerful?

Student: Yes.

Prof: My brother died of cancer even though he prayed to God for healing. Most of us would attempt to help others who are ill. But God didn't. How is this God good then?

(Student is silent.)

Prof: You can't answer, can you? Let's start again, young fellow. Is God good?

Student: Yes.

Prof: Is Satan good?

Student: No.

Prof: Where does Satan come from?

Student: From...God...

Prof: That's right. Tell me son, is there evil

in this world?

Student: Yes.

Prof: Evil is everywhere, isn't it? And God did make everything. Correct?

Student: Yes.

Prof: So who created evil?

(Student does not answer.)

Prof: Is there sickness? Immorality? Hatred? Ugliness? All these terrible things exist in the world, don't they?

Student: Yes, sir.

Prof: So, who is responsible for them?

(Student has no answer.)

Prof: Science says you have 5 senses to use to identify and observe the world around you. Tell me, son...Have you ever seen God?

Student: No, sir.

Prof: Tell us if you have ever heard your God?

Student: No, sir.

Prof: Have you ever felt your God, tasted your God, smelt your God? Have you ever had any sensory perception of God for that matter?

Student: No, sir. I'm afraid I haven't.

Prof: Yet you still believe in Him?

Student: Yes.

Prof: According to empirical, testable,





demonstrable protocol, science says your GOD doesn't exist. What do you say to that, son?

Student: Nothing. I only have my faith.

Prof: Yes. Faith. And that is the problem science has.

Student: Professor, is there such a thing as heat?

Prof: Yes.

Student: And is there such a thing as cold?

Prof: Yes.

Student: No sir. There isn't.

(The lecture theatre becomes very quiet with this turn of events.)

Student: Sir, you can have lots of heat, even more heat, superheat, mega heat, white heat, a little heat or no heat. But we don't have anything called cold. We can hit 458 degrees below zero, which is no heat, but we can't go any further after that. There is no such thing as cold. Cold is only a word we use to describe the absence of heat. We cannot measure cold. Heat is energy. Cold is not the opposite of heat, sir, just the absence of it.

(There is pin-drop silence in the lecture theatre.)

Student: What about darkness, Professor? Is there such a thing as darkness?

Prof: Yes. What is night if there isn't darkness?

Student: You're wrong again, sir. Darkness is the absence of something. You can have low light, normal light, bright light, flashing light....But if you have no light constantly, you have nothing and it is called darkness, isn't it? In reality, darkness isn't. If it were you would be able to make darkness darker, wouldn't you?

Prof: So what is the point you are making, young man?

Student: Sir, my point is that your philosophical premise is flawed.

Prof: Flawed? Can you explain how?

Student: Sir, you are working on the premise of duality. You argue there is life and then there is death, a good God and a bad God. You are viewing the concept of God as something finite, something we can measure.

Sir, science can't even explain a thought. It uses electricity and magnetism, but has never seen, much less fully understood either one. To view death as the opposite of life is to be ignorant of the fact that death cannot exist as a substantive thing. Death is not the opposite of life: just the absence of it.

Now tell me, Professor. Do you teach your students that they evolved from monkeys?

Prof: If you are referring to the natural evolutionary process, yes, of course, I do.

Student: Have you ever observed evolution with your own eyes, sir?

(The Professor shakes his head with a smile, beginning to realise where the argument is going.)

Student: Since no one has ever observed the process of evolution at work and cannot even prove that this process is an on-going endeavour, are you not teaching your opinion, sir? Are you not a scientist but a preacher?

(The class is in uproar.)

Student: Is there anyone in the class who has ever seen the Professor's brain?

(The class breaks out into laughter.)

Student: Is there anyone here who has ever heard the Professor's brain, felt it, touched or smelt it? No one appears to have done so. So, according to the established rules of empirical, stable, demonstrable protocol, Science says that you have no brain, sir. With all due respect, how do we then trust your lectures, sir?

(The room is silent.)

(The professor stares at the student, his face unfathomable.)

Prof: I guess you'll have to take them on faith, son.

Student: That is it sir... The link between man & God is FAITH. That is all that keeps things moving and alive.

That student was: Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, the current President of India.

Exercise 2.2 How do I feel His/ Her presence more and more in my life?

Repeat God's name– Choose any name of a divine form. All forms are aspects of the same ONE energy: Christ, Buddha, Bhagwan Shri Satya Sai Baba, Krishna, Ganesha, Rama Zarathushtra and so on. Keep repeating the name of any one form continuously in every integrated moment at all times.

Meditate and pray – talking and listening to God. Sit in silence for 21 minutes or more focusing on asking God a question. He will reply. God answers your prayers in His time in His universal language, look around for signs and symbols; you will see Him answering you.

Ceiling on desires – in this world there are many people who have less than you. Look around and identify these people. Learn to be content with what you have and share with others who have less than you.

Selfless service – when we help others expecting nothing in return, we transform our own lives. How can you help someone today?





Exercise 2.3 Find the names

Find the NAMES OF Divine forms –down, across or horizontally and circle them. How many did you find?

Exercise 2.4 God's seven creations

God's seven creations are earth, sky, water, plants, animals, man and fire. God created all the planets and the universe. Make a collage using magazine pictures of some of God's creations.

Exercise 2.5 The Flower of Love

One day Shri Satya Baba (a great Spiritual master and divinity in human form living in India) visited a school in Mumbai, India. Students sat in orderly rows, each of them holding a rose to be offered to Him. Their faces glowed with happy anticipation at meeting Him. There was a small child barely four years old who the teachers thought too young and therefore was seated in the rear row much to the

child's dismay and was not given a rose.

The little one's pain at being discriminated against showed in his morose face. He was keen to present a flower to Shri Satya Sai Baba just like the others. He requested the teachers give him a rose but received none. When Shri Satya Sai Baba arrived He walked along the rows of boys touching each rose and blessing all the children. The little child watched His every step as slowly the child made his way to the front row. As Sai Baba was nearing him the child snatched up a tiny grass flower that he saw nearby. When Sai Baba arrived in front of him the child gave him this simple offering, which was lovingly accepted. In appreciation of the little child's gesture He smiled and patted him affectionately. While Sai Baba merely touched the roses offered by other children He carried away with Him the humble grass flower the little child had so lovingly offered. The humble sincere offering of a devotee is more priceless than any material treasures. The moral of the story is that God does not need anything from

Z	A	R	A	T	H	U	S	H	T	R	A	T
A	T	G	A	N	E	S	H	R	A	M	A	N
H	M	O	T	H	E	R	M	A	R	Y	S	T
E	A	M	U	M	W	R	T	Y	B	B	V	L
R	L	S	A	I	B	A	B	A	U	B	N	H
R	Y	H	S	D	G	J	U	I	D	R	X	T
M	A	I	J	E	S	U	S	V	D	U	A	W
O	H	R	C	H	R	I	S	T	H	J	S	Q
P	L	D	E	N	B	Y	S	D	A	N	F	D
W	E	I	T	L	T	R	S	R	Y	M	G	C





Chapter 3 Understanding

Morality, integrity, righteousness, charity, truth, forbearance and non-violence are basic tenets of all religions.

Shri Satya Sai Baba

What do you understand by the word prophet?

A prophet is a messenger of God who comes onto this planet in human form to teach people how to lead happy lives. There have been many prophets, holy men and sages through the ages. The prophets, sages and holy men established religions. Prophets came at different times in history, teaching the same fundamental truths, but keeping in mind the differences in culture, language, customs and traditions of the people. There are some religions like Hinduism that have not had a prophet but many sages and great spiritual masters through the ages who have passed on profound truths.

What is a religion?

A religion gives us a framework of universal principles that we can utilize to achieve happiness and peace in our lives. Religions developed through the ages as people interpreted the original message of the prophet. Religions developed rituals, customs and dogmas. Throughout history some selfish leaders have misinterpreted and misused these religious principles for their own selfish gain and fought wars in the name of religion. I do not believe God wants us to fight in His name. Humankind has misused religion to gain personal

power, wealth or fame. Unfortunately today people have turned away from our Creator because they are unhappy with people who represent divinity. A knife can be used in different ways, either to hurt or to be put to good use in the preparation of cooking. The knife in itself is not bad or good. It is the people who use it that have either good or bad intentions.

Exercise 3.1 Religions of the world

Below name the five important religions and their prophets, if any, and draw a picture of the important symbols connected to that religion.

Name of religion _____

Prophet _____

Symbol _____

Name of religion _____

Prophet _____

Symbol _____

Name of religion _____

Prophet _____

Symbol _____

Name of religion _____

Prophet _____

Symbol _____

religion and spirituality



What is spirituality?

The good-hearted man who professes no religion is the truly religious man.

Shri Satya Sai Baba

A lot of people are moving away from religion and want to have a direct experience of a higher power without the structure of religious organizations, religious dogmas, customs and intermediaries like priests and monks. This term is a general term used for people who are pursuing a higher power irrespective of religious dogmas, customs and rituals. Being spiritual is recognizing a higher power, our Creator and acting with integrity maintaining human values of peace, love, charity, righteousness and non-violence. Spirituality is not about solitude or living alone. Spirituality is about having "equal-mindedness" towards everyone, (seeing divinity in all) living with all and helping all. **love all serve all.**

What are the fundamental truths common to all religions?

Righteousness, love, peace, charity, truth and non-violence are basic tenets of all religions. But over the years, humankind has forgotten these truths and as a result respect for human values has vanished.

Prophets, sages, deities and human forms of Divinity (written in an alphabetical order):

Bhagwan Shri Satya Sai Baba

Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba was born with the name Sathya Narayana Raju, 1926 and is divinity in human form. He has millions of followers and hundreds of Sathya Sai Centers in over a hundred countries around the globe. Satya Sai Baba was born to a poor agrarian family, as the son of Pedavenkappa Raju and Easwaramma. It was reported that when he was born, musical instruments in the household started creating and playing music on their own. On May 23rd 1940, when he was fourteen, he claimed to be the reincarnation of the sage or fakir Shirdi Sai Baba and subsequently took the sage's name. He says that he is an avatar (incarnation of a divinity) of Shiva and Shakti and an embodiment of love with divine powers such as omniscience (all knowing) and omnipresence (all powerful).

At the age of 14, Sathya Sai Baba declared to his parents that he had come to this world with a mission to re-establish the principle of Righteousness, to motivate love for God and service to fellow man. Since then, he has consistently called on all mankind to Love All, Serve All and has repeatedly asserted that the essence of all scriptures is Help Ever, Hurt Never! The once rural village of Puttaparthi has been transformed into a thriving international city where thousands flock to see their spiritual master. Even as





a child Sathya was already manifesting extraordinary powers -- plucking things out of the thin air, on one occasion even transfixing a scolding teacher to his chair! The smiling, frizzy-haired lad was half-prankster and half-conjurer in his schoolmates' eyes. He was bright, showing flair not only for academics, but also music, dance and drama.

Sathya Sai Baba urges humankind to: Believe in God --for there is only ONE GOD for all mankind, though He may be called by many names. Follow sincerely your own respective religions and live your daily lives in consonance with the teachings of good behavior and morality. Respect all other religions --for no religion advocates the negative and lower qualities of humans. Perform selfless service to the poor, the sick, and the needy without thought of reward or fame. Cultivate in their lives the values of truth, divine love, right conduct, peace, and nonviolence and promote these values among all. Be patriotic and respect the laws of the country in which they live.

He is said to manifest vibuthi (holy ash) and small objects like rings and watches daily. He claims to materialize these objects out of nothing to help others. These are given to people to reinforce their commitment to divinity. These claims are believed and testified to by his followers. Sacred ash, amrit (honey), sandal paste, fragrances, flowers and even letters are reported as materializing from His pictures all around the world. In addition, the followers, and even many non-followers, have testified about many miracles and cures performed by him.

He preaches a foundation of five basic values: Truth, Right Conduct, Peace, Love and Non-violence. He teaches the unity of all major world religions and says that they all lead to God. His followers and the organizations that He has founded are involved in many charity projects, providing free modern hospitals and water projects serving thousands in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh and the city of Chennai (Madras). In His ashram (holy abode for spiritual aspirants) and around it there are various buildings including a University and a World Religions Museum. He has founded schools all over India and his "values-teaching methods" are slowly being implemented in other countries. His mission was further clarified in a letter he wrote to his brother in 1947, stating, in part, "I have a task to foster all mankind and ensure for all of them lives full of bliss. I have a vow: To lead all who stray away from the straight path again into goodness and save them. I am attached to a work that I love: To remove the sufferings of the poor and grant them what they lack."

Buddha

Gautama Buddha was a spiritual teacher of ancient India. He is the key figure in Buddhism. He was born in Lumbini, a place situated in modern Nepal. He spent most of his life in the regions of Northern India. There is a debate about his birth but a consensus placed his date of birth at 563 BCE.

He was born with the name of Siddhortha (Sanskrit) or Siddhattha (Poli), meaning

"he who has achieved his goals", he belonged to the clan or gotra of Gautama (Sanskrit) or Gotama (Poli) meaning "descendant of Gotama".

His message was passed down by oral tradition and committed to writing about four hundred years later. Gautama was born a prince, destined to a comfortable, even luxurious life by the standards of the day. All traditions agree that the Buddha's mother died at his birth, or a few days later. At his birth the great Asita announced that this baby would either become a great king or a great holy man. His father, King Suddhodana, wishing for Gautama to be a great king, shielded his son from religious teachings or knowledge of human suffering.

Until the age of 29 Gautama lived as a prince in Kapilavastu, a place situated in Nepal today. Gautama was provided with everything he could want or need but he was still dissatisfied and troubled. Gautama soon left his home, his possessions, and his entire family at age 29, to take up the lonely life of a wandering monk. Abandoning his inheritance, he dedicated his life to learning how to overcome suffering. Gautama discovered what Buddhists call the Middle Way -- a path of moderation away from the extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification. Sitting under a pipal tree, now known as the Bodhi tree, he vowed never to arise until he had found the Truth. At the age of 35, he attained Enlightenment. He found the cause of human suffering: attachment and desire. He also found a way to get rid of suffering: the eightfold path: right understanding, thought, speech, action, livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

Ganesh

Ganesh, the Hindu elephant-headed God, is known as the Remover of Obstacles, the God of domestic harmony and of success. He is the most beloved and revered of all the Hindu Gods, and is always invoked first in any Hindu ceremony or festival. He is the son of Parvati (the wife of Shiva, the Destroyer, and the most powerful of the Hindu trinity of principal gods). There are many stories about how Ganesh got his elephant head, and about his exploits and antics. He was created as an ordinary boy, but was decapitated in battle. Shiva's emissaries were sent into the forest and told to get the head of the first animal they found and to fit that head onto the boy's neck. They found a little elephant, and used the head of the elephant. The festival of Ganesh or Vinayak Chaturthi, the day on which Ganesh was born is the most joyous event of the year. Throughout India the festival is celebrated with much enthusiasm and devotion. The festival is celebrated for ten days.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the central figure of the Christian religion, a savior believed to be both God incarnate and a human being (the term "Christ" meaning anointed or chosen one). Most of the details of his life are unclear, and much of what is known about his life comes from the four Gospels of the Bible. He is said to be born in Bethlehem, Judea around 5 BC, his birth date is celebrated as Christmas and was used as the base





year for the modern Christian calendar, though researchers now believe that earlier estimates were inexact and that Jesus was actually born between 4 B.C. and 7 B.C. The Gospels tell the story of Jesus' birth in a stable in Bethlehem, and then of his life as an adult, a teacher with miraculous powers who foretold his own death to his closest followers, called apostles. The Romans crucified Jesus, betrayed by the apostle Judas, and his resurrection three days after his death was taken as proof of his divinity. The date of the crucifixion is marked as Good Friday, and His resurrection on the third day is celebrated on Easter Sunday.

He lived in obscurity until He was thirty, and then began a public ministry that lasted three years. It was destined to change the course of history. He began to identify Himself as far more than a remarkable teacher or prophet. He began to say clearly that He was God. He made His identity the focal point of His teaching. The all-important question He put to those who followed Him was, "Who do you say I am?" When Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:15-16), Jesus was not shocked, nor did He rebuke Peter. We are told, "The Jews tried all the harder to kill Him; not only was He breaking the Sabbath, but He was even calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God" (John 5:18). On another occasion he said, "I and My Father are One." Immediately the Jews wanted to stone Him. He asked them for which good work they wanted to kill Him. They replied, "We are not stoning you for any of these but for blasphemy, because You, a mere man, claim to be God" (John 10:33).

Christ's main message is of the brotherhood of man and loving all. Jesus' teachings included forgiveness, life after death, and resurrection of the body. Jesus used a variety of methods in his teaching, particularly parables and metaphors. Christians adopted the cross as their symbol.

Krishna

Lord Krishna appeared over five thousand years ago in Mathura, India to Devaki and Vasudeva. The place of His birth is known as Sri Krishna Janmasthan. He is the speaker in the Bhagwat Gita, one of the books of wisdom in Hinduism. In the Gita, as it is also known, Krishna says repeatedly that He is God Himself, the source of everything. Arjuna, to whom Krishna is speaking, accepts Krishna's words as true.

His main teachings are:

Continuous thought and remembrance of God with love which indicates the awareness and the relationship that one has with the higher power.

All those for whom I am the Supreme Goal, – are dear to Me above all.

Focus of life is establishment of dharma, which is good action and effort. This action and effort should lead one to experiencing the divine nature that is dormant in every being.

Service to God manifested in service to people.



Baby Jesus Christ



Have love and compassion towards all. Lust, anger and greed destroy us. Every one should give up these three.

In the Bhagavad Gita, emphasis was given to acceptance, performance and realization of actions. It is also said that knowledge of action, knowledge of human participation in life, in this creation, understanding the role that each human being has to play, is a very secret subject that has never been revealed before. But it is only through perfection in action that one can improve the quality of life.

All the great spiritual masters are involved with serving and helping people. Spirituality is not about sitting alone on a mountaintop it is about being involved with people and helping them with love and compassion. This action and effort is called karma. The three keys to being divine are humility, simplicity and selflessness.

Krishna's teachings were to develop transcendental love and to be involved with karma.

Muhammed

Muhammed is a messenger of Allah (God) who founded Islam. Prophet Muhammad was born in Makkah, present-day Saudi Arabia around 570 C.E. The main beliefs of Islam are:

There is One God.

All books sent down through prophets are respected and acknowledged including the Torah and the Gospels.

Belief in the existence of angels.

Belief in the Day of Judgement, Life after Death, Heaven and Hell.

Belief in predestination.

Muslims declare that there is no deity except Allah (Arabic for God) and that Muhammad is His messenger. They submit fully in obedience to Allah and mould their lives according to the teachings of the Holy Quran and prophet Muhammad.

Shirdi Sai Baba

At the beginning of eighteenth century a young bearded man with sparkling eyes took shelter in a mosque, in Shirdi Village State of Maharashtra in India. Nobody knew from where this stranger who hardly spoke a word had come from.

The curious villagers started offering food to the man, but he never asked anything from them. Sometimes he shared his food with the animals. Soon the young fakir (religious sage) started expressing his viewpoints with few elderly villagers. His simple language of expression and his special power of solving the problems of the poor, needy and destitute made him well known as Shirdi Sai Baba. After a period of time devotees started coming to Shirdi in ever growing numbers. The village was fast becoming a centre of pilgrimage. Baba preached his principle of love and faith in humanity to all his disciples. Sai Baba strongly believed in uniformity of religion and he never distinguished anyone on the basis of

caste, creed or religion. He always made it a point not to return empty handed those who had come to him in their hour of need and grief. He performed miracles to alleviate the suffering of poor people. On one occasion he restored the sight of a blind elderly person and on another occasion he lighted a lantern with water when there was no oil to burn in it. He practiced and preached humanism and universal brotherhood. He established the superiority of love and compassion above egoism. He taught simplicity of livelihood and excellence of human virtue reflected in day-to-day conduct. Baba left his body of his own will on 15th Oct. 1918. His body was laid in a place called "Booty", which he had asked his disciple to build before his death.

Shiva

There are numerous gods and goddesses worshipped by Hindus all over India. Among these, the most fundamental to Hinduism, is the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva - creator, preserver and destroyer respectively. Brahma has four heads corresponding to the four directions of the compass. He is the creator of life and the entire universe. Vishnu is the preserver who guides the cycle of birth and rebirth. He is also supposed to have taken many incarnations to save the world from evil forces. Both Rama and Krishna are believed to have been incarnations of Vishnu. Shiva, usually seen with a coiled cobra around his neck, destroys all evil and also has many incarnations, not all of which are terrifying.

