Dear Readers:

The purpose of this quarterly newsletter, Self Awakening, is to inform Sadhaks (seekers of self-realization) and other readers about Maha Yoga, an effortless, joyful and no cost path to Self-Realization.

P. P. Shri Narayan Kaka Maharaj of Nashik, India was a leading teacher and exponent of Maha Yoga, a centuries old tradition, whereby a realized Guru (Siddha Guru) awakens the Universal Life Energy (Kundalini) within the Sadhak, eventually leading him/her to self-realization. This ancient tradition (Parampara) continues under the leadership of several Siddha Gurus, including the fourteen designated by P. P. Kaka Maharaj as Deekshadhikaris (those authorized to initiate Sadhaks into Maha Yoga). Additional details about Maha Yoga are available at www.mahayoga.org.

To the thousands of Sadhaks in the Maha Yoga tradition all over the world and other interested readers, this e-newsletter is intended to provide virtual Satsang. It is intended to encourage Sadhaks to remain engaged in Maha Yoga, be informed about Maha Yoga-related events around the world, and to provide a forum for getting guidance about Maha Yoga from leaders from P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj’s lineage.

Readers are urged to contribute questions, thoughtful articles, interesting life experiences related to Maha Yoga and news about Maha Yoga-related events to this e-newsletter. Reminiscences of P. P. Kaka Maharaj are also most welcome. We will be glad to include them in future issues. Please send any content, comments, or questions you would like to submit to self.awakening@gmail.com.

Past issues of Self Awakening are archived at http://www.mahayoga.org/selfawakening.aspx.
The next day Maharajshri described the qualities of a sthitaprajna [a person of steadfast wisdom or intellect; the perfect yogi] as presented in the last eighteen verses of the second chapter of the Gita, which describes doing karma competently.

"When prarabdha is completely depleted by doing karma competently, when all desires and deep-rooted tendencies are cleared, when the world appears to be God's play and joy constantly fills the mind and the heart, then it is a clear sign that the intellect of that person is steady. His joy does not depend on any external factors and his contentment comes from within.

"It is hard for a worldly person to understand this inner joy. He cannot think of joy without external pleasures. He believes that only worldly pleasures can give joy. He does not know that what he considers to be real joy is only its shadow. But as long as the external door is open the inward door cannot be opened. The way to open the inward door is to perform karma without attachment.

“A sthitaprajna is not perturbed when unfavorable circumstances develop. He does not wish for favorable, happy or desirable circumstances. A person free from attachment, fear and anger is called a sthitaprajna. Otherwise what would be the significance of purity of the mind? To get angry when upset and to feel fear at the possibility of losing something are signs of impurity. Stability develops with purity of the mind.
Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

“The senses of a sthitaprajna withdraw from pleasures in the same way that a turtle withdraws his limbs. This is called pratyahara [retraction of the senses] in the path of yoga, that is, the senses give up their pleasures. In this state the aspirant’s mind turns away from the world. That is when real hunger for spirituality arises, and one feels the pain of separation from God. This is when the inner spiritual journey starts.

“This state of sthitaprajna should be natural and effortless. If you force the senses to abstain from pleasures then externally and only temporarily will they give them up. Interest in those pleasures will remain latent and will arise again as soon as favorable situations occur. As long as the samskaras of pleasures are alive only temporary control can be achieved with suppression. But when the mind is totally purified, then on the one hand the desire for worldly pleasures dies, and on the other hand spirituality is achieved.”

The next afternoon the Colonel Saheb returned from Dehradun. He had finished studying the books, reading them thoroughly day and night. He said, “Maharajshri, after studying the books all my doubts have vanished. Previously I did not know that such things were possible. The surprising thing is that I am developing control over my kriyas. Before now I did not understand what a kriya was. Now when I feel like sitting in sadhan I sit and strong kriyas take place. When I feel like getting up my kriyas stop. Now my relatives are wondering what this is. They are sure that this is not insanity. But what is it? They are unable to understand.”

Maharajshri said, “How can they understand? They have no knowledge or experience of the subject. How can you expect them to understand? You cannot give them the experience, but you can explain it to them. That will remove any remaining doubts, and they will stop disturbing you while you are doing your sadhana. You can give them the books to read.”

Colonel Saheb said, “From reading these books, I understand that God’s divine Shakti becomes active and, on the basis of samskaras, many different kriyas in the mind and body arise. But I do not have a Guru.”

