

Kriya Yóga in Daily Life

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LONDON :
L. N. FOWLER & CO.
7 IMPERIAL ARCADE, LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.4

*Made and Printed in Great Britain by
The Camelot Press Limited,
London and Southampton*

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO
K. A.,
FOR HIS DEVOTION, LOVE, AND
CONSTANT INSPIRATION

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KRIYA YOGA IN DAILY LIFE

CHAPTER I

KRIYA YOGA

KRIYA YOGA is the preliminary stage of Yoga through which the student must pass before he is ready to study and practise the higher branches of the Wisdom Religion.

In Western Religion it is customary to lay great stress upon certain actions, thoughts, and desires as being moral, and to inculcate an ethical code into the minds of young students. Sin, as understood in the West, finds no place in Eastern Religious Teachings.

The Universal Spirit is all that is Good, True, and Beautiful, and, as we are manifestations of God, our motive for the study of Religion should be to express in our daily life goodness, truth, and beauty. The moral code of a Race is determined by its stage of Spiritual evolution.

Among certain African tribes the killing of one's

enemies constitutes a moral act, which gains for its perpetrator the respect and reverence of the tribe, but the same act committed in a civilised country would constitute a crime, very often punishable by death, and certainly carrying with it the disapproval of the community.

Kriya Yoga does not, however, concern itself with morals in this sense. To the Kriya Yogi morality, as such, does not exist. He does certain things because they help him to attain spiritual union with the Universal Spirit, and he refrains from certain actions because they would hinder the development of his spiritual nature.

There are two classes of Yogis. Those of the Right-Hand Path, and those of the Left-Hand Path. Both classes train along the same line, but whereas a Yogi of the Left-Hand Path would not eat meat because it would interfere and hinder the development of Occult Powers, the Yogi of the Right-Hand Path abstains from meat-eating not only because of his training, but on account of the cruelty and suffering caused by the slaughtering of animals for food. In both cases the act is the same, but the *motive* is different.

Kriya Yoga is that branch of the Yoga Philosophy that deals especially with development of character.

The student must remember that there is a vast difference between character and reputation.

Reputation is what people *think* you are—character is what you *really* are.

We hear claims being made by every Religion in the World as being the Universal Religion, yet we have only to study each religion to find that, instead of being ALL Truth, it expresses very little of that fundamental Principle.

Just as the Sun is reflected in many pools of water, so is Truth reflected in many Religions. It is the way of the world to mistake the reflection for the reality—to seek the shadow instead of the substance. Only when man becomes psychically and spiritually free will he realise the tremendous importance of the power of positive thought, by which alone can he build character.

Character is the coinage of the Spiritual World.

An American Indian Chief, who had a wonderful collection of *Wampum* beads, one day entered an automobile store and told the salesman that he wanted to buy a car. The salesman told him the price of the car in dollars, whereupon the chief offered him the *Wampum* beads, saying that it was the coinage of his tribe. "That may be," said the salesman, "but it is not the coinage of this State."

You cannot buy Spiritual Powers with gold and silver. Though you may be rich with the wealth of the world, you will be poorer than the poorest

beggar when you enter the life of Spirit if you have not character.

Our ideas regarding Sin and Virtue need revising. Religion, to be of any practical value, must be applicable to the problems of daily life. It is in the home, factory, workshop, school, and street that we spend most of our time. It is with the thoughts that centre round the ordinary tasks of life that our character is built—for thoughts are the bricks with which we build the Spiritual atmosphere, which in our next life will be a temple wherein the Soul may express goodness, truth, and beauty, or a prison in which the Soul will be forced to realise the mistakes of earth life, and the necessity for Spiritual enlightenment.

We must never forget that Thoughts are Things—actual, tangible things, that by delicately constructed Scientific instruments can be weighed, photographed, and measured.

Religion is an indispensable necessity in every walk of life, for it is nothing less than the sum-total of our ideas and opinions of the greatest power in the world—GOD. Religion makes a very strong armour, but a very poor cloak. Before the student can derive any benefit from Religion, he will have to find definite facts upon which to base his knowledge, by experiment and study. To be certain of anything in this world is a difficult task. There

is only one thing of which we can be perfectly and absolutely certain, only one thing that admits of no possible doubt, and that fact is expressed in two words—I AM.

The highest ideal of every human being is called "God." Saint or sinner, ignorant or educated, man or woman, savage or civilised, the highest ideal is God. In every race, and in every degree of civilisation, there is, and always has been, a tendency to pick out that which appeals to the Spiritual nature of man and to surround it with theory and dogma, so that it becomes for the time being the Religion of the Age.

As man's spiritual nature unfolds, and reaches a more perfect standard, so does his idea of Religion change, and his conception of God become more spiritual. In the earliest history of Religion man formed his conceptions of God from the experiences of daily life, endowing God with a personality little higher than himself, attributing to God revengeful impulses and human tendencies.

The God of such people was little better than a glorified savage.

Religious writings of all Races record the evolution of the religious ideas of the Race, from the idea of a personal God of wrath, anger, and vengeance, to more spiritual ideas, which terminate in the conception of God as a Spiritual Power.

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Our ideas of God need to be carefully revised, if we would study the great truth of the Yoga Philosophy with any degree of understanding. All the talking in the world will not help humanity to understand Religion—only spiritual unfoldment can do that. The trouble lies in the fact that people are so busy pointing out to others what is good and what is evil, what they must do and what they must not do, that they have no time to follow their own advice.

“Everybody’s business is nobody’s business,” and the student of Kriya Yoga will find progress difficult, if not altogether impossible, until he learns to accept personal responsibility for all his thoughts, desires, and actions. He will have to set aside many things that are necessary to a man of the world, and to embrace many things that are condemned by those who live in a worldly environment.

He will have to choose between the approbation of the world and Spiritual lethargy, or the condemnation of the world and Spiritual illumination.

The earnest Kriya Yogi will not, however, be easily frightened by the things of the world, and the loss of reputation will concern him very little. Each Soul will have to tread the Path that leads to Wisdom. Each Soul will have to endure the bitter agony of renunciation, for we each have our Gethsemane; we have to choose between the

World and the Spirit, for we cannot have both.

The whole of Kriya Yoga teaching may be summed up in one word—Preparation. The aim and desire of the Kriya Yogi is nothing more or less than to be a good man, but we use the term in a vastly different way from that in which it is used by the world.

One must necessarily conform to an ideal, and the difference between the Kriya Yogi and the worldly man is, that whereas the latter makes society's standards his ideals, the former sees in God both an ideal and a reality—a never-ending source of inspiration.

Now that the student has decided to study the fundamental Principles of Life as presented in the Yoga Philosophy, he will have to discriminate between the things that help in the evolution of his Spiritual Consciousness and the things that merely afford pleasure.

Goodness, defined according to the Yoga Philosophy, does not mean the negative goodness of the world. To be good in the Yogi sense of the word means to be true to the higher self, to express that higher self as beauty, to see in all things the link that binds man to God and brings all life together in one Universal Brotherhood.

Beauty, in the Yogi sense of the word, includes not only Art, in its many expressions, but extends

to every phase and form of life. The Kriya Yogi sees only the goodness or God-ness of life in its manifestations, and even things that to the ordinary person are repulsive are to the Kriya Yogi merely signs of the great fight going on all through Nature between Evolution and Involution.

He who treads the Path of Wisdom can never stand still. He must go forward, towards a greater and more perfect development than he has already attained, or use the powers he already possesses to prevent others attaining illumination, thereby becoming a disciple of the Left-Hand Path—a Black Magician.

The supreme test of the utility of a man's religion depends upon the service that that religion prompts him to render to his fellow-men. Goodness, Truth, and Beauty are the three sides of the triangle of the Spiritual Life. Goodness must be actual and unselfish. Truth must be sought for its intrinsic virtue—it must be Truth for Truth's sake—and Beauty must include both Goodness and Truth.

Real beauty is always an expression of God. The highest form of Beauty is that which is the result of the Soul's unfoldment.

In the study of Science, Art, or Music it is always an advantage to have reliable books and a competent teacher. So in the study of Religion, the student will need a reliable book, and a Teacher capable of

inspiring the student with the highest motives—a Teacher whose knowledge has been gained by practical experience. The impossibility of attaining Spiritual unfoldment by book-learning is the reason why we fail when we come to put into practice the things we have learned about Spiritual unfoldment.