The invisible deities are represented by a complexity of images and idols symbolizing divine powers. Many of these idols are housed within ornate temples of unparalleled beauty and grandeur. The Hindu gods are very much alive and live in temples, snow-capped peaks, in rivers and oceans and in the very hearts and minds of the Hindus.

Quan Yin

Is the Goddess and Divine Mother aspect of Buddhism. The same Goddess and Divine female energy carried by the Virgin Mary in Christianity. In the Egyptian mysteries it is carried by Isis. In Hinduism it is carried by Shakti, wife of Vishnu, by Parvati, wife of Shiva, by Radha, wife of Krishna, and by Sita, wife of Rama. Quan Yin are embodiments of compassion. She is roughly equivalent to Green Tara in Tibetan Buddhism. Symbols characteristically associated with Kuan Yin are a willow branch, with which she sprinkles the divine nectar of life; a precious vase symbolizing the nectar of compassion and wisdom, the hallmarks of a bodhisattva; a dove, representing fecundity; a book or scroll of prayers which she holds in her hand, representing the dharma (teaching) of the Buddha or the sutra (Buddhist text) and a rosary adorning her neck with which she calls upon the Buddha.





Zarathushtra

Zarathushtra – Is the prophet of the first revealed religion in the world called Zoroastrianism. The Zoroastrians are a group of people, originally from ancient Iran, who practice the religion revealed by the prophet Zarathushtra (also known as Zoroaster by the ancient Greeks). Western scholars tend to agree that Zarathushtra was born between 1500 and 1800 BC near the Aral Sea on the southern Russian Steppes. Zoroastrian and other Eastern scholars date the birth of the prophet to 3000-5000 BC. Either way, the majority of religious scholars agree that Zoroastrianism is the world's oldest revealed religion and has therefore had a significant influence on religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Zoroastrianism was the state religion in ancient Iran for more than a thousand years. The last Zoroastrian King was Yazdagrid III, who was deposed by the Islamic Arabs in 936 A.D. The Arab invaders provided the Iranians with a simple choice – submit to Islam or die. During this period, small groups of Zoroastrians fled by boat to Western India and arrived in what is today called the State of Gujarat. The Zoroastrians were granted refuge by the Hindu ruler of that area, King Jadav Rana, who allowed them to freely practice their faith. It was the Hindus who called the Zoroastrians “Zoroastrians” (the people from Pars or Persia). Today, this word Zoroastrian (which actually signifies race, as opposed to religion) is commonly used to denote Zoroastrians residing in India.

Zarathushtra's message has been summarized in ancient hymns known as the Gathas. His central message is that there is one God - Ahura Mazda – the Lord of Wisdom. Wisdom and Omniscience are the primary attributes of this loving, kind, and totally good Creator.

When I grasped Thee in a vision to be the Father of the good mind, the real Creator of Truth, (and) the Lord of existence in Thy Actions. (Y. 31.8) Gathas

The purpose of humankind is to gain and spread wisdom, that is, Divine consciousness that comes from: self-awareness, knowledge, intuition, intellect, reasoning and discernment. Zarathushtra believed we could forever eradicate evil, by using our minds for the highest good and reaching a state of Divine consciousness.

According to Zarathushtra, evil is manifested in many ways: ignorance, selfishness, egotism, hatred, jealousy, illness, disease and even death (the temporary triumph of evil). Zoroastrians therefore value education and it is hardly surprising that as a race, Zoroastrians have a literacy rate of almost one hundred percent. But wisdom is more than just an academic education; it is connecting with inner Divine consciousness.

Exercise 3.2 Unity in diversity

As a project find quotations from the holy books of the five major religions of the world that show that the fundamental truths of all religions are the same.

Assimilation into a Multicultural Society: unity in diversity

The world is becoming a smaller place. It is so wonderful to see diverse people from all cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds united as one. It is wonderful to see more and more people respecting differences and recognizing the brotherhood of humankind. Spirituality is based on the awareness that the One manifests through many forms and many attributes. So humankind needs to develop toleration towards all. Religion connotes reunion of the individual soul with the Universal soul. It is a mark of ignorance to consider one religion as superior and another as inferior. The paths may vary but the goal is one. Religious differences are brought about by the poison in the mind of man to control, dominate and manipulate others.

A Zoroastrian/Parsi story of Unity in Diversity

The Zoroastrians or the Parsis are a microscopic group of people (only about 100, 000 around the globe) from Ancient Iran. In 936 AD they fled from Iran due to persecution from the Muslims. They

fled by boat to India. They landed first on the Island of Diu in Gujarat. The Hindu King Jadav Rana gave them sanctuary in India. At first the King was afraid that the Zoroastrians would cause trouble amongst his people. The head of the Zoroastrians was a high priest named Sanjana. The high priest asked the King to tell his men to fetch a bowl of milk and some sugar. When the bowl of milk arrived the priest took a fistful of sugar and poured it into the bowl of milk saying, “The Zoroastrians are like this sugar the Indian people are like this milk in the bowl (land of India). The Zoroastrians will bring sweetness to your people just as this fistful of sugar is doing to the milk. No milk is being spilled over, the sugar melts in the milk”. The priest was explaining to the King that the Zoroastrians would contribute to the Indian society in substantial ways. They would assimilate and bring joy and happiness to all people. This is exactly what happened when the Zoroastrians did prosper in India building many hospitals, schools and charitable institutions for the people of India. They maintained their distinct identity in terms of their religion and culture but they still assimilated and brought much happiness to the general Indian population.

The Zoroastrian contribution to India has been extraordinary, despite its small numbers. In the 18th and 19th centuries the Zoroastrians built the shipyards and docks of Surat and Mumbai and were in the forefront of trade and commerce. They helped to build India's national infrastructure and promoted the growth of industry, in general. Tata and Godrej are household names as is today the Rasna





Group of Industries. Zoroastrians were in the forefront of the freedom struggle and names such as Dadabhoy Naoroji, Madame Cama, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Veer Nariman, Sir Dinshaw Vatcha and Sir Shapurji Bengali fought to create a free and modern India. Not many are aware that it was Zoroastrian philanthropy which helped Mahatma Gandhi to return to India from where Gandhiji launched his freedom struggle. Amongst the Zoroastrians who have made their mark in modern times are Dr. Homi Bhabha – Father of Atomic Energy, Field Marshall Sam Manekshaw of the Indian Army, the Jurist - Nani Palkhiwalla and J. R. D. Tata – Founder of Civil Aviation.

Questions

- 1) There are many immigrants in our country what can you do to bring unity in this diversity of people?
- 2) What is the most important thing that you have learnt in the story of the Zoroastrian people?





Chapter 4 Human values

and laws of the universe



Truth is unity of thought, word and deed. When action is saturated with Truth it becomes right.

Shri Satya Sai Baba

What do you understand by Human Values?

A human "value" is a thought, idea, or concept, that we give a lot of importance to, which we find worthy, and therefore imbibe in our day-to-day life. There are a number of values we should treasure, let us examine them.

What values are important for you?

Truth: Not telling lies, fairness, and honesty. Telling the truth involves facing your fears. It also involves at all times owning up if you have made a mistake, -being humble, and not boasting about your accomplishments.

Righteousness and right conduct:

Righteousness is learning to think and speak the truth, and act in alignment with truth. It is about being moral, controlling the senses and emotions and directing them for the highest good of all. When we perform our duty and take responsibility for our thoughts, words and deeds, we are righteous. What is duty? Duty is performing actions because of responsibility, respect and revering others,

and to serve others to the best of your ability. As human beings we have the ability to think, discern and make choices, we can choose good from evil. Right conduct is truth in action.

Love:

Love is positive unconditional regard for one another. It is the ability to give and receive and be selfless. Love is giving happiness to others for the sake of happiness. God is love. The true nature of man is therefore Love. Love is energy not an emotion. When love is related to the body and senses, it is not real love – this is affection through attachment. Real love is without egotism, pride, hatred and envy. Divine love gives and forgives and does not receive. Love should manifest as service to others. Love is about seeing the brotherhood in man, not the differences.

Peace:

Peace is harmony, balance, contentment and satisfaction within self. When we are unruffled, steady and non-attached, we are in a state of equanimity and we are peaceful. Peace is the calming of all mental activities when we let go of pride, ego, the need to be right, and desire. When a thought arises do not impulsively rush into action – think – is this for others and my highest good? When we think things through and do not act in haste, we are in a state of harmony and peace. Peace is also there when you have complete faith in God and TRUST Him

implicitly. Let go of all fears and trust God is there, and He will look after you. Peace begins with a smile and the feeling of joy. Peace has to start from within. When we are balanced emotionally there is peace.

Charity and service:

Serving others is the highest virtue. In helping others we gain love and happiness and our self-esteem grows. When we serve others we are serving self. Serving others sincerely is a greater action than even prayers. Shri Satya Sai Baba says, "Hands that work in service are holier than lips that pray."

Non-violence:

When we are at peace with self and truly love and respect all of God's creations we are non-violent. Being non-violent is being compassionate and respectful towards all in spite of differences in culture, ethnicity, religion, language, and colour of skin. Impatience is the cause of violence. Violence is the sign of animal nature at its worst. When we see others as part of us we are non-violent. Do we get angry about the teeth that bite our tongue and do we get angry with ourselves when we stub our toes? Why? It is because we see the teeth as a part of ourselves. Help ever, hurt never.

Patience:

Patience is knowing that everything is in divine order, that there are no accidents and not a blade of grass moves without divine WILL. Patience is letting go the need to be impulsive and driven to rush into hasty action. Patience is about letting go of control and working only as God's instrument. To attain God realization you need sincere effort and patience. Patience means surrendering individual will to God's WILL. How do we know what is God's Will – by listening to our conscience. The conscience is the voice of God.

Surrender:

Surrender is moving out of ego (selfishness), control and domination to the realization that we are all divine. It is about TRUSTING, having full FAITH and RELYING implicitly on the divine power implicitly-. It is about acknowledging that we are a part of the divine spark and an instrument of the divine. Surrendering is about only having divine thoughts, words, and actions, and disconnecting from the rewards or fruits of all action. The total dependence on God is considered as surrender.







Exercise 4.1

Fill in the related words connected to the five main values mentioned below:

RIGHT CONDUCT	PEACE	TRUTH	LOVE	NON-VIOLENCE
Being respectful	Calm	Fair	Affection	Considerate
Doing one's duty	Control of sense	Integrity	Care	Harmless

Exercise 4.2

Short Story with discussion about Truth

Rose a nine-year-old girl was playing with her brother John who was two years old. As they were rolling and jumping up and down they both hit the side of the table where their mother's expensive vase stood. The vase came crashing down. Rose's mother was in the kitchen but she heard the loud crash and came rushing into the room where Rose and John were playing. "What happened here?" exclaimed the mother. Rose replied, "He did it!"

Questions

- 1) Why do you think Rose was telling a lie?
- 2) What was she feeling?
- 3) Do you think she should have told her mother the truth? Why?
- 4) Why is it wrong to tell lies?
- 5) Can you think of a time you spoke the truth even though it was difficult?
- 6) How did you feel after speaking the truth?

Exercise 4.3

A Short story with discussion about service

Susan was a small petite girl who accompanied her mother every Sunday to the local community centre. Susan's mother did voluntary work there baking cakes and serving the elderly tea and cakes. On this Sunday Susan heard from one of the elderly ladies Elma about her friend Tom, who had fallen down the stairs and hurt his wrist. Elma told Susan and her mother that she was concerned about Tom, as he had no family to look after him and was living all alone. Susan was very sad to hear about Tom. She asked her mother, "Can we take a piece of cake and visit Tom? Susan's mother was happy with Susan's compassionate response so she replied, "Of course, we can." Susan spent some time with Tom talking and making him feel happy. She was happy making him happy expecting nothing in return.

Questions

- 1) Have you done anything nice for someone recently? Tell us about it.
- 2) What does compassionate mean?
- 3) What makes Susan feel most happy?
- 4) Can you think of a time you made someone else happy without expecting anything else in return?
- 5) Why is serving others even better than praying in God's eyes?

Exercise 4.2

Meditate sitting in silence for 10 minutes – think of the word patience and what it means to you.

The nine laws of the universe

What are laws? They are rules or norms that help us to lead happy lives. Rules are necessary in society so that everyone gets a "fair go". When we all live by human values of love, peace, righteousness and non-violence, rules or laws become superfluous or unnecessary. Let us look at the nine laws of the Universe. How do -- they apply to you in your life?

1. We are all divine
2. Love is everything
3. Giving and receiving are both important
4. Contentment – being satisfied and feeling fulfilled
5. Karma – what we sow we shall reap
6. Growth and learning
7. Wisdom
8. Detachment or being independent
9. Duty to others





1. The law of divinity

We need to realize that our true self has the same pure Divine essence as God. God is total goodness and wisdom. Meditation is the pathway to realizing our true inner potential. Experiencing our true self can only be obtained in silent meditation and an attitude of non-judgment.

Meditation Exercise 4.3 Applying law of divinity

Meditate in silence for at least 15 minutes.

Listen and be one with nature and your surroundings

Examine if you have thought, spoken and acted through the day not in tune with your divine nature, that is without Love and wisdom.

2. The law of giving and receiving

Everything is constantly changing. Look around your environment, your family and nature. Everything and everyone is constantly changing. Your body, mind and the universe are constantly in a state of exchange and change. We are all intertwined in the big scheme of things. Giving and receiving are different aspects of the same flow of energy in the universe. There is a Universal law that states that the more you give the more you will receive. The intention behind the giving and receiving is the most important thing. If you give with positive intention

for the highest good of the other then you shall receive tenfold. Our true nature is prosperity and abundance because nature supports our every need and desire. The source of all wealth is Divinity.

Exercise 4.4 Applying the law of giving and receiving in the meditation group

Giving and receiving starts with a thought. Make giving and receiving with good intention a part of your consciousness. Practise the discipline of giving and receiving good thoughts by tuning in with family members and friends at a certain time each day. The most precious gifts are the gifts of caring, affection and love.

Each time you meet someone, silently send them a gift of wishing them joy and happiness.

3. The law of karma

What we sow is what we reap. Karma implies that every action of conscious choice has a consequence. Everything that is happening to you in this moment is the result of the choices that you have made in the past. Unfortunately, a lot of us make choices unconsciously like robots and therefore we do not think they are our choices.

Meditation gives us the tools and the pathway to become tuned to our inner, intuitive self. Our heart (conscience) knows the correct answer; it taps into the cosmic computer, the field of pure potential. The more you bring your

choices into the level of your conscious awareness, the more you will make those choices which are spontaneously correct for you and those around you. Past karma has to be paid. How do we deal with past negative karma? I believe we can lessen the impact of past negative karma by churning out more good thoughts, words and deeds.

(Diagram) THOUGHTS -> WORDS
(DECISIONS) ---> ACTIONS (DEEDS) ----
> CONSEQUENCES

Exercise 4.5 Applying the law of karma

Do a meditative introspective exercise and examine the choices you have made through the day. Bring them to your conscious awareness. The best way to prepare for the future is to be fully conscious in the present.

Every choice you make ask yourself "What are the consequences of this choice that I'm making? Will this choice bring fulfillment and happiness to me and also to those who are affected by this choice?"

4. The law of love

When you are in harmony with nature and your thoughts, words and actions are motivated by love and the established knowledge of the true self - the law of love is in function. When you operate from the point of true love, you are in tune with your divine nature and you can create happiness for self and others. Love all

and never hurt others, this is the way to be divine.

Exercise 4.6 Applying the law of love

Practise acceptance with people, situations and circumstances as they occur, knowing this moment is as it should be. Be in a state of joy knowing that all is "as it is meant to be". Think, speak and act with love, never wanting to hurt another. Then take responsibility for the situation and events that are problematic. Do not blame yourself or anyone else but treat each problem as an opportunity for learning. Relinquish the need to defend your point of view and remain open to all points of view.

5. The law of growth

The purpose of our existence is to work towards perfection and return as co-creators of God. Growth and progression is the key to happiness. Energy and information exists everywhere in nature. There is nothing other than energy and information. A flower, leaf, animals, you and I when broken down to the essential components are atoms and molecules of energy and information. Unlike other creations, the human nervous system is capable of becoming aware of the information and energy. We are capable of influencing the energy and informational content in our body, environment and world -- causing things to manifest by two qualities: attention and intention.





Attention: whatever you focus your attention towards in life will grow stronger. For instance, if you put more attention on your piano practise you will play better. Focus your attention on helping humankind and manifesting goodness in the environment and you will grow and progress towards becoming one with Divinity.

Intention: makes energy you put your attention on, to manifest in the physical realm. Intention is focusing your thoughts and willpower to create in the physical realm, hopefully for the benefit of humankind and creation. For instance: I intend to win this race. Intent is desire without attachment to outcome. Intention with detachment leads to life-centred, present-moment awareness.

Exercise 4.7 **Fulfilling your life's mission to further humankind to move towards God.**

Slip into silence.

When you come out of the silence, release your intention and wish. If there are a series of goals, write them down and have your intention focused on them before you go into silence.

Remain in the state of awareness of your true self. Keep your goals to yourself unless others share the exact same goals.

Relinquish your attachment to the outcome. Relinquish your attachment to a specific result and live in the wisdom of uncertainty.

Let the universe handle details. When things do not seem to go your way trust that it is due to a valid reason and that the cosmic plan has much grandeur designs for you. Refuse to allow obstacles to consume and scatter the quality of your attention in the present moment.

6. The law of contentment

Who is the poorest man? He who has many desires is the poorest man in the world. Who is the richest man? He who has contentment is the richest man in the world. Contentment is being satisfied and happy with whatever you have in life – that is not constantly wanting more and more. When we put a ceiling on desires and stop grasping at things and people, we are following the law of contentment. We cannot really own anything, as everything in this world is impermanent. Enjoy what you have now; rather than crave for what you do not have, that is the key to happiness. Be content with what you do and have in life rather than constantly being frustrated. Always look at the glass as half full rather than as half empty. If you do not have huge material treasures be grateful for the spiritual resources you have, that is the love of family and friends. Do not have expectations, as the more you anticipate and expect the more you will be disappointed. Be grateful to God for everything that comes into your life.

7. The law of wisdom

We have knowledge, understanding and wisdom of the Universe deep within us, as we are divine. We need to be silent and listen to the wisdom within us. Thoughts are the first unit of wisdom. When we think negatively, we exist in a state of disharmony and lose touch with our Divinity and wisdom. We have the potential of pure wisdom if we meditate and expand our consciousness to the Divine One.

8. The law of detachment

To become attached to someone or something is to become excessively worried and preoccupied with a person or problem, trying to control the person or the environment. (This is only applicable to adult relationships and not necessarily to your children.) When we are attached to someone or something, we become excessive emotionally and do not think with wisdom and so we “get blown about by every wind”.

How do we detach?

Detachment is a higher state of consciousness when we can think with love and wisdom without excessive emotion. Detachment can be learned by practise. Always detach in the attitude of love, rather than anger or hatred. Relinquish your attachment to the physical, temporary, material objects and people. Step into the unknown within (into the realm of the Divine One), trusting the Universe and your creator

to guide you through inner wisdom. Do not be compelled to force solutions onto problems. Allow yourself and others the freedom to be as they are. Step into the field of all possibilities and remain open to the infinity of choices and experience the mystery, joy and magic of life.

Exercise 4.6 - Detachment

In a meditative state think of a person or problem you feel excessively worried about.

How has being attached (worrying, becoming excessively emotional, trying to control) helped so far?

Visualize placing the person and the problem in the hands of the Divine One. Now visualize the Divine One holding you. All is well for the moment. All is as it should be and as it needs to be. In a meditative state keep repeating this positive affirmation and let the words resonate through every cell in your body.

SERENITY PRAYER - God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change the courage to change, the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

9. The law of duty/dharma

Everyone has a purpose in life, a gift and special talent to give others. When we blend this unique talent in the service to others, we experience the ecstasy and excitement of our own spirit, which is the ultimate goal of all. Ask yourself, why am I here? Focus on doing well in what you do. Search for your unique talent.





Discover your spiritual self.

What is your unique talent? Express your unique talent.

How can I use my unique talent and gifts to serve others? How can I help all those I come into contact with, without asking what's in it for me?

Exercise 4.7 Probing for talents

In a meditative state ask yourself who am I? What are my unique talents? If money and time were not an issue, in what way would I want to serve humanity? Observe twenty minutes of silence and release your desires when you come out of the gap.

What are the impurities that humankind can acquire?