Maharajshri replied, “I told you that you had samskaras of an awakened Shakti from a past birth. For some reason its activity had stopped. It had become active again and was without control. You believe that you have developed control over those kriyas by reading books. When you came to me last time, my Shakti extended, established contact with your chitta, and brought your Shakti under control. Perhaps you did not experience this but I did. Is this not the work of a Guru? Our Guru disciple relationship was established when you came last time. A formal initiation has not taken place yet.”

Question: “Then please bless me a formal initiation.”

Answer: “A ceremonial initiation is only a formality now. If you still desire it then I will find an auspicious time and let you know.”
The discussion of the Gita resumed in the evening. Again the subject was the qualities of a sthitaprajna.

“We may say that these are qualities of a sthitaprajna, but they are the same for a devotee, a jnani, a yogi, or a person beyond the gunas. All of them have the same qualities, but they have been narrated differently. It seems that the objective of Lord Krishna in the Gita is not to unite the individual soul with God, but to free him from worldly attachments. This is absolutely appropriate. God is always available, but if one is still attached to the world how can God be experienced? One does not have to attain God, but to attain the experience of finding God. Perhaps this is the mistake that an aspirant makes: He sets the goal of his sadhana as the attainment of God and not the removal of attachment towards the world. How can a spiritual aspirant climb the heights of spirituality when his feet are shackled with deep-rooted tendencies and desires and the path is full of stones, thorns and weeds, and wild animals roam all around? This is why Lord Krishna emphasizes ending the influence of the world on the mind.

“Lord Krishna further says that an aspirant must be very cautious, even if he is very intelligent and discriminating, and control his senses with full attention. It is possible that with the slightest attraction to pleasures of the senses he may fall for them. With the slightest slackening, sensuous pleasures will be ready to attack. This is why the Lord talks about remaining totally cautious and absorbed in yoga. One never knows from which side worldly pleasure might raise its head. For stability of the mind and intellect, the senses must remain in control. An aspirant should never think that now he is a siddha [perfect] and need not be concerned about worldly pleasures.

“The person whose mind keeps on thinking about pleasures becomes attached to them, and then desires arise. When desires are not fulfilled, then anger arises. The distinction of good and bad is lost and memory is destroyed. Thus his life is wasted. Whichever pleasure a human thinks about, he gets dyed in its color. Thoughts about these things come continually, while sleeping or awake, thoughts about desire, sometimes of obsession and, at other times, of anger. If you must meditate on something then why not think about the futility and transient nature of the world, so that the mind desires renunciation of the world? Why not think about the qualities of God, so that you desire to develop them? Why not concentrate on the purity of the minds of the saints, so that the mind of an aspirant can also be purified by their contact? If senses move the intellect then the intellect also guides the senses. The one whose senses are free from likes and dislikes will be able to remain balanced even while enjoying the pleasures of the world.”

Maharajshri went on talking and I listened quietly. My mind was, as it were, divided into two parts. One was listening attentively to the discourse of Maharajshri. The other was churning
my heart. “I have given up my home, taken initiation, taken bramhacharya initiation, and now I am preparing for sanyas diksha. Still, I am so far away from real spirituality. I do try to remain free of likes and dislikes, but my mind is filled with them. I may not listen to gossip about others, but my attention does turn toward the vices and weaknesses of others. Externally I do not live in the world, but the world is deep within me. My mind does get restless. I do think about many things, but my mind does not let me pursue them. What is the use of only thinking about things? First I have to convince my mind, but how? If I try to convince my mind then it escapes me very cleverly. If I scold my mind it gets angry with me and starts to jump even more.

“Am I the only one in this world who is tormented by this dilemma, or is the whole world in the same condition? My problems will not be solved by others' problems. The person who faces a problem must find his own solution. I must solve my own problem. When I used to have an interest in gossip, I noticed that the people I criticized would turn out to be much better than myself. As I criticized others I did not realize that I was unaware of my own vices. When my attention turned toward myself I realized that the weaknesses of others were nothing compared to my own. Still I was indifferent toward my weaknesses and felt proud about my virtues.”

My intensity did not leave me alone either. On the surface I appeared very quiet but inside I was very intense. I used to boil over at small provocations. Strong feelings would erupt and I would want to do all kinds of things. Those whose intensity was expressed openly appeared to be very bad, but the force of their intensity would be released. I was being eaten up by my intensity and I was forced to bear its heat.

