

# **RAJA YOGA MEDITATION STEP-BY-STEP**



## **TEACHERS-GUIDE**

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# LESSON 1

## **RAJA YOGA MEDITATION STEP BY STEP**

The 'Raja Yoga Meditation Step by Step' course will help you in learning how to meditate, it presents a structure. Within this framework each one is given guidelines on how to meditate creatively and successfully.

Of course every structure has its limits and it is never absolute. The wonderful thing about Raja Yoga is that it is a creative process which is individual and unique for everyone. Raja Yoga enables everyone to have their own experiences on the self and God. Nonetheless, it's good to have a certain structure to guide and assist you. We will build up the structure in 4 lessons, step by step.

\* One of the first questions you can ask yourself, even before you start meditating, is:

### **WHY DO I WANT TO MEDITATE?**

What is your personal reason in wanting to learn meditation? What is it you want to achieve through meditation?

In the course we will take time to experiment with the material. In this way it will not be just theory, but an experience as well. So let's take a minute to think about this question: Why do I want to meditate?

*(Teacher: Take a minute of silence, then ask a few of the students what their reasons are. After asking the students you can give some suggestions, such as:)*

Reasons to meditate can be: to become peaceful, to improve your power of concentration, to reduce stress and anxiety, to build up inner strength. Or maybe you feel depressed from time to time and want to know what is the reason for that and what the solution might be. Maybe you would like to get to know your own feelings a little better, to find out who you really are. Or maybe it's a relationship with God that you want.

Your reasons for wanting to meditate will probably change from time to time. When you have deeper insight into yourself, there will be different things you will want to know. And from time to time when you ask yourself this question 'Why do I want to meditate?', you will notice other answers, other reasons, other perspectives. The more you understand why it is that you are doing something, the clearer your goal is, the more powerful your motivation will be and the more directed will your efforts be in reaching that goal.

### **BALANCE: OUTSIDE / INSIDE (matter) (spirituality)**

One of the most important reasons for meditation is to restore the balance between the inside and outside world. Most of us are rather out of balance in this respect.



Generally our attention is focussed more on the things around us, rather than on the things inside us. We think about our work, our friends and family members and we are constantly subjected to sounds, to things we see and information, all of which we are expected to respond to. If we don't have a strong sense of our inner world (identity), we are at risk of being led instead of having the power to lead our own lives. We then feel that we are at the mercy of many external influences and feel out of control.

The result of not having a sense of your own identity is that you become dependant on others. It then becomes more important what they think or feel rather than what you yourself think or feel. Instead of you being able to influence in a positive way, you yourself are being influenced. Quite often the influence is not in the direction of your choice, which will make you feel a victim.

When the situation is stronger than you are, you will be distracted by it. The result is a lack of concentration and clarity. All these are symptoms of living out of tune with your inner self.

That's why Brahma Kumaris is an institution which focusses primarily on the soul and gives lessons on how to discover and develop inner, spiritual powers and qualities. So, no bodily exercises are taught. Which isn't to say that Brahma Kumaris does not underline the importance of a healthy body. After all, the soul expresses itself better in a healthy body. Healthy food, exercise and relaxation are of importance. But there are so many institutions who already pay a lot of attention to these aspects: Weight Watchers, fitness centres, aerobics, saunas, massage centres, etc, that the Brahma Kumaris centres do not need to cater for these needs.

So, whenever we use words like 'beautiful', 'strong', 'clean', 'mature', etc. we are talking about the inside of the self: the soul.

\* Let's take a minute to think about ourselves.

When I think about myself, what do I think of? Do I think about the way I look: My body, my form, appearance? Do I think about my relationships, my work, my role, my status? Or do I think about my inner qualities, my character? Can I see myself apart from people and the things around me? Can I see myself the way I really am? (*minute of silence*)

You could say that meditation is the art of staying close to yourself, that is, to your pure spiritual self. Through this, feelings of confidence and inner peace emerge, whatever the circumstances may be. Friends, relationships, jobs, material possessions, etc. are all subject to change. The only constant factor in your life is you, that is the real 'I', the core of your being. That's why it's so important to get to know your real self very well, so that you'll be in control under all conditions.

There is a big difference between the things that pass and the things that are permanent. Things that pass are: situations, outer appearance, clothes, the different roles we play (father, teacher, boss, etc.) and even your body. However important these things may be, ultimately they are perishable. The imperishable include: your real self, your original powers and qualities like peace, love, happiness and your state of self-respect or self-worth.

\* Check how much time you spend during the day on the perishable and how much time you spend on the imperishable and eternal matters.  
(*minute of silence*)



## **WHAT IS MEDITATION?**

**\* Inner dialogue**

**\* Inner healing**

**\* Recharging the battery of the soul  
through connection with  
the Highest Source of spiritual energy**

### INNER DIALOGUE

Meditation is an inner dialogue, a conversation with yourself. In our lives we spend quite a lot of time talking to others. When we are looking for answers to a question, we tend to ask others: "What would you do if you were me?"

But, of course, the other person is not you and in the end you will have to decide for yourself. The more you get to know yourself, the more you find out about what it is you really want. That's why an inner dialogue is so important. It's a conversation, a relationship, with the one whom you really are.

During these inner conversations you get to know yourself: your deep desires, your strengths, talents and qualities. But also your weaknesses become visible. It's important to learn to look at all these aspects of your personality. A lot has happened to the soul during the course of time. There are lots of inner patterns, ideas and misunderstandings that, consciously or unconsciously, play a role in our lives. Ideas about our role, status, religion, colour, creed and culture have dictated our lives to a great extent. These concepts have made us 'body-conscious', developing in us inferiority or superiority complexes, intolerance, fear, insensitivity, disappointment and loneliness. All these types of experiences have led us away from who we really are: the original, complete individual, that is, the eternal soul.

You can read books, argue with others or follow one course after the other, but in the end you will only find your real self in the silence of meditation. For no-one can tell you exactly who you are. You can only experience this for yourself. That's why it's so important to take time for this.

### INNER HEALING

Having a silent conversation with yourself is very healing. In fact the word 'meditation' comes from the Latin 'mederi' which means 'to heal'. Meditation literally makes you 'whole' again. When we don't know ourselves, we feel lost: Who am I? Where am I going? What should I be doing? Who can I trust? What is true and what is false? Your 'heart' may tell you one thing but your 'head' tells you something else. Whatever I thought was right yesterday, no longer feels right today.

No-one can solve these questions for you except you yourself. Your own experience is more powerful than anything else. That's why Raja Yoga pays so much attention to the experience of meditation. That's where the answers lie. When you begin to experience yourself as a spiritual personality, others may try to undermine you, but no-one can destroy this inner reality.

### RECHARGING THE BATTERY

But meditation is especially about recharging yourself with inner strength. This can be achieved by connecting with the Highest Source of spiritual energy. Spiritual power is very essential. Lack of spiritual energy is the reason for just about every problem we have in



the world of today, individually and collectively: depression, irritation, stress, boredom, isolation, conflict. It all comes down to a lack of spiritual power: the power to co-operate, to tolerate, to be flexible, to be able to forgive, to be able to face difficulties sensibly, etc.

\* Now check your own condition for a minute. Are you powerful or are there weaknesses?  
(*minute of silence*)

**INGREDIENTS OF RAJA YOGA MEDITATION:**

- \* **Method**
- \* **Practice**
- \* **Attention**
- \* **Experimentation**

METHOD

One of the main ingredients of Raja Yoga meditation is a clear method, such as this Step by Step course.