These impurities are the six inner enemies of man: excessive desire, anger, greed, attachment, pride and jealousy. Where do these impurities originate from: the human mind. Hence keep a check on the mind by observing your thoughts. Also watch the friends and company you keep. It is often said "birds of a feather flock together". Surround yourself with righteous thinking noble friends. Everyone reaps the consequences of their actions, depending upon their destiny and their qualities. We need not be too much concerned with that. As long as one is attached to worldly objects and thinks in terms of thine, and mine, one will be afflicted by sorrow. When we do good to others, we benefit. If we experience

difficulties and hardships in life, the fault lies with us. God is not responsible for our sorrows and difficulties; it is the rebelliousness of our senses and our mind that is responsible for them. So, we should control our senses and our mind. If we are able to control our senses and our mind, everything else will come under our control. We blame God for our problems and difficulties. But, God loves one and all equally. He has no hatred towards anyone. When man strays away from the path of righteousness, God comes in human form to reform him. Birds, beasts and insects lead lives according to their specific nature. It is only man who has given up all righteousness in today's world, forgotten his divine essence and degraded his humanness.





Chapter 5 Who am I?

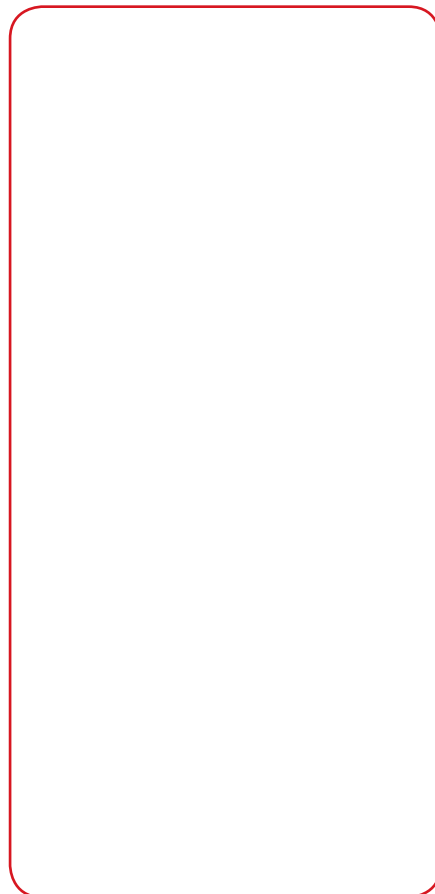
A pregnant tigress was crossing a river when she suddenly gave birth to a cub. The mother was swept away by the rushing waters but the cub reached dry ground somewhere down-stream where a herd of sheep were grazing. The sheep raised the cub as one of their own, and therefore mixing with the sheep day after day, the cub forgot its true identity and thought it was a sheep. The cub completely lost its' inherent strength and capabilities. One day a tiger attacked the herd and was surprised to see the cub behaving like a sheep. The tiger dragged the cub to a water pool and pointed to the cub's image in the water, "Look you are not a sheep; you are a tiger. Recognize your true identity". We are similar to the cub in that we are often influenced by what others think we are. Our self-image develops through what others tell us about ourselves. The truth is we are all divine.

I have three images of my being. These self-images are developed through:

- 1. What others think I am.** As discussed earlier we get the first messages about ourselves from significant "others" in our environment. This makes our self-image. Then we start connecting with what others have said about us and begin seeing ourselves in a certain way.
- 2. What I think of myself.**
- 3. Who I really am.** I am neither the mind, the body, nor an emotion, I am Universal Energy. My purpose in this life is to learn about my true nature and detach from other people's judgments and perceptions of me.

The human being is made up of the spiritual body, the subtle body (the mind) and the gross body. What is the gross body made up of? The body is made up of five elements; water, air, ether, fire.

Exercise 5.1 The human gross body – below draw in any organs and body parts that you know...



What is the Breath?

Prana or primal universal energy is everywhere: in the air we breathe, in the food we eat, all creations have prana or "the energy of life". The Japanese and Chinese word to describe a concept that is similar to prana- "Ki" or "Chi". The prana flows through the chakras in our bodies. The Latin word Anima spiritus means "breath" or "spirit". Breath creates life. The main source of energy should be obtained via correct breathing, yet most of us access only ten to twenty percent of our full breathing capacity, leaving us short of energy and compromising optimum health and well-being. [HYPERLINK "http://www.breathing.com/articles/longevity2.htm"](http://www.breathing.com/articles/longevity2.htm) Clinical studies prove that wellness and health are dependent on proper breathing. Improper breathing either worsens or causes a vast array of illness and/or disease.

When we inhale we bring some of the outer world into us and when we exhale we take some of our being into the outer world. Thus, there is a part of us in the Universe, just as the Universe is a part of us. Amongst the yogis of India, age is not determined chronologically by the number of years a person has lived but by the number of breaths a person takes. It is believed that each person is granted a specific number of breaths in this physical realm. So if one slows down one's breathing, one's metabolism tends to slow down, resulting in increased longevity. It is a well-documented fact that animals with longer and slower breathing have a longer life span than animals that take short, fast breaths.

Breathing is the only act that humans can do consciously or completely unconsciously. It is when we are breathing in conscious awareness that we are controlling prana and directing it to heal our bodies. Slow and deep breathing helps us to relax, but there are other subtle effects of breathing on our physical body.

Breathing Awareness Exercises.

The vast majority of us do not breathe "correctly". The optimal breathing technique involves drawing the abdominal wall out when breathing in. Shallow breathing only fills part of the lungs. We have to breathe properly to increase pranic intake as well as increase oxygenation of the blood and increased consciousness. The following techniques should be practised before the commencement of meditation practices.

Exercise 5.1 Conscious Breathing.

Lie on your back placing your hands about half an inch in front of your abdomen. Take a deep slow breath so as to see your hands moving, pushing away from your abdomen. Next exhale, pushing the hands into the abdomen. It should take over a minute to both inhale and exhale. When it becomes a habit to breathe like this, you can dispense with the hands. Try the exercise again with your hands on the side of your rib cage and then by folding your arms like wings, raising the elbow as you breathe in. All the movements should blend into one flowing movement.





Exercise 5.2 Heart Breathing.

Now try and synchronize your breath with your heart rate. Inhale a complete breath during 7 or 9 beats of your heart. Retain the breath for 3 heartbeats and exhale for 7 or 9 heartbeats. This exercise trains you to have a longer breath span. Scientists and researchers have found a co-relationship between health and long breath spans.

Good Nutrition – You Are What You Eat. The body is the temple for God and therefore should be taken care of and not defiled.

Obesity and illness related to poor food habits have increased over the last few decades. The types of illness related to overweight are heart diseases and diabetes.

Staying healthy includes a balanced diet, cleanliness, exercise, as well as refraining from bad habits such as smoking and drugs. (Refer to the Chapter on Habits). People who develop a lifestyle using good nutrition, hygiene and exercise develop

a lifetime of habits, which will give them the benefit of a long healthy life. The Food Guide Pyramid (see below) helps to promote the three basic rules for a healthy diet: Variety, Balance and Moderation.

Variety means that you must include many **different** foods from each level of the Food Pyramid because no single food can supply all of the nutrients that your growing body needs on a daily basis. It is best to eat foods of all colours. The more colour and textures in your daily meals, the better range of nutrients you will get.

Balance means that you must eat the right **amounts** of foods from all levels of the Food Pyramid each day. This way you will get all the calories and nutrients you need for proper growth and development.

Moderation means that you are careful **not to eat too much** of any one type of food. The right amounts of servings from each of the food groups depends on your age, sex, body size and activity level, but the table below will give you an idea of where you fit in:

	Preschool children	Most children and Teenage girls	Teenage boys
Bread, Cereal, Rice, Pasta	6 servings	9 servings	11 servings
Fruits	2 servings	3 servings	4 servings
Vegetables	3 servings	4 servings	5 servings
Milk, Yoghurt, Cheese	2-3 servings	2-3 serving	2-3 servings
Meats, Fish	5 ounces	6 ounces	7 ounces

Types of Food: Carbohydrates, Protein and Dairy.

Exercise 5.3 Myths About Food.

Breakfast is the Most Important Meal of the Day.

True

Breakfast is an important meal needed to break the fast from your previous meal and initiate your metabolism. Good breakfast choices include:

- wholegrain varieties of breakfast cereals, breads or crumpets
- protein foods such as eggs, nuts, low fat milk or yoghurt
- fruit

Milk Increases Mucus Production.

False

During colds and flu, many people will avoid milk and other dairy products, thinking that this increases mucus. Studies have shown that this is not true.

Wuthrich B *et al* 2005, 'Milk consumption does not lead to mucus production or occurrence of asthma' Journal of American College of Nutrition , vol 24: 547S-55S

Olive Oil is better than Butter.

False

Olive oil and butter have the same amount of fat and kilojoules per gram, therefore both have the same effects on

weight. However, olive oil is healthier for the heart than butter because it contains monounsaturated fats rather than saturated fats, which have been found to have a link with increased cholesterol and heart disease.

- NHMRC 2003, 'Dietary guidelines for Australian adults', Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra

Vegetable Oil is Healthy.

False

Not all vegetable oils are healthy. For example palm oil contains 50% saturated fat. Saturated fat has been associated with increased cholesterol, heart disease and diabetes. Better choices include the unsaturated vegetable oils canola and olive oil.

- NHMRC 2003, 'Dietary guidelines for Australian adults', Commonwealth of Australia: Canberra

Fresh Vegetables are Always Best.

False

This is not always the case. Frozen vegetables can contain just as many nutrients as fresh vegetables. This is because vitamins found in vegetables are retained throughout the freezing process from blanching, freezing and thawing ready to cook.

- "Frozen Vegetables- Do they count?" 2000, Heinz Wattie's Australasia/ New Zealand Institute for Crop and Food Research/ Nutrition Australia/ New Zealand Nutrition Foundation.



You Should Enjoy a Wide Variety of Nutritious Foods

True

Because no single food can provide you with all the nutrients you need, it is important that you choose a wide range of foods from the different food groups e.g. fruits and vegetables, dairy products, breads and cereals, and also within each food group e.g. fruits such as apples, bananas, oranges, pears and rock melon from different cultures e.g. Indian, Italian, Greek, Chinese, Thai, Mexican and Vietnamese.

Enjoying a variety of nutritious foods means you won't miss out on essential nutrients such as protein, carbohydrates and fats, as well as vitamins and minerals.

Nutrition Australia recommends that we consume around 30 different foods each day. Usually, the more colourful the meal is, the greater the number of different nutrients we consume.

Eat Plenty of Vegetables, Legumes and Fruits.

Try to include at least two serves of fruit and five of vegetables each day. It is important that you choose a variety of fruits from apples to citrus fruits to berries and bananas, from fresh, stewed or canned varieties.

If you are Overweight - What can you do?

1. Make it a life commitment to eat moderately and eat well. Have strong intentions.
2. Make it work for you by having a plan.
3. Keep a food diary to monitor your food intake.
4. Do not deny yourself your favourite food, in moderation.
5. Do not beat yourself up if you stumble but decide to pick yourself up and renew your commitment to self.
6. Be encouraged by your success.
7. Set short-term realistic goals.
8. Seek help if you need it - An Accredited Practising Dietician can help.
9. Exercise.





Personal hygiene

Hygiene is a term that refers to the steps you take to stay clean and healthy. There are clean living habits everyone should try to follow. Cleanliness is said to be next to Godliness. Keeping your body clean is an important part of keeping healthy and helps you to feel good about yourself. According to the Archives of Disease in Childhood in a study of almost 11,000 infants, high levels of bad personal hygiene in childhood increase the risk of eczema and asthma.

Clothes

Our clothes can become stained, dirty and generally grubby during the day, so we need to change them often. Clothes are next to our skin and collect dead skin cells, sweat and possibly other unmentionable stains. Overnight bacteria start to work on these stains so our clothes do not smell as nice on the second day of wearing.

Shoes

You spend a lot of time on your feet and your shoes are very close to the place where the largest collections of sweat glands live - your feet! Sweat gets into your shoes and bacteria thrive there as they like the moist leather or fabric. If you are a frequent swimmer or use public showers, you need to be particularly careful to wash your feet and dry them well. Many people with bare feet use these places and so you can easily pick up fungal infections or other problems such as warts.

Hair

The hair follicles, which the hair grows from, produce oil, which keeps the hair smooth. You also have sweat glands in your scalp, and dead skin cells come off the scalp. The oil, sweat and dead cells can make the hair greasy and look dirty unless you wash it regularly.

Teeth

You should brush your teeth twice a day - after breakfast and before you go to bed. During the day fill your mouth with water and swish it around to get rid of anything sticking to your teeth.

Smoking

Some people smoke because their friends do or because it seems cool. Unfortunately most become addicted to nicotine, one of the chemicals in cigarettes and smokeless tobacco. Nicotine is both a stimulant and a depressant. This means nicotine increases the heart rate at first and makes people feel more alert (like caffeine). It also causes depression and fatigue. With depression and fatigue and lack of nicotine the addicted person will crave another cigarette to stimulate them again and thus a cycle is created. According to many experts, the nicotine in tobacco is as addictive as cocaine or heroin.

What is alcohol?

Alcohol is created when grains, fruits, or vegetables are fermented. Fermentation is a process that uses yeast or bacteria to change the sugars in the food into alcohol. So if alcohol is a natural product, why do we need to be concerned about drinking it? When people drink alcohol, it's absorbed into their bloodstream and it affects the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord), which controls virtually all body functions.

How does it affect the body?

Alcohol is a depressant, which means it slows the function of the central nervous system. Alcohol actually blocks some of the messages trying to get to the brain. This alters a person's perceptions, emotions, movement, vision, and hearing.

In very small amounts, alcohol can make a person feel more relaxed or less anxious, but greater amounts of alcohol cause changes in the brain, resulting in intoxication. People who have overused alcohol may stagger, lose their coordination, and have slurred speech. They will probably be confused and disoriented. Depending on the person, intoxication can make someone very friendly and talkative or very aggressive and angry. An intoxicated person's reaction times are slowed dramatically, which is why people are told not to drink and drive. When large amounts of alcohol are consumed in a short period of time, alcohol poisoning can result. Violent vomiting is usually the first symptom of alcohol poisoning, as the body tries to rid itself of the alcohol. Extreme

sleepiness, unconsciousness, difficulty breathing, dangerously low blood sugar, seizures, and even death may result.

What is substance abuse and addiction?

Addiction begins with the misuse of a substance like marijuana or cocaine. You can abuse a drug without having an addiction but in most cases it does lead to addiction. A person can become addicted to all sorts of substances. Addiction is when the person has grown so used to a drug that they have no control and are completely dependant on the drug. Addiction can be physical, psychological, or both.

Physical addiction is when a person's body actually becomes dependent on a particular substance - even smoking is physically addictive. It also means that a person builds tolerance to that substance, so the person needs larger and larger doses to get the same effects. When a physically addicted person stops using a substance like drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes, they may experience withdrawal symptoms. Withdrawal symptoms are diarrhea, trembling, and generally feeling extremely unwell.

Psychological addiction happens when the cravings for a drug are psychological or emotional. People who are psychologically addicted feel overwhelmed by the desire to have the drug to the extent they may lie or steal to get it.



Getting help

If you think you are addicted to drugs or alcohol, recognizing that you have a problem is the first step in getting help. Find someone you trust to talk to. It may help to talk to a friend or someone your own age at first, but a supportive and understanding adult is your best option. If you can't talk to your parents or a close family member, you may want to approach a school counselor, doctor or favorite teacher. Unfortunately, overcoming addiction is not easy. It is not a sign of weakness if you need professional help from a trained drug counselor or therapist.



Bad habits

Chapter 6 Using meditation

to manage our emotions

Expansion is the essence of love. You can light a million lamps from one; yet the first one will not suffer at all. Share love with a million, it will be as bright as when it was alone.

Shri Satya Sai Baba

Emotions – what are they?

Emotions are feelings that are generated from thoughts. The English word 'emotion' comes from the Latin root *emovere* which means something that sets the mind in motion towards action. This could be harmful, neutral or positive action. There are destructive or negative and constructive or positive emotions. Negative emotions are generated from thoughts that are not in tune with reality, that is, there will be disparity between the way things appear and the way things are. I have often remarked to my students that wisdom and our objective judgement is lost when we are experiencing intense emotions.

Meditation exercise 6.1 – Observing emotions

Sit quietly and think about one event of the day, recall as much as possible. Observe and witness your emotions connected to one event.

If an emotion arises from where did it arise? What was the cause? Did you decide to experience the emotion or was it spontaneous? If you experience a negative emotion trace the triggering factors. Negative emotions usually arise from a need to defend certain aspects of

your personality. The three needs are

Security: Was there a threat to your security?

Power: Was your power, real or imaginary, over something or someone threatened?

Sensation habits: Were you being deprived of an anticipated pleasure?

What is the process of generating an emotion?

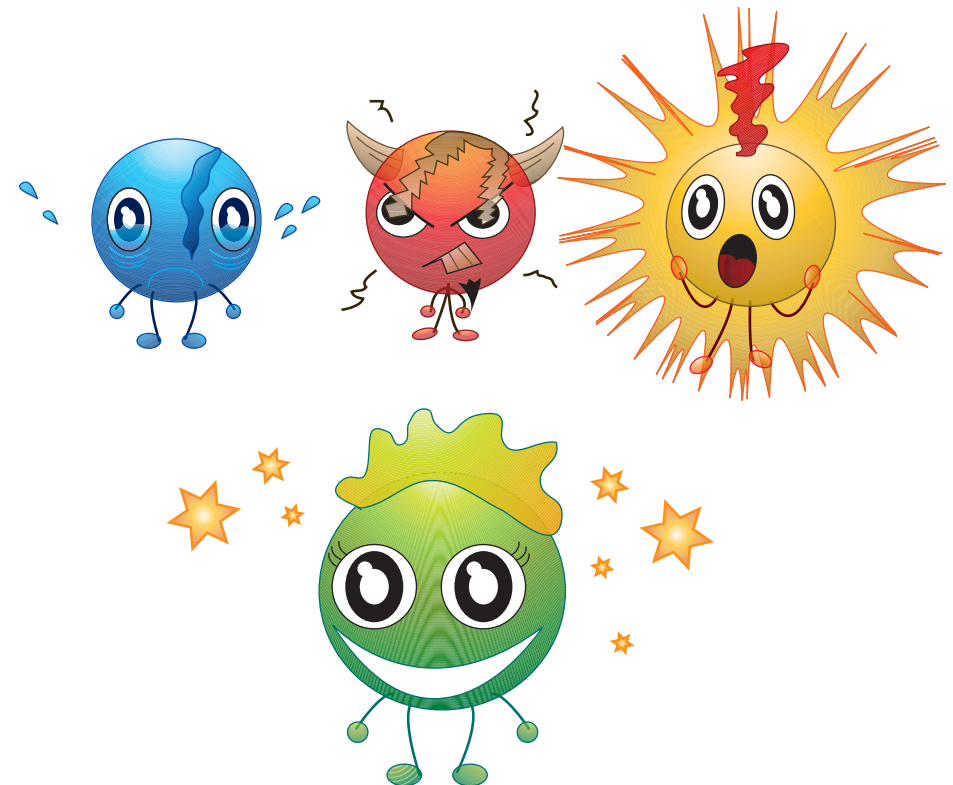
The senses pick up information from the environment, which we perceive. Our brain encodes, decodes and interprets this information and this produces a feeling. If the thoughts, perception and interpretation are positive, then we experience positive emotions such as joy and happiness. On the other hand, if the thoughts, perception and interpretation are negative then we produce destructive emotions. Destructive emotions bring harm to self and others. Therefore, the motivation or intent and the results or consequences of generating one's emotions should be considered.

Senses picks up information

The mind interprets information depending on past experience

If the interpretation is positive you generate positive emotion - joy

If the interpretation is negative you generate anger, sadness and fear.



Emotions



Buddhist philosophy like Hinduism and other traditions further believe that destructive or negative emotions are not inherent in the nature of the mind. They are intermittent and arise depending on circumstances, perceptions, habits and tendencies

Emotional management through meditation

*Can emotions be managed and controlled? Yes. Our real nature is to be calm as we are spirit. We put on a mask of restlessness, anger, fear and sadness. Feelings and emotions according to the great Indian spiritual masters obscure the soul from its true nature. **Perfect control of feeling makes you king of yourself.***

*Paramahansa Yogananda (1893-1952),
The Divine Romance*

How can we remove destructive negative emotions?

Darkness is the absence of light; so also negative emotions block us from being who we really are. The body, mind, emotions and spirit are interconnected. There is an intimate relationship between the mental, emotional and physical components of our being. If for instance, we recall a traumatic incident (thought) we will emotionally experience the same feelings we felt at the time. Most of the time we tend to identify with our emotions

e.g. "I am angry", "I am sad", "I am happy". But are we our emotions? No. For emotions to be experienced, we need to interpret our thoughts. For example, if Mr. Green calls you "scatter brained and lazy".