At one point I even began to wonder whether I should take sanyas or not. I was witnessing many weaknesses within myself. I had a full load of vices and weaknesses. When and how would these vices be exhausted? I could not see an end to them. Would it be appropriate in this condition to accept the staff of a sanyasi, to put on the garbs of Narayan and make people bow to me? Always I heard “No” coming from within. But what will happen then to Maharajshri's wish? He must have some thoughts as well. He must not be unaware of my mental state. In spite of that he has proposed that I take sanyas? Once again my mind started to oscillate in the dilemma. “Is it good to take sanyas or not?” Finally I thought it was better to submit to the Guru's wish. Maharajshri had told me that my sanyas would be vidvisha sanyas [renouncing worldly life in pursuit of the ultimate truth].

The next day Maharajshri spoke further on the Gita.

"It is okay to make efforts and one must make efforts, but it must be done with a sense of surrender to God. The state of sthitaprajna is attained not by efforts, but by the grace of God. There is the fearful possibility that the ego will arise if you believe it to be the result of your own efforts. Thus everything a person can attain is due to God's grace. In spirituality, the attainment of worldly pleasures is not God's grace; their renunciation is God's grace. The real attainment is inner renunciation. Peace of mind is contained within inner renunciation.
The individual soul is freed from all miseries and remains joyful. Consequently his intellect becomes stable. The one who is not committed to yoga cannot have a steady intellect and the yearning for spirituality cannot arise in him. How can a person who is empty of spirituality attain peace?

“The essence of all this is that people wander in search of peace, but how can they find it where it does not exist? The world goes through constant change. There is no stability in the world due to that. Peace is in stability, thus there is no peace in the world. Peace is not a thing of the world; it is a state of mind. If the mind is peaceful then the whole world is at peace.

“If senses are fickle then the mind wanders with them. This robs the intellect just as a boat in strong winds is dragged upon the waters. Consequently he whose senses are unaffected by sensual attractions, his mind and intellect also remain steady.

“Lord Krishna explains the importance of control over the senses. Just as control over the mind is important, control over the senses is equally important. Sometimes the mind makes the senses restless, and at other times the senses make the mind restless, hence control over both is necessary. The Lord has compared the mind absorbed in sensuality to the night. For a mind attached to pleasures, attraction towards worldly objects means being awake. Just as the world disappears for the person who sleeps, spirituality disappears for the mind absorbed in sensuality.

“Things are exactly the opposite for a person with control over his senses. For him the attraction of sensual pleasures is like night, and being conscious of spirituality is like being awake. In other words, desire for pleasure is darkness, but a worldly person considers it light. For a self-controlled person, desires are like a dark night. He maintains interest and awareness about spirituality, remains conscious of his mind, and keeps marching forward toward the light of spirituality. The ocean does not exceed its shores even when all the rivers of the world keep flowing to the ocean with their waters for thousands of years. Similarly, for a sthitaprajna, worldly pleasures come and strike his mind and are destroyed, but his mind is always steady and his intellect always unshakeable.

“The person, who has given up desires and expectations, has no attachments, is free from the feelings of ‘mine’ and ‘yours’ and performs his worldly functions without ego, attains peace. Lord Krishna calls this state brahmisthiti. Bramha, while doing everything in the world, is doing nothing. In the same way a sthitaprajna, free from ego while performing actions in the world, is free from action.

“This is called Karma Yoga, Buddhi Yoga, Seva Yoga or competence. This is the foundation of all spiritual practices [sadhana]. For depleting prarabdha there is no better practice than this. The aptitude for inaction comes only after continuous Karma Yoga. The secret of being in the world, yet performing all worldly duties while being detached from the world, is
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Karma Yoga. This is the entrance to all kinds of sadhana. This Karma Yoga gives strength to sadhana, depletes prarabdha, and annihilates itself when its job is done.

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“Churning of the Heart” trilogy by P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj is available from:
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Answers to Questions from Sadhaks

Question: I would like to receive Mantra Deeksha. Please give me the Swami Samarth Mantra that I can chant over and over, and which will enable me to work miracles.