PRACTICE

The second ingredient is practice. Practice is something we ought to do daily. It's like that with almost everything. If you want to learn how to play the piano, then first you must practice scales. Regularity is also very important. If you don't practice consistently, at one point it will feel as though you have to start all over again. It's the same with meditation. Through consistent practice you will experience yourself to be improving. Changes will start to happen in your life. Meditation will become much more than just sitting down every now and then for a bit of peace. It will become part of your whole life, a way of living.

ATTENTION

It's better to meditate regularly than only once a week for a couple of hours. Regular and consistent meditation keeps you alert. You will find that you won't have to work so hard to get rid of all the 'cobwebs' in your mind, that is, the wasteful impressions you have to clear away before the actual meditation can begin. Regular moments of introspection during the day sustain the experience you had during your morning meditation. If however, you plunge headfirst into your daily activities without regular pauses to re-affirm who you are, you lose yourself in activities. Attention is needed. In the last lesson we will go into more detail on how to keep balance during your daily activities.

EXPERIMENTATION

To experiment with everything you learn is very important. In this way the theory becomes practical and life becomes a joy, that is, worth living. See your mind as a laboratory in which you can experiment with new thoughts, feelings and ideas. Experimenting is an individual, incognito process. Allow yourself the time to understand and practice these ideas.

**Step 1:  
SOUL CONSCIOUSNESS**



\* ***I am a soul***



The very first step in meditation is to become soul conscious. This has been introduced already in the introduction course. The question is however, have you really experienced yourself to be a soul and have you been able to sustain this experience? Visualisation helps to create and sustain this consciousness. Visualisation means creating an image of something in your mind.

\* Let's experiment with visualising ourselves as the point of spiritual light in the centre of the forehead. *(silence and commentary)*

*I turn my attention within... I disconnect from the things around me... from sounds, the things I see, people around me... I focus all my attention on myself... I see myself as a point of spiritual light in the centre of the forehead... I visualise this point as a star... a sparkling star... clear and pure... very powerful... I, the soul, am eternal and imperishable... I am the spark of living energy giving life to the body... I sparkle like a star in the centre of the forehead... all my attention is focused on this one point... on the one whom I really am... I am light... a point of living light...*

Visualising ourselves to be a point of light is very important because for so long we have thought of ourselves in terms of bodies. Through visualisation you create a new and pure image of your true identity. The more you remind yourself that you are a soul, the more the original memories, experiences and feelings will emerge. It is like an inward journey, a journey of recognition through which you return to your own essence.

#### **WHAT IS A SOUL?**

- \* **Mind**
- \* **Intellect**
- \* **Sanskars**

What exactly is a soul?

The soul is a point of spiritual light and consists of three subtle organs. In the same way that the body has organs (eyes, nose, ears, mouth, etc) so too the soul has subtle organs. These organs are non-physical and have different functions.

First of all there is the mind. In the mind all our thoughts, feelings, emotions and experiences become manifest.

\* So look inside for a minute. What do you see? *(minute of silence)*

#### **MIND**

Things you are becoming aware of are inside the mind. The mind is like a screen on which all sorts of thoughts, images, feelings, experiences, etc. are constantly being projected. The mind's function is to think. It even goes on at night (dreams). When the mind works automatically, without a particular direction or aim, you could say that it is on 'auto-pilot'. The mind is then working according to the pattern of accumulated habits. In which case we are not using the intellect.

#### **INTELLECT**

The intellect is the organ within the soul that can distinguish between the different thoughts in the mind. The intellect judges the thoughts and decides along which line the mind should think. So, the intellect allows us to determine the types of thoughts and



feelings that we want. That's why Raja Yoga meditation puts great importance on the intellect. The intellect steers the thoughts, it gives a certain direction to the mind. If, for instance, the intellect gives the mind the order to think about peace, the mind will start pondering on thoughts and experiences of peace that emerge from the sanskars.

### SANSKARS

The sanskars are like a gigantic archive, in which all our past experiences are recorded, as well as the eternal recording of our original qualities such as peace. The more focussed the intellect is, the longer the mind is able to think about the quality of peace and the deeper the experience of peace will be.

During meditation mind and intellect co-operate. The intellect consciously focusses on the most original sanskars thereby emerging our pure identity of peace, love, power, wisdom and happiness.

The foundation of meditation is a stable state of soul consciousness. To create this stage you can use this simple basic exercise. The exercise consists of four questions you ask yourself and give an answer to.

***BASIC EXERCISE TO BECOME SOUL CONSCIOUS:***

- 1. Who am I?***
- 2. What is my form?***
- 3. What are my original qualities?***
- 4. Where do I come from?***

These questions are important because they all have to do with the soul, the real 'I'. Answering these questions forces one to think deeply about the soul. The success of this exercise depends on how long you are able to think about these questions without being distracted by the things around you or by the other thoughts within your mind.

So, apart from these questions being a simple method to help you to become soul conscious, they are also a training for the mind. Even if you don't have an experience right away, just keep on practising. See it as a kind of gymnastics for the soul, in the same way you would train your body to get into shape after a few years of inactivity. At first it might be tough. You may get a few muscle cramps, but after a while you get back into shape again. It's the same with the undisciplined intellect.

A golden rule to completing these four questions is that if you have a waste thought in between these questions, you have to go back to question 1. In this way you learn to build up a concentrated soul conscious stage step by step.

Try to answer the questions with understanding. Try, as much as possible, to really experience your answers. Visualise, experiment, experience. Don't go to the next question until you feel you have really completed the preceding question.

If you practice this exercise well, the next step in meditation will be easy. So, try to do this exercise at least twice a day. Start and end your day with this exercise. Take your time, at least ten minutes. Don't worry if you don't get past question 2. Slowly build it up. You will find that these questions will serve you as a framework into which you can build your own creative meditations. Every day you can create a new experience. You will never be bored. See to it that you sit in a quiet place where you are not interrupted by phones or



people.

\* Now, let's practice the four questions.

*I sit relaxed... in silence... and disconnect myself from the things around me... the next ten minutes or so are for me alone... to know myself... to be with myself... I don't have to think about others... I don't need to worry about the things I still have to do... I ask myself:*

*Who am I?... who am I really?... automatically my mind focusses towards the one I really am... the soul... the incorporeal light in the centre of my forehead... the soul who is eternal... the spiritual self... the soul who is imperishable... the eternal point of light.*

*Inside I, the soul, lie all my experiences... my whole identity... what I am is inside this tiny point of living light... this is who I really am... immortal... eternal... I let these thoughts penetrate my mind... I am immortal... living light... incorporeal... I am not matter... I am not this body... and I ask myself:*

*What is my form?... I am a point... very small, but so powerful... a point of spiritual light... I shine like a star... like a pure, clear star of light... I visualise myself as this star... and I realise that I, the soul, control my body from within this point in the centre of my forehead... I am a point, radiating light... and I ask myself:*

*What are the original qualities of I, the soul?... my original quality is of pure divine peace... peace is my original nature... the closer I get to myself, the deeper I go into my original peace... peace, my original strength... I am no longer distracted by all the things around me... peace and silence... peace is such a great power... the power of my true self... the power to be stable under all conditions... I allow this feeling of pure peace... the peace of my original nature to flow through me... peace belongs to me... peace is me... and when I am close to my real self, I notice how strong I am... I have strength... the power to be myself whenever I want... beyond influences... I am completely inside... very quiet... very peaceful... at one with myself... peace and silence.*

*In silence I experience a feeling of love... love for who I really am... understanding of myself... acceptance of myself... respect for my original eternal being... when I see myself in this way, love emerges... and confidence... and I ask myself:*

*Where do I come from?... I realise that my original home is far, very far away from this world of sound and matter... it is the world of eternal peace... the world of light... of silence... the world beyond of stillness and peace... this is my silent, eternal home... this is where I come from... the world of silent peace and light... peace and light.*

Om Shanti.