1st stage: You first scan all of the sensory input. Hear Mr. Green's tone of voice, see his body language, and take in the "content" of the communication.

2nd stage: Identification with sensory input. Associations with the object happen in the mind. You will think of all the past experiences you have had with Mr. Green including when he has made callous remarks about you.

3rd stage: Evaluation of data and discrimination. Was Mr. Green really being offensive? You will accumulate all past experiences and information related to Mr. Green and then make your decision.

4th stage: Decision-making faculty invoked - to act or not to act. Should I respond to Mr. Green? How should I respond to Mr. Green? All this happens at great speed. It is at the 3rd or 4th stage that emotions are experienced. It is at step 3 that we need to connect with our Atma, our divine self so that we interpret and see things only as divine. All thoughts and emotions are energy and this energy we can feel in our body (that is if we are tuned inwards - not many people are tuned in - please see chapter on energy). Predominantly anger comes up in my throat, neck region (vishuddhi chakra), fear in my solar plex or stomach region (manipuri) and

sadness in my heart (anahata), the back heart chakra I feel jealousy and envy and so on.... If we do not cleanse and clear accumulated garbage energy from our chakras we will fall ill (mentally or physically). Hence it is important for people to look within and feel and explore their energy fields so that they can cleanse and clear and learn to not invite this energy again into their being and **transform** into pure **love**.

Not all anger, sadness and fear are destructive. The positive aspect of anger energy is when we use this energy constructively to motivate us to achieve things. Anger can be used also to save someone jumping off a cliff, similarly fear helps us to flee from danger. God is ALL energy. God has given us anger, sadness, fear and joy so that we **can create, experience and make conscious choices**. Thoughts and emotions propel us to make decisions and then perform actions. Without thoughts and emotions we human beings would not be able to make conscious choice and create.

As negative emotions enter the mind, they transform into mood or habitual patterns and eventually, as traits of temperament. One can work to remove destructive or negative emotions in three ways:

The remedy for each negative emotion can be found in meditation. For instance, the antidote or treatment to hatred is connect to the feelings of being joyful and being loved in meditation. One of my colleagues at a place I used to work had a "hot" temperament, much to the dismay of her peers and myself. When I

meditated and looked for and focussed on the positive traits and qualities of her personality, the anger and irritation towards her melted away. In searching out for her positive traits, I utilized reason, taking the other aspects of her reality into account. The Dalai Lama has said,

"From the Buddhist point of view, even in dealing with the afflictions (negative emotions), understanding the nature of reality becomes very important because lack of understanding leads to either reification, some kind of nihilism or false denial. For that reason, valid, verifying cognition is very important."

Often students have been encouraged to look fear in the face - i.e. to face up to and address the fear. Often, when they do that they find that the fear melts away. Negative emotions are generated because of distorted mental images in the mind. I had a patient who had a phobia of water and the image was so distorted in her mind that she was afraid to go for a bath or shower. After a few therapeutic sessions I discovered the reason for her phobia. She was thrown into the deep end of a swimming pool when she was a child. In her mind the experience was so traumatic that all water was equal to danger. After therapy her mind was able to see the distorted thinking that all water is not dangerous.

Transforming negative into positive that is, using the energy of the negative emotion for positive outcomes. One of my students said he used anger when jogging and running up a steep hill.





Meditation exercise 6.2 – Generating an emotion

Place any object such as a pen before you. You are directed to first experience liking, a positive emotion for this object. Then, try to experience intense dislike, negative emotion for this object.

Become conscious of the stages you go through - before you experience the emotion. Are emotions really automatically experienced? Can we make choices?

Deliberately recall a past incident, which caused you to experience strong emotions. Recreate the incident in detail. Try to trace the emotion back to its real cause. Observe the event. Did you decide to experience the emotion or was it spontaneous?

Management of our mind will greatly improve our emotional life.

Does one deal with negative emotions before, during or after they occur?

The beginner approaches emotional management or intervention only after experiencing them. When one has had some experience in this practice then one can deal with emotions as they arise. The person is freeing themselves of the emotions as they arise. Spiritual masters and realized people might avert a destructive emotion even before it manifests by recognising the triggers and patterns that precede these destructive emotions. Conversely, they might take

this one step further and mobilize the negative energy to serve humankind. For example, after the tragedy of Jalianiwalla Bagh, where the British massacred many hundreds of unarmed Indian men, women and children Mahatma Gandhi harnessed the anger of the oppressed population to launch his historic satyagraha movement (i.e. non-compliance and non-violent protests). Gandhi used forceful yet non-violent action against the British to achieve his goal of freedom for his people.

Types of emotions – four main categories

Joy or happiness
Fear
Anger
Sadness

Anger – thoughts of dissatisfaction, unfulfillment.

Sadness – thoughts of loss and grief, lack of love.

Fear – future worrying thoughts: gloom and doom.

Joy and happiness – thoughts of satisfaction, fulfillment.

Bliss – Being Love, Divinity, final goal of meditation.

joy or happiness

Happiness and joy are positive emotional states or conditions that we experience, albeit for short periods during our lives. As our mind or thoughts affects the way we feel, happiness is impermanent. On the other hand, bliss is permanent. Bliss is non-dual; it is a spiritual state of consciousness, when we are one with Divinity. It is that state of being when we are: Divine Consciousness – one with Divinity. The goal of meditation is to attain Bliss. Suffering in humanity is caused by ignorance, negative emotions and attachment. However suffering and pain helps us to become better human beings and helps us to grow.

We could never learn to be brave and patient, if there were only joy in the world.

Helen Keller, US blind & deaf educator, 1880 - 1968

Steps to attaining bliss

Enjoy what you do and have in the now. For example, if you work as an electrician, find meaning and purpose in what you do and enjoy your work. Do not constantly crave to become a teacher. You can always plan and take action to change things that you do not like in your life.

Positive thinking in every integrated moment of awareness. Always think of the glass as half full rather than as half empty. Thoughts are the first step in creation. Thoughts are extremely powerful. They create your world. If you think positively, you create a positive world.

Live in the present. Do not regret the past and wallow in past glories nor worry about the future. Worry is unreal mental activity created through fear. A patient wrote this beautiful poem for me which she titled, *Huzan's gift*:

Nothing is lost

In fact more is found

When you live in the present

Your feet on the ground

The future still floating

On wings and a prayer

Even angels take shelter from your fears through love and care

So pack up your troubles

Your thinking must shift

Breathe this moment

Feel its presence it's the NOW that's your gift.

Make others happy through **selflessness**. We spend too much time focusing on ourselves, with the "poor me" syndrome. We tend to always compare ourselves with people who have more than us rather than be grateful for what we have as compared to most people. Hence we want more, more and more...

Real joy comes not from ease or riches or from the praise of men, but from doing something worthwhile.

Sir Wilfred Grenfell, English missionary & physician (1865 - 1940)





Do not have expectations. We are constantly having expectations. If we do not have expectations we cannot be disappointed.

Contentment. Become satisfied with what you have. We always compare ourselves with others who have more than us and forget to be grateful for what we do have.

Healthy body, mind and spirit. Healthy body comes with eating well; fresh vegetarian food is the healthiest. It goes without saying that smoking does severe long-term harm and excess alcohol leaves leads to lasting physical damage.

Replace anger in your heart with Love. Instead of using anger as a weapon to hurt another, look within and harness this force to destroy your own ego and your bad habits that bind you. Love will quickly and effortlessly fill the void.

Look fear in the face and deal with it. Fear, worry and anxiety are mental irrational beliefs about a future condition. We create worry and fear in our minds. If you **live in the present** and deal with the reality of what is happening NOW, fear and worry will automatically be removed.

Grief or sadness is a sign that we have developed “attachment” towards the unreal. For instance death is a temporary condition where the body turns to dust but the real you, your spirit, is permanent and can never be destroyed. **So stop grasping at temporary objects** but grasp for the only permanent energy in the Universe – the Divine One.

Fear

Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear - not absence of fear.

Mark Twain, 1835 - 1910

Fear can be positive or destructive. Fear can be used positively, for instance, to flee from danger.

The definition of fear as a destructive emotion is “False experience appearing real” – i.e. false thoughts in our mind about something or someone that appear real to us. The greatest fear we have about ourselves is “mortal fear”. Fear about our cessation; fear about bodily pain, hunger and any threat to the body.

There are three parts of the Self. Firstly, what others say about us. Secondly, what you say about yourself, which is generally based on the messages we get from others, and thirdly, your true reality, which is Atma.

Fear is created when we identify with what others say about us and our thoughts and associations with past negative experiences. If you want to release fear identify with your true reality which is Divine and indestructible. When we perceive ourselves as being destructible, we experience fear. Our perception and interpretation of an object or person as threatening to our wellbeing, security or power, produce fear.

The reality is that we are indestructible. Our true essence is Divine. Fear prevents us from being who we really are and rising to Universal Consciousness. The

root cause of fear is the absence of pure and sacred thoughts and “separateness from God”. When we see ourselves as one with God as divine we see ourselves as indestructible and eternal and have courage to look at fear in the face. One of my meditation students whom I shall name Rob recounted his experience of being held up by a gunman in the bank. At that grave moment he stated that he thought about his three children and said to himself, “I am not ready to die”. He prayed to God and found himself with great inner courage and strength. Rob made an effort to talk to the gunman and eventually the gunman did give up his gun. A miracle occurred not only was Rob’s life (was) spared but the gunman gave him back his possessions. In that crucial moment Rob had two choices: to think of himself as defeated and “dead”, and therefore give in to the gunman, or address his fears with courage and challenge the gunman with his wisdom. I am so glad Rob choose the latter. Fear is worry, anxiety and stress related to the future.

Another patient whom I shall call Anne was suffering from anxiety. One day she was in a hurry to get to work and she grabbed a vitamin pill to swallow with some water and found that she was choking. At the moment of crisis her thoughts went back to a childhood experience of choking and all the thoughts she associated with that experience - thinking the worst, that she was going to die from the choking. Because of the choice she made in thinking, she experienced the worst panic attack with heart palpitations, violent shaking, and profuse sweating. I later told

her that in that crisis moment she still had a choice. To think the worst or to think: let me call out to my guides and angels and ask for help, and trust that she would receive the help she needed. Next time a crisis situation occurred I believe Anne would be better prepared to make the right choices in her thoughts, thereby creating a positive outcome. We create our reality by the way we think.

Exercise 6.3 – Steps to eliminate fear

Go through these steps in a meditative state:

Identify the fear(s). What are they? For example: I have fear of water.

If possible, identify the origin of the fear. Why do I have these fears? Where did these fears originate? Identify the thoughts that trigger these fears. For example: I remember being thrown into a swimming pool when I was three and I almost drowned. This resulted in my lasting fear of water.

What are the “core beliefs” that have developed as a result of these fears? Core beliefs are fundamental thoughts, attitudes, perceptions you have about yourself and your environment, generally derived from past experiences. These beliefs are so deep-seated, that they unconsciously affect your actions. The more traumatic and unsettling our experience, the stronger our beliefs. For example: I am not a good swimmer. I am not a good person etc.





Prepare to turn off the worry, fear and anxiety by identifying with Divinity. There is nothing or nobody that can hurt your spirit or soul. You are a part of the divine energy. "I am not just the body, mind and intellect. I am Divine". Trust and have faith in Divinity protecting you. Live up to the truth of your being. A fearless person will be detached from all objects of the world and become saturated with the love of God. On the other hand, one who is egotistic about his body and attached to worldly accomplishments will be full of fears.

Have a practical plan to deal with the fear. Put the plan down in writing. For example: I will go for swimming lessons, I know that one negative experience about the water does not necessarily make the water dangerous.

Confront the fear by implementing the plan. It does not matter what others think. For example, even at the age of 50, I will take swimming lessons.

Do deep breathing. Watch and observe your breath. Watch your body and transform all the tense areas to a state of relaxation.

Reinforce success with positive affirmations. "I am Love, I am Divine"

Anger

Anyone can become angry-that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way-that is not easy.

Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics.

Aristotle is postulating in the above statement that anger can be an asset as well as detrimental. Some anger is used to compassionately help someone. Buddhists use the term "virtuous anger" to describe this. If someone is about to jump off a cliff and I shout at them angrily to stop, I am using anger for a positive outcome. On the other hand, destructive anger is an emotion or feeling that is generated when the mind interprets that the individual needs are unfulfilled. Fear of losing something or unfulfilled needs brings about anger. Hatred, jealousy, envy and pride stem from the root emotion of anger. For instance, if someone calls me a fool or is rude to me, I perceive that as a threat to my self-image and I generate a feeling of anger, which compels me to fight back.

Anger debilitates. Anger is usually rooted in judgment. People are angry because we have not met their expectations. We hold others to some standards. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "An eye for an eye and the whole world will be blind". If we are in an intense emotional state, we lose touch with our higher consciousness and wisdom.

Holding on to anger, resentment and hurt only gives you tense muscles, a headache and a sore jaw from clenching your teeth. Forgiveness gives you back the laughter and the lightness in your life.

Joan Lunden, in Healthy Living Magazine

Anger is responsible for shortening a person's life. How does your body react when you are experiencing anger? The blood pressure rises, the body parts become tense, nerves become weaker. We release chemicals in our body that over the long term affects us adversely. Anger has many shades and colours: Fury, outrage, resentment, wrath, exasperation, indignation, vexation, acrimony, animosity, annoyance, irritability, hostility, hatred and violence. Guilt is a form of self-anger or anger turned inwards. It also has tinges of fear energy. You are disappointed with self or you did not live up to the expectations of your self. Sometimes anger is a defence against fear. If we let go of the fear, we will let go of anger. A person threatened of losing control of a situation or reputation might go on the attack aggressively to hide his fears.

A client asked me once: who is the cause of anger and why it is uncontrollable??

The mind causes anger. Why are we uncontrollable and impulsive? If we train our minds we can be in control and not impulsive. We are conditioned and programmed sometimes to have thought habits and emotion habits but through meditation we can de-program ourselves

to return to our natural divine state. A habit is automatic impulsive behaviour that we learn through repetition of thought and action. If my father is quick tempered I will unconsciously develop a habit of being quick tempered. We learn a lot of things from conditioning and programming given to us by our parents, hence when we choose our parents we choose our life's lessons.

I know deep down I am ONE with divinity but in this physical reality I am constantly working with duality and choices (good and bad thoughts, emotions) in a moment I can be divine and in a moment I can be **unconsciously** demonic. If I switch off my consciousness even for a moment my automatic pilot mode (my conditioning) can take over and I can be impulsively angry, sad or fearful. I am learning not to take a vacation and always try and stay in higher consciousness. It is hard work but the adventure and learning is awesome.

A patient I shall name Kavita, presented at the clinic with severe neck and shoulder blade pain. Her work demanded her to use her neck muscles frequently as she had to constantly bend to pick up things. Her posture was also not good. However added to this physical stress she had emotional issues and experienced real anger issues. She felt discriminated by her colleagues and her boss. She could not express herself and locked her pain in her throat and neck. After a few healing sessions her pain reduced considerably. She was further empowered by learning assertive communication and learning to change her attitude and thoughts and forgive.





If someone angers you, know you are in material consciousness. Even if you have been maltreated, still you should be ready to forgive. When you forgive you are in spiritual consciousness... Material consciousness is quarrelsome; spiritual consciousness gets along with everybody.

Paramahansa Yogananda, The Divine Romance

Exercise 6.4 Meditation exercise to let go of anger

This exercise is done to let go or discard anger in any situation, an attitude, a place, or a negative link to a person, a memory or an illness. When we address our feelings and voice our feelings we are acknowledging and confronting them. This is the first step in letting go of our anger. Facing our feelings in this way takes courage and helps us to affirm that we are more powerful than the anger energy.

Chant I am divine in the group. The group members should close their eyes, join hands in the circle and imagine breathing in and out of their heart centres as they chant together. Each person begins to send a gold beam of light from his or her heart to the centre of the circle, filling the space with gold energy and creating a beautiful healing pool. Allow everyone to continue the sound softly while each member stops singing in turn and speaks in a clear voice, "I let go of ... (individual to fill in the blanks appropriately) into the pool of healing light". Release negative feelings, negative links, ties, situations,

memory, illness etc. After each person has "discarded", they should finish with "So be it" as a cue for the next person to speak. Continue round the circle till there is nothing more to let go. All the group members should chant OM and collectively transform the negative energy into golden light and see the negative energy being drawn away by the Divine One.

Next, each person has to call into their lives everything they want, need and deserve. You are allowed to ask the Divine One for gifts. This time use the words. "I call into my life..." and again finish with "So be it". Breathe the golden light into our bodies. Chant I am Divine. Sit in silence for a few minutes and experience.

Sadness

The greatest griefs are those we cause ourselves.

Sophocles, Oedipus Rex, 496 BC - 406 BC

Sadness or grief is an emotional state we produce when we have lost sight of who we really are. Man keeps grasping at material things and people. We feel sad when we think we have lost someone or something. Death is really a temporary state of being, the body turns to dust, and the spirit is eternal. As the Buddha and other great masters taught, desire is the cause of human suffering. Man is himself the cause of all his sorrows and difficulties. It is our own karma or action

that is responsible for our suffering. What we sow we shall reap. It is only through sufferings and sorrow that we learn and grow. A patient I shall name Hilda came to me for grief counselling. She told me her daughter was in great pain having lost her 5-year-old son. The mother and grandmother were devastated, as he had accidentally drowned in a swimming pool. I was extremely moved by their unimaginable pain. After much soul searching and reading many books and even experiencing her grandson's presence, Hilda told me that she realised that her little grandson was still "there", though not a physical body. She had not really lost him, he had just moved on to another dimension of reality. She let go of her thoughts of loss and just saw him "on the other side", this helped her move forward in her own life. Her grandson was always with her in spirit.

Meditation exercise 6. 5 To let go of sadness

In a deep meditative state, investigate the reasons for your grief or sadness. Then detach from your physical self and your losses and see objectively the "big picture", who you really are. See yourself as divine, eternal, indestructible, wisdom and beauty.

Daniel Goleman (2003), Destructive Emotions and how we can overcome them: A dialogue with The Dalai Lama page 92.

Dr. Samuel Sandweiss coined this term in 1985 in Spirit and the Mind.





Chapter 7 We are spirit

- We are energy



What is energy?

Energy is in everything, in us and all the things around us. The aura or electromagnetic field emanates from all matter. We use energy to do everything we do, from baking a cake to running a marathon race. Energy is the power to do it all. In scientific terminology energy is strictly defined as “the capacity for doing work” It comes in different forms such as heat (thermal), light (radiant), mechanical, electrical, chemical, and nuclear energy.

Energy is either stored (potential) energy or dynamic that is working (kinetic) energy. For example, the food you eat contains chemical energy, and your body stores this energy until you release it when you work or play. Energy can neither be created nor destroyed. Energy can be transformed into another sort of energy. For instance stored energy in a flashlight's batteries becomes light energy when the flashlight is turned on. Energy has always existed in one form or another.

Thus energy cannot be extracted from or added to an electromagnetic field without a corresponding change in the field. A thought is a potential or static electromagnetic field pattern. A thinking process represents a continually changing or dynamic electromagnetic field. As thoughts changes from static to a dynamic field it imparts energy to and receives energy from the thinker during the course of the thinking process. When the process ends the resultant thought is stored as a static electromagnetic field pattern in the auric field. The mind is not in the brain. It exists throughout

the body. Clearly the mind, the aura and the electromagnetic chakra system (this will be discussed later) are inseparably related.

Let us understand the three categories of energy more clearly:

Universal or cosmic energy

Earth energy

Human energy or auras

Universal or cosmic energy

The easiest way to observe Universal energy is to gaze on a sunny day at treetops against the blue sky. You may see a haze around the trees and you may also observe tiny spots or globules in the blue sky. Inanimate and animate objects both have an aura. Inanimate objects take on the energy of the owner.

The Universal Energy (the divine consciousness) permeates all space and connects all objects to one another. Kirelan photography has developed our ability to see energy fields. Investigations in this field have revealed that the Universal energy field is highly organized, constantly flowing and pulsating in geometric patterns. These patterns can be seen by people with expanded consciousness. The cosmic energy is the purest, infinite energy of the highest vibration. It pours down from the cosmos in abundance. You can use it for cleansing, healing and re-energizing. The source of this energy is God (or whatever other name you might accept). The

cosmic energy is constant, everlasting pure white light that is not influenced by any human or earthly behaviour. The cosmic energy may influence the earth energy but the reverse is not possible.