We may speak accurately and eloquently on Spiritual matters, but when it comes to living a Spiritual life we find ourselves deficient, and we find that we need something that will quicken the Spirit, an influence that will exert its force upon our Astral bodies, and in this way produce the desired result in our daily life. Such an influence can only come from another human Soul, since we are too much immersed in material things to receive such help from the Universal Spirit.

As we progress and unfold our Spiritual nature, we receive more and more of the Divine Light, but until we have so progressed it is well that we receive the influence of an advanced Soul. The Soul from whom the student receives such high Spiritual vibrations, and whose influence is capable of quickening Spiritual consciousness, is called the Guru, and the student who receives such influence, is called the Chela.

Throughout this book the student will be given daily exercises for the development of Spiritual

consciousness. They should be practised regularly, until the student feels within himself the impulse to proceed to the higher branches of Yoga.

One exercise should be practised each day, the first week covering the seven exercises. Then the first exercise should be practised for one week, in this way the seven exercises covering a period of seven weeks. After this, one week should be devoted to revisionary practice of the seven exercises.

Exercise One

Set aside one hour every day for meditation on the Universal Spirit. Put all material thoughts and desires out of your mind, and concentrate. Try to attune yourself with the God-consciousness. Choose some place where you will not be disturbed while you practise. If possible, get into surroundings that express God-consciousness. The ideal place for the practice of this exercise is where there are trees and flowers. If this is not possible, sit in a room where you are not disturbed, and concentrate on the mystery of God's Love.

Read any poem or hymn that will awaken within you Spiritual feelings and desires.

CHAPTER II

YAMA

KRIYA YOGA is divided into two parts, Yama and Niyama. Yama deals with the moral qualifications necessary to the study and practice of Yoga, while Niyama deals with the physical qualifications essential to progress in this interesting branch of Occultism.

The aim of the Yogi is to develop his latent psychic powers so that he will be better able to reach truthful conclusions regarding the vital facts of Spiritual life. In Yoga, as in other branches of Occultism, the law of attraction plays an important part.

He who would know the truth about the great problems of life must be truthful himself. We have mentioned certain moral qualifications, but it is well that the student remembers that our morals are based upon our idea of what is good and what is not good. The morals of a Race are an index to its Spiritual evolution. To strike a man on the head with a club and kill him would, in certain savage

tribes, be considered a brave act, and therefore morally good, but the same thing done in a civilised community would be considered criminal, and therefore morally wrong. The act is the same in both cases, but it is public opinion of such an action that makes it morally good or bad.

The Western student will have to considerably revise his opinions regarding Morality, if he would understand the elementary principle of Yoga.

Civilisation approves of many things that to a Yogi are immoral. On every hand we hear men preaching and teaching the necessity for being truthful, yet in daily life these very people will tell one lie after another, under the impression that they are merely being polite. If we tell a lie, or cause another to do so, or even approve of a lie, it is equally sinful.

Truth must be absolute. If it is only a little lie, or a deliberate intent to deceive although no words have been spoken, it is still a lie, and bars progress along the Path that leads to Wisdom.

The truthful man will not sacrifice Truth for worldly reputation. He would not say to an acquaintance, "I am pleased to see you" if he were not really pleased. When man has reached that state of evolution where the Soul-consciousness expands, and embraces Truth for Truth's sake, civilisation, as such, will have ceased to exist, for

civilisation is man's attempt to make himself independent of Karmic and Natural Laws.

We are told that "Honesty is the best policy," but to the Yogi honesty is not a policy, neither does he regard it as a virtue. It is something that is the outcome of right thinking, and concomitant with Truth, for no man can be truthful if he is not honest. Man's first duty is to be true to himself. That is the first manifestation of Truth. Having attained it, honesty will become part of his second nature.

A man who is honest does not accept any belief or theory because another tells him it is true.

"Our conceptions of Truth unfold as the Soul expands, and reaches the more perfect standard—the Absolute." Honesty, in the Yogi sense, does not merely mean that a person will not steal; it has a more important meaning, since in Occult teachings the words Truth and Honesty are used together, and apply to the Soul in its dealings with other Souls.

All forms of life are manifestations of God-consciousness, the same life-force acting throughout the mineral, vegetable, animal, and human kingdoms. The realisation of this fact makes the Yogi as careful in his duty towards the lower forms of life as in his dealings with humanity, so that he will not willingly injure any animal. If we

injure or cause any living creature to be injured, or approve of such an action, we are guilty of cruelty.

Many Yogis attain powerful influence over animals, because they have succeeded in realising the principle of *non-injuring* any creature. Snake-charmers can handle the most deadly reptiles with perfect safety, because they have, through the practice of non-injuring, become *enrappto* with the animal-consciousness.

The earnest student of Kriya must train himself to distinguish between the self (spirit) and the not-self (personality, mind, etc.), for unless he does so he will never attain unselfishness.

Unselfishness, to a Yogi, means something more than mere generosity. It means the absolute renunciation of all those ideas, desires, etc., that interfere with or prevent Spiritual progress.

In India the name Sannyasins is applied to those spiritual individuals who, renouncing the Not-Self, work for the good of humanity, without even a thought as to the result of their work.

When the Soul realises certain things as true, it is forced by the Law of Cosmic Evolution to express those things, and it matters little to that Soul whether the world accepts or rejects such an expression of God-consciousness. As man progresses, and his spiritual consciousness gains

predominance over animal desires and thoughts, he ceases to be concerned with worldly opinions.

No product of man's inventive ingenuity has ever done as much for humanity as the simple goodness of a pure Soul, for Science and Invention, while quickening the mental power of man, and conferring upon him a sense of superiority, does not help him toward the attainment of Spiritual emancipation.

It is only when man begins to understand something of the Divine Plan of Life that his Spiritual faculties awaken.

It must not be thought that Science and Invention in themselves are undesirable—far from it. They are necessities to the correct working of the Universal scheme. The things of the world each have their special purpose, which is to slowly but surely lead man to the conscious recognition of his Spiritual Nature.

There are millions of religions in the world, many claiming to be the only true Religion. The Yogi knows only one Religion, and that is Truth. There is no Religion higher than Truth. Each Religious Teaching contains a part of Truth, but no religion contains it in its entirety.

Three blind men once went to the Zoo, and were led to an elephant. One of them put his hand against the elephant's side. "Oh," he said, "the

elephant is like a wall." The second man felt the elephant's trunk. "No," he said, "the elephant is like a snake." The third man was picked up by the elephant, and lifted into the air. "You are wrong," he said, "the elephant flies like a bird." Then they began a lengthy argument as to what an elephant was like, each strongly upholding his own view.

Truth is a manifestation of God, and has many aspects. Each Religion has its own conception of Truth, which it is prepared to maintain at all costs, regardless of the fact that each aspect of Truth is but a part of the whole. Only when man gathers the various aspects of Truth together, and views them as a complete whole, can he know Truth.

Beauty, as an expression of God-consciousness, finds its place in every Race, and in every phase of life. This is not at all surprising when we remember that colour plays an important part in forming our ideas of Beauty. It is as though man, failing to find in his environment that which would raise him to a state of Spiritual consciousness, sought to devise a means whereby the limitations of environment may be overcome.

Thus it is that in all countries we find colour playing an important part in the daily life of the people. Just as Beauty is an aspect of God-consciousness, so is colour an aspect of Beauty.

The seven colours of the Spectrum vibrate in harmony with the seven principles of man, so that the predominance of any particular colour in the environment of a person has a direct effect upon his Astral body.

The Yogi sees in Art, not merely a means of enjoyment—a mental pleasure—but a centre from which he may draw inspiration, and a symbol of all that is Good, True, and Beautiful in life. It is only when we regard Beauty as a symbol of our ideals that it becomes to us the embodiment of Spiritual forces, and an attribute of God.

Much that is called beautiful by the world is void of even a semblance of real Beauty, while much that is regarded by the world as commonplace affords a striking example of the highest type of Beauty, for Beauty is one of the sides of the Triangle of Life, the other two being Goodness and Truth.

A Triangle is not complete without three sides. In a like manner, there can be no Beauty without Goodness and Truth. Beauty is the Divine inheritance of man. The mission of the artist is to create beauty, so that to the Yogi, God is the Supreme Artist, whose Art is Life, and Man the triumph of perfection of His works.