### OM SHANTI

Om Shanti: Two words you all know by now. We say 'Om Shanti' to one another to remind ourselves and others of our original nature of peace. It is important to realise that Om means 'I am' and Shanti means 'peace'. Each time you say 'Om Shanti' it's important to understand and feel it, otherwise it becomes a hollow phrase.

It is also important to learn to meditate with eyes open. You will find in the long run that it will be much easier to keep up a meditative consciousness during your daily activities. Whilst meditating you can focus your eyes on the poster of the Supreme Soul who, like us, is also a star of light.

Om Shanti.



## LESSON 2

\* Let's start with a short meditation the way we learnt in Lesson 1.

*I sit comfortably... and focus my attention inwards... I concentrate on who I really am... and ask myself:*

*Who am I?... I am a soul... a spiritual being... I am eternal... I will never die... I will always live... I, the soul, am the living being inside the forehead... I give life to the body... I am the one who creates thoughts and feelings... and I ask myself:*

*What is my form?... I, the soul, am a point... a point of spiritual light... I am like a spark of living energy, very small, but very clear and bright... I visualise myself as this beaming star in the centre of the forehead... I am this star... a small star in a large body... and I ask myself:*

*What are my original qualities?... my basic quality is peace... peace is my origin... deep inside there is peace... quietness and silence... detached from any disturbance or influence... free from negativity... deep inside I am completely myself... relaxed and peaceful... completely at peace with myself.*

*In this silence I find the original power to be who I really am... stable... clear... concentrated... independant... I allow these qualities to penetrate my mind... and realize that this is my original nature... whatever happens around me, I am stable, peaceful and strong... the more I learn to be peaceful, the more my selfrespect and confidence will grow... love for myself increases... step by step... a warm feeling of love and recognition... love for who I really am... love for myself, the eternal soul... I love myself... again and again I come back to these thoughts about who I really am... about my qualities... and I ask myself:*

*Where do I come from?... instantly my thoughts travel upwards... I remember my original home of peace... the world of sweet silence... my original home, the soul world... a dimension of light, spiritual light... in this world I can be who I really am.*

*I now return slowly to the world of matter and to the consciousness of this room... but I hold on to the feeling of peace, love and inner strength.*

Om Shanti.

How did it go this week? Did you practise the 4 questions? Was it hard to concentrate? Was the mind stable?

### CREATING EXPERIENCES

\* **Choice**

\* **Concentration**

Meditation is the art of being able to create your own experiences. We are not always aware of the fact that we create our own experiences anyway on the basis of the thoughts that we create in our mind. Our thoughts determine our consciousness. Our consciousness determines our mood. Our mood is how we feel and these feelings create an experience.

### CHOICE

It is important to realize that we always have a choice in what we think. We are free to think whatever we like in any given circumstances. And these thoughts create our feelings and emotions. In some cultures, for instance, the death of a relative is celebrated. It all depends on what we think about death. That's why it is said: As is our vision, so is our world.



The second thing to realize is that we are influenced by whatever we focus on. The mental link with a person, an object or a situation brings up certain feelings. We all know how this works: when we think about something negative, negative thoughts will emerge in the mind. These thoughts lead to feelings. And feelings give us an experience. In the same way we can also connect with something positive through which the mind will create positive feelings. The choice is ours.

### CONCENTRATION

The longer you manage to stay in a certain consciousness, the deeper the experience of those thoughts will be. Focussing on a certain subject is done by the intellect. When the mind and the intellect are stable in one consciousness, this is called concentration. It is only when we are concentrated that we can have an experience.

So meditation is: mind and intellect are stable in a spiritual consciousness. We learn to focus our attention on the pure essence of our being, the peaceful soul, and we experience this. The reason why we find it difficult at times to concentrate is because the intellect has become weak. There are many things that influence our intellect in a negative way. The obvious things are: liquor, drugs and cigarettes. But also watching television for long periods of time; overwhelming emotions, such as: anger, fear, worries, sorrow or desires. They also cloud the intellect.

If you are not attentive during the day and do not filter the impressions that come to you, your intellect becomes polluted. When you want to meditate at the end of such a day, you will have to struggle for a while to get rid of all the unwanted impressions.

|   |
|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">* <i>Yoga = Connection</i><br/>* <i>Connection = Influence</i><br/>* <i>Influence = Experience</i></p> |
|---|

The word yoga literally means connection or union. As we saw, you are influenced by whatever you connect yourself with. So, whenever you feel a certain emotion coming up, you can ask yourself: "Hey, what's happening? What did I connect my thoughts with that makes me feel the way I feel? I did that myself. I chose to connect myself with something or someone."

A Raja Yogi consciously chooses with whom or with what to connect the mind. A Raja Yogi controls the mind. 'Raja' means king, the master of the self.

We are constantly connecting our mind to someone or something. In a sense we are all constant 'yogis'. So, being a yogi isn't difficult at all. The question is however: what kind of yogi are you? Or, in other words: what do you connect yourself with? A Raja Yogi learns to connect his intellect with his original personality of peace, love, purity and power and with the Supreme Being.

\* Let's experiment with yoga.

*Sit relaxed and imagine you are in your own home... now you go to the kitchen... look around you... it's all familiar... you see the cupboards, the sink, the stove, the fridge... now walk to the tap... open the tap... put your right hand under the tap... feel the water flowing over your hand... now turn off the tap and dry your hand.*



This must have been quite easy. We all know our own kitchen. We only practiced this exercise for a minute, but imagine that we were to concentrate very intensely and do this exercise for half an hour. The experience of being in your kitchen will then become very realistic. Every detail will become 'visible', you just 'feel' the whole atmosphere of the kitchen.

This is what yoga is about. It is connection, influence, experience. You know the surroundings, you travel there with the power of your intellect. You think about it and you have the experience of being there.

So, the soul doesn't have to leave the body to actually experience another place or even another dimension. You were here in this room, yet your attention was elsewhere.

**Step 1:**  
**THE JOURNEY INSIDE**  
**\*Raja Yoga: The conscious choice for a connection with your original self**

The first step in Raja Yoga is the conscious choice for a connection with your original self. Which means you do not connect yourself with all the ideas you might have had about yourself: I am a man, I am a student, I am funny, I am charming, I am a Christian, etc. These are concepts, ideas that have been formed in the course of time. They are not your original 'you', your spiritual identity. So, the first step in Raja Yoga is connecting with your original self, the soul.

**Step 2:**  
**THE JOURNEY UPWARD**  
**\* The spiritual dimension**  
**\* The power of silence**  
**\* The experience of essence**

### THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

The second step in Raja Yoga is the journey upward, the journey to the spiritual dimension. This dimension, called the soul world, is a non-physical world. A world in which time, sound and movement do not exist. In this original home of all souls, we can experience ourselves as we truly are in all eternity. Here we are separate from limitations such as form, role, age, race, religion, expectations, time and space. Here, in this world of silence, we can be who we truly are without any disturbance.