Earth energy

The earth energy emanates from the earth's very core and resonates through every part of nature. As the cosmic energy is very powerful substance the earth's energy is needed for grounding a person. An individual needs a balance of the two energies. The earth energy is composed of matter, but it is so subtle that most of us do not see it. Some sensitive people who do see it describe it as supremely organized consisting of spirals and dots. It is everywhere flowing between every animate and inanimate object on earth connecting everything together. This is why different locations have different “feel”, the energy patterns are different. This explains why some of us prefer certain areas to others. Each individual make-up dictates what earth energy resonates best for us. Connection with nature is essential for your spiritual growth. Whenever possible make contact with different earth energies. Have you felt the energy of trees?

Meditation exercise 7.1 Cosmic and earth energy awareness

You need to sit for this breath awareness training exercise. Your feet should be flat on the ground, your back straight. Now close your eyes making sure your body is comfortable.

Start by taking three big “letting go breaths”. See yourself then breathing from your belly. Expand your belly when you breath in and contract your belly when your breath out. Feel your whole body completely relaxing.

Now start visualizing that you are breathing in the cosmic or sky energy. Imagine the sun and sky above you; imagine you are drawing this energy into you from the top of the head (sahasara chakra, explained later) to your heart center. As you breathe out imagine your breath moving out to the edges of the universe, get a sense of spaciousness. Continue this for a while.

Now we will breathe in the energy of the earth. Feel or imagine the earth energy beneath your feet. As you inhale imagine the energy being drawn from your feet and up to your heart. Breathe out a sense of spaciousness as if your breath could move out to the edges of the universe.

Exercise 7.2 – Earth energy

This exercise needs to be done in the daylight, outdoors. Lie on your back and gaze up at the sky, keep gazing at it feeling completely relaxed. After some time you will see a pattern in the sky it may look like squiggles at first then you may be able to make out little white balls. Study this phenomenon for a few minutes and then you will see the whole expanse above you is actually pulsating with these small balls of energy. Now try and focus on a nearby tree, study the edges of the tree. Can you see a sort of green or pink haze round the perimeter of the





tree? If you watch closely enough you will notice the balls of energy outside slip into and disappear into the tree. The tree is absorbing the earth energy.

Exercise 7.3 – Awareness of plant auras

Put a houseplant or a leaf under bright lights against a dark background behind. The aura of the plant may reveal itself to you.

Exercise 7.4 – Earth energy consciousness

The objective of this exercise is to develop your intuition and consciousness of the earth energy. Take a flower, fruit, twig or pebble in your hand. Feel it all over, examine every part of the object with your fingers. Use your five senses to get more awareness of the object. Take a deep breath and try and suck into your belly the essence of the object. Study the object for as long as you like. You should know this object intimately. Now let your thoughts dwell on the origin of the object.

Human auras

We are more than just our body, our minds and our emotions. We are energy; that is, we are part of Universal Energy (Divine One). We have our own auric field called the human aura. The human aura or human energy is highly individual band of energy that surrounds us. Our human aura is basically a strong electromagnetic field; we give off (electric) and receive (magnetic) energy. This field of energy

extends normally six or seven inches around the body. It is a field of light, a luminous radiation. As we go through life we are leaving traces and imprints of our energy everywhere we go and everything we touch. Some objects absorb more energy than others. For instance, natural fibers absorb more energy. Our human auric or electromagnetic field is generated by the spinning of the chakras. Chakras are wheels of light and energy that spin and produce its own electromagnetic field that produce the auric human field.

The aura itself is generated by the spinning of smaller vortices of energy located within the body. These subtle energy centers are called chakras. If these energy systems become imbalanced there may be abnormal symptoms that manifest on the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual planes. Subtle energies are strongly perturbed by the mental and emotional activity of the individual. Our auras are constantly changing, expanding and contracting.

Walter J. Kilner (1847-1920) a physician devised a method for making auras visible by making goggles impregnated with the chemical dicyanin. Through his work he was able to perceive three levels of aura and he related illnesses directly to the auras.

Soviet scientists Semyon and Valentina Kirlian discovered a technique whereby they could convert the non-electrical properties of an object into electrical properties. They for example, took two leaves that on the surface level look identical but when photographed using

the kirlian camera one appears having weak energy. This was because one leaf was diseased. They found links between health and the aura.

Depending upon our health and our mood the size and colour of the aura can change. And an individual interpretation of the colours can differ - however below is given a basic guide to the colours and what they represent.

Exercise 7.5 Exploring an aura

Ask a person to stand in the middle of the room with their hands outstretched, with their eyes open. Start by standing well away from them. Hold out your hands, standing at least 3 feet away from the other person. Be relaxed, gently moving your hands around this field. Move closer, what do you feel. Try this exercise with different partners does each person's aura feel different? Some people have nurturing energies and you want to be close to them while others feel like they are intruding and you feel hemmed in or out of balance.

The chakras

Chakras are energy centers, or openings, through which we receive cosmic energy in to our body and give out energy to the Universe. Chakras are energy centers of our consciousness. In working with our chakras we are expanding our consciousness. Chakra literally means a wheel in Sanskrit. It is an important analogy because as you open the chakra center it does spin, albeit on a high

frequency. Spiritual masters say that each energy center is a myriad of colours. Assigning each a colour is a learning tool to give us a better focus. We do not just have the seven, but these are considered to be the major ones. The number of lines of energy that cross that point determines the significance of these chakra centers. We have many energy lines (nadis) or electrical currents that run through our body. A major chakra is defined as a point where there are 21 rays of light or energy crossing each other. Acupuncture and acupressure use all these energy points. Remember the earlier analogy of the electric fan? All energy centers spin at a frequency that we find difficult to actually see, but the experience of opening and closing the energy centers enables us to appreciate that they do exist. As discussed earlier we are all connected to God/ cosmic energy. We are given cosmic energy from the top of the head (sahasara chakra). (Please see the diagrams for their locations in the physical body). Energy anatomy is critical to the well being of our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual body. Energy anatomy is as specific as physical anatomy. Very specific patterns are seen in the energy body with illnesses. It is important to learn how to evaluate your energy levels and see your energetic body. To see your energy body and how you use your energies can be done through developing inner vision.

According to Caroline Myss we are given a certain amount of cosmic energy from the top of our heads. This energy gets distributed filling our entire body, maintaining and looking after





our cells. The purpose of life is wisely distributing the cosmic energy that we are given. However, we do not wisely invest our energy.

Myss instructs us to look at ourselves as “energetic bankers”. God wants us to experience and learn from life by investing wisely but often we invest our energies unwisely and develop energy leaks. E.g. you are given a thought that the world is going to end in 2002, the important question we need to ask ourselves is will we “finance” that thought? Is it beneficial for us? The answer is no. So we need to let go that negative thought.

How do we develop energy leaks? Through negative thoughts, words, actions that deplete our energy resources. It could be in the form of childhood experiences, parental criticism, negative attitudes etc. or worrying about the future. If our investments do not work adequately we borrow energy from others like parasites, so that we cling and draw on other people's energies or we borrow energy from our cells leading us to illness.

The energy system can be understood more clearly through the 7 chakras.

Myss looks at the chakras as “data banks”. She says each one contains certain type of information for spiritual maturity. In asking yourself certain questions related to each chakra you would know how you are investing your energy and how you are developing spiritually. Myss goes on to say that healing is the process of returning our energy circuits back to the body. We do

this by forgiving and “letting go” through inner work and meditation.

Location of seven main chakras

Mooladhara (base chakra): This is known as the root centre. It is associated with the earth element in nature and it is the seat of primal energy. The physical trigger point for this chakra is different for males and females. In males it is the spot on the skin directly between the genitals and anus. In females: it is the point located at the cervix, where the uterus and vagina join. The mooladhara chakra is visualized as a deep red lotus flower.

When we are born our family invests our cosmic energy into cultural and family beliefs, this is, how we spiritual develop consciousness in the base chakra. If the cultural and family beliefs given to us are negative we develop prejudices, superstitions and attitudes, which make us unwisely, use our energies, E.g. Jews or black men are our enemies. If our first chakra energy leaks we have problems with our immune system. Often, others in the ethnic group reinforce our tribal negative and positive beliefs in the community. E.g. Christianity is better than other religions. You will plug into others who have the same beliefs. When this happens we hook into the energy of others in the community to support their and our beliefs. On the positive side, the tribal and family beliefs given to us teach us about loyalty, independence, social skills, acting with honour with others.

Swadhisthana (sacral region): It is associated with the unconscious mind and is the storehouse of collective energy. The trigger point in the physical body for the swadhisthana is located at the level of the pubic bone or coccyx. It is most generally visualised as being in the front of the body at the pubic bone. The second chakra is related to control, power, money, sex and one to one relationships. We need to understand our relationship to power, money, sex and relationships to understand how we leak energy from this chakra. E.g. jealousy/envy need to control others, feel we have lack of money or do not want abundance of it as it means responsibility. Feeling betrayed or betrayal is leaking of 2nd chakra

Manipura (navel centre): It is the seat of all emotional energy. It is centred on the spine and in the front, at the navel. It is visualized as a yellow lotus flower. The third chakra is located in the solar plex. This chakra is related to your work with self. How your emotions develop your self. How you feel about your self. This is about honouring self, respecting self. When you do not keep your word to self e.g. I must exercise, diet, meditate, you develop powerless relationship to self. You do not have strong personal boundaries and you need the approval of others constantly. You become dependent on others. You rely on the wisdom of others, not look within. People with energy leaks in this chakra have difficulty getting strength from themselves in overcoming problems and issues they have to hook into others. The energy has to come from the outside. Often people become manipulative and have

private agendas in the way they get their energies from others. People who do have strong energy in their third chakras are intuitive. They rely on inner self (and spiritual guidance which feeds this inner wisdom) to work through problems and situations.

Anahata: This is the heart centre, where love of divinity and man become one. In the physical body, anahata is felt to be located at the level of the heart behind the breastbone. It can be visualized inside the spine and also just inside the front of the chest. It is visualized as a pink or light green lotus.

Vishuddhi (Throat centre): It is visualised in the region of the throat near the Adam's apple. It is visualised as a sky blue lotus flower. When we are frustrate, angry or unfulfilled we lock negative energy in this area. We need to feel content and always address and speak out if something bothers us.

Ajna: (Third eye): it is the command centre of the spiritual and physical bodies. It is the point, a psychic centre where information is received. A silver or lilac lotus depicts it. When we have negative thoughts we block this centre.

Sahasrara: It is a huge radiant dome inside of the head. It is the highest of the psychic centres. It is visualized as a shining white lotus of infinite petals.

Please see the diagram below. There are numerous other smaller chakras, which are used by acupressurists and acupuncturist for healing.



Function of chakras

To vitalize and nourish our spiritual bodies (auras/ human energy fields) and therefore our physical bodies. Illness in the physical body is caused by an imbalance of energy or a blocking of the flow of energy through the chakras. How do I unplug from negative energies? Through meditative introspective exercises decide where you need to unplug yourself, break the old habits and patterns of investing in negative beliefs; consciously drop your wound language. See yourself in the future, 20 years from now. Looking from that point in time you will see how unwisely you are investing, giving your power to insignificant or irrelevant thoughts, beliefs that zap your energy.

To develop our self-consciousness as one with divine consciousness. In meditation we use numerous techniques that “open” our chakras to receive divine consciousness/ universal energy. We become one with divine wisdom, consciousness, and love.

To transmit energy from one spiritual body/ layer to another. Through our chakras we connect to our different layers of spiritual bodies and more importantly to the energy fields of all of God's creations.

Exercise 7.6 See if you can find the Sanskrit names for the seven chakras. Circle the same.

sahasratuvsmooladharmnvishudhip
tyrgsfjkwazdmanipurannahataabdd
yuvbxajna

Exercise 7.7 Fill in the blanks

A _____ is an energy centre.

We are not only the body we are body, _____ and _____.

The human _____ is a strong electromagnetic field around the human body,

_____ is the power to do it all.

Energy is either _____ or _____.

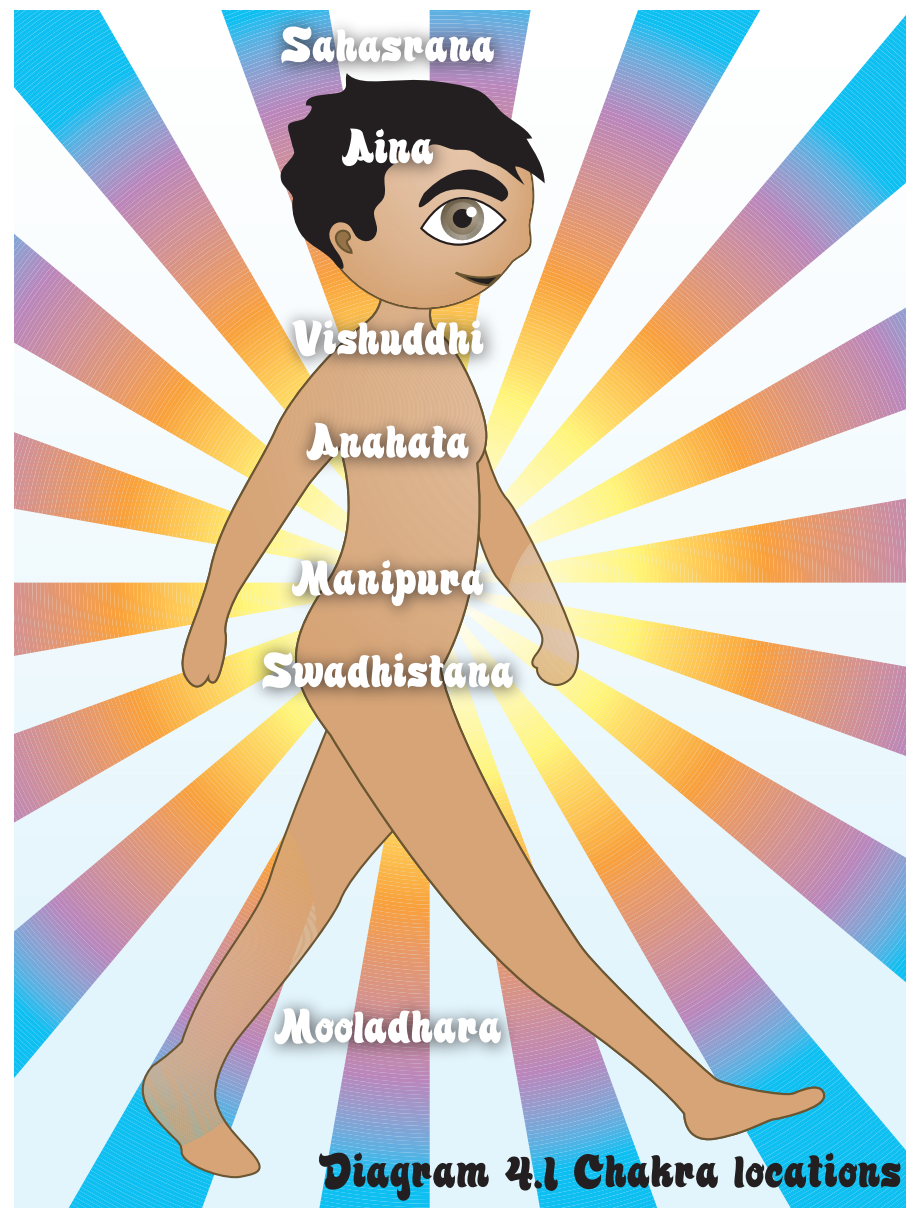


Diagram 4.1 Chakra locations

Chapter 8 Basics of Yoga

and meditation

What is yoga?

The word “yoga” means to join, unite or combine with Divinity.

Yoga developed in India many centuries ago. Meditation is a part of yoga. Many wise men or sages in India have walked the path of yoga. In the yoga sutras a (book on the subject of yoga), Patanjali, a famous Indian sage described yoga as the means by which our mind can be made still, quiet and free from all distractions. The goal of yoga is self-realisation that is to have knowledge of and to become united with the Divine energy.

In order to attain union with Divinity, which is the goal of yoga and meditation, it is necessary that one incorporates the eight-fold pathway:

Yama This requires us to integrate the universal principles of non-violence, truth, peace, self-control, selflessness and love, into our daily living.

Niyama We are required to absorb personal discipline of cleanliness, contentment, service to others, love to self and others in every thought, word and deed, with great effort, self-study, trust and faith in Divinity.

Asana The body is to regularly practise yogic postures, which is said to bring about physical health.

Pranayama are breath awareness exercises that bring about wellness. There is a strong correlation between breath and wellness. The longer the length of one's breath the better the health of the person.

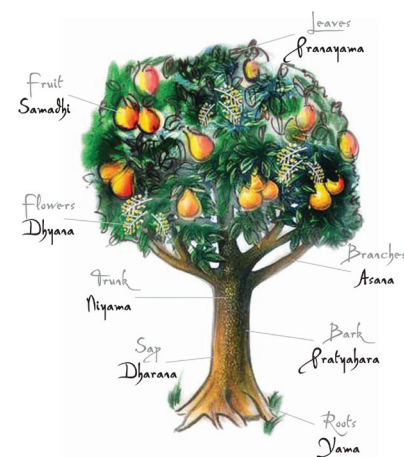
Pratyahara are methods of learning how to control the five senses through use of strong will power. Overindulging the use of the senses brings unhappiness.

Dhahran Concentration and learning how to focus your mind on creating your own truth. It is through learning how to concentrate and focus that we learn to meditate which is becoming one with our true reality.

Dhyana Meditation needs to be undertaken regularly integrating the principles in your daily life. These principles are explained in this chapter.

Samadhi The final stages of meditation lead to samadhi, which is self-realization or union with Divinity.

The diagram below diagrammatically portrays the links between the eight limbs of yoga. Planting and nurturing a seed eventually leads to a tree with fruits.



The eight limbs of yoga

What is meditation?

The dictionary says the word ‘meditation’ is derived from the Latin word meditari, which means, “to heal”.

Meditation is going within, with the purpose of knowing oneself. The goal of meditation is to attain oneness with God. This is achieved by going beyond obstacles of the mind and the body. In

deep meditation a person can achieve such single mindedness that one will hear nothing and see nothing. In fact all the senses withdraw. A snake may crawl over the body but one will not be aware of it: That is, in deep meditation, the five senses cease to work.

Yogananda, a revered Indian sage, stated that prayer is talking to God and meditation is listening. Shri Satya Sai Baba, a great living Divine Master expanded on that by stating that man has an erratic “monkey mind” that jumps from one thought to another. It is natural for the mind to wander; we have to train the mind to be one-pointed.

Humankind is the embodiment of the cosmic and divine consciousness. To know God, one has to start by knowing oneself. Meditation is the experience of divine consciousness within self.

The human being is made up of mind, body and soul (spirit). The mind has different aspects: the conscious mind, the subconscious mind and the superconscious mind. The mind is likened to an iceberg. When the mind is engaged in wavering thought processes it is called manas (monkey mind). When it is busy in the process of enquiry and discrimination between right and wrong it is called Buddhi or the intellect. When it functions as a repository of memories it is known as Chitta or subconscious memory bank. When it identifies itself with the physical body assuming the doership for various activities, it goes by the name of Ahamkara or the ego. The whole Universe is nothing but a projection of the mind.



The super conscious mind IS, everything in the universe. It is pure essence of Divinity. The conscious mind is the tip of the iceberg. It is that part of the mind that operates in the present collecting information from all the senses. The subconscious mind is the broad base of the iceberg. It is the storehouse of all past thoughts, words and deeds from all experiences in this life and previous lives. The aspect of human personality which is beyond any change, however, is atma, the real Self. The atma is the changeless eternal spirit or the Self. It is Divine Consciousness. The aim of meditation is clearing the other aspects of the mind and become one with the Divine Consciousness within us.

Connection between thoughts and meditation

Thoughts are bundles of energy created in the mind. When we die we take nothing with us except our thoughts in energy form. We create everything with thoughts. Think about it if you were to bake a cake or make a model aircraft or do your homework what is the first ingredient you will need. A thought. Our first language was thoughts – pictures in our mind. There are many types of thoughts. Let us look at them.

Types:

**Past, present, future
Sensory, associated,
Divine (spiritual)
Positive and negative**

- 1) Past thoughts are associated thoughts they have a connection with something you have already experienced e.g. water/peaceful, baby/cute. Past thoughts tap subconscious mind (memory).
- 2) Future thoughts are associated thoughts related to tomorrow. They could also be planning thoughts that involve past experience.
- 3) Present thoughts (NOW):
 - 1) Sensory thoughts are related to the body and senses
 - 2) Divine Thoughts are connected to who we really are and the realization of the TRUTH, the experience of soul/ Atma)

When we have no thoughts and are not aware of our body we are truly experiencing our spiritual state that is when we are meditating. Meditation is merging with divinity.