Religion, to be of service to humanity, must combine and contain within itself Goodness, Truth,

and Beauty, for God is all that is Good, and Nature, a manifestation of God, is unerringly true, while the evolved man is ever striving to manifest Beauty.

The trend of civilisation is toward beautification, though, unfortunately, man's conception of Beauty does not always reach the standard of his ideals, so that, instead of producing the beautiful things of his dreams which would reflect his Spiritual consciousness, he produces only a distortion of his ideals. This is particularly true with the fundamental facts of life.

The first thing the Yogi must learn is to avoid argument. All the controversies about God and Religion defeat their own ends, and, instead of helping man to understand Religion, and to grow in love of God, they hamper his mind with petty distinctions and definitions that in no way help in the elucidation of the problems of Religion.

No one has ever seen God, and humanity has very far to go before it attains the illumination necessary for *knowledge* of God. How, then, can people argue about One whom they have never seen, and do not know?

It is well to pray to God, but it is better to serve Him by service to humanity. The Yoga Philosophy has no conception of God as a personal Saviour. Christianity rests upon the teachings of Christ. Mohammedanism rests upon Mohammed.

Buddhism rests upon the teachings of Buddha. But the Yoga Philosophy does not rest upon any individual, either Divine or human. It is based upon Principles.

In the West, religious practice is the outcome of religious teaching. In the East, religious teaching is the outcome of practice.

Much has been talked and written about the idols of India, and the Western nations have stood aghast at the many symbols of God used in Eastern Religions. Such condemnation is the direct result of ignorance.

In the West there are many idols, but people do not regard them as such. The devout Christian who bows to the Crucifix, the lover who cherishes a gift from his beloved, and the patriot who reverently salutes his country's flag are all idol-worshippers. To the Christian, the Crucifix is the symbol of sacrifice. It stands for all that is good in Christianity. To the lover, the gift from his beloved one is a symbol of their love. To the patriot, his country's flag is a symbol of all that is beautiful in his country—it is, in fact, the symbol of his country.

In the East, the images dedicated to Religion are used and regarded as symbols, and serve merely as centres for concentration. The Yoga Philosophy has no particular symbol, neither has it a creed.

Yogis take Truth from many sources, and thus keep their minds free from the encumbrances of preconceived ideas. Throughout the study of the Yoga Philosophy the student should pay as much attention to *practice* as to the Philosophy, because it is not enough to know with the mind. One must practise and keep on practising, for Yoga is essentially a *practical* study.

Exercise Two

Sit in a comfortable position, placing the hands on the knees, and keeping the spine erect. Close your eyes, and keep as still as possible. Choose something to serve as a centre for concentration. For this purpose you can fix your attention on something spiritual or material, it does not matter which, so long as the contemplation of it awakens within you spiritual feelings. You may choose a virtue, such as Goodness, Truth, Beauty, or Honesty.

It is well to begin this exercise by finding out a desirable Spiritual quality that you do not at present possess. This will serve as a means of bringing you *enrappo* with the Spirit-Consciousness that permeates the Universe. Endeavour to feel the God-consciousness through the symbol you have chosen for meditation.

Keep perfectly still throughout this exercise, and try to be in tune with the Spiritual forces that surround and protect you.

Always remember that God is not far away from you, but very near to you. God is ever present.

Mentally ask the Universal Spirit to make you a pure instrument for the service of humanity.

Carry this thought with you in your daily life.

Practise this exercise for not less than a quarter of an hour, and not more than one hour.

CHAPTER III

NIYAMA

NIYAMA is that part of Kriya Yoga which deals with the physical preparation necessary for the higher branches of Yoga, and without which it is not well that the student should even study Yoga, let alone attempt to practise the various exercises in other branches of the subject.

The physical body is the instrument through which the other principles of man's consciousness manifests, and, as such, it should be made pure and sensitive, with particular regard to the nervous system. Every thought, desire, and action affects the nervous system, because in order to think, to desire, to act we must transmit such emotions from the brain to the nervous system, and then to the muscular system.

That being so, it is necessary that the physical body should be made pure, for the Yogi must be one whose individuality seeks a Paramatma or Universal Consciousness, through a body rendered perfect through purity.

There are two kinds of Purity—physical and psychic, and both are closely connected with each other. Physical purity means the results of care and attention bestowed on the physical body—ordinary physical cleanliness—whereas psychic cleanliness means purity of thought, desire, and intention.

All the good actions in the world will not confer upon the student the crown of Spirituality unless in his innermost self he carefully and reverently guards his thoughts, for thoughts are as seeds planted in the garden, and if the seed is bad, how can the fruit thereof be good?

In our efforts to attain Purity we often make the mistake of fixing upon that which is impure, and trying by every means in our power to avoid it, thereby fixing our attention upon that which we do not desire. Yet such is the law, that the more we direct our attention upon anything the more we attract that thing to us. That is why in India we are so careful in our choice of words.

Words are the symbols that express our thoughts, each word being the symbol of a particular thing.

In Eastern Occult literature we do not use such words as evil, impure, etc., for evil is the absence of Good, so that we say "Good and Not-good, Pure and Not-pure." Thus we do not create in our mind symbols for negative qualities.

In Hatha Yoga (that branch of Yoga which deals

with the development of the physical body by psychic means) we do not speak of disease, but instead we use the term "not-health." We are aware that it is impossible to mould the English language to conform with our ideas in this respect, neither is it desirable that we should do so. Nevertheless, it is well that the student who aspires to become a Yogi should choose his words so that they express only *positive ideas*. In this way he will build into his Astral body strong and positive forces.

The first thing the student must learn is to fix his thoughts upon the qualities and virtues he desires to attain. The Yogi reasons in this way : The Paramatma is all that is Good, True, and Beautiful, and, since all things are an expression of the Paramatma, all things contain in some measure Goodness, Truth, and Beauty.

The student who would be pure must see purity in all things. Nothing is impure. It is only when man distorts Truth so that beauty is hidden that things become impure.

The first stage of Niyama is physical cleanliness. Anger, pride, and a sexual desire must be overcome. The surest way to do this is by fixing the attention upon the Spiritual Nature inherent in every individual, and seeking to contact it on every possible occasion.

Yoga is the most practical of all Philosophies,

as it deals essentially with the facts of life. The old idea of Religion was to seek to worship God without understanding even the elementary facts of existence, disregarding the fact that so long as man lives a life of the world, and manifests in a physical body, he is bound to acknowledge and obey the physiological laws that govern physical existence.

Too often we hear people say that Sex and Sexological teachings should find no place in Religion, Yet Sex is one of the facts of life, and in Kriya Yoga it finds not only a place, but a most important place, for sexual instinct and desire is a direct manifestation of God.

Sexual energy manifests on three planes—physical, mental, and spiritual. The poet, the painter, and the musician use this energy to create on a mental plane, while the Seer, the Prophet, and the Yogi use this energy on the Spiritual plane.

There are certain psychic laws that govern the transmutation of sexual energy into psychic force, and these are fully dealt with in Raja Yoga, that branch of Yoga that deals with the Spiritual development of man by psychic means.

All things are good, since they are God's creation. It is only man's abuse that results in the thing being "not-good."

The Yogi endeavours to rise above the limitations of the physical body by training that brings about

an equal development of physical, mental, and psychic energies. Half of the misery in the world is caused by the fact that people do not develop along lines that will enable them to work on the three planes of existence at the same time.

One-sided development results in man being handicapped in the race of progression. Perfection is the goal of the Yogi, but such a desire for perfection must not be confused with worldly selfishness. The desire for perfection is only good when the ultimate aim is to be better able to help humanity.

Life is one long road that leads to Adeptship. The foolish man plays among the flowers that grow by the wayside. The wise man walks steadily onwards, his eyes fixed upon the Star of Adeptship, that symbolises the end of the Road—the goal of human achievement.

The student of Yoga must give up the idea of personality, for such is the law of spiritual progress that only when man renounces the things of the world does he gain the things of the Spirit. Human desires, emotions, and thoughts are not wrong in themselves. It is only when they vibrate in such a way as to control the mind that they cease to be subservient to man's spiritual nature.

Any attempt to treat Yoga as a study, having regard only to its theoretical teachings, is doomed to failure. A man may read all the books in the

British Museum, if he lived long enough, and yet remain unlearned. The study of any subject presupposes a certain amount of conscientious thought about that subject.