### THE POWER OF SILENCE

For this connection with your own self, silence is very important. All around us there is noise, especially when you live in a city. There is constantly the noise of people, cars, radios, etc. So, what is silence?

The power of silence enables us to disconnect from everything around and even from the 'noise' inside the mind. In silence we can journey to the silent home. In this world of silence we are able to heal, to experience ourselves as we really are. Silence is an enormous power. It is only in silence that we are able to know ourselves and all the secrets of life. Silence is like a weapon, a shield against negativity.



Silence is an inner power. It means being able to connect with the essence of our being, with that original point of peace, of harmony, of wholeness. Silence is a quiet place behind all thoughts, feelings and emotions. From this place of quiet I can, like an observer, look at the world from a distance.

Silence is something you can build up inside of yourself, you can create space for silence. In this space you can build up a stock of silence, a reservoir which can always be used at the time of need. Raj Yogis have a 'meditation room' inside their mind, a place of silence they can always go to.

\* Let's see if we can be completely silent for just one minute. (*minute of silence*)

Was it possible? No thoughts at all? Making the mind completely silent is not the main practice of Raja Yoga. Raja Yoga is the art of stabilising the mind in one consciousness, for instance peace. When you think deeply about peace, you'll find your mind will gradually become more and more quiet, until only a few essential thoughts remain. It then feels as though you can 'float' on those thoughts. Silence comes automatically when you learn to focus your attention on one idea. So, learning to give your thoughts the right direction takes you into silence.

#### THE EXPERIENCE OF ESSENCE

Going back to the essence gives power. Think about the essential oils of flowers. These oils are very concentrated. Just a drop is enough to spread a lot of fragrance. In the same way, our concentrated thoughts are also very powerful. If, on the contrary, we go into wasteful expansion, we lose power.

**\* Fuel**  
**\* Churning**  
**\* Visualisation**

#### FUEL

For the journey upward we need fuel, first of all to get off the ground and secondly to be able to remain in our place of destination, at least, for a while.

\* What do you think this 'fuel' is? Let's think about this. (*Short silence. Students give their answers*)

Powerful, positive thoughts are our 'fuel'. Positive thoughts 'lift us up', negative thoughts make us heavy. So, our thoughts are our fuel. As long as you have uplifting, powerful thoughts, you will be able to stay in a spiritual consciousness. When your positive stock runs out, then you fall back into ordinary thinking. The art of the spiritual upward journey is to have a large stock of powerful, positive thoughts and to keep on increasing this stock.

#### CHURNING

For this you need spiritual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge is the basic material that the intellect works on to produce pure, refined thoughts. These thoughts are the fuel for the upward journey. This is what meditation is all about. That's why Raja Yoga meditation is not to make the mind empty, bringing it to a point of blankness. In fact, it is focussing the mind on an spiritual quality, churning that quality or idea, refining it until you come to its essence. And that essence gives you the power to lift up.



## VISUALISATION

In lesson 1 we have done a visualisation exercise. We have visualised the soul. This is important because the soul, the Supreme Soul and the soul world, though they do exist and are real, are at the same time invisible. Visualisation can help make the invisible 'visible', thereby making it easier to understand and experience. So, the journey upwards consists of three elements: fuel (pure, positive thoughts), churning and visualisation.

\* Let's end this lesson doing a meditation on traveling to the soul world.

*In silence I focus on the point of energy in the centre of my forehead... I concentrate my thoughts on my original form... I, the eternal point of living energy... my form is like a point... a tiny point of light... I shine like a star... I visualise myself as this tiny star, radiating light in the centre of my forehead... I am this point of light... I am a soul... a point of living energy... in silence I ask myself:*

*What are my original qualities?... the more I focus my attention inward, the more I experience silence and inner peace... peace is my original nature... peace is me... pure, deep peace... the peace of I, the eternal soul... whatever happens around me, I remain peaceful... I have the power of stability... the power of concentrating my thoughts... the power to be at one with myself... clear and free from external influence.*

*I travel far above this world of time, matter and sound... I see my concentrated thoughts like a beam of light going further and further upwards... and now I come to a world of silence... stillness and golden light... I have come home again... my home of peace... the home of all souls... in this world I am completely myself... I am free... a point of light... the very essence of my being... pure light... pure peace... pure love radiating all around... I am in an ocean of peace... an ocean of stillness... at one with myself... in this golden world of pure light... no sound... no movement... complete stillness... complete, eternal peace.*

Om Shanti.



# LESSON 3

\* Let's start with meditation on the basis of the 4 questions.

*I turn my thoughts inward... I pay no attention to the things around me... I direct all my thoughts towards the one whom I really am... I ask myself:*

*Who am I?... I am a soul... an eternal, immortal soul... I, the soul, will always live... I am the living being... the spark of living energy in the centre of the forehead... I realize that this is the one whom I really am... for so long I have thought that I was the body, my form, my role... but now I know that I am an eternal soul and that my form is a point of light.*

*I, the soul, shine like a star... like a bright star in the centre of the forehead... I visualize myself... I see myself as this shining star of living light... all my attention is focused on this point of light... I ask myself:*

*What are my original qualities?... what is my most original nature?... I used to be completely peaceful... free from expectations and desires... free from tension and disappointments... completely myself... completely relaxed... in harmony with myself and my surroundings... and when I look inside I try to locate these feelings... I allow these feelings to grow and to flow through me... my original sanskars... my original personality of deep peace... I enjoy these feelings... I am experiencing peace... within myself... the quiet and the peace of my own being.*

*This inner peace is my greatest power, my greatest treasure... it is like a shield of spiritual light around me... this pure peace makes it easy to be myself... independent and free... and whilst hearing and seeing the things around me, I am not influenced by any of them... I am at one with myself, my original nature of soul-consciousness... and I ask myself:*

*Where do I come from?... I let my thoughts travel upward, like a concentrated beam of light... I travel to my original home of peace... a world above the stars... a dimension of spiritual light... a world in which I can be who I really am... I connect to my own origin... the essence of peace and purity... here I am completely stable... nothing can influence me... I am peace... peace... peace.*

*Slowly I return to the consciousness of my physical body... the material world... but I remain introspective... I remember my original nature of peace.*

Om Shanti.

In this third lesson we will experience the relationship with the Supreme. Through the practice of Raja Yoga meditation we are able to establish a mental link with the Source of Life. Through this mental link we are reminded of our own original powers and qualities. Qualities that are already in everyone of us, but need to be reinforced.

So, let's quickly revise the steps that we've covered so far:

- |   |
|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Step 1:</b><br/><b>THE JOURNEY INWARD</b><br/><b>* CREATING A SPIRITUAL SELF IMAGE</b><br/><b>* SOUL CONSCIOUSNESS</b><br/>- Positive thoughts<br/>- Clear mind<br/>- Free from inner conflicts<br/>- Introspection</p> |
|---|



## CREATING A SPIRITUAL SELF IMAGE

The very first step is the inward journey, soul consciousness. Soul consciousness means creating a spiritual self image. It's important to emphasize the word *spiritual*, because we all have a self image. The question is however, what kind of self image do you have?