Answer: Our tradition (Parampara) of Maha Yoga does not grant Mantra Deeksha. It is a Sankalpa Deeksha, whereby the Sadhak receives Shaktipat Deeksha purely by the intent of the Siddha Guru. All Deeksha forms, whether they are done through the granting of a Mantra, the touch of the Guru, or the glance of the Guru, happen only with the underlying willful intent of an accomplished Guru. Without the Siddha Guru’s intent all Deeksha forms will fail. The Deeksha Gurus in our tradition grant Deeksha only with their pure intent/Sankalpa. This enables Sadhaks to receive Deeksha in the privacy of their own homes, anywhere in the world. They do not need to be in the Guru’s presence.

Also, once Deeksha has happened, we do not ask the Sadhak to do anything with his own intent when he sits for Maha Yoga Sadhan, including the chanting of a Mantra. We ask him to sit for Sadhan with an attitude of surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within him and simply observe what happens. Sadhaks typically experience involuntary activities (Kriyas) during Maha Yoga Sadhan, such as physical movements, mental activities, or the flow of Prana Shakti within their bodies. All a Sadhak should do at such times is to calmly observe such activities without fearing them or getting attached to them. Some Sadhaks also find themselves chanting Mantras without any intent on their own. However, these are nothing but the Kriyas that happen during Maha Yoga Sadhan. Some Sadhak consider these Kriyas to be miracles and often develop attachments to them. But the Kriyas are simply expressions of Samskaras that are getting brought up in our Chitta (mind stuff) during Maha Yoga Sadhan, and by simply observing them in a detached manner, the Samskaras underlying the Kriyas get gradually eliminated. The essential purpose of Maha Yoga Sadhan is the gradual elimination of accumulated Samskaras eventually leading to Self-Enlightenment, not the occurrence of or the power to perform miracles. In fact, getting attached to Kriyas or “miracles” will severely retard a Sadhak’s spiritual progress.

So, you are welcome to chant the P. P. Akkalkot Swami’s Mantra of Shri Swami Samarth of your own free will when you are not sitting for Maha Yoga Sadhan, but we do not grant it as a form of Mantra Deeksha in our Parampara. If you are interested in trying out Maha Yoga you are welcome to try out the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga as described here https://mahayoga.org/mahayoga-introductory-practice.aspx. If you are interested in applying for Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha of our Parampara you can do so online at https://mahayoga.org/mahayoga-introductory-practice.aspx.

Question: I understand that all a Sadhak need do after receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha is to sit for Sadhan every day. But what should I do to receive ongoing guidance following Deeksha? Do you offer courses or do you have online groups from whom I could get guidance? Please guide me on this topic.
Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

**Answer:** Once a Sadhak has received Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha from a Siddha Guru, he is asked to sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan every day and follow the rules and restrictions that he agreed to before Deeksha. If he has any questions or needs further guidance, he can always contact the Siddha Guru from whom he received Deeksha, or he can e-mail his questions to info@mahayoga.org or to self.awakening@gmail.com. We do not have any courses, but we have a WhatsApp group “Mahayoga Sadhaks” which he can join to keep up with what’s happening in the Sadhak world. Please send a request to info@mahayoga.org if you want to join that group.

In addition to relying on these external sources for getting guidance, Sadhaks are also encouraged to listening to and following their inner Guru during Maha Yoga Sadhan, which is the Guru Tattva that resides within a Sadhak once he has received Deeksha. Sadhaks who are in their early stages after having received Maha Yoga Deeksha may not be able to discern such guidance, but with the experience of surrendering every day to the awakened Prana Shakti within them during Sadhan, more experienced Sadhaks are able to allow themselves to be led and guided by the awakened Prana Shakti, the inner Guru. But this only happens when a Sadhak is able to put himself completely in the hands of the awakened Prana Shakti within him. So, until then he can always rely on the external sources for guidance described in the previous paragraph.

**Question:** I deeply desire to receive Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha, but I have been affected by several health issues for a very long time. I would very much like to get healed and develop spiritually, but I am afraid that I might have some terrible Karma that keeps me from getting healed and developing spiritually. Please advise me on what I should do.

**Answer:** Glad to read that you are interested in receiving Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha (initiation). However, the Maha Yoga authorities have informed me that you had applied for, and were granted, the Deeksha by P. P. Kaka Maharaj way back in September 2009. So, you have already been initiated. All you need to do is to sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan (meditation) on a regular basis, surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within you and simply observe what happens without getting afraid of or attached to any involuntary activities (Kriyas) that happen during Sadhan. Please do not do anything with intent during Sadhan, simply surrender to the Prana Shakti and allow her to do what is needed for your spiritual progress.