In Occultism, thinking about a subject is not sufficient. The student must put into *practice* the things he has learned. Reading books on physical culture, or any kind of sport, will not make the reader proficient in these matters. It is a physical study, and therefore needs physical practice. Reading a book on mathematics will not make a mathematician, there must be a certain amount of mental practice in the working out of problems.

So in Yoga it is necessary for the student to not merely read the philosophy, but to practise with a view to the attainment of Psychic powers that will be of great use to him in the unfoldment of his Spiritual Nature.

At the commencement of his studies in Yoga the student will be confronted with many difficulties, which perseverance alone can overcome. The necessity for physical purity cannot be too strongly impressed upon he who would become a Yogi.

Kriya Yoga is the preparatory stage of Yoga leading to the higher branches, without a thorough knowledge of which progress would be impossible. There are certain rules that must be obeyed. There are certain restrictions imposed upon the Chela

which, though they seem unnecessary, are founded upon certain Occult facts.

Alcohol in any form is strictly forbidden, because alcohol destroys the soft tissue of the nerves, and thereby induces a state of ill health, which is detrimental to satisfactory progress. The consumption of Alcohol sets up vibrations that lower the rate of the vibrations of the Astral body, which is the reverse of the purpose of Yoga, which aims at the *raising* of the Astral vibrations.

We do not want the reader to think that we condemn alcohol. Nothing in this world is useless. We merely wish to point out that Alcohol finds no place in the training of a Chela.

The use of Tobacco in any form is also strictly forbidden. Smoking is a vice to which Hindoos are not usually addicted.

Around each individual is a thin, web-like structure of etheric matter called the Astral Web, the purpose of which is to protect the individual from outside influences, and to act as a psychic shield. Tobacco has the effect of coarsening this web, which in the developed man should be thin and strong. The more material a person is, the thicker and coarser is the Astral Web. The thicker it becomes, the more brittle it becomes, for it must be remembered that Astral substance is the reverse from physical matter. Continual use of Tobacco

results in the breaking of the Astral Web, and through the holes thus formed external entities of a low order can gain access to the mind and body of the individual.

The Chela is forbidden to eat meat for two reasons. Flesh foods carry with them vibrations of the animal Astral body, so that the meat-eater builds into his Astral body the fear, rage, and desire of the animal consciousness. Another reason for this restriction is that the Yogi prefers, for humanitarian reasons, to refrain from the slaughter of animals for food.

The Chela is enjoined to have and maintain the highest regard and most sincere reverence for all matters dealing with Sex. Furthermore, the Chela is required to dedicate his sexual nature to Siva, promising to create only that which is good, true, and beautiful. The Yogi regards the sexual act as a direct petition to the Universal Spirit for the incarnation of another Soul, and regards the act as being merely the means to provide a physical body for the incarnating Soul. Later in his studies the Chela will rise above the distinction of Sex, for he will realise that THE SOUL HAS NO SEX. Finally we may mention that the Yoga philosophy contains an Esoteric Sexology which is taught only to those who have proved themselves physically, mentally, and spiritually able to appreciate and use this knowledge.

Exercise Three

Gradually reduce the amount of meat in your diet, until you can replace it altogether by another article of food.

The renunciation of alcohol can be accomplished by Will Power and determination. Make up your mind that you will not use it again in any form, and enforce your decision by your Will Power.

The use of Tobacco can be discontinued gradually, reducing the quantity used, until you are finally able to do without it altogether, but by far the safer, though more difficult, way is to make up your mind that you will not use it again, and bring your Will Power to bear, as in the renunciation of Alcohol.

Fasting helps considerably to overcome the craving for Tobacco, but if this is not practicable, the addition of fruit, especially apples, to your diet will neutralise the craving, for it must be remembered that Tobacco is a drug, the after-effects of which will take time to eradicate.

Preparations of peppermint and acid (such as peppermints and acid-drop sweets) may be used until such time as the craving will have entirely ceased.

Get reliable knowledge of sexual physiology

from a standard medical book. Worship God through a study of life's greatest problems.

Once you have begun to practise an exercise, do not give up. Keep on until you have obtained the desired result.

CHAPTER IV

PENANCE

THROUGHOUT the entire history of Religion, Penance plays an important part. Ascetism and Religion go hand in hand, yet the more man progresses, the further he is along the road that leads to Wisdom, and the more will he express Ascetism on a spiritual plane.

The Yoga Philosophy is essentially ascetic, but there is a difference between Ascetism and Fanaticism. Much that has been written and said about Yoga has been founded upon imaginary ideas rather than concrete fact. It has been said, for example, that to become a Yogi it is necessary to torture one's body. That is *not* true.

The Yogi realises that his body is an instrument necessary to his evolution, and that the better it is cared for, and the stronger it is made, the more service it will be to him.

The Yoga Philosophy certainly does recognise Penance, but the Penance of a Yogi is far, far

different from that of a Fanatic. It is not well that one should render the body less fit for service in order that a mistaken idea may be accepted as Truth.

The Yogi definition of Penance is, limitation or suffering voluntarily accepted, and it does not necessarily mean the infliction of physical pain. Penance, to be of any real value to man's spiritual development, should bear a close resemblance to the sin committed. The idea that Yogis indulge in horrible penances results from a mistaken idea brought from India, by travellers who have seen some of the wonderful phenomena that form the Esoteric school of Eastern Occultism.

In Sufism (Mystic Mohammedanism) part of their most sacred ceremonies consists of an exhibition of psychic phenomena, which, being seen by Western travellers, would be called a terrible penance. In this particular ceremony the Neophyte stands in a semicircle formed by Priests and Gurus, and, having chanted Mantras, then enters the Silence. After much meditation and prayer, the officiating Priest is armed with a sacrificial knife, with which he attempts to make several incisions in the body of the Neophyte.

If the Neophyte has trained conscientiously, and knows how to manipulate psychic force, no injury will be done, as the knife will not even

scratch the skin, however much force the priest may put behind it.

The whole ceremony is a test of psychic power, and the ability of the Neophyte to render his physical body incapable of physical injury.

The Yoga Philosophy teaches that man should be master of not only his body and his mind, but of his Astral body as well.

Many Gurus make it a rule for their Chelas to undergo one or more of the four ordeals—the ordeals of Fire, Earth, Air, or Water. The ordeal of fire necessitates the ability to raise the vibrations of the body so that the handling of fire, known in the West as Fire Mediumship, is accomplished without even the slightest injury to the physical body.

The ordeal by water necessitates the ability to alter the vibrations of the body so that it becomes possible to move on the surface of water with perfect safety.

The ordeal by air implies a mastery over the Spirits of Darkness (those who use Occult knowledge and power for selfish ends, undeveloped Spirits, etc.).

The ordeal by earth necessitates a mastery over the vibrations “ of life that springs from the earth ” plant life. By the concentration of psychic force on certain seeds, germination is made to take place more rapidly than under ordinary circumstances.

Each of these ordeals are used as tests to ascertain the student's progress in the practice of Raja Yoga. To be able to undergo the ordeals is the aim and crowning ambition of a Raja Yogi.

Much that has been classified by Western travellers as "Hindoo Penances" are not at all real penances, but merely an exhibition of psychic phenomena.

The essentials of Penance are: (1) That it is voluntarily accepted and submitted to. (2) That it bears a close relation to the sin committed. (3) That it helps the student to master and conquer the desires of his lower nature. (4) That it does not permanently injure the physical body, or render it less fit for service. (5) That it is performed reverently, sincerely, with a full realisation of its sacredness.

Do not discuss any penance you may do with another person. Regard it as being sacred and secret. It concerns only you and your Guru, or, if you have no Guru, yourself and God.

We have mentioned in the chapter on Niyama certain restrictions incidental to the practice of Kriya Yoga. These may be rightly classified as penances, since they fulfil the essentials of Penance.

If you abuse your physical body by the use of alcohol, you commit a sin—that is, you hinder your own progression, and since no man can live for self alone, your action, by the power of example,

etc., affects others, so that it is well that you give up the use of alcohol, thereby doing a penance.

The use of tobacco in any form is detrimental to your progress in Yoga, so that to one who has become addicted to the use of tobacco, to give it up would constitute a real penance.