\* Let's take a minute to think about this question. How did I previously see myself? What are the first thoughts that come to mind when I think of myself? (*minute of silence*)

Were the thoughts that came to mind spiritual ones? Or did you think of your role, form, status and relations with others?

It's important to create a spiritual self image because we want to establish a relationship with the Supreme Soul. As the Supreme is completely soul conscious, it's essential we stabilize ourselves in soul consciousness. A relationship with the Supreme Soul is a relationship from soul to Soul, purely through thoughts and feelings. It's an exchange without eyes, hands, feet, mouth, etc. Here's where the importance of the practice of the 4 questions comes in, because they help us to become stable in a soul conscious stage.

## SOUL CONSCIOUSNESS

How do you know if you are really soul conscious? To answer this question, here are several aspects you can check:

### POSITIVE THOUGHTS

Are my thoughts positive or negative? When you are soul conscious you only have positive thoughts about yourself and others. No criticism, jealousy, fear, hopelessness, etc.

### CLEAR MIND

Are my thoughts clear and clean? There should not be any confusion, lack of concentration or waste thoughts. In soul consciousness the mind and the intellect are clear and concentrated.

### FREE FROM INNER CONFLICTS

Is my mind free from conflicts, free from tension? There are a variety of conflicts. For instance when our conscience bites, guilt or shame are experienced. Confusion about what is wrong and right, good or bad, true or false also creates inner conflicts. Sometimes there are conflicts between the 'head' and the 'heart'. Worrying about others also creates an inner conflict. All these are a sign of body consciousness.

### INTROSPECTIVE

It might be useful to look at the meaning of the word introspection once again. Introspection doesn't mean ignoring people and things around you. It doesn't mean that you don't communicate. In Raja Yoga we learn to keep our eyes and ears wide open and still remain within ourselves. Introspection means being able to create and control your own thoughts no matter what is happening around you. You are the one who creates your own 'reality'. There is a subtle difference between reacting and responding. We are used to reacting to people and things around us. We see something and, before we know it, we react. Responding is something we consciously do. We think about it and then we decide whether to do it or not. Responding implies a choice.



**Step 2:**  
**THE JOURNEY UPWARD**  
**\* The spiritual dimension**  
**\* Experience of your own essence**

In lesson 2 we discussed the journey upward in detail and have understood the importance of traveling to the spiritual dimension. It is in the silence of the soul world that the soul is able to experience it's own essence of peace, love and purity.

**Step 3:**  
**CONNECTION WITH THE SUPREME SOUL**  
**\* Point - Point connection**

Step 3 is the connection with the Supreme Soul, a connection from point to Point. This connection is so important and unique because the Supreme Soul is the only personality who is ever pure and eternally positive. God is an eternal Point of light. Human souls are also eternal points of light. But the difference is that human souls have a body of matter, whereas the Supreme Soul never has one. He is always a Point of pure energy living in the eternal home, the soul world.

The connection between the human soul and the Supreme Soul is a connection between two pure essenceful beings. This is why it is the most powerful connection a human soul can experience.

\* Why do you think it is important to connect with the Supreme? (*minute of silence*)

**WHY A CONNECTION WITH THE SUPREME SOUL?**  
**\* Power: Recharging the battery of the soul**  
**\* Experience of being eternal and imperishable**  
**\* Purification**

First of all it's important to understand that the Supreme is the most pure source of spiritual energy. When we connect ourselves mentally with someone, by thinking of that person, we are influenced by their energy. Connecting with the Supreme means being influenced by pure, powerful, loving energy. It is said that a person is coloured by the company he keeps. As there is no better company possible, isn't it a good choice to connect our mind and intellect with the Supreme?

**RECHARGING THE BATTERY**

Everything we do in our everyday life takes energy. Usually we lose more than we gain. This is why the soul gets tired, it is not recharged regularly or properly. The soul is like the battery of a car. If you wait too long to recharge the battery, you may not move at all. So, to recharge your battery daily, you need to learn to connect yourself with the Supreme, the constantly powerful One. When this connection is established, the energy will automatically start flowing from the Supreme Soul to the human soul.

**EXPERIENCE OF BEING ETERNAL AND IMPERISHABLE**

Another important reason to connect with the Supreme, is to experience your own original nature of being eternal and imperishable. Eternity is the feeling of being beyond the consciousness of time and matter, that is, being beyond limitations. Especially the limited thought of having just one life, of being a mortal being, is a source of great fear for many.



When you connect to the Supreme, you feel yourself to be above time and matter. Your eternal relationship with the Source of Life is once again being established. This experience gives peace and contentment to the soul. Your attitude towards life changes by experiencing yourself to be something more than just a name, a body, a role.

\* It's important to let this point sink in deeply. You, the soul, will never die. You have always lived and you will always live. Let's take a minute to think about this.  
*(minute of silence)*

### PURIFICATION

The connection with the Supreme purifies the soul. After a deep meditation there is the experience of lightness, as if a heavy weight has fallen off your shoulders. Sometimes you even feel as if you are completely renewed. Connecting with the Supreme cleanses the soul. Ingrained negative feelings and emotions gradually dissolve and the original pure sanskars emerge. A deep meditation is sometimes called a 'bhatti', meaning 'furnace'. This refers to the fact that the impurities of the soul are being burnt away, dissolved. In this purification misconceptions that, consciously or subconsciously, dominate the soul are also removed.

**THE SUPREME SOUL**  
***The Source of Truth, Peace, Love,***  
***Power, Purity and Happiness***

God is the Supreme Source of all that has value and significance for existence. The most valuable and significant things of life include truth, peace, love, happiness and freedom. These qualities, or powers, or values, however you like to name them, are the things that make life, life. That is, they make life worthwhile. Is there anyone who would say that love or truth or happiness is not worth anything or that it is worth very little?

When we forget these qualities, these powers, we begin to feel empty, without purpose, dissatisfied. We need to find them again, because only then can we truly be called human beings. A true human being is one who enjoys and creates a life of happiness. We need to remember and refill ourselves with the fundamentals of human life. But in order to find them, where do we go? Where do we search?

We understand that the first step is looking inward. But this first step is not enough. We need to go towards the One who is the eternal Source of these qualities. Truth, peace, love and happiness are His very being. He never loses these qualities, because He never forgets who He is, a pure eternal Soul. So, He is the constant Source, the only One who can supply our need at any time.

How? First we need to understand Him as He truly is and then connect with Him, absorbing those qualities deep within ourselves. Qualities which He gives generously, constantly, selflessly.

We know that God is a Point of light. However, we do not simply relate to the form, but to the qualities within the form. To understand God, is to understand His qualities. It is when we understand His qualities that we can experience them. By experiencing His qualities of truth, love, peace and happiness, we once again discover our own inner source of truth, love, peace and happiness.



## TRUTH

So, let's think deeply about God's qualities. He is the Source of Truth. But, what is truth? Truth is that state of being which never gives or takes sorrow in any way. Another word for truth is purity. The Pure cannot be violent, nor give pain, or suffering. The Pure is always benevolent. All suffering is the consequence of personal choices over time. Truth is knowledge and knowledge creates a new consciousness, a new life. A life of wholeness and happiness. Truth is the mother of freedom and happiness, because it brings honesty and trust to relationships.