Also, please do not worry about whether you had bad Karma or being banned from the spiritual path. All human beings, regardless of their past Karma, are eligible to receive Deeksha and sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan. But please understand that the purpose of Maha Yoga is entirely spiritual; so while it is unlikely Maha Yoga Sadhan will cure you of the health issue you have, regular Sadhan will put you in a better, calmer mental state and help you progress at a rapid pace on your spiritual journey.
**Question:** I had received Maha Yoga Deeksha a few years ago and I sit for Sadhan on a daily basis. But more recently I was granted Mantra Deeksha from a Guru from a different tradition. Since then I have taken to chanting the Mantra I received, but over the past few weeks I no longer feel blissful when I chant the Mantra. And when I sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan I hear some strange chants which I am unable to recall, or identify the Mantra that comes to my mind. Please guide me on whether or not I should continue to chant the Mantra I received or simply give it up.

**Answer:** Glad to read that you have received Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha and have been performing Maha Yoga Sadhan on a daily basis. Once a person has received Maha Yoga Deeksha and has experienced Maha Yoga Sadhan, there is no need for him to seek other forms of Deeksha. Maha Yoga Deeksha, which is a Sankalpa Deeksha, is the highest form of all such Deeksha approaches which are intended to awaken the Prana Shakti within a Sadhak. It is caused by the pure Sankalpa (intent) of a Siddha Deeksha Guru. It does not need a Mantra, or the touch, or the look of a Guru; all these other approaches will likely not be very effective without the underlying Sankalpa of a Siddha Guru.

The fact that you sought the Mantra Deeksha suggests that you perhaps do not quite have the faith in your Maha Yoga Sadhan that is needed for you to make progress on the Maha Yoga path. So I would suggest that you continue to sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan on a daily basis, have full faith in the fact that the Prana Shakti within you has been awakened, surrender to her and allow her to do what is needed for your spiritual progress, and simply observe what happens (Kriyas) without having any expectations for what should/shouldn’t happen, or develop attachments to any of the Kriyas. **Please do not do anything with your own intent, including chanting any Mantra, when you sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan.** If you find yourself chanting a Mantra without any intent of your own, please allow it to happen and simply observe it as a Kriya that is happening.

The Kriya process during Maha Yoga Sadhan is a result of the awakened Prana Shakti within you bringing up into your Chitta, accumulated Samskaras from your current and past lives, which get expressed as physical, Pranic or mental Kriyas. By simply observing the Kriyas that happen in a detached manner, the Samskaras underlying them get gradually eliminated from a Sadhak’s Chitta. As the Samskaras get eliminated, their expressions, which are the Kriyas that happen during Sadhan, will also gradually begin to stop, resulting in the mind becoming calm and eventually resulting in the Sadhak experience Self Enlightenment.

You may continue to chant the Mantra given to you if you wish, but please do not do so when you are sitting for Maha Yoga Sadhan. But it might be best if you gave the Mantra chanting a rest and sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan with your full faith on a daily basis.

**Question:** I received Maha Yoga Deeksha a couple of years ago, but over the past few months I don’t seem to be making any progress. I recently completed Laghu Anushthan of the Gayatri Mantra (chanting the Gayatri Mantra 24,000 times), but it does not seem to have...
Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

helped my Maha Yoga Sadhan. For some reason or the other I am unable to sit regularly for Sadhan and when I do, I can’t sit for a long enough time to get into “ekagrata” (a calm meditative state). I seem to have become quite lazy as well. A friend advised me to sit again for Deeksha on the next Deeksha day, but I don’t know whether or not I should do that. Please advise me on what I should do.

Answer: Most Sadhak’s go through similar phases when they feel they are not experiencing any progress. The best way to deal with this is to realize that such phases happen, and the only way to get out of them is to sit daily and diligently for Sadhan.

Glad to read that you completed Laghu Anushthan of the Gayatri Mantra. Such practices are indeed good for building inner strength. But they are no substitute for daily Sadhan. Make a rule for yourself, “No Sadhan - no food”. That way if you feel too lazy to sit for Sadhan, having such a rule will force you to sit, and with daily Sadhan you will begin to experience the spiritual satisfaction and the “ekagrata” you desire. So don’t become disappointed by your lack of discipline and put yourself down because of it. Make a resolve to sit for Sadhan every day, surrender to Prana Shakti (Universal Life Energy) when you do so, and let her take you where you need to go spiritually.