The same principles apply with regard to meat eating.

You may regard anything that interferes with your spiritual unfoldment as sin, and no on account should you allow it to gain an ascendancy over your spiritual nature.

In one of the Temples in India, dedicated to the worship of Siva, there is inscribed the following passage, which forms part of a code of instruction to Chelas: "Will Power is the whip that drives humanity to Success."

Fasting is a form of penance much practised by Yogis, on account of the physical and spiritual benefits derived therefrom. Many of the diseases prevalent among civilised nations are the direct result of over-eating.

The person who abuses anything lacks the Will and capacity to use it properly, and therefore does not deserve to have it.

It would constitute a real penance to one addicted to gossip and slander to have to remain silent, but the effect of such a penance on that person's spiritual

nature would be so great as to outweigh the temporary disadvantages of its performance.

In your study of Kriya Yoga particular attention should be paid to purification—physically, mentally, and psychically. Do not let anything remain that will serve as a link in a chain that will bind you to material desires. Do not do anything merely because others do it. Choose those things which will help you to develop your spiritual nature, and do them at whatever cost.

Do not shirk your duty to yourself because that duty is difficult. Do what you know to be right, whether you like doing it or not.

A weak man follows the examples of others, arguing that if the majority think it is right, it must be so. He follows the lines of least resistance, giving in to his lower nature, rather than suffer the inconvenience attendant upon a fight between his higher and lower natures.

He does not try to master himself, therefore he becomes a slave to habit, so that he is chained by his desires, instead of being free to develop his spiritual nature.

A strong man thinks for himself, and, having found Truth, holds fast to it because it *is* true. He does not care what the opinions of others may be, arguing that he is personally responsible to the Law of Karma for his actions, be they good or evil.

He is master of himself, and as he is constantly crushing out of his life the things that would hinder his progress he develops his psychic forces, so that he becomes free to walk the Path that leads to Wisdom.

There must be no half-measures about your practise of Kriya Yoga—either you do it, or you do not do it.

Yoga is unlike any other subject, inasmuch as mere theoretical knowledge is useless, as it is impossible to practise the phenomena without a thorough understanding of the Philosophy. Both have to be studied together, resulting in a well-balanced development of the mental and psychic faculties.

Another peculiarity of Yoga is that you cannot study haphazard. It is absolutely imperative to begin by studying Kriya Yoga. When you have mastered yourself sufficiently, you may proceed to study Hatha Yoga, Karma Yoga, Raja Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Gnani Yoga, and Bhakta Yoga, in the order given.

It is true that you may study Hatha Yoga without becoming a Bhakta Yogi, or you may become a Karma Yogi without knowing the least bit about Raja Yoga, but you *must* begin your studies by becoming a Kriya Yogi.

Purification is absolutely essential, and you

should spare yourself no pains to rid yourself of every habit that could possibly interfere with your practice of Yoga.

Do not be afraid to crush even the slightest desire, for it is very often the insignificant vices that stagnate Spiritual growth, and make man a slave of habit instead of a Master of Wisdom.

Exercise Four

Periodically set aside a certain time for self-examination. Endeavour to find your faults, and to proceed to remedy them as directed in this chapter.

Do not be satisfied until you have thoroughly mastered your desires and broken bad habits.

If you are in the habit of speaking angry words, or indulging in scandal or gossip, practise keeping silent. Speak only when absolutely necessary.

Train yourself to be able to forgo any luxury or comfort to which you have become accustomed.

CHAPTER V

DAILY SACRAMENTS

MANY false ideas prevail regarding the place Religion has in daily life. There has always been a tendency to keep Religion apart from worldly tasks, forgetting that even the most material act is in the nature of a sacrament.

It is true that all our actions do not reach psychic contact with our spiritual nature, but that is because we have not evolved sufficiently to live in such a way that we are constantly in touch with Nature.

The Kriya Yogi creates with his mind an Astral environment which not only enables him to overcome difficulties, but transforms ordinary daily tasks into outward symbols of the communion that is constantly taking place between the Soul of man and the great Universal Spirit. The Yogi realises the power of mind over matter. He realises the importance of little things.

The great things are made of fragments small,
Small things are germs of great;
And of earth's temples, all
To fragments owe their weight.

And, realising this, he transforms material life into a daily round of Religious sacraments.

The old-fashioned idea of saying grace before meals finds no place in Yoga, for the Yogi realises that eating in itself is an act that is both necessary and sacred. Whereas the worldly minded man eats to gratify the appetite, and makes a social affair of a meal, the Yogi realises the spiritual meaning behind the act of eating, so that a meal to him becomes a means of communion between his own nature and the God-consciousness.

Sleeping is another act that is too often looked upon only as a temporary respite from worldly activities, yet to the Yogi it savours of not only a mystery and a wonder, but a symbolic death, from which he will awaken on the morrow physically refreshed, and morally attuned to the highest vibrations.

There are many wonderful things connected with the sleep state that an advanced Occultist, with his knowledge of Natural Law and psychic force, sees through that to us is a mystery. We only see the sleeping body. We do not realise the wonderful things that are happening in the psychic world to which the consciousness has gone, and where it is experiencing many strange things.

Every physical act physiologically necessary to life is regarded by the Yogi as a sacrament—that is, he regards it as the “outward sign of an

inward grace"—a symbol of spiritual communion, so that such acts become to him links with the God-consciousness.

In the more advanced stages of Yoga particular attention is directed to the regulation of breath. This is particularly so in Raja Yoga.

Breathing, then, is another act which is regarded by the Yogi as having a particularly spiritual value. It should be distinctly understood that any attempt to raise one's consciousness so that daily acts become of sacramental value, must be accomplished unobtrusively, with sincerity and reverence.

Hindoo Religious Teachers know quite well that so great is the power of the Astral body over the physical body that the assumption of a position involving pressure on certain nerve-centres will make it impossible for one to experience fear, while the assumption of an attitude involving pressure on another nerve-centre will make it impossible to feel pain.

Nowadays we hear much about the power of mind over matter ; yet we know that it is not so much a question of the influence of mind on the body, as it is of vibrations from the Astral body reaching certain nerve-centres in the physical body, and causing certain mental states to exist. Any emotion experienced keenly enough in the Astral body is transmitted through the mind to the physical body, where it finds expression on a material plane.

Realising this, the Yogi endeavours to choose his thoughts with sacred care, so that the very act of thinking becomes to him a sacrament.

In India, bathing, eating, sleeping, breathing, and even speaking are regarded as Religious sacraments. This may seem strange, even fanatical, to the Western student, but it is based upon sound common-sense.

There are certain Occult reasons why particular attention should be paid to correct breathing. These reasons are fully discussed in Hatha Yoga teachings. Suffice it to say that the air we breathe contains not only oxygen which goes to purify the blood, but psychic force, which in Yoga Teachings is called Prana. There are right and wrong ways of directing the Prana into the various nerve-centres through which it manifests. Whether we do it correctly or incorrectly depends upon the way we breathe.

Thus it is that breathing assumes an important place, not only in the Yoga Philosophy, but throughout the entire teachings of Hinduism.

By far the most important of all the daily sacraments is, from an Occult point of view, the act of thinking, since it not only determines our actions, but builds out Astral Body, the influence of which manifests not only in our physical body, but in our material environment.

Bathing is an act that is in itself a sacrament, symbolising, as it does, the elimination or washing away of that which is not pure, and radiant rebirth. Water is the material symbol of Astral Light, which, by its vibrations and reaction on the psychical centres, is capable of changing man's whole nature—raising him from the human to the Divine. In many Religions the sacrament of washing has been symbolised by Baptism.

Eating is another daily act that is regarded by the Yogi as a sacrament. In every Hindoo home, throughout the length and breadth of India, the eating of food is essentially regarded as an act of great religious importance. The social "small-talk" that so often takes place at a Western table is entirely absent during Hindoo meals, which are usually eaten in strict silence.

The food-supply of the World originates from the Natural Kingdom. Growing plants are permeated by Prana. Some forms of animal life subsist on vegetation, and they in their turn are eaten by flesh-eating animals, so that the Prana undergoes a change in the rate of its vibrations.

The Yogi aims to store as much Prana as possible in his body. For this reason he prefers to eat fruit, rather than flesh foods. During a meal the Yogi concentrates his attention on the absorption of Prana from the food he is eating.