## LOVE

God is the Source of Love. What is love? Love is the power to give and forgive. Love is the power that makes us free, independent. Love doesn't measure, possess or say 'mine'. Love has many faces: respect, tolerance, patience, mercy. Above all, love accepts, nurtures and heals. In a word: love is friendship. Love is not just a good feeling for one person. Pure, divine love, by its very nature, is universal and democratic. God, the Being of Love, accepts all, but all do not accept Him. God's love heals, because it accepts me as I am. Pure love enables me to believe in myself. Faith in myself brings courage; the courage to face, change and to be myself. God loves us in this way.

## PEACE

God is also the Source of Peace. What is peace? Peace is freedom; free from the desires that create conflict in the self and with others. Selfishness, expressed through a variety of desires, creates separation and disharmony. God's being is harmony, because He is complete; beyond needs, and therefore naturally beyond any desire.

Peace is contentment. To be at one with your own self, that is, to know your eternal self and to experience its value and uniqueness. A peaceful being is stable, because no negative influence has the power to disturb him. A positive self-awareness naturally brings peace and stability to the soul.

(If there is not enough time to go into the depth of all of these qualities, just pick one. As long as students understand how this process of churning deeply on a certain quality works).

To think about the qualities of the Supreme Soul in this way, makes you become aware of His personality. This understanding and this experience will bring you closer to Him. And the more you experience God and His qualities, the more you will come to realize your own divine nature. This is what self-realisation is all about. We recognize ourselves, by recognizing the Supreme Soul.

We now know that the Supreme Soul is the Source of all powers and qualities. But apart from that, He also has, like human souls, a personality, though He is not a person.

**RAJA YOGA:**  
***Relationship of the human soul  
with the Supreme Soul***

Raja Yoga is the yoga of relationships. Relationship is the most fulfilling experience of human existence, which is why everyone looks for the ideal relationship. Of course, often it is not found, whether it is with other people or with God. The reason, usually is, that we don't know enough about the other or have wrong information. Both of these aspects determine or colour the relationship.



It is important to connect with the Supreme Being because in reality it is the most positive relationship a human being can experience, especially at this time. In order to experience this relationship, we need to understand the wrong ideas we have about this Being, otherwise it's just about impossible to start a relationship with Him, let alone experience it. Later on in this course we will understand how punishment, creating fear, guilt and regret is certainly not the way in which this totally pure and loving Being relates to us.

So, Raja Yoga is the relationship between the human soul and the Supreme Soul. A relationship is more personal than a connection. A relationship is about feelings and experiences that two personalities share. The relationship between the human soul and the Supreme Soul is a purely subtle one, through thoughts and feelings. The sharing of feelings and experiences is direct, not through any physical organs such as hands, eyes, mouth, etc.

The highest level in Raja Yoga meditation is the full experience of the self united with the Supreme. Raja Yoga means the highest union, because no greater relationship is possible for the human soul than to experience this spiritual union with God Himself. To be able to relate to God, we need to know Him. Without some depth of knowledge we cannot form a relationship. This also applies in our relationships with human beings. The more we get to know someone, the easier it is to love them. The relationships we can have with God are very natural and normal, in so far as they are reflected in the relationships we have with human beings. The difference being that, with God, the relationships can never be polluted by sorrow, exploitation or possessiveness.

God is a complete Being and a complete being never needs to take anything in order to add to himself or herself. A complete being gives unconditionally, so the one who responds does not feel afraid or diminished. The experience of the true love that God gives is so pure, so real, that the soul wishes of it's own choice to remain in this relationship.

Feelings and experiences we might have missed in relationships with human beings are now possible with God. Everything we have ever longed for in our relationships and didn't get, we can get now. In this way our dependencies, projections and expectations are removed. This in itself will automatically improve relationships with others. Instead of taking, we start giving. Instead of wanting, we start sharing. Instead of needing, we start loving.

God is the gentle, understanding Father who, on the basis of love, creates a new life. God is the wise, accepting Mother who, with patience and care, sustains the growth of our spirit. God is always there to assist and guide the soul towards the goal of happiness and wholeness.

God is the eternal Parent of all souls. When a soul has a genuine feeling of love, wherever the soul may be, the Parent responds. The Parent also supports and in one way or another fulfills the needs of a child. The constant love of the Supreme Parent, when it is felt by the child, strengthens the child, enabling it to experience a sense of self-worth.

God wants friends, not worshippers. Friends understand each other. Friendship means trust, because you know you'll not be judged, but accepted as you are. With trust one can be open and not afraid of weaknesses being seen or known, because a true friend's vision sees that which is innately good and pure in spite of external appearances.

God is our true Friend. A real father and mother are friends to their children. They do not dominate or misuse their role, but whatever they have, they give for the child to mature into a complete individual. God is our true Friend, Mother and Father.



In Raja Yoga a yogi feels so close to God that he/she does not only use the word Father, but especially uses the word 'Baba'. Usually 'Baba' is what a small child lovingly and trustingly calls his/her father. So, for a yogi reaching for self-realisation, God is Baba, the gentle and knowledgeable One who sustains, who guides, who teaches and who liberates. Once names were given to reflect a special power or quality that a person had. God is given the name 'Shiva'. 'Shiva' means the Point, the Seed, the Benefactor. 'Shiva' describes God's form (the eternal Point), power (the eternal Seed who has total knowledge and the power to transform and renew life) and main virtue (the One who is eternally benevolent to all).

\* Let's end this lesson with a meditation in which we meet Baba as our eternal Mother, Father and Friend.

*I step into silence... gently concentrating the mind... I focus my thoughts on the centre of my forehead... I focus on my true self... om shanti... om... I am a soul... a point of light... a point of living energy... I am peace... pure, deep peace... I, the soul, focus my thoughts and like a beam of light my thoughts journey upward to my home... the world of liberation... the world of complete purity and silence... and in this world I meet the eternal Resident of my home... my beloved Parent.*

*The Supreme is my eternal Parent... the One who cares... who gives me true life... and in this sweet silence... in this meeting with my eternal Parent, I begin to experience what pure love really is... God, my beloved Mother, who, with great wisdom, patiently guides me... sustains me... my eternal Mother who accepts me as I am, cleans me and makes me worthy... my eternal Mother shows me my worth and my value in the creation.*

*God, my gentle Father, who, with love, gives me life... a new life... a new consciousness... and directs me to my goal of self-realisation... my goal of remembering myself as I truly am.*

*God, my beloved Father and Mother give me their friendship... love, true love, is expressed in friendship... and in this friendship I am not afraid to show my weakness, because I understand that this weakness will be removed with patience, tolerance and sweetness... God, my Friend, the One I can rely on... the One whom I trust so deeply that I can open myself completely... and in this divine friendship I am able to find myself... believe in myself and especially change myself... divine friendship does not judge or criticize, but reveals to me how to change and the benefit there is in becoming better... to become a better person gives benefit, not only to myself, but also to those around me... the love of the Mother, the Father, the Friend, purifies me.*

*And in this deep link of the heart to One I feel the rays of purity... of truth... cleansing and freeing the self from the past, from shame... from guilt and from all fears... spiritual love gives me faith and hope... the faith to believe in myself... to believe in myself and to accept myself is the gift of any true relationship.*

*Now, understanding and experiencing the reality of my Father's relationship with me... I do not feel alone... I do not feel unwanted... I have a Companion... a Support... I have a Mother and a Friend... who are helping me to know and to express my eternal individuality within this play of life... my Mother teaches me with deep wisdom... and my Father keeps guiding me with loving patience... let me understand the purity of God's relationships with me... and as I understand this I can never feel fear or loneliness... I remain in this silent absorption of love with One... I remain in the experience of my eternal Father, Mother, Friend, Teacher and Guide.*

Om Shanti.