If you get distracted during Sadhan or feel an urge to get up after a few minutes, just close your eyes and observe your normal and automatic breathing. Prana Shakti controls your normal and automatic breathing. Think of your breathing as a Kriya that Prana Shakti is conducting and simply observe it. Don’t worry if ekagrata does not return immediately, it will return gradually. The more you worry about such things the less likely will you experience progress because your mind will be engaged in such worries, which in turn will keep you from experiencing ekagrata. Just surrender to Prana Shakti and let her do her job.

Deeksha happens only once in our lifetime. So if Deeksha has not happened to you before, then please go ahead and sit for Deeksha on the next Deeksha day at 6:00 am following the instructions at our website www.mahayoga.org. If Deeksha has already happened to you before, you are still welcome to sit for Sadhan on the next Deeksha day at the designated time. Sadhan on Deeksha day typically turns out to be more intense than at other times for many Sadhaks.

Question: I have firm faith in Maha Yoga and although I have not yet received Deeksha (initiation) I would like to receive it soon. However, I live with my wife and parents who are skeptical about such spiritual matters and traditions, and are concerned that Maha Yoga might cause me to leave my household and go live with my Guru. And since they are not very supportive of my receiving Deeksha, it would be very difficult for me to follow the required rules and restrictions at home. Also, I am in the merchant navy and it would be near impossible for me to have meals aboard ship without onion and garlic. Please advise me on what I should do.
Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

Answer: Given your difficult household and living situation here are some suggestions you might want to consider:

Please provide your wife and parents some of the basic information about Maha Yoga. Help them understand that once Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha happens, the practice of Maha Yoga is not between your Guru and you but between you and Prana Shakti (Universal Life Energy) which resides in us all. You don’t even need to be in the presence of the Guru for even the Deeksha to happen. The Guru’s role is like that of a postman. He puts you in direct contact with Prana Shakti during Deeksha, and once this contact is established, it is between you and Prana Shakti what happens later. Maha Yoga is to be practiced in the privacy of your own residence, so there should be no concern at all of you leaving your household to go live with your Guru. Please visit the website www.mahayoga.org for more information on Maha Yoga which you can share with your wife and parents.

A time may come when your wife and parents have a better understanding of Maha Yoga and become supportive of your decision to receive Deeksha, and are willing to help you follow the rules and restrictions that go with it. But until then it would be better that you not ask for formal Deeksha.

But until then you can quench your thirst for spiritual growth by following the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga as described here https://www.mahayoga.org/mahayoga-introductory-practice.aspx. This introductory approach is extremely easy to follow and does not require you to observe any of the rules and restrictions associated with Deeksha. If you sit for Sadhan every day as described in the approach, your Sadhan will flourish and you will begin to get the spiritual benefits of Maha Yoga. Over time, your family might also notice in you the calmness and the other good changes that regular Sadhan brings about, and perhaps be more accepting of you receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha. When that happens you may apply for Deeksha if you are so inclined. We pray to our Gurudev to help create the situation for you to be able to receive Deeksha.

Question: I am very interested in doing Maha Yoga sadhana, but because of a few concerns I have I don’t think I am quite ready to apply for Deeksha.

First, I would like to know if after receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha whether or not I will be able to practice the sadhana of another Guru. I have great faith in Akkalkot Swami Samarth so I feel somewhat hesitant to do the sadhana as prescribed by another Guru such as the Gurus in your Maha Yoga tradition. I feel like I might be showing some doubt in my faith in my prior Guru.

Secondly, I understand that the Maha Yoga path requires a Sadhak to not consume onion and garlic and food outside one’s home. But since I am an attorney, I need to be eating out quite often, so it will be impossible for me avoid onion and garlic and to follow all the restrictions. Will my inability to follow these restrictions hurt my progress on the Maha Yoga path?
Thirdly, what types of experiences will I likely get after Shaktipat Deeksha?

Please guide me on the above issues.

**Answer:** It is good to know that you are interested in Maha Yoga. Here are the responses to your three questions:

- Some people consider receiving Deeksha from a second Guru after one has already received Deeksha from a previous Guru as a change of faith in one’s spiritual path and as deserting the previous Guru. This is the reason why we ask Sadhaks who have a prior Deeksha Guru who is still alive, to get permission from him/her prior to receiving Shaktipat Deeksha. However, this does not necessarily apply in your case because it does not seem from your e-mail that you have received Deeksha from anyone in P. P. Akkalkot Swami Maharaj’s tradition. And, more importantly, your reverence for P. P. Akkalkot Swami Maharaj who is considered to be an Avatar of Lord Dattatreya is entirely consistent with our tradition whose adherents are often followers of Lord Dattatreya.

It is said that Lord Dattatreya himself had 24 Gurus. As long as the teachings of a Guru do not contradict the teachings of prior Gurus there is no need to feel like you are deserting the prior Gurus. P. P. Shri Gulvani Maharaj, who is responsible for the spread of Shaktipat Sadhan in Maharashtra and all over India, had received Deeksha from P. P. Shri Vasudevanand Saraswati Maharaj (also known as Tembe Swami Maharaj) prior to receiving Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha from P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj. P. P. Shri Gulvani Maharaj continued conducting the basic Sadhana prescribed to him by P. P. Shri Vasudevanand Saraswati Maharaj, fully adhering to his teachings and principles, while at the same time practicing Maha Yoga and propagating it through Shaktipat Deeksha to those Sadhaks who asked him for it. Of course, Shaktipat Sadhan was fully consistent with P. P. Shri Gulvani Maharaj’s prior Sadhana and practices and it helped him by accelerating his spiritual development, which greatly benefitted the world as he was able to propagate “Shakti” Sadhan to householders and common people.

Another thing to keep in mind as you wrestle with this issue is the fact that Shaktipat Sadhan is simply the worship of, or surrender to, Prana Shakti (Universal Life Energy, also referred to as Mother Energy). It does not involve the worship of or surrender to any specific Deity, nor does it require a Sadhak to actively/intentionally do anything during Sadhan other than to sit calmly and to let the Prana Shakti do what is needed. And since Prana Shakti is the basis of everything that is in the universe, its Sadhan will only augment and accelerate whatever sadhana or practices your prior Guru might have prescribed. This is the reason Maha Yoga and Shaktipat Sadhan is open to all regardless of their religion or creed, and Sadhaks can continue to follow whatever religious practices and traditions they want to as long as they do not prevent the Sadhak from surrendering to the awakened Prana Shakti within himself during Maha Yoga Sadhan.
Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

- The restrictions for those seeking Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha only apply to the consumption of non-vegetarian food, onion, garlic, alcohol and tobacco. There are no restrictions related to eating food prepared outside one’s home as long as the above restrictions are observed to the extent possible. You can check the ingredients of purchased food prior to buying it where such information is available to avoid violating the restrictions. You may also choose to eat “Jain food” which avoids non-vegetarian ingredients as well as onion and garlic. Jain “thalis” (platters) are available all over India as well as in many other nations. We recommend that Sadhaks follow the rules and restrictions in order to minimize the obstacles that come in the way of spiritual progress. They are there only to help Sadhaks make steady and rapid progress.

- There is a lot of material on Sadhak experiences during Maha Yoga Sadhan at www.mahayoga.org. Please go through the section on Maha Yoga Initiation (https://www.mahayoga.org/mahayoga-details.aspx#initiation) to get an account of the classical experiences of Kundalini Awakening after Deeksha. Please also read the section on Sadhan under the Frequently Asked Questions tab (https://www.mahayoga.org/mahayoga-faq.aspx). Keep in mind that each Sadhak’s experiences are unique given his specific situation and prior Samskaras. You should not have any preconceived ideas when you sit for Sadhan about what kind of experiences you should have or not have. Just allow the Prana Shakti be the Karta (doer) during Sadhan and simply observe what happens without any judgment or attachment to any experiences or Kriyas. The whole idea is to experience inner peace during Sadhan.

Hope these responses are helpful to you as you decide on whether or not to follow the Maha Yoga path. Incidentally, in case you do not want to receive Shaktipat Deeksha, or want to get a taste of Maha Yoga prior to Deeksha, you can follow the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga as described here: https://www.mahayoga.org/mahayoga-introductory-practice.aspx. Sitting for Sadhan under the Introductory Approach does not require you to receive Deeksha nor do you need to agree to follow the rules and restrictions. So do give it a try and see what happens.