When eating, the thought should be directed to the fact that the food will be built into the physical body, and there, by a wonderful process of Nature, be transformed into flesh and blood. Thoughts of this kind, constantly held in the mind, will have a twofold effect. They will greatly assist in the process of digestion, and at the same time they will set up vibrations that will result in greater satisfaction being obtained than if the food were merely eaten to satisfy appetite. A Yogi eats only when hungry.

Sleep is regarded by Occultists as being of great importance in psychic development, for Trance is but another form of sleep.

Much of the difficulty about going to sleep, that in the West forms the base of so many complaints, would disappear if people regarded sleep as the Yogis regard it—as a sacrament. To go to sleep quickly, and to obtain the fullest possible benefit, the body should be kept straight. The head should be kept level with the body, or, at most, only slightly raised. The thought should be centred upon unconsciousness, the idea of absolute blackness being seized upon by the mind. The breath should be regulated rhythmically. The eyes should be closed, and the attention directed to the space between the eyebrows.

Sleep will then descend like a mantle of peace,

and the Soul, liberated from the limitations of the physical body, will enter into the unseen. Yogis usually sleep on the floor, and when they use a bed they prefer a *very* hard one.

One has only to live among Yogis to realise that they regard speech as a sacrament. So carefully do they choose their words, so seriously do they utter them, that it would seem as though they unwrapped them from the Akashic matter, as one would unwrap a rare ornament.

The Yogi realises that words are thoughts come to life, and great is the care exercised by them, to see that no unworthy thought is given birth into a world of sound.

Truth and Reality are twin aspirations, that the words of a Yogi seem always endeavouring to reach. The rules of speech among Yogis are: (1) Speak only words that are good, true, and beautiful. (2) Do not speak even words that are good, true, and beautiful if by doing so you will cause trouble or hurt to another. (3) Do not indulge in argument. (4) Do not repeat any gossip or scandal. It does not matter whether it is true or not. (5) Do not use words uselessly. Mean every word you say. Think what you say, but do not say all you think. In this way, you will not only gain the reputation for being a man of your word, but you will in reality be one who speaks Truth.

Exercise Five

Put into practice the teachings given in this chapter, having first prepared your mind by prayer and meditation.

Make your life one long prayer, and your daily actions Religious Sacraments.

CHAPTER VI

PRAYER

It has been said that "Prayer is the Soul's deepest and Divinest conviction," yet to the Yogi prayer is even more than that. It is the indefinable something that forms the link between man and God. The prayer of the Yogi does not consist merely of words nicely phrased, and punctiliously correct, for it is the desire that prompts the prayer, and not the words that express it, that constitutes sincerity.

Every deep, sincere desire that has its birth in human joy or sorrow is a prayer in itself, and when man seeks to link his consciousness with the Universal Spirit such desires are as links—golden links that hold him fast to all that is good, true, and beautiful.

The Yogi idea of prayer is expressed very clearly by the following story. A little girl was once sorely troubled because her brother would set traps for birds. One day, in answer to her complaints, her father jokingly told her to "pray to God about it."

Later, when he noticed that she was very happy, he asked her if she had prayed. "Yes," she said, "I prayed three prayers. First I prayed that God would not let the birds go to the traps, then I prayed that the traps would not catch the birds, then I kicked all the traps to pieces."

The essence of prayer is sincerity. The efficacy of prayer depends upon the intensity of the desire prompting it. It is easy enough to study any branch of Occultism in order to gain mere theoretical knowledge, but it is when the student begins to apply that knowledge, when he commences to *practise* Occultism, that dangers beset his path.

The world is divided into two classes of people—those who know something of Occultism, and those who do not. In this case, we do not mean Mental knowledge, but inner recognition that springs from an awakened consciousness.

It must be clearly understood that Occultism is not Magic, and that the phenomena of Yoga is far above a mere practice of magical rites and ceremonies. The performance of magical rites and ceremonies are not in themselves different from the practice of certain branches of Yoga, but it is the attendant influences, both psychic and mental, that have the power of exerting Solar influences.

If the desire of the student is unselfish, spiritual, and sincere, he will, by such desires and thoughts,

create around him a protective Aura, that will be an impassable barrier to any influence or force that is not good, true, or beautiful.

It must ever be remembered that Occult forces that can be used for good, can also be used for evil.

There are certain rules the strict observance of which is essential to success in the practise of Yoga. These are :

(1) The place selected by the student for the study and practice of Occultism should be situated so that there is not likely to be much disturbance, and the Astral Light should be free from malignant influences.

(2) The student is required to possess a knowledge of the following subjects before he commences the practical and experimental study of Yoga : Physiology, Comparative Religion, Astrology, Numbers, and Colours. He may also read with advantage works on Spiritualism, Theosophy, etc. The student must on no account take up these studies as a school-boy would take up Latin. He must not attempt to thoroughly understand and to gain absolute knowledge of them, but he should read them with a view to gaining knowledge that will form a basis for further study and experiment.

(3) Thorough preparation must be made on three planes—physical, mental, and spiritual—before attempting to practise Yoga.

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(4) Seek and build perfect harmony.

(5) Absolute obedience must be rendered to one's Guru (if the student has not yet attracted a Guru, absolute obedience must be rendered to his own spiritual nature), and on no account should the student even think disobediently, for such obedience is an unbreakable Law of Occultism. There are definite reasons why disobedience is never heard of among those who study under a Guru.

(6) The student should set aside a certain time each day for prayer and meditation, regarding the time thus spent as necessary to his spiritual unfoldment, as food is to his physical body.

(7) "A disciple must recognise fully that the very thought of individual rights is only the outcome of the venomous snake of selfishness. He must never regard another man as a person who can be criticised and condemned, neither may he raise his voice in self defence or excuse."

The Universal consciousness, manifesting through all things, is the source from which all inspiration comes. Flowers turn their petals to the sun, trees vie with each other in the race skyward, even a dog will raise its head to the moon and howl, and mankind, savage or civilised, has always turned its attention to the heavens, seeking a power, a force, a *something* from which to gather inspiration, fortitude, and courage.

From the desire of man to find something to give him consolation in the time of trouble, protection in time of danger, has arisen the desire to tell one's innermost thoughts to an all-compassionate Deity, and so has arisen the sacrament of Prayer.

Man's earliest idea of prayer was confined to blood sacrifices and burnt offerings. As mankind progressed, and human intelligence broadened, man's conception of God changed, and his idea of prayer altered from merely sacrifice to that form of prayer at present used among certain African tribes.

He began to show God, through ceremonial actions, what he desired. He would go through the ceremony of an imaginary battle, culminating in an imaginary victory, in order that God, seeing them, would know what was wanted. In times of famine they would go through the imaginary process of carrying in the harvest. They would even go so far as to prepare for the fulfilment of their desires, showing that they *expected* an answer to their prayers.

The purpose of prayer is neither to tell God what we want nor beg for favours, yet these form the basis of every prayer. God, being all Wisdom, knows not only what we want, but also what is well for us to have. Being all Goodness, he will give to each Soul exactly what is necessary for the progression and spiritual benefit of that Soul, so that there is no need for us to beg, for we will be

given everything that is necessary to our spiritual unfoldment.

The real purpose of prayer is to express the Soul's sincere desire to shine in a light of Cosmic Consciousness, to express something of God's goodness, truth, and beauty.

Prayer raises the consciousness of man from the material to the spiritual, and bids him take hope. Each Soul is part of the great Over-Soul, a drop in the ocean of Spirit—a spark from the Eternal Fire. The more spiritual a man becomes the more he realises this. Such realisation awakens within him, not only a desire to be good, but the knowledge that he *is* good.

The world at present is cognisant of the fact that suggestion is largely responsible for failure or success in human undertakings. A business man may fail because he fears failure, and has allowed fear to dominate him until he finds its material expression in failure.

Much good in life is never materialised, because they who have it in their power to do good are not conscious of their spiritual strength.

A true friend gives courage and confidence—his words suggest peace and power. Such a friend is prayer, for real prayer opens the mind to the inflow of Divine Grace, and links the human consciousness to the Divine.

How does prayer work? That is a question around which many learned controversies have arisen. Some will say that prayer goes straight to God. Others will say that it is received by a guardian angel, or even a Saviour, through whom it is transmitted to the Deity. Others will say that prayer centres round and round man in his Astral environment, impressing itself upon his consciousness, until it finds expression in his life.