# LESSON 4

\* (Meditation commentary based on the 4 questions and relationships with God)

In this last lesson we will discuss the subject of meditation during our everyday actions.

## **MEDITATION IN ACTION**

**(karma yoga)**

**\* Spiritual consciousness during everyday action**

Raja Yoga meditation is much more than sitting down every now and then to meditate for a while. It will become a part of your life, it will become apparent in everything you do. With an elevated consciousness you can add quality to everything you do. It then becomes less important what you do, and more important how you do it. Karma yoga means having a spiritual consciousness whilst in action. Yoga means connection (with your real 'I' and with the Supreme). The word karma literally means 'action'.

It is said that you can judge a person by his actions. Even though we are masters in hiding our true feelings and motives, our actions often speak louder than words. Our attitude and our expressions reveal the consciousness we are in, that is, our underlying thoughts and feelings. It's important to realize that our thoughts, consciously and unconsciously, have a great effect on our attitudes and actions. Everyone vibrates something. We cannot hide this vibration, it is something that others feel. Even if our words are very positive, if our inner attitude is negative, people will feel this. They sense it in the atmosphere. The consciousness behind the words is what really counts. If you tell people to be lively and strong, whilst you yourself feel weak and burnt out, the message won't come across. No matter how well you manage to put it into words, people will not be convinced.

So, karma yoga is about being able to maintain the spiritual consciousness you experience in meditation in your everyday actions. It's making the invisible (the consciousness) visible (through action). Gradually the difference between how you experience yourself to be in meditation and the way you express yourself in everyday life will diminish. In the sense that, whatever you think or do in whatever circumstance, will always be positive and clear. A karma yogi has learnt to keep a state of soul consciousness anywhere and everywhere.

## **BEHAVIOUR:**

**\* Quality**

**\* Significance**

**\* Essence**

## **QUALITY**

When you become more aware of improving your behaviour, the quality will begin to increase. Adding quality to your actions means performing actions with a positive inner attitude. So, you can do something with joy because you want to do it or you can do the very same action with complaints or because you are told to do it. In both cases your task will probably be accomplished, but the result will be very different.



Cooking is a good example. You can literally taste how a meal is prepared, whether it is with love or with compulsion or in haste. If the thought or motive behind the action is good, the process of the action will also be good and consequently the result can only be good. So, it's important to pay attention to the quality of your thoughts and motives.

### SIGNIFICANCE

Many of our daily actions are routine and almost mechanical. But, with the right consciousness you can add something to everything you do. Through this feelings of boredom, uselessness and frustration begin to disappear. Thus giving more significance to the things you do, making life more fulfilling. You don't have to do very important or great things for this. Anything from vacuum-cleaning, washing up, driving the car, to running an office, directing a company, etc. is a matter of your state of mind.

There is a simple law that states: You either influence the circumstances, or the circumstances influence you. There is no in between. Either you determine the quality of a conversation, the atmosphere or a situation, or it is being determined for you. In the latter case you may feel a victim of circumstances. If you feel controlled by a certain situation, you only react negatively, instead of being able to contribute to it. You'll feel there is nothing you can do. You then feel angry or apathetic, afraid or useless.

### ESSENCE

Being essenceful is something which is important in behaviour and in speech. It has to do with the art of leaving unnecessary things out. For instance, check the way you speak. How many words do you use that are not really necessary, which do not make your point any clearer? How many thoughts, phrases and gestures do you need to make something clear? How long does it take you to get to the point?

Another aspect of being essenceful is of seeing others in their essential form of being souls. A Raj Yogi learns to distinguish between the form and the contents. The form might be of anger or rude behaviour, but inside there is a soul, a being who might be frightened or distressed. It's really an art to always see the essence. It's the art of living!

***Time-conscious  
Action-conscious***

There are two main factors that prevent us from having that feeling of consciously adding something beautiful to everything we do in life. The first is the consciousness of time and the second is getting too caught up in the action itself.

### TIME-CONSCIOUS

Time-consciousness means 'pressure'. These type of thoughts create haste, tension, stress and impatience through which the action loses quality. Often, while we are doing something, we are thinking of what we have to do next. Or maybe we are still thinking of what we have just done. So, we are not living in the present. We are not 'here'. Thus we lose the power and opportunities offered by the present.

\* Check how many times your thoughts took you away from what you were doing, even whilst listening to these very words. Adding quality to your actions in the form of accuracy, contentment and patience is only possible when you live in the now.



## ACTION-CONSCIOUS

Getting too caught up in the action itself makes us forget we are supposed to be light and peaceful. We forget to be easy and contented since we are caught up in the desires of our actions. When we learn to pay more attention to our thoughts and motives, we get less tangled up in the action itself. Through meditation you can develop a consciousness which you could call being a 'detached observer'. You learn to look at things from a distance. You learn to look at your own thoughts and feelings without getting too caught up in them. You learn to look at others without negative feelings like hatred, jealousy or competitiveness.

If there isn't enough distance we cannot judge situations accurately. We have no overview, we cannot see the larger perspective. We only tend to see our own 'reality'. This can cause great imbalance. Just think about all those scientists who are brilliant in their own specific field creating all sorts of new inventions but never wondering what the effect of these new things could be.

Being the detached observer makes it possible to work on details without losing sight of the whole picture. This doesn't mean you are less involved in what you do, it just means there is more balance.

**\* Attitude**  
**\* Motivation**

These two words sum up the contents of all we've said before. The word 'attitude' refers to our inner attitude, the consciousness with which we do the things we do. It is very important to check your motives. Why are you doing something? What's the reason? What do you want? Is it out of love or out of selfishness? When this subtle checking becomes a second nature, you become true to yourself and others. This is the basis of pure action.

\* Let's check for a minute and look back on the things we did today. Can you see what was motivating you? (*minute of silence*)

**ACTION AND REACTION**  
**(The law of karma)**  
**\* Result**  
**\* Transformation**

## RESULT

The law of karma teaches us to check our motives. It makes us aware that everything we do has a consequence. Every cause has an effect, every action has a reaction. The more aware you become of the law of karma, the more importance you will give to pure, clear motives for your actions. You realize that everything will come back to you, just like a boomerang. There is no one else to blame. Every choice implies a consequence at some time.

The difference between doing something from a limited and from an unlimited consciousness is often quite subtle. Doing something from a limited consciousness always has a negative, selfish motive behind it. Doing something from a spiritual consciousness brings benefit to others and to the self.



A limited consciousness is an 'I-' and 'mine-consciousness': "I want this, I want that, my car, my wife, my idea." Through this way of thinking the benefit you bring to yourself is always temporary. A day will come when your selfishness will come back at you.

We tend to have short-term thinking, not seeing long-term consequences. We are no longer the objective spectators of our own actions. The result of this short-term thinking is that we deceive ourselves and others and endanger the planet.

### TRANSFORMATION

Transformation is something that happens in the practical reality of every day life. Our field of practice is the outside world. This is the place where we are 'tested'. It is through these 'tests' that we are able to grow.