Editor’s note: Please send your questions regarding Maha Yoga and Shaktipat to: self.awakening@gmail.com.
Guru Pournima Events in Nashik and Mumbai, India

Guru Pournima (full moon), also known as Vyas Pournima, honoring the Adhya (original) Guru, Maharishi Vyas Muni is celebrated every year on a full moon day in summer, based on the lunar calendar. On this day, Sadhaks pay their respects to their Gurus, an Indian tradition that has survived and thrived over the millennia. This is all the more true in the case of Maha Yoga Sadhaks who express their gratitude to their Siddha Guru, who by granting them the sublime gift of Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) has set their spiritual lives on a certain path to Self-Enlightenment.

In keeping with the tradition that P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj had established a few decades ago, Guru Pournima was celebrated this year on Friday, July 23rd at the Maha Yoga headquarters at the P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Maha Yoga Trust in Nashik, India, under the guidance of the Chief Trustee, P. P. Shri Prakash Rao Prabhune Maharaj, and at various other Maha Yoga Ashrams and sites including one such event at the home of Shri Hemant Petare in Mumbai, India. All these events were conducted in a manner consistent with restrictions imposed by local governmental authorities to minimize COVID 19 transmission.

At the Maha Yoga headquarters in Nashik, the day’s events began with Geeta Paath (reading of the Bhagvad Geeta) followed by Pavaman Abhishek (worship) at the holy feet of P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj, represented by Swamiji’s Padukas (symbolic footwear). The Shri Satya Datta Pooja was performed next in honor of Lord Dattatreya, the embodiment of the Hindu Trinity – Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Later, P. P. Prabhune Maharaj and Sou. Prabhune performed Guru Poojan by venerating the Padukas representing P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj. This was followed by a similar veneration of P. P. Shri Prakash Rao Prabhune Maharaj conducted by Shri and Sou Laukik Prabhune on behalf of all Sadhaks. In this manner, three generations of Maha Yoga Siddha Gurus represented by P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj, P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj, and P. P. Shri Prakash Rao Prabhune Maharaj were venerated.

The rest of the program included Mantra Jaagar (chanting of Vedic Mantras by Purohits), discourses by P. P. Shri Rakhe Maharaj and P. P. Shri Prakash Rao Prabhune Maharaj on the importance of the Guru in a Sadhak’s spiritual development, Aarti and the Palkhi (Holy Palanquin). The entire event was conducted in a joyful and devotional manner, while following all the spiritual rules as well pandemic-
related governmental restrictions. A video of some of the events at the Nashik Ashram can be found here [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vk322BXJteM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vk322BXJteM).

Guru Pournima was celebrated in Mumbai at the home of Shri Hemant Petare. Due to pandemic-related restrictions, attendance was limited to around 35 people. A session of Samuhik Sadhan (group meditation) in the morning was followed by Pavaman Abhishek, Shri Satya Datta Pooja and Maha Prasad.

The entire program during this holy day was conducted by Sadhaks with great enthusiasm and devotion, expressing their immense gratitude and love to their Guru and to the Parampara which has granted them the divine gift of Maha Yoga.
The English language translation of P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj’s biography is available in hardcover edition. P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj was the Shaktipat Deeksha Guru of P. P. Narayan Kaka Dhekane Maharaj as well as P. P. Gulvani Maharaj. The original biography was written in the Marathi language by Shri A. S. Potbhare and it was translated into English by Dr. R. V. Urankar.

Copies of the book are available in India for Rs. 299 plus postage at:
P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust
P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Chowk,
Shrirang Nagar, Gangapur Road
Nashik, Maharashtra, India 422013

Phone: +91-253-2311616
Upcoming Events:
Deeksha Day (Initiation Day) on November 14th, 2021
Those desirous of receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) should go to the website: www.mahayoga.org for instructions. The online application form is also available at the website. Future dates for Deeksha Days are posted on the Maha Yoga program calendar at http://mahayoga.org/progcal.aspx.

Maha Yoga Sadhan Shibirs (workshops) at Nashik Ashram
The Nashik Ashram holds Maha Yoga Sadhan Shibirs on the first Sunday of each month from 8 am to 2 pm. Sadhaks sit for Samuhik (Communal) Sadhan, which is followed by a discourse on Yoga. Maha Prasad (lunch) is also served. About 250 Sadhaks typically attend this monthly event. These and other events at the Nashik Ashram and at other locations are posted at http://www.mahayoga.org/progcal.aspx. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, these Shibirs and other communal events at the Nashik Ashram might be suspended consistent with the governmental directives. Please check with the Ashram for when such events will resume.

The Nashik Ashram is located at:
P.P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust
P.P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Chowk