A Yogi would say that there are three kinds of prayer : (1) verbal prayer, (2) mental prayer, and (3) spiritual prayer. Verbal prayer is the kind of prayer uttered by the savage when he shakes his spear and utters his war-cry, shouting over and over again to the tribal gods to give him victory. Such a prayer consists of nothing more than a mere expression of that which is desired, and such a prayer certainly does nothing more than centre around the Astral body of the one who utters it.

Mental prayer reaches man's consciousness through his mind. Any prayer uttered with intensity of desire will bring about a state of vibration in the Astral body which will be transmitted to the physical body.

By mental prayer we do not only mean silent prayer, but any prayer that, starting in the Astral body, works through the mind, and finds expression on the material plane. The majority of prayers are of this kind.

Spiritual prayer is the opening of the mind of man to such an inflow of Divine Grace that the vibrations of the Astral body are intensified, and the consciousness raised to a high degree of spirituality. In such prayer there is no expectation, certainly no begging, for it is communion between man and God.

Many Theologians have attempted to teach man how to pray, and in all Ages, and in all Religions, much has been said concerning the use of prayer. To the Yogi prayer is not so much mere words as an ardent desire welling up within him, until it fills his whole being, and finds expression on the Astral plane in the form of thought-waves of powerful intensity.

It is better to offer strong waves of emotion and desire as prayer to God than words that are mere shells—devoid of feeling. The student must remember that prayer, to be of any use to oneself, must be strongly felt, must have its birth in strong emotion and intense desire.

Prayer, to be of help to another, is wasted if put in the form of words. Emotion is Nature's own prayer-book, and desire is her Rosary.

The mind of the evolved man is a prayer-wheel in which his emotions and desires revolve in the form of prayers.

Some men never look up, until illness lays them on their backs.

As food is necessary to the physical body, and study is necessary to the mind, so is prayer necessary to the spiritual life of man. The man who does not know how to pray does not know the meaning of communion with God. The province of prayer rightly belongs to Bhakta Yoga, that branch of the Yoga Philosophy that teaches the student how to attain perfection through the love of God. Prayer is so far-reaching in its effects that it finds its way into every sphere of life, and every phase of thought. People have strange ideas with regard to prayer. They either pray like parrots every night and morning, or they pray only when they are ill or in trouble.

The Yogi knows the necessity for daily prayer. To him it is not a custom, but an actual necessity, so the habit of daily prayer grows upon him, and his mind opens itself to the highest spiritual influence. In course of time the calm that is the result of meditation and prayer remains with him long after he has ceased praying, so that eventually he carries with him into the world the peace and power that he has drawn from the Cosmic Consciousness by prayer.

Do not regard prayer as something to be kept for special use. Pray every day, but do not pray unless you feel your spiritual nature trying to assert itself.

A Yogi prays in two ways—by attuning himself with the Universal consciousness, and by impressing upon his mind *Mantras* that, working through the Astral body, find expression in his daily life. We now give a few such Mantras for meditation :

(1) O Thou Infinite and Eternal Spirit, Thou who hast had no beginning, and will have no end, Thou whom the sword cannot pierce, whom fire cannot burn, whom air cannot dry, whom earth cannot crush, whom water cannot drown, grant unto me a realisation of my One-ness with Thee.

(2) Infinite Spirit, source of all that is good, true, and beautiful, help me, through thy ministering Spirits, to forge with my thoughts links that shall bind soul to soul in one great Brotherhood of Life.

(3) O Thou Universal One, who art good, true, and beautiful, enter into my life, fill me with a desire to be good, true, and beautiful. May my tongue speak only words that are true, may my hands do only that which is good, may my thoughts be always beautiful, that I may draw men nearer to Thee.

(4) Thou Infinite Spirit, who art the centre from which all things flow, teach me, through the ministry of Thy angels, to make my thoughts links that shall bind humanity together in one great

brotherhood, without distinction of Race, Creed, Caste, Colour, or Sex.

Fear, doubt, and worry find no place in the life of a Yogi, for when the consciousness is attuned positively he becomes incapable of receiving negative vibrations.

The whole of life is but a plan, of which man forms an integral part, and in which every soul has a mission to fulfil. Life as we know it on the earth is but a part, and a very small part at that, of all that great range of consciousness that can conceivably be called life.

Penetrating and interpenetrating the physical brain are the vibrations of the Astral brain, which constitutes man's invisible environment. Later in his studies of Yoga the student will learn much about this wonderful plane, as it is there that he will have many strange experiences, and much hard work.

Yoga, unlike most subjects, cannot be studied with the mind alone, for the study of Yoga means also the practise of Yoga, for which the student should be pure in body and strong in mind, with his Soul ever seeking goodness, truth, and beauty.

Exercise Six

Sit on the floor with legs crossed (as tailors do in this country). Inhale a deep breath, retain for as long as possible, and slowly exhale. Repeat, and while retaining the breath endeavour to attune your spiritual nature with the God-consciousness. Memorise, and frequently repeat, the Mantras given in this chapter. Put meaning into them, so that the ideas expressed therein will in time become part of your daily life.

Listen to and implicitly obey the voice of your spiritual self.

CHAPTER VII

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATION

EVERY day new and important discoveries are made, some of which substantiate teachings that have been familiar to Occultists, but ridiculed or wholly disbelieved by the world.

Environment is one of the two great factors of life. The entity that lives in the environment forms the second factor. They act and react upon each other. It is only when an entity reacts adequately to its environment that it flourishes. When it fails to do so, it deteriorates and finally perishes.

Many forms of life have disappeared from the face of the earth because they failed to change when environment changed. They failed to adapt themselves to the new conditions in which they were placed.

Throughout the vegetable kingdom we find a constant war being waged between the entity and environment. Many kinds of fish live to a considerable age so long as they can adapt themselves to the watery environment, but let the pools dry up

and the fish will perish, for it cannot react to its new environment.

Certain fish have, however, succeeded in adapting themselves to their new environment, and in course of time Nature has provided them with lung-like structures.

Far back in the world's history we find traces of the peculiar adaptation of fish to an entirely new environment, so that from a fish-like creature there evolved the Mammal. Another environment, that of increasing cold, compelled the development of animal life to assume a curious change, so that the reptile, reacting to its environment, grew, and exchanged its scales for fur, or, in the case of birds, for feathers. The giant Mammals of the pre-historic Age, that have disappeared from the face of the earth, failed to react to that change in their environment occasioned by the advent of man.

This was not because man grew to be physically stronger than they, but because he learned to raise his consciousness to a higher vibration, so that it functioned on the mental plane. It was a triumph of "mind over matter."

Even man is compelled to adapt himself to changes of environment. On every hand we see these changes taking place. The horse has given way to the automobile, the quill pen to the typewriter, and even man is slowly but surely changing,

for, like all other entities, he must react to environmental influences or be crushed out of existence.

Recent experiments in Science have proved the existence of many forces imperceptible to the physical sight, but forming, nevertheless, an important part of our invisible environment.

Ordinary man is a slave to environment, for ever striving to alter it to suit his needs, only to be met with disappointment.

The Yogi is master of his environment, and uses it to suit his purpose by the simple process of adapting himself to it, so that he gains all the advantages, and none of the disadvantages, of such environment.

Our invisible environment is immeasurably greater than our material world. The Yogi strives by a close study of Nature to learn the lessons written in the Book of Life, for he knows that Nature is a manifestation of God—the same God that men all over the world are seeking.

The visible environment embraces only a few octaves of vibratory frequencies, and only a three-dimensional existence, while the invisible environment embraces innumerable octaves of vibratory frequencies, an existence of more than three dimensions.

So well does the Yogi know of the existence of an invisible world, interpenetrating the physical, and

acting upon it, that he not only builds and thinks in accordance with its Laws, but gives it first place in his life.

The Yogi realises that the power of thought is one of the vibratory frequencies of the unseen world.

In the beginning of its life, the cactus-plant had leaves just like any other plant, but when its environment changed, and water became scarce, it dispensed with leaves, and shaped its stems so that they would hold water. In this way it continued to live and flourish, when other plants had succumbed to the environmental change.

Later, in order to defend itself against vegetable-eating animals, it developed spikes.