Goals of meditation

Self-realization - Awareness of self. We don't know who we really are, or what aspects of ourselves we should identify with or believe in. Meditation is bringing the mind home.

Enlightenment – This is beyond awareness of self to a state of being in union with Divinity.

Types of meditation

There are two types of meditation: active and passive.

Active meditation is when you are in total integrated awareness when performing daily duties such as walking, talking and eating.

Passive meditation is sitting in one posture (could be in a "lotus posture" or lying down posture) and performing a meditation practice. The aim of the practice is to still the ever-restless active manas (conscious mind) and make it one pointed.

When a person achieves sustained successful passive meditation, it will automatically lead to active meditation. That is, the person will become divine consciousness in every moment of his or her existence. This may involve a lot of practise and may take lifetimes. to achieve.

Benefits of meditation

**Physical
Emotional
Mental
Spiritual**

Physical

A beneficial decrease in heart rate and blood pressure.

Reduced oxygen consumption, reduced metabolic rate. Breathing rate is reduced. During sleep, oxygen consumption drops by 8% but during meditation it drops by 10 to 20%.

According to Dr. Khalsa, meditators experience 80% less heart disease and 50% less cancer than non-meditators. Besides this, 75% of insomniacs were able to sleep normally when they meditated and 34% of people with chronic pain significantly reduced medication by practising meditating. Premenstrual syndrome symptoms decreased by 57%. Migraine headaches decreased notably as did anxiety and depression.

Dr. Khalsa has also reported that meditators secrete a youth-related hormone called DHEA.

Emotional

The calming hormones melatonin and serotonin are increased by meditation and the stress hormone cortisol is decreased. Thus it reduces stress, negative thoughts, fear, anger, guilt and grief and induces a state of relaxation.





Enhances self-esteem and a greater sense of security.

Mental

Improved concentration and memory.

Helps planning, setting and achieving goals through one-pointedness.

Spiritual

Makes your soul develop and grow towards the goal of enlightenment.

Components of meditation

There are three components of meditation. The meditator or the subject (Dhyaata) is the one who “sees”. Then there is an object of meditation (Dhyeya) followed by the process of meditation (dhyana). The process of meditation requires the meditator to establish a relationship with the object of meditation.

The process culminates into meditation when the subject, the object and the process unite and merge into a single unified experience.

How do we meditate – posture

Any position; sitting, lying down, standing, walking, tubbing (in the bath tub) is good initially (in the beginning stages), as long as you observe the following:

Keep the spine erect or straight.

Ensure that there is no strain or tension – present in any of the body parts.

Make sure the right and left sides of the body are in equal balance.

Be in a state of “conscious awareness”. You are taking your consciousness away from yourself and beyond the ordinary doing of mundane chores and stilling the thoughts and emotions.

When meditators assume yoga postures, it makes them conscious of particular areas of their bodies. Holding these postures for a while requires effort and one tends to become self-conscious about the effort. This leads to a more enlightening condition of being unconscious of self.

Furthermore, yogic postures require discipline and the exercise of discipline builds power. It helps to direct the internal energy (kundalini) within us. The postures of yoga are intended to coax the body out of old ways of holding itself and moving. They help to correct posture and ineffective movements. They break up old patterns of standing, sitting, walking and working and replace them with more graceful ways. When this happens it subtly but basically changes people, helping their lives. In doing so, this achieves two important basics essential to healing, flexibility and balance.

Flexibility is of paramount importance in healing the physical body. The ability to be adaptable to change is vital for health

as health breaks down when we resist change...

Balance, on the other hand, is derived from flexibility and is integral to holistic health. It is the excesses and deficiencies that create imbalances.

Group activity exercise – heart balloon

Put love into balloon and send it across to another person. Each time you send the balloon to someone say something nice about that person.

Looking at some yoga postures

The Warrior Pose

Stretches the spinal column, strengthen the shoulders and legs, improves concentration and balance.

Triangle pose

Helps straighten hunchback and rounded shoulders, makes entire body strong and elastic.

Do: Narrow your waist, expand your chest, align your head and arms on a line and keep your head exactly above your ankle.

Don't: Do not let your thigh muscles loosen.

Bow to the light within you.

Corrects round shoulders, makes the hip joints more flexible, expands lungs

and chest.

Do tighten your knees, your thigh muscles, draw your shoulders back press palms against each other.

Don't bring your knee to your head instead bring your head to your knee.

Sun Salutation pose

Rejuvenates the body strengthens the shoulders, leg, back and neck muscles. Exercise should be done in quick succession, jumping from one pose to the next.

Lotus pose for meditation

Pose directs energies throughout the body. The sole of the foot must be upward and the heel must touch the pelvic bone





The Triangle pose



The Warrior pose



Exercise 8.1 Fill in the blanks:

_____ are the universal principles of non-violence, truth, peace, self-control, selflessness, love, into our daily living.

_____ means we are required to absorb personal discipline of cleanliness, contentment, service to others, love to self and others in every thought, word and deed, great effort, self-study, trust and faith in Divinity.

The body is to regularly practise yogic postures, _____ which is said to bring about physical health.

_____ are breath awareness exercises that bring about wellness. There is a strong link between breath and wellness. The longer the length of one's breath the better the health of the person.

_____ are methods of learning how to control the five senses through use of strong will power.

The final stages of meditation lead to _____ which is self-realization or union with Divinity.

Exercise 8.2 Colour the circle and the end of sentence yellow for a positive thought and black for a negative thought.

- 1) I am kind and compassionate. O
- 2) I do not like my sister's friends they are so pretentious and full of themselves. O
- 3) My mother does not understand me. O
- 4) I will never do well at Maths. O
- 5) It does not matter if I am not that pretty I am beautiful on the inside.
- 6) I failed in my English exams I will try to do better next time. O

Exercise 8.3

- 1) What do you understand by the conscious mind? Give an example of a conscious mind thought.
- 2) What do you understand by the subconscious mind? Give examples of your subconscious mind retrieving a thought.
- 3) What part of the mind is working in meditation?
- 4) What are the qualities of the human mind?

Paramahansa Yoganada (1986) The Divine Romance (Self-realisation fellowship, USA).

See footnote 1.





Chapter 9 Loving myself

What is love?

It is important to note that love is not a feeling or emotion. Love is the primal energy of Divinity and therefore the basis of all creation. If the thoughts, perception and our interpretation of the outside world are negative, then we experience negative emotions, which are fear, anger and sadness.

We have always been told or conditioned to believe that we cannot do anything about our emotions except- restrain ourselves from drastic action, enjoy them, or feel guilty about them. But the truth is we can manage our emotions. Physical disorder and illness is said to have three main causes: genetic defects, trauma, the mind, and emotions. The effect of trauma or distress could be the result of our mental and emotional disposition.

Understanding love

Love is the difficult realization that something other than oneself is real.

*Iris Murdoch, British novelist
(1919 - 1999)*

The heart is associated with loving. Love is the primal energy force that is responsible for creation. The Divine One is Love. Love is therefore not an emotion or feeling; it is our natural state of being. We have moved away from our natural state of being and therefore the basic ingredient we need to spiritually grow is LOVE.

According to Dr. Scott Peck, **real love** is not an emotion. He distinguishes it from the “falling in love” syndrome, which is always a temporary phase, as the majority of us fall out of love after a while. He defines “real love” as “the will to extend one’s self for the purpose of nurturing one’s own or another’s spiritual growth.” The experience of love is accompanied by the experience of joy. I believe that genuine love requires:

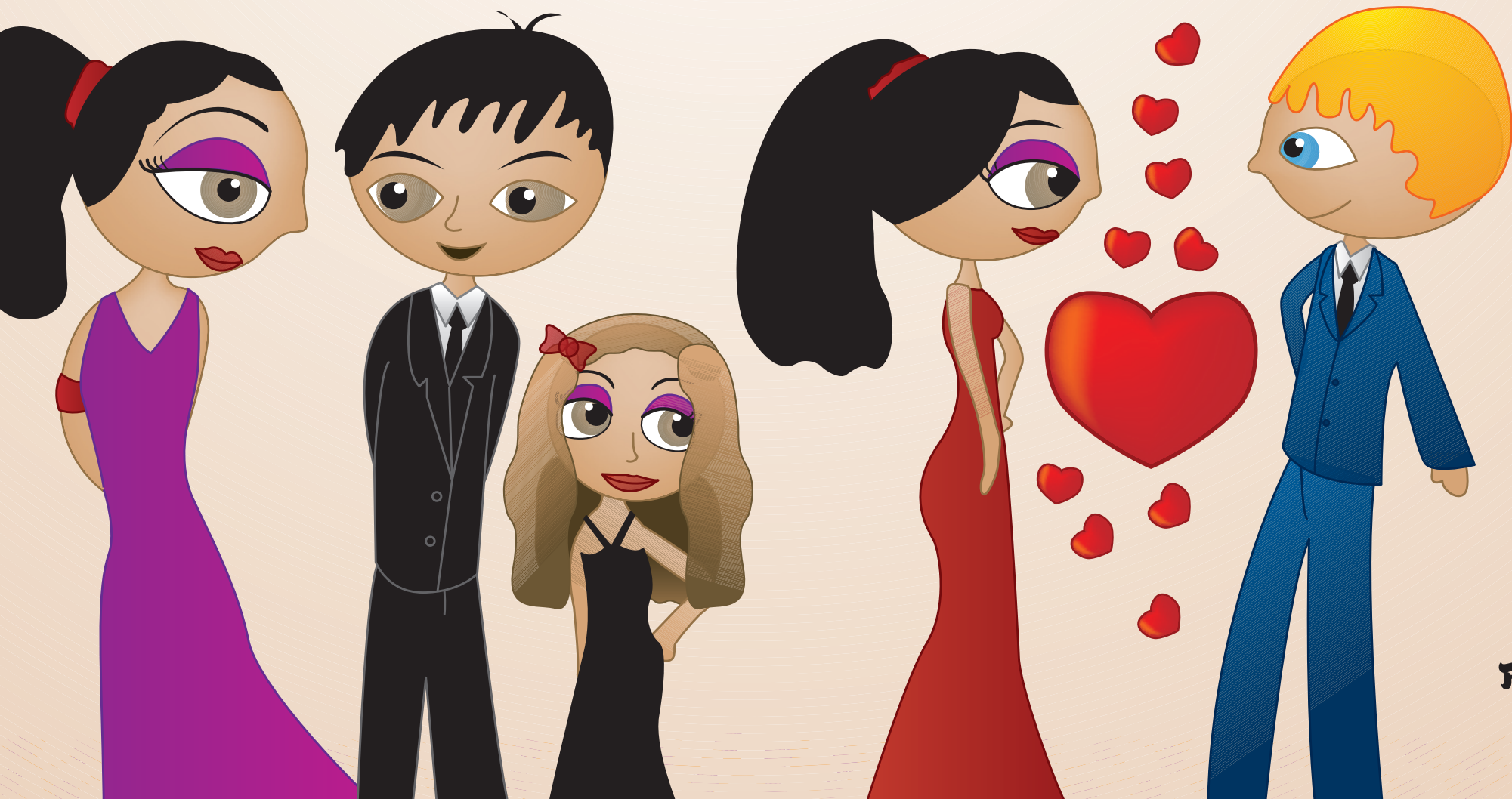
- **Long-term commitment**- when you love someone you should be **consistent in loving**. Giving love to someone should not be attached to what you get from the relationship. Humankind’s commitment to the Divine One is often dependent on what we have or do not have in life. For instance, how often do we turn to the Divine One in times of trouble in comparison to the times we turn to Him in times of joy? On the other hand, Divinity loves us unconditionally.
- **Effort and Time** - real love requires effort. We need to take that extra step and walk that extra mile. When we love someone, our love has to be demonstrable through our exertion. Parents who really love their kids spend “quality” time and put effort into their care. To really love self also requires commitment, time, and effort. How much “quality” time and effort do we put towards our own spiritual development? To love Divinity also requires commitment, time, and effort.
- **Will** - real love is an act of will, that is, it is both an **intention** and an **action**. We need to have willingness to “learn”

and heal. A large proportion of us have good intentions (thoughts), however, we may not follow this through with our actions. This probably is because we lack the discipline, commitment and responsibility.

- Discipline and taking responsibility are the means to human spiritual development. Life is difficult and full of problems. How does one solve problems? If you had a problem with a particular subject at school, what would you do? Follow a regular routine towards this subject (order, system, and method) and take responsibility to invest time in coming to grips and mastering this subject? A child has to learn to **delay the pleasure** of enjoyable activities in order to keep abreast and excel in studies. For example we have to give up watching TV and focus on our homework if we want to do well at school. We can always watch TV after we have finished our schoolwork. Often we cannot delay the immediate satisfaction we receive from expressing ourselves angrily or having outbursts of anger, giving vent to petty vengeance and self-importance boosts. We often do not see the long-term repercussions of our thoughts, words and actions. Furthermore, real loving is supplying others with a “fishing rod” and teaching them how to fish, rather than reinforcing an unloving, lazy attitude and constantly providing them with the “fish”. Where there is love, responsibility follows.

- **Independence and self-sufficiency** - dependency is not love, it seeks to receive rather than give. It nourishes immaturity rather than growth. Healthy relationships are about partnerships not co-dependency. By the time we have left behind adolescence and become adults we should be independent and self sufficient in everything.
- Genuine love **does not involve making sacrifices**. When we genuinely love we do so because **we want** to love. Whenever we think of ourselves as doing something for someone else, we are in some ways denying ourselves and not taking our own responsibility. To genuinely love is to extend oneself rather than sacrifice self. It enlarges rather than diminishes the self. It is important to ask ourselves why we do things for others. What is our motive?
- Genuine love is an exercise of **wisdom** - Love is wise. It requires judgment, thoughtful and often painful decision making for the spiritual growth or the higher good of self and others. For instance, parents have to show “tough” love when their children are addicted to harmful substances or children are doing something that is not good for them long-term.
- Genuine love recognizes and **respects the uniqueness of individuality and the separate identity of the person**. Each member of our community has something to offer. Rather than be **competitive** and put others down, and constantly compare each other’s





Family



worth in material terms, let's value the individuality of ourselves and others, and the uniqueness of our inner skills and talents. Genuine love requires one to be **a team player**.

- **Giving and extending ourselves because the goal of real love is spiritual growth.** If we are to progress spiritually, we need to reach out and help others. Real love is a path of enlightenment, becoming one with the other and eventually the whole world. There are no easy shortcuts - in order to lose the self we must first find the self. How do we achieve this? Through discipline and inner awareness by first starting with the self. The present state of malfunction in our world can be largely attributed to the lack of discipline and inner awareness. If spiritual awareness is becoming one with the Divine One and if Divine Energy is Love, then let's start really loving!

Exercise 6.1 Love is

1) Fill in the blank. What does "love" mean to you? Who do you really love and why?

Love is _____

2) Have you ever been in a situation when you have to say or do something that is not welcomed, that is giving "tough love" or love with wisdom for the other person's highest good? Illustrate the situation.

Meditation exercise 6.2 For healing a person with love energy

Go into deep meditation and think of a person who you need to send LOVE to. Pour pure green or pink light from your heart centre and send loving thoughts to someone who needs it. If the person is physically present before you, place your hands on their heart centre.

Why is it important to love your self first?

Learning to love yourself is the greatest love of all.

Michael Masser and Linda Creed

If we cannot love ourselves we will not be able to love others. When we are unhappy with ourselves can we make others happy? I need to honour and look after myself so that I can adequately look after others. Would you be a good friend if you were constantly giving in a relationship without any thought to your needs?

What do you understand by self-esteem? How does self-esteem develop?

Self-esteem is self-worth or the value that people put on the image that they have of themselves. Everyone has a picture of him/her self based on: strengths, weaknesses, characteristics, and abilities. This mental picture, often called self-

image, begins to develop in infancy and continues to grow and change throughout life. People develop their self-image through their interaction with other people and the world. When we see ourselves as divine our self-esteem is positive and high. When we accept the negative messages that others give us about ourselves we develop poor self-esteem or self-worth. Self-esteem is a person's overall sense of being lovable, acceptable, worthy, and capable.

Self-esteem has three main parts:

- Having feelings of self-acceptance and self-worth that is knowing that I am divine.
- Feeling loved and accepted by others is knowing and believing that there is divinity in us and all others.
- Feeling competent and capable of solving problems and using skills. Knowing and believing that if I am divine I have all the qualities of divinity: divine intelligence, divine power, beauty etc.

How Does Self-Esteem Develop?

The first ideas that babies and young children have about themselves are strongly influenced by the things their parents do and say. If a parent tells a child that she is bad often enough, the child will begin to believe that she is bad. If a parent constantly tells a school-age child that he is dumb, there is a good chance that he will believe that he can

never do well in school. As children grow, the opinion and judgement of teachers, friends and other people influence the image they have of themselves.

People also have a mental image of what they would like to be. Everyone's mental image of the ideal person is different. Some people admire athletic skills, others admire people with intellect or academic abilities. Still others admire people who are spiritual. People whose mental self-image equals the mental image of their ideal person generally feel good about themselves and have high self-esteem. People whose self-image does not match the things they think are important tend to be unhappy, dissatisfied, negative about themselves, and have low self-esteem. People with low self-esteem may see themselves as unlovable, unacceptable, unworthy, or incompetent.

Why Does Self-Esteem Matter?

The way people feel about themselves has a big effect on their behaviour. People with high self-esteem who feel good about themselves and see themselves as competent, independent problem-solvers are more likely to meet challenges at home, school, and work. People who feel lovable and worthy have better relationships and tend to ask for help and support when they need it. Self-acceptance helps people cope with failures and learn from mistakes. High self-esteem allows people to accept their imperfections.





Low self-esteem has been linked to violent and criminal behaviour and to school failure. Teenagers with low self-esteem are more likely to be involved in gangs, drug and alcohol abuse, immoral activities, or antisocial behaviours that lead to confrontations with the law. Low self-esteem is also linked to depression, poor body image, and eating disorders. People with low self-esteem tend to have a harder time coping with failure, mistakes, and their own imperfections.

Can People Improve Their Self-Esteem?

Unlike a person's eye, hair or skin colour, self-esteem is not fixed for life. Self-esteem can be nurtured and improved. Studies have shown that positive thinking or positive "self-talk" helps raise self-esteem. For example, people who think, "I'm so unintelligent, I'll never solve this math problem" reinforce their low self-esteem. They can help raise their self-esteem by mentally correcting themselves and thinking instead, "I might have to work harder than some of my friends to resolve this problem, but I am sure I can solve it."

Parents, teachers and friends can help children develop high self-esteem by:

- encouraging children to try new things
- offering genuine praise for trying hard, rather than just for success
- helping children learn new skills that are age and interest appropriate

- not comparing abilities (especially with siblings or classmates)
- expressing acceptance and caring
- being a good listener and giving importance to feelings expressed.

What is depression?

Depression is a condition that causes people to feel sad and to lose interest in activities that normally give them pleasure. When sadness lasts several weeks and starts to interfere with normal activities, such as studying, relationships with friends and family, attendance at school, or activities that are normally fun, then it is more than an ordinary disparity in mood. It is depression. People with depression have continuing negative and pessimistic thoughts. They may experience changes in eating and sleeping patterns and in their ability to concentrate and make decisions. Depression can be treated and you can seek a mental health counsellor to help you. Extreme cases of depression can lead to suicide.

Common symptoms of depression

- difficulty getting up or going to sleep, sleeping too much or too little;
- eating too much or too little
- unexplained periods of crying
- fatigue and decreased energy, even when getting enough sleep

- difficulty concentrating or remembering things
- difficulty making decisions
- increased interest in death
- thoughts of suicide

Additional symptoms of depression commonly found in young people. These include:

- worsening school performance
- talking about or running away from home
- unexplained outbursts of crying
- increased irritability, anger, or hostility
- extreme sensitivity to failure or rejection
- being bored a lot of the time with no interest in things
- isolation and lack of interest in friends
- increased difficulties in relationships with family, friends, or teachers
- ongoing physical problems, such as digestive problems, headaches that have no obvious physical explanation
- alcohol or substance abuse
- reckless behaviour
- abnormal fear of death

Depression is complex, but it appears to have mental, physical, genetic, and environmental components. 90% of depression can be cured through

meditation, psychotherapy and sometimes medication.

Disorders created with body image

Body image is a person's impressions, thoughts, feelings, and opinions about his or her body. Teenagers' bodies are undergoing so many changes that it is easy to understand why they may be preoccupied with their appearance and their body image. Both boys and girls are experiencing growth spurts and sexual development. Girls' breasts and hips are enlarging, body hair is growing, and menstruation is beginning. Boys' muscles are growing, their voices are getting deeper, and their testicles and penises are getting larger. Their features may be changing, and hormones may cause skin problems. It takes a while to get used to their new "image" or appearance.