Real transformation means transformation of character, of sanskars. This transformation takes place through desireless, pure actions. Every pure action adds quality to your personality and forms a new habit which will make it easier for you to cut the old (negative) habits. After a while this new, positive habit becomes as automatic as the old one was. It's a matter of attention and practice.

To conclude this lesson, here are a few essential ingredients of karma yoga:

#### **INGREDIENTS OF KARMA YOGA:**

- \* Soul consciousness**
- \* Relationship with the Supreme Soul**
- \* Practicing specific stages  
(actor-consciousness)**
- \* Traffic-control**
- \* Beginning and end of the day**
- \* Chart**

### SOUL CONSCIOUSNESS

Soul consciousness is the foundation of meditation and meditation in action.

### RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPREME SOUL

When you experience a relationship with the Supreme Soul whilst in action, it is as if you work with a 'double motor'. You'll find you have more power, more energy, more patience, more tolerance, more love, etc.

There is so much we have to do and think of anyway, apart from the transformation process we have willingly put ourselves through. So, in order to get this extra power to constantly 'check and change', we need a mental link with the Supreme Source of power. Baba is like a friend who is always around when you need Him. One thought is enough to establish the mental link.

### PRACTICING SPECIFIC STAGES / ACTOR-CONSCIOUSNESS

An actor-consciousness is the consciousness that you, the soul, are playing a role through your body (the costume you wear). Every soul plays his own part. Life is a game. We often tend to question or even interfere with the role of others: "Why is he doing this?" "Why don't they do it this way?" But we cannot change others, only ourselves. When you leave behind the desire to change others and, instead, change yourself, you become light. You begin to appreciate and understand the role that every actor is playing in this world drama.



\* Let's take a minute to think about this.

*Imagine you being an actor... you are from a world far from here... when you come onto the stage of the earth, you put on a costume... the costume of your human body... the stage is lit by the sun, the moon and the stars... you play your role together with all other actors... whatever happens is all right.*

The reason for many conflicts is that we forget that we are 'only' playing a role. We tend to identify so much with the role we play, that we cannot see it in the context of the whole play. We over-identify with the role: I am a policeman, I am a housewife, I am a Christian, I am a man, I am a woman, etc. This limited consciousness brings many problems, because others' roles become a threat to us. Instead of understanding, we have fear or insecurity, which results in conflicts. It is the opposite of a 'brotherly vision'.

### PRACTICING SPECIFIC STAGES

You might also want to practice different types of consciousness. An actor-consciousness is a good one, or be a benefactor wherever you go, or try seeing everyone around you as a soul. You can also practise qualities of the soul. Take one every day. Monday is 'the day of silence'. Tuesday is 'the day of power'. Wednesday is 'the day of love', etc.

### TRAFFIC CONTROL

Traffic control is a way to return to the essence at regular intervals during the activities of the day. At all BK-centres around the world a song automatically starts playing at 7.00, 10.30 and 12.30 a.m. and at 5.30 and 7.30 p.m. When the song plays everyone stops doing whatever they are doing to check or control the 'traffic' of thoughts in their mind. During traffic control you remember who you are, what your form is, what your qualities are, whose child you are and where you are from.

\* Let's try it now... (*minute of silence*)

### BEGINNING AND END OF THE DAY

It's important to start the day with early morning meditation. It's the foundation of the day. The thoughts you start your day with, determine the rest of your day. See it as a spiritual breakfast. Just like the body, the soul also needs a 'breakfast' in order to get through the day. How long you want to meditate, depends on your own need. At every BK-centre there are meditations between 6.00 till 6.30 a.m. and in the evening usually between 7.00 and 7.30 p.m.

### CHART

Ending the day in a good way is just as important. Meditation and keeping a chart (or a diary) can help you to clear your mind, so as to be able to really start afresh the next day. You think about the things that went well, or the things that didn't go too well and set new goals for tomorrow.

A chart can be of great help. A chart is like a questionnaire with points that you are working on: powers, qualities, certain stages, etc. You might want to check the percentage you were soul conscious or how many minutes (hours) you remembered the Supreme Soul during the day. A chart is an easy way to see the progress you have been making and also what points need specific attention.

\* Now, let's end this lesson with a meditation based on the 4 questions and connecting with Baba, the Source of all qualities, the Source of Life.



*Sit relaxed... let the mind be still... concentrated... and let me step into silence... and as I journey into silence... I focus the energy of my mind, my thoughts, on the centre of my forehead... I understand that I am a point of light... a point of immortal energy... I understand I am a soul... a being of peace... pure, deep peace.*

*And in this state of soul consciousness I concentrate my thoughts like a beam of light... my thoughts journey beyond this world of time and matter... in silence and in gentle concentration, with this beam of concentrated thought, I journey upward and I come to my home... the home of myself and originally the home of all souls.*

*Here, in this world of silent peace, I see, I feel, I understand that this is the supreme place of the Supreme Soul... the One who is eternally a Point of pure being... the One who is the Source of all life... the One who is the Source of all qualities and values... the One who is called the Truth... the Light... the Benevolent.*

*And as I come closer and closer, I begin to understand and experience how this Being, this Pure and gentle Being, remains constantly positive... constantly the standard of true value for this universe and for my life... the Supreme is the Source of Truth.*

*Truth, that state of being which knows no sorrow... nor gives sorrow or pain of any kind to any other being... to have truth, to be truth, is to constantly experience a state of freedom... and as I begin to understand this Source of Truth... I begin to realize that I too must become true... free... totally free of all desire... and in this state of freedom I understand that truth is purity.*

*To be pure is to be real... the pure is never violent... never gives pain or suffering... the pure maintains the law of life... the law of life is love... the Supreme Being is the Source of Love... unconditional love... in essence my original quality is also of love... but I have forgotten what it is... and now, as I come close to the eternal Source of Love, I begin to experience what it really means.*

*Love accepts me as I am... the Supreme Being loves me, because He accepts me and through this acceptance I am nurtured... I am healed... and with the experience of this love I can trust... with trust there can be gentle change for the better... love forgives... love gives... love respects... the Supreme Being, the Source of Love, allows me to be what I truly am... His love does not interfere, but facilitates my growth... and as I sit in this silence... in this concentration on this Being of Love, I absorb these rays of love deep into myself... and as I absorb the love, I begin to believe in myself... I am given the courage to change.*

*Like the rays of light coming from the physical sun falling on the seeds in the earth, the rays of sunlight facilitate the growth of the seed into a beautiful flower... the light does not make the flower, but facilitates it's blooming... in the same way the Supreme Being allows me to grow... in the same way the Supreme Source of love sends me the rays of that love and facilitates the bloom of my individual and original self.*

*And as I feel the rays of love and truth penetrate my being deeply and gently, I feel confident that my aim of realisation and growth will be achieved... love gives me peace... the peace of being at one with myself.*

*The Supreme Being is the Source of Peace... peace is total harmony... no division, no conflict within the self or with others... the Supreme Source is constantly peaceful by His very nature... peace comes from the contentment of knowing my eternal self... the Supreme Being never forgets that He is a soul, a Point of eternal light... eternally He is true to Himself... I forget.*

*But now, in this link of yoga... in this link of life, I remember who I am... I remember my original qualities and where I come from... and especially I remember the One who is eternally the Source of love, of truth, of purity, of peace... the One who can gently guide me back to myself... in this silence... in this link I begin to remember... I begin to awaken.*  
Om Shanti.