So man, if he would grow and flourish, must rise above his environment. This presents the problem of which environment should man endeavour to master. Man cannot master environment, but he can adapt himself to it in such a way as to use it to his own advantage.

Everything that is has its origin in the unseen world of spiritual forces. Penetrating and interpenetrating physical matter is the Astral substance, and it is upon this that the student must work if he would raise himself above his environment.

It is not sufficient to have ability, knowledge, and opportunity, one must have Will, energy, and determination, and, above and beyond all this,

he must have the Power Within, the sacred something which is part of the Universal consciousness.

Advanced Occultists, who have developed the ability to explore the Astral world, report that all things existing on the physical plane have a counterpart in the Astral, and that all that lives on the physical, when it dies, continues to live for a short time on the Astral plane.

The first requisite to the knowledge of practical Occultism is that the student should be free from prejudice and preconceived ideas, and that he should awaken within him the desire to attain at-onement with all life.

Innumerable entities occupy space, ever ready to influence man in order that they may gain experience of earth life.

Innumerable thoughts like shafts of light fly around him, seeking to pierce the armour of his Will, and enter his consciousness, so that they may find expression in action.

Many Planetary influences act and react upon the Astral body, moulding and shaping it so as to bring about astrological changes in his life. No one is wholly free from influence. Even when man has attained illumination, he is still the recipient of various influences, both psychic and material, that will, if he accepts them, produce considerable change in his life.

So great is the influence brought to bear upon us in our daily life that it would seem impossible to rise above it, were it not for the fact that on every hand we see examples of the triumph of Will over environment.

Much has been written concerning the Law of Karma, and the doctrine of Re-incarnation. In the beginning there is the Universal consciousness, which in course of evolution manifests successively through the vegetable and animal kingdoms. Then it becomes individualised, and manifests in the human kingdom.

At first such consciousness is little above the animal level. Then after an earth life, during which it gains knowledge by experience, it passes into the Astral world through the gateway of Death, where it learns something of the limitations of the physical body, and works out much of its evil Karma (Karma which is the fruits of actions, either good or bad, resulting from earthly experience), preparatory to incarnating in a physical body.

If the individualised Soul has made good use of its earth life, it is given better opportunities in its next incarnation, in which it will have to do those things which it should have done, and will have to learn from experience to know good from evil. At the end of that earth life the soul will again go into the Astral, through the gateway of

Death, and will go through many experiences that will bring out all that is good in the character that has been developed in the physical body.

Each time a Soul incarnates in a physical body it brings with it the nucellus from which its earthly character will develop, for the experiences the Soul learns when on earth are crystallised into a psychic something that forms part of the consciousness that is the " Power Within " all living things.

Man creates his environment by his thoughts, and is responsible to his higher nature for the limitations that such environment imposes upon him. Thought is like a seed, which, being sown in the Garden of the Soul, grows into an act which, strengthened by repetition, becomes the Tree of Habit (of good or evil), to which man is chained by his desires.

Religious Teachers of all Ages have laid great stress upon the necessity for purity of thought, as a preliminary to purity of action. Eastern psychology definitely proves that man has within his Astral body the seeds of both success and failure, and that it depends upon his degree of spiritual evolution as to which he develops and brings into being on the physical plane.

Reality in thought springs from an inherent desire to manifest Truth, so that words have to fit themselves on a framework of strong desire—not, as

in the West, strong desires largely trying to fit themselves on a framework of conventional words that ill express the strength of the desire.

Complete mastery of the physical body is the first step on the Path of Wisdom, for it is only when man controls his body and rises above it that he becomes aware of the enormous power over which he, as a Soul, has dominion.

Science has done many wonderful things, but Science cannot prevent the working of Natural Law. Science cannot create that something that we call "consciousness."

Biologists tell us that Protoplasm is the physical basis of life, and that, when dead, it yields up Carbon, Oxygen, Nitrogen, Phosphor, and Sulphur ; but Science has not succeeded in analysing Protoplasm, for it is a "*living* substance," and Life is a manifestation of God.

The story is told of a Scientist who discovered a process of making artificial wheat. He called all the farmers in the district together, and told them of his discovery. The farmers challenged him to set the artificial wheat by the side of some natural wheat, or to grind it into flour. This the Scientist did, with great success. At last one farmer suggested that the artificial wheat be sown, and the seed from it allowed to grow. This the Scientist could not do, for the artificial wheat had no seed.

Man may make the outer shell, but he cannot create "consciousness," for consciousness is Life, and Life is God.

The mind must be kept free from prejudice, and preconceived ideas, and the thought must be held to the central idea of goodness, truth, and beauty.

The Soul has no Sex, for Sex is but a vibration of the Cosmic Consciousness; inasmuch as everything has its own vibration, either high, low, or medium, so everything has an expression of Sex.

Truth is never changing, Beauty is ever present, and Goodness is the mission of everything.

Evil is but a mistaken way of expressing good. The man who seeks Wisdom always finds folly; yet the fool who seeks folly often finds Wisdom.

Do not try to jump into Heaven, to leave the earth behind you, while you hang on to the Spiritual World with both hands, but, standing with your feet firmly placed on the earth, reach out and grasp Heaven, making yourself the link between Heaven and earth.

If fools around you sneer about God, cling all the firmer to your own ideas of Religion, and your conception of God.

When others doubt you, have faith in yourself, for you are a part of the Universal Spirit.

Exercise Seven

This chapter contains odd sentences, each expressing an Occult Truth, and is given for the purpose of causing the student to *think*.

Read through the chapter carefully, and select a thought. Concentrate upon it until you have found its inner meaning.

The student who cannot direct his thoughts to a particular thing, and by concentration gain an inner knowledge of that thing, has not learned how to think.

Remember that THOUGHTS ARE THINGS.

May the Peace of the Universal Spirit be with you.

THE END.

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The Divine Message requires neither introduction nor recommendation, as it is in itself quite enough to meet and answer any and every need, though comprising but a few pages only. I therefore send it forth into the world as it is, merely adding to it my heartfelt, sincere wish that it may soothe the weary hearts of my brothers and sisters, and make their heavily laden lives light, pleasant, and successful.

Merciful Lord ! may Thy blessings rest on the eager souls who study it, on those who may lightly read it, and also on those who may pass it by. Peace !

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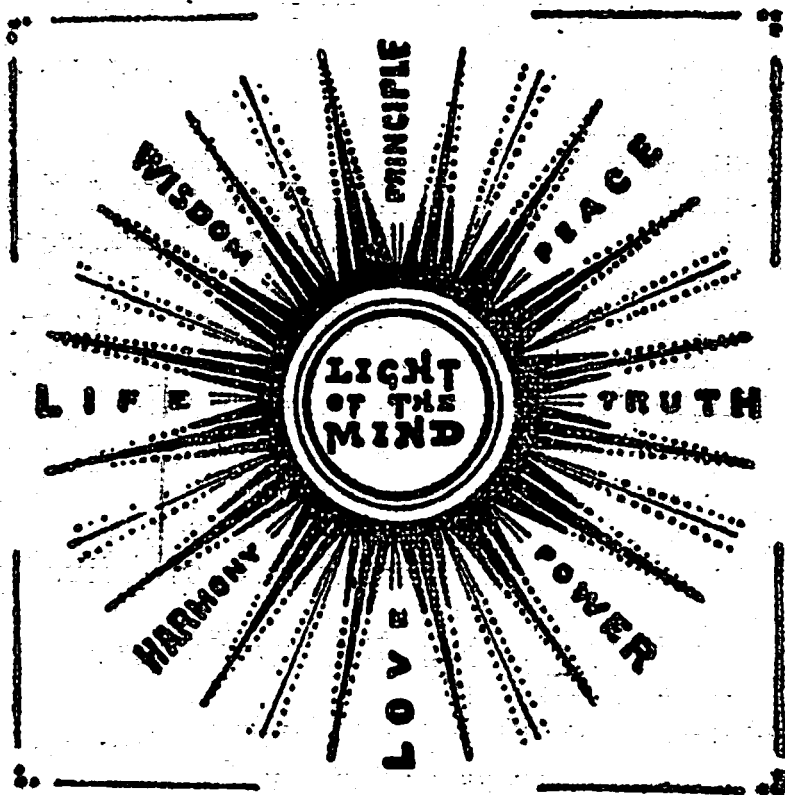
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