Teenagers are very susceptible to criticism, teasing, or negative comments. Some teenagers lose confidence in their appearance if they receive negative or insulting comments about their looks, racial or ethnic features, physical abilities, or body changes associated with puberty. With all of the focus on the body's appearance, teenagers may need to be reminded to give equal value to other important aspects of themselves, such as personality, inner strengths, mental aptitudes, and artistic and musical talents, which, along with body image, contribute to overall self-image.





What Leads to Body Image Problems?

Extreme dissatisfaction with body image can lead to depression, social isolation, or eating disorders. Someone who has a constant and distressing preoccupation with minor body “imperfections” may have a condition called **body dysmorphic disorder**.

Teenagers with body image problems are strongly affected by what they see in the media that is on television and in the movies. Magazines are filled with pictures of thin and beautiful young women and lean and muscular young men. Teenagers are influenced by these images and may wish to look like their favourite models or stars. However, the physical perfection that the media images portray is largely an illusion created by makeup, hours of styling, special lighting, and photography. When people compare themselves to these perfect looking images, they may become dissatisfied with their own appearance. The need to look perfect, or to have a perfect body, can lead to body image problems.

Body image problems affect both boys and girls, but they tend to bother girls more deeply than boys. One reason is that in the Western culture, girls’ and women’s worth and value traditionally have been closely linked to their physical attractiveness. Boys feel the pressure to be tall, muscular, and strong.

Eating disorders

Eating disorders are conditions in which an individual’s eating behaviours and food habits are so disturbed that they cause physical and emotional problems. Eating disorders usually develop during adolescence and have a greater effect on girls, although boys can also be affected. Many factors seem to contribute, influences from society and culture, mass media, emotional issues, stressful situations, and fears of maturity, puberty, or sexuality, family factors such as overly controlling parents, serious emotional conflicts, or problems expressing feelings, or poor childhood feeding and eating patterns. People who have an eating disorder usually do not set out to deliberately have this problem. Generally, eating disorders develop slowly, as do the signs and symptoms. Eating disorders include anorexia, bulimia, and obesity.

Anorexia (an-o-REK-see-a) is an eating disorder involving excessive dieting, preoccupation with food, distorted body image, fear of getting fat, and rapid and significant weight loss. The disorder primarily affects young women.

Bulimia (bull-EE-me-a), sometimes referred to as the “binge-purge” disorder, involves repeated episodes of excessive eating (bingeing) followed by attempting to rid the body of the food by vomiting, using laxatives or enemas (purging), or exercising excessively.

Obesity (o-BEE-si-tee) is a significant excess of body fat. Children with obesity are at higher risk for obesity when they

grow up. Adults with obesity are at higher risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, and other health problems. In cultures that value being thin, people with obesity also may experience emotional distress as well.

Most teenagers with eating disorders need the assistance of mental health and other health care professionals to manage the problem. Anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating disorders are treated most successfully with a combination of therapies. Behaviour change programs, monitoring of diet and eating patterns, individual or group psychotherapy, support groups, nutritional counselling, family counselling, and sometimes medication may all be part of the treatment.

What is ADHD?

The symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) include inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity.

Inattention: lack of concentration, careless mistakes, difficulty sustaining attention, don’t seem to listen, don’t follow through on instructions to finish tasks, are easily distracted and often forgetful.

Hyperactivity: fidgets or squirms, leaves seat, runs or climbs excessively, cannot play quietly, “on the go” or over-active and talks excessively.

Impulsivity: difficulty awaiting turns, and often interrupts others. These symptoms are present before 7 years old and result in significant impairment of functioning. This does not mean it is

just a childhood problem people carry on having these symptoms into adolescence and adulthood, although the way it affects people changes (often people become less hyperactive).

Types of ADHD?

1. Mostly Inattentive Type
2. Mostly Hyperactive-Impulsive Type
3. Combined Type (most common type seen by doctors etc)

What Causes ADHD?

ADHD appears to run in families, which suggests that it may be at least partly genetic. It is a developmental disorder, which means that symptoms are present from and before 7 years old and the child’s brain appears to develop differently from the majority of children. It often is seen alongside other developmental brain disorders.

How Many People Have It?

Somewhere between 3 and 5% of school-aged children have ADHD. So in a class of 20 students, one could have ADHD and in a school of 500 children, 25 children could have ADHD.

As children grow older into adolescence some of them grow out of it. Others continue to show symptoms though they change with hyperactivity becoming rare and inattention more common.





How is ADHD Treated?

One can use meditation and holistic therapies to help teenagers with ADHD. Sometimes medication is combined with helping young people and their families understand their symptoms and how to deal with them to reduce the stresses in their life. This may involve talking.

What is friendship?

Friendship is caring about another person. It is about sharing common interests being open and honest in communication.

How do you become a good friend? Characteristics of a good friend

1. You need to love yourself.
2. You need to be honest with yourself and with your friends.
3. You need to accept yourself and others as they are.
4. You need to be able to share with others. Give and take.
5. You explore areas of common interests.
6. You need to be trusting and trustworthy.
7. You need to communicate openly and honestly.
8. When you act assertively rather than aggressively you are more likely to have friends.

Exercise 9.1

Why do you think it important to develop good friendships? What do good friendships or relationships teach you?

Exercise 9.2 Loving myself and others

1. Write or draw different things that you do well.
2. Write about something that you have achieved and are proud about.
3. What is the meaning of honesty and why is it important in a friendship?
4. Why is it important to admit that you have made mistakes? Write and discuss about some of the mistakes or failures you have had.
5. Friendship is about being dependable and reliable. Write about how you have been dependable in a difficult or emergency situation.
6. you been teased by your friends? How does it feel when someone teases you? Why should we not tease others?
7. If your friend does something irritating what can you do about it?
8. Do you share things with your friends? What are the things you do share?
9. Do you keep your friend's secrets? What kind of secrets should you not keep and tell your parents or elders about?

What is bullying?

Bullying is hurtful behaviour directed by more dominant individuals or groups against those who are less forceful. Elements of "aggression" and "violence," may be present when bullying occurs. It is not the same thing as fighting or quarrelling between people with the same strength. It is unjustified repeated behaviour often enjoyed by the bully or bullies. It is experienced as "oppression". It may take many forms, both physical, as in name calling and hitting, and psychological or indirect as in exclusion and rumour spreading.

Why do people bully others?

Children are not born as bullies they become bullies, which means that they can change. Children bully for a variety of reasons. Some persecute their classmates to gain a sense of power and control. Some bully in an effort to gain recognition and status from peers that they might not be able to get in other ways. Others bully to compensate for feelings of inadequacy. Still others target their classmates as a way of venting frustration with problems at home or problems in school (for example learning problems or peer rejection), and some bully because they've been bullied themselves. Bullies usually choose as targets peers who are weak, unpopular, and unlikely to resist. They target children who stand out in some way, such as the teacher's pet, a child with a speech defect, a slow learner, a child with big ears, a child who wears the "wrong" clothes or the child for whom English is a second language. Often

bullies are taught from an early age that the way to get what they want is through force. They learn to respond to challenges through conflict and to express themselves with their fists rather than with words. As they get older, bullies are at risk of further acts of violence, including frequent fighting and carrying weapons. Often, bullies come from households where there is little parental supervision and a lack of warmth and attention. Their parents might model aggressive behaviour as a way of solving problems, and/or discipline through a combination of angry outbursts and corporal punishment. The message the children receive is that "might makes right. Children also learn aggressive behaviour from the media, notably from television. All schools provide an anti-bullying policy so if bullied speak to your teachers.

Exercise 9.3

Are you bullied at school? Do you feel there are bullies at your school? Make a list of the behaviour that you feel some kids have and use to bully others

Exercise 9.4

What can you do to eliminate bullying, if bullying occurs in your school? Under the headlines below elaborate on what you can do and give examples of how you would do it....





Responding to bullies

1. Standing up for self – assertive behavior
2. Ignoring the bully
3. Telling friends
4. Telling parents
5. Telling teachers
6. Outside help:
 - a) Counsellors
 - b) Childline
 - c) Police

What is aggression?

Aggression is obvious hurtful behaviour towards self and others that is intended to inflict damage and cause destruction. Aggression is often due to a conflict between the interests of two or more individuals. The emotion in aggressive behaviour is anger energy. Anger is an emotion produced because of thoughts of unfulfillment.

Conflicts

What is a conflict?

A conflict is when two individuals or parties have perceived incompatible goals. Conflict is an opportunity for change. Conflicts can occur in competitive and cooperative situations. In cooperative

situations the manner in which one party tries to reach their goal can still undermine the other. A clash can occur in relation to interests, values and actions.

Types of conflict

- Intra and inter-personal conflict: conflict with self, parents, teacher, peers
- Group conflict: groups in school/ colleges
- Community conflict

Approaches to solving conflict – Negotiations

What is negotiation?

Negotiation is a communication skill that helps you to get what you want from others without alienating them. It is a process whereby people with different or opposing needs can arrive at a fair agreement. It is possible to negotiate anything and everything.

How to solve a problem

- Clarify the problem factually. Detach yourself from the problem and try to remove the emotional and subjective issues from the facts.
- Find alternatives to solve the problem.
- Decide what solution to take depending on whether the decision is in tune with Divinity and Divine Will.

- Affirm what the solution is.
- Activate the power of mind by focusing attention on the desired results, believing that everything is possible.
- Co-operate calmly and unhurriedly as the mind unfolds in perfect sequence the outer elements of the solution and your part in the action becomes clearly evident. Rejoice in each step and affirm, “I can solve problems that I thought I never could.”

How do i manage conflict in a relationship?

Conflict occurs in most relationships at some time, as there will always be differences in values, beliefs and expectations between two people. For both our physical and mental well-being, it pays to learn the basics of effective conflict management. Regardless of the setting, there are some common processes, which you can put to work, thereby reducing the risk of differences escalating into conflict.

1. Be clear about your viewpoint.

How you think about a situation will affect how you feel. It is not only external circumstances that determine whether you are happy in life or not, but rather how you interpret and perceive the situation.

2. Become proactive

Prevention is better than cure, so invest in the health of your relationship, i.e. recognize and eliminate the damage

– before it ever manifests. Now, should problems arise; they are less likely to escalate into conflict.

3. Check out your “hot buttons” or issues that bother your partner

Everyone has their own triggers or “hot buttons” that set off feelings of anger, unfairness, injury, insult or hurt. Become familiar with your “hot buttons” and your partner’s, so you are less bothered and slow down your physiological response to your anger or anxiety. Keep alternative responses ready to use in case you find your hot buttons are being pushed. That is, reflect and do not react, take the time to think through a situation instead of succumbing to a knee-jerk reaction.

4. Empathise without judgement

Understanding is promoted by empathy with respect. When both parties engage in this process, there is often a noticeable and immediate reduction in tension and quicker discovery of solutions.

5. Separate the problem from the person

This means that you talk about the problem, but not about the other person’s personality and/or qualities or traits. We all are unique and different with differences in personality - it is better to focus on the problem rather than the person.





6. Avoid name-calling, sarcasm and accusations.

Sarcasm may feel good in the moment, and name-calling may also offer a base-form of momentary satisfaction but they do a lot of damage to the situation and make it harder to come to a solution.

7. Call “time out” if needed

If you find that the situation is escalating, it can be useful to call a “time out” to allow all parties to “cool off”. This is fine, so long as calling a time out is not just an excuse to forget the discussion. Rather, it is a way for you to catch your breath, re-focus your thoughts and prevent an escalation of the problem.

8. Brainstorming as a part of problem solving

Remarkably, the process of brainstorming yields solutions that neither party may have initially thought of. In many instances, the new solutions they find are even preferable to what each had originally envisioned as being the ideal solution.

If we look honestly at our relationships, we can see and learn so much about ourselves... our belief systems, our self-image ... who we really are... If you want to learn the secret to establishing good relationships, it is to become conscious of every thought, belief and attitude you have in that relationship.

Outcomes in conflict resolution

1. Competitive, win-lose.

- In this outcome, one side “wins” and one side “loses.”
- Usually there are fixed possessions, assets or resources to be divided, so that the more one gets, the less the other gets.
- In this outcome, one person’s interests and opinions directly oppose the others.
- The main focus in this type of bargaining is usually maximizing one’s own interests.
- The overriding strategies in this mode include manipulation, forcing, and withholding information.

2. Collaborative, win-win or creating value.

- There is a variable amount of possessions, assets and resources to be divided so that both sides get something equally and each of the members can “win.”
- The main focus is to maximize both parties’ outcomes.
- The overriding strategies include co-operation, sharing information, and mutual problem-solving. This type is also called “creating value” since the goal here is to have both sides leave the negotiating table feeling they have greater value than before.

Keys to establishing a positive collaborative outcome

- Change your attitude to a win-win approach. Have your intention clear: both parties need to win.
- Have a clear plan and strategy; ask yourself: what is important to you and why is it important.
- Be aware of your choices or alternatives.
- Generate a variety of possibilities before choosing.
- Separate people from the problem
- Focus on interests, not positions; consider the other person’s situation:
- Create options for mutual gain.
- Communicate carefully and clearly taking intangibles into account
- Use active listening skills; rephrase, ask questions, and then ask some more.

How can i change a win-lose situation to a win-win situation?

It is not always easy to alter difficult situations to a win-win but the following lists some techniques that you might utilize:

- **Reduce tension** through humour, let the other person “vent,” and express themselves. Acknowledge theirs views, listen attentively, make small concessions as a signal of good faith

- Increase the accuracy of **communication**; listen intently throughout the conflict; rephrase the other’s comments to make sure you understand them; mirror the other’s views
 - **Manage issues**: search for ways to slice the large issue into smaller pieces; **depersonalize** the conflict--separate the issues from the people
 - **Establish commonalities**: since conflict tends to magnify perceived differences and minimize similarities, look for greater common goals (we are in this together); find a common problem; focus on what you have in common
 - **Focus less on your position** and more on a clear understanding of the other’s needs and communicate so as to move toward them
 - Make a “workable” proposal for both; support the person’s demand; reformulate; repackage; sweeten the offer; emphasize the positives of the outcomes.
 - Find a **legitimate value** in the proposed solution for the person to consider.
- 





Exercise 9.5 Examine a disagreeable relationship and your intended outcome

Sit in quiet contemplation and bring to mind the person you are in conflict with. Examine your thoughts and feelings and your body's reactions to this person. Ask yourself the questions mentioned above; visualize succeeding and achieving your intended collaborated outcome. Now move into action and implement.

How do you negotiate difficult issues filled with emotions and keep your relationships positive and constructive?

1. Communicate your individual needs. Each person has a right to his or her own needs.
2. Understand why other people need things. Our needs include our hopes, fears, aspirations, and are expressed at a deeply fundamental level.
3. Allow for the expression of another individual's wants. The other person also has a right to fulfill his needs.
4. Understand why other people need things.
5. Look for any option and solution to meet needs that we are able to make happen. It is the means to get what we both want.

EXERCISE 9.6 Have you had to negotiate tough issues with your parents, teachers, friends? Can you elaborate on what you did to problem solve?





Chapter 10 Bad habits and

how to eliminate them



Bad habits are like a comfortable bed, easy to get into, but hard to get out of.

Anonymous

What is a habit?

A habit is an acquired learning of a particular action developed by repetition of thought and the action. For instance, you learn to play the piano or play a game on the computer by repeating the skill in thought and action. All actions begin with a thought. The brain thoughts and repeated thoughts form core beliefs which translate into a particular action. Often, we are rewarded for particular actions and these become reinforced. Habits become automated and automatic. This is called conditioning or programming. Habits are necessary in learning new skills. For example a “habit” of playing the piano or doing homework regularly: when our parents or teachers reward us we learn this skill and it becomes part of our routine.

Bad habits originate in thoughts that lead to actions which are harmful to us and/or others for example, smoking, overeating, and excessive consumption of alcohol. In actual fact, there is no obvious or real reward for the bad habit, in fact, quite the contrary. However, the rewarding happens in terms of our thoughts. We associate bad habits with pleasure rather than pain. For instance, smoking is associated with positive self-image and relaxation, as opposed to its real association, which is a very real co-relation with cancer. The habit starts in the

mind as a thought. “I’ll have a cigarette to make me feel relaxed and remove my stress”. These thoughts and actions, when repeated again and again, become reinforced, conditioned or programmed into us. Habits are formed gradually over a period of time by repetition of an action. In childhood, because the mind is more pliable, it is easier to develop habits. If we associate with people with bad habits it will lead to a much greater probability that we also pick up these habits, as we move towards a mindset of thinking that “this action is really not so bad, as John does it and he seems to be a nice guy”. People who support your bad habits are not your real friends. A young 21 year old presented himself at my clinic with drug related psychosis. He remarked that he knew drugs were causing him to have distorted thinking and hallucinations but ninety per cent of his friends were involved in drugs so “if it is O.K. for them it is O.K. for me -everybody is doing it.” A frighteningly large percentage of our youth are using drugs without knowing the facts about the long-term ill effects of drugs on the brain and also the emotional damage drug usage causes.

Smoking is one of the worst addictions. The chemicals found in just one cigarette cause serious damage to our bodies. For example, smoking replaces the oxygen in our lungs with a poisonous gas called carbon monoxide, the same gas found in car exhausts. This reduces the amount of oxygen available to the body. Another toxic substance found in a cigarette is nicotine. Nicotine places greater stress on the body by increasing heart rate, raising blood pressure, and shrinking the blood

vessels of the body. These changes place considerable pressure on the heart. A cigarette can restrict you from performing at work, in the classroom, and especially when playing sport. It is also found that if adults smoke in a family, there is a much higher likelihood that children will also smoke. If they take up smoking in school, there is once again a high likelihood of them then moving on to experiment with drugs. It’s rare to find some one who habitually indulges in drugs and who is a non-smoker.

Breaking old habits and programs

Self-control is not suppression. Suppression is harmful – holding the thought that you want something, but doing nothing constructive to get it. Self-control is patiently replacing wrong thoughts by right ones, changing reprehensible actions to helpful ones.

Paramahansa Yogananda

Is it possible to break negative core beliefs and our habits and programmes that are so entrenched within us? Yes it is. One requires to be consistently and persistently watching one’s “self talk” that is one’s thoughts, words and deeds. A patient I shall name Mary felt unloved with very low self-esteem and used cocaine and other drugs to ease her pain. Working with her was quite a challenge, as she struggled to change her thoughts but with her willpower, constant support from me and healing “water essences” that I made up for her through prayer

and my positive thoughts and intentions, we eventually succeeded in breaking the old habits. She had to take small steps towards her final goal, but with persistent and consistent effort, she finally let go of her past negative thoughts that had created the dependence on drugs.

*Forget the past. Human conduct is ever unreliable until man is anchored in the Divine. Everything in the future will improve if you are making spiritual effort **Now**.*

Sri Yukteswarji.

Can we inherit bad habits from past lives?

Yes, this explains why some people get addicted to smoking and drinking sooner or more easily than others. Some habits could be inherited from karmic patterns of previous lives. For instance, I was working with a client whom I shall call Tom. He had an obsessive-compulsive behaviour disorder and kept washing his hands (every hour or so) the fear of “contamination”. During the course of therapy I discovered that he had an autocratic, strict father with very strong values of right and wrong. Tom often received “beltings” from his father for any wrong behaviour. It was at this time the behaviour of frequent washing of his hands started. The washing of hands provided him with some psychological relief even when he was not doing anything “wrong”. I had to make Tom realise that he had developed wrong obsessive behaviour from his distorted thinking pattern. It was interesting to note that in his past life, he was a rebellious religious crusader who was





crucified for his religious beliefs. Once he realised the origin of his fear and accepted his beliefs were irrational and distorted, his healing started. He subsequently learned to challenge and change his old beliefs and his behaviour automatically was transformed. A learnt habit (whether in the mind or overt in behaviour) is difficult to change but with persistence, consistent, determination and the re-conditioning of old programs, new behaviour manifests. Some of us inherit bad habits from watching our parents at an unconscious level or from past lives. I have often done past life regression work to heal some of those patterns from previous lives.

When you say no, mean it

A saint is a sinner who never gave up. A sin is anything that keeps man oblivious of God.

Paramahansa Yogananda

Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind.

Dr. Seuss
US author & illustrator (1904 - 1991)

When you really love yourself, you honour yourself and do that which is for your highest good. We are spineless weaklings when we say "yes" even though we know it is not good for us. People walk over and trample on the weak-willed. I used to think it was a good thing to be sensitive and submissive. But I learnt that being too sensitive or weak willed is detrimental to your being. Look at the great spiritual masters - they stand erect and tall and

speak their truth, in spite of persecution. It takes courage and divine will to say "NO" and mean it. The spiritual aspirant has to be strong-willed. Bad habits bring short-term pleasure or gratification but this occurs at the cost of long-term soul benefit. Your body is the temple of your soul and so it is important to look after your body. Your senses will try and tempt you but do not let the mind control you. You are divine, made in the image of God, so train your will and mind to be liberated from being enslaved to bad habits. Never admit defeat and keep trying and you will succeed in breaking away from these habits. Do not associate with friends who weaken your will and encourage you to do that which is bad for you. Those friends that protect and inspire you to think, speak and act positively are your true friends. My grandmother always said, associate with likeminded people. Love yourself and mix with those who really love you and have your highest interests at heart.

Every night introspect whether you have been swept away by the tide of bad habits or whether you are developing willpower. By keeping a diary of your good and bad habits you are better prepared to deal with them.

Meditation and its role in installing good habits

When you want to create a good habit or destroy a bad one, concentrate on the brain cells. Constantly in meditation and conscious awareness, watch your thoughts. Ask God the Archangels and your guides to help you. When you want to instil a good habit, meditate on the eyebrow centre and deeply affirm the good habit you want to install. Imagine the divine light going through your brain and body. When you want to destroy a bad habit, concentrate on the eyebrow centre and deeply affirm that all the grooves that hold the bad habits in your brain cells are being erased.

Spiritual habits

Why be upset because God hasn't shown himself to you? Think of the long time you ignored Him!

If I tell you a fruit has a certain colour and that it is sweet you still only understand the non-essentials about it. To know its distinctive flavour, you yourself must eat it. Similarly, to realize truth you must experience it. I can only arouse your appetite for divine fruit, why don't you get busy and take a bite?

Paramahansa Yogananda

Yogananda said it may take eight years to break deep entrenched bad habits and form good habits. He says, "Procrastination fosters more bad habits until the will is a prisoner and you think

you cannot change." Therefore start now and do not give up, but instead, try harder. Meditation is the best spiritual habit to inculcate. It is your special time with your Creator. Never miss your appointment with Him.

Mind power

God remembers us, though we remember Him not. If He forgot creation for a second, everything would disappear traceless. Who but He holds in the sky this mud ball of earth? Who impels the growth of trees and flowers? Yet how few of His children give Him a thought!

Paramahansa Yogananda

Everything is a thought force. This world is a world of delusion, maya, and man is kept hypnotized with that delusion. The body is mind in action. The body is a grosser manifestation and the mind is a finer manifestation and spirit is still finer. Consider H₂O. In its invisible form it is water vapour, in liquid form it is water and in solid form it is ice. Likewise, the elements of spirit or energy, mind and body are one, but at different densities. With the power of your mind you can work changes in the life and in the body itself. Never discredit the effects of the mind on the body, but instead, train the mind gradually to know its power. In the mind lies the omnipresent healing power of God. Think positive thoughts even in the face of struggles and difficulties.



Ways to develop mind power

- Walk with God through prayer and meditation and know that nothing can bring you down when you are with Him.
- Develop intense desire for results. Focus on the present and visualise the results happening NOW.

Evolution is a suggestion of God in the human mind, and is true in the world of relativity. Actually everything is taking place in the present. In spirit there is no evolution, just as there is no change in the beam of light through which all the developing scenes of cinema pictures are manifested. The Lord can turn the motion picture of creation backward or forward, but everything is really happening in an eternal Now.

Paramahansa Yogananda

- Dedication, commitment and persistence to your intention are the keys.
- Ask yourself: what is preventing me from getting what I want?
- Think of past successes in other areas and believe in yourself.
- Make yourself feel good by watching the emotions you are generating.
- On a daily basis, put power into your intention. It is our beliefs that are the power behind creation and manifestation.

- We can turn any idea to a belief if we look and associate with positive experiences that support the same. Beliefs drive all our behaviours. Make your beliefs into convictions.
- Remember that our destiny is shaped through our decisions not the conditions in our lives. Every decision we make impacts on our life – making no decisions is also a decision in itself!
- We all have the resources to achieve our dreams. We just do not realise this.
- Associate the bad habits with pain rather than pleasure. (For instance associate smoking with lung cancer and a painful and premature death, as opposed to relaxation and pleasure).
- Feel the excitement of your goal – being without the bad habit which brings you closer to achieving your dreams.
- Think positive thoughts and practise equanimity in times of difficulties and suffering
- Resist temptation by giving power to the mind rather than the senses.

This life is a master novel, written by God and man would go crazy if he tried to understand it by reason alone. That is why I tell you to meditate more. Enlarge the magic cup of your intuition and then alone you will be able to hold the ocean of infinite wisdom.

Paramahansa Yogananda



Bad habits



Exercise 10.1 Do you have any bad habits?

Choose any 3 habits you would like to change and journal the thoughts that encourage you to act on this bad habit and shift the thoughts so that you eliminate the bad habit. Maintain the journal for at least 21 days. For example:

Date	Habit	Thought that triggers habit	Shift in thoughts
21/7/2006	Overeating	I do not want to cook I prefer snacking	I will eat healthy it will only take me half an hour to prepare a nice salad.
	smoking	I am so stressed I need to have a cigarette to calm myself	I will go for a walk in fresh air to calm myself
	lack of exercise	I hate going to the gymn	I will go for a swim – there is a warm heated swimming pool I can go to.



Chapter 11 Angels

Each one of us has a spirit guide or guardian angel guiding us throughout our physical life. The Hindus and Buddhists call them devis and devas. The Zoroastrians call them fravashi or farohars. There are angels in the Christian tradition too. There are seven Archangels who head the Christian spiritual hierarchy. I was told that all human beings are sparks of God and in the beginning were angels – pure spirit or essences of God. Some of these angels have chosen to come down to the physical form for experience and those that have not, are still in God's pure energy form. Angels are spiritual beings who have never incarnated into the physical form. They contact us when they need to give human beings a message. We will one day return to being angels: pure Divine energy.

In contrast to angels, spirit guides have usually come into physical form (that is they have incarnated several times) and are in between lives taking on the role of guiding a human being. At the spirit realm many of them choose to guide their loved ones who are still in physical form. We may sometimes have more than one spirit guide and or guardian angel. We always have one primary guide that is with us permanently throughout our life. The others come and go depending on our needs, development and interests. People who are uninterested in spiritual matters are often not open to assistance therefore they may be unaware of the guidance or the presence of their guides. It is said that those individuals generally have only one guide throughout their life. The guides are spiritually more evolved than the person but not necessarily of the highest spiritual calibre, that is, they are still not one with God in essence.

As we in the physical realm evolve spiritually we move towards higher vibrations and so we attract guides of higher vibrations, we have to be open and purified in order for them to connect with us. A similar analogy is school, as we become more educated and move to higher grades we have the equivalent calibre of teachers to teach us. We may have a number of teachers each specializing in a certain subject. It is said for instance, that artists and musicians are guided by guides who have been artists or musicians in their previous incarnations. A friend of mine who creates sacred essences for healing has a guide who was a doctor in a previous incarnation. He gives her a clear insight, knowledge and wisdom about the human body at a deeper level.

Often, we feel afraid because we believe we are alone and vulnerable in a frightening world. But we need to remember that we are surrounded by angels and guides who can help us in countless ways. When we get rid of our fears and instead ask for their help we can see miracles happening in our everyday life. A simple and fast way to create more miraculous coincidences in your life is to connect to your angels, ask and expect the miracles to happen. Hold a firm thought or question in mind then know your angels are at work, creating an occurrence that will fulfil your need.



Angels



EXERCISE 11.1 CONNECTING WITH YOUR SPIRIT GUIDES

Relax your body and watch your breath. Visualize that you are in a sacred space. Ask for protection. When you are in a deep meditative state, call out to your guides. Ask first for your primary guide to appear, then any other guides that are present. Ask three times for them to reveal their names and even their identity and then await their reply. Ask that you might see an image or sense their presence. Be silent and trust the images that come to you. Carry out this meditation for the next couple of days and faithfully ask the same questions. Observe what comes through. You can draw a picture of any images that come through of your angels.

Nine fundamental principles to observe when communicating to your spirit guides and guardian angels:

1. Be in a harmonious receptive state and believe that you are worthy of communicating with them.
2. Invoke their presence - unless you invite them they will not come.
3. Ask them for specific help and guidance. Humans have freedom of choice, and angels never interfere unless they are called and asked for help.
4. Be very specific and clear as to what you want. Identify what you need for your growth (and if applicable for someone else's) and highest good. Surround your request with Love. Be

sure to never try to manipulate and control someone else's life or interfere with the Laws of karma. Check your motives before you ask for something for yourself and/or for someone else.

5. Listen. Work with your intuition rather than your intellect. Trust and believe what comes through.
6. Follow their guidance and believe that the outcome you desire will happen. Visualize that you have already achieved the outcome.
7. Always be positive, trust them completely; release any doubts and have patience. Believe that there is abundance in the universe.
8. Limitations and doubts stem from our mind. Trust the Universe to work on your problems. God has no limits. Do not limit yourself; believe in God as He believes in you. Miracles are God's Will in action. You do your part by asking and believing and then "let go" the wanting of the outcome. Trust that whatever happens will happen for your highest good.
9. Thank them for their guidance and presence.

Angels are coming down to earth at this time in great numbers. They are spirits with a higher vibratory frequency. They are here to help us move towards our Creator. Angels sometimes announce their presence with feathers.

I talk to my guides a lot of the time. In good times and when things are difficult. One day as I was driving to work I was talking to them about a difficulty I was having with a research project at work. I remember calling out to my guides for help. I wanted to know if they had heard my request. I asked them for a sign.

I was stalled at the traffic lights in the middle lane when I saw a white feather float towards me. I was amazed as there were no birds or even trees in sight. When you unexpectedly see a feather, know that they are present and looking out for you. There are many out-of-work angels in the world today, as a large proportion of humankind is not open to receiving their help.

We can ask angels to help others and us, but we need to be mindful about our motives. We can also call on the Archangels to help us. There are seven exceptionally evolved spiritual beings that are commonly referred to as Archangels. Archangel Michael is often present at my clinic in healing sessions. A few patients have noted his presence. In a healing session I am his instrument to help patients get rid of negative energies and bring healing, strength and courage to patients especially those that have suffered from trauma, or been victims of substance abuse or had had severe issues with anxiety and fear.

A patient whom I shall call Joan was experiencing great pain in her neck and abdomen. She had been to a massage therapist who had done deep bodywork on her and triggered childhood memories

of sexual abuse. I requested Archangel Michael to come through. He was there in an instance even Joan felt his presence, a pressure in her third eye. At that particular session he helped her by releasing her pain and then gave her some personal advice with this universal message:

I am an aspect of Divinity. I am Divine Will. I am strength and Divine power. Like divinity I am omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient and can help you at all times, any time. When in crisis, fear or intense pain call out to me and connect with me by concentrating on your "third eye". You will feel my presence instantly. Hindus call me "Shiva". I represent the Divine masculine energy of power and strength.

Exercise 11.2 Miracles from angels

Start a journal. On one side of each page, write a specific problem you are encountering. Then, ask your guides and angels for a miracle or solution to your problem. When your problem is resolved through divine intervention, write the results on the other side of the page. You will see how quickly the angels perform miracles. This is also a good way of recording your communication with your guides and angels.

What is intuition?

Intuition is an inner knowingness, a strong gut level feeling that we get when we are in touch with our higher consciousness or when we receive guidance from our spirit guides, guardian angels or Divinity. Intuition is receiving information through





pathways other than our traditional five senses. Intuitive faculties vary from person to person and also within the same person at different times. Humankind is moving towards being more intuitive, that is, being capable of direct information that is unlimited by belief, space and time. We are all connected to each other and therefore capable of influencing each other. John Bell, a quantum physicist, reported in 1964 that once two particles have been in contact with one another, they remain connected and are capable of influencing one another, even at great distances. We are from God and connected to each other and therefore, we are still capable of being influenced by divinity.

How do we develop our intuition?

All human beings have intuition or sixth sense and we develop it further, by always looking within for answers. Meditation training is a great way of developing your intuition. By listening and being still, we start seeing, hearing and feeling with our sixth sense. We should learn to trust the guidance of our inner voice.

Exercise 11.3 Develop your intuition

- In a meditative posture, still the conscious mind.
- Breathe light into your solar star or Universal energy point (7 inches above the sahasara chakra) and take that light down to your earthstar (7 inches below your feet).
- Pray: "I invoke the light of God in me, I am light, Love and Wisdom"
- Ask your spirit guides or guardian angels a question and listen to the guidance.
- Trust what comes through.
- Thank your guides.

Exercise 11.4 Angel guidance

Your newborn purpose is nursed by angels, cherished by the Holy Spirit and protected by God Himself.

A Course in Miracles

Connect with your angels in deep meditation and ask them the following:

- 1) What is my soul purpose in this lifetime?
- 2) Who am I? Who are you?
- 3) What do I need to do to become a better human being?

Evolution is a suggestion of God in the human mind, and is true in the world of relativity. Actually everything is taking place in the present. In spirit there is no evolution, just as there is no change in the beam of light through which all the developing scenes of cinema pictures are manifested. The Lord can turn the motion picture of creation backward or forward, but everything is really happening in an eternal Now.

Paramahansa Yogananda

Angel story

Tom Green and his family were off to the Gold Coast in Australia for their autumn vacation. They lived in Sydney and had to travel 200 kms, approximately a 10-hour drive. They had four days of fun-time there on the beach swimming, building sand castles and water skiing. Returning to Sydney after their holiday the family drove throughout the afternoon and into the night, and when it was nearing 11 o'clock Tom's father was quite fatigued, as he had driven for many hours without a break, causing him to have a micro sleep.

For a few minutes the car veered into the oncoming traffic and before the family knew it they were heading for a collision with a truck. Tom sitting in the back seat was the only one awake, saw the enormous truck, and in that moment of sheer panic he called out to his angels and guides. A miracle happened. Just in that long moment Tom's father woke and saw what was happening and veered the

car back to his side of the lane. Luckily there was very little traffic going through at that hour. The family was extremely shaken by the incident. Tom told his family later how he was the only one who saw what had happened and had in that terrifying moment remembered to call out to his angels for help. He believed that his angels were just a call away. He believed his angels helped him and his family that night.

Exercise 11.5

Have you got a miraculous story to tell? Have you ever experienced your angels helping you in a difficult situation? Share your experience.





Chapter 12 Spiritual healing,

prayer and mantras



What is our natural state?

I believe that we were made perfectly. We were first created in spirit or energy form and then this energy was transformed by increasing its density to create matter.

Why do we get ill?

Illness or “dis-ease” is disharmony in our physical body. There is a strong connection between the physical, emotional and the spiritual. Our outer world is a reflection of our inner world. If we listen carefully to our physical body, it will communicate the state of our inner being.

When we are ill, our body is communicating to us that there is an inner emotional and spiritual disharmony. Most illnesses are opportunities for us to change and transform from within. We may undertake to bear some illnesses, for a higher learning for others and/or ourselves. It is part of our life's mission that we agreed to take on before we came to this physical realm. In actual fact, our illness may be a gift or an act of service to help other people move towards compassionate awareness.

As such, the majority of physical illness or dis-ease in our body may be the result of years and/or lifetimes of

- Negative thinking,
- Negative beliefs,
- Negative programming or conditioning. Through childhood we are socialized and nurtured by significant adults with

certain core beliefs that program and condition us. These thought patterns if negative create negative energy or emotions that lead to ill-ness.

- Negative living: - i.e. bad eating habits, smoking and drinking excessively and living in a physically unhealthy environment.
- A lack of love to self and others, which causes disharmony or imbalance in our spiritual bodies. Illness and dis-ease is the result of us moving away from our true essence, Divinity and being in ego consciousness rather than divine consciousness. This causes the chakras to become over-activated or depleted in energy (prana) affecting our spiritual bodies and physical body, causing physical illness.

Is it possible to become channels of healing energy and heal others and ourselves?

Yes, most of the time if we are not interfering with people's karma or life lessons. Divinity heals. He created us, so there is no reason why He cannot re-create a part of us that is sick or diseased. Furthermore, we are created in His image so we have astounding abilities and power to heal just as He does. We have the power to heal the planet and ourselves, by believing that we can. When we listen to our bodies, and seek divine guidance to change and transform from within, our physical

bodies heal automatically. We can become channels of healing for others and ourselves.

What is prayer?

I believe prayer is making our intention known to Divinity. It is communicating to Divinity and plays a pivotal role in healing. It is not so much asking Divinity for healing but declaring and knowing that God is giving it. The New Testament declares, whatsoever you ask in prayer, believe and it shall be given. Prayer's efficacy comes from the law of cause and effect that pronounces, “What you expect and believe is what you experience”. We create our reality by the way we think and what we experience. We can give power to negative thoughts or power to positive thoughts.

A prayer adapted from st. Francis assisi's prayer:

Divine one, i am thy humble instrument. Where there is anger, fear and sadness **i am love.**
Where there is injury, **i am healing.**
Where there is doubt, **i am faithful**
Where there is darkness, **i am light.**
I give not attached to any fruits of my labour, I surrender, knowing that you are the only doer.

Thy will is done
I see you in all others and myself,
We are one.
I ask for thy protection, wisdom, love and healing.

Amen

What is a mantra?

A mantra is a string of holy words recited repeatedly as the words have power and strong positive vibration to bring about positive changes. An example of a short mantra is OM. Om means divine one and the Hindus believe it is the sound of creation. The utterance of the Om is credited with the power of attuning the individual soul with the Universal soul and is very powerful. Constant chanting of this sound A-U-M leads to peace of mind and experience of supreme bliss.

Ma means manana (ruminating) Shra means saving so manthra will save you if you meditate on it... When the sadhaka (the spiritual aspirant) with a purified consciousness dwells on the manthra and it's meaning and resolves its significance in his mind without break he shares in the splendour of divinity. Baba

What is spiritual healing and why is it important?

Spiritual healing unites us to the fullness of our beings and reconnects us to who we really are. Spiritual healing involves connecting and receiving the loving energy of a higher power beyond our own intelligence. The healing is non-denominational and does not conflict with the religious or spiritual beliefs.

The healing process links us to the universe and to our very essence which is divine. The basic particles in the universe aren't really particles but described as “loops of strings” that vibrate at a







particular level. The vibration frequencies determine the identity of the particle. It is believed that the shape and content of the entire universe and everything in it is determined by vibration frequencies of every single atom, every single particle. All is one – and all is vibration or music. Spiritual healing leads us towards these harmonious vibration frequencies.

Healing energies help people to evolve beyond their material experience. Healing is the restoration of the person to spiritual wholeness. It is the removal of a block or interference on a physical mental and emotional level that has kept us separate from the perfection of the universe. Love is necessary in healing. What is love? It is the all-encompassing love of creation, our Creator and consciousness.

The channelling of love energy from its divine spiritual source to someone who needs it/ is called spiritual healing. The channel is usually a person, whom we call a healer, and the healing energy is usually transferred to the patient through the healer's hands. The healing does not come from the healer, but through her/him. The word "spiritual" refers to the divine nature of the energy, which healers agree, comes from one external, invisible intelligent source. The healing energy from this source is available to all.

Healers see the mind, body and spirit as one interdependent unit and believe all three must work in harmony to maintain positive health. Any problem - be it physical or mental illness, needs the power of healing to restore the balance of the whole person. It is felt that sickness

often starts in the mind, or at the deeper level of the spirit, and it is often here that healing begins.

How does one feel when one receives healing energy?

When you receive healing, you may feel heat, cold or nothing at all, but the Divine energy is still being channeled to you through the healer. Please also be aware that, very occasionally, patients feel some discomfort during healing. This does not mean that something is wrong; it is invariably caused when "negative" energy is cleansed and cleared, just as we may cleanse and clean an infected wound. Soon the discomfort will cease and you will feel better. Patients often experience different feelings during healing; some people may feel very relaxed or even energized after a healing session, others could only feel better after a day or more. It is not uncommon to require more than one session, especially if the illness is chronic.

After a healing session, it is advisable to take some time out for yourself. Drink plenty of water and take rest. Please make sure that you are completely ready to travel before you conclude the healing session.

Benefits of spiritual healing

- Experiencing greater peace, love and joy in your life
- Clearing your mental and emotional blockages
- Increased energy
- Balancing the chakras and clearing auric fields
- Eliminating disease in your physical body and improved overall health
- Reconnecting with your higher-self and an awakening of your consciousness. Less confusion, greater clarity - expanded multi-dimensional awareness.
- Finding the answers to those eternal questions.... who am I.... why am I here?
- Personal empowerment
- More self-confidence and a more positive outlook on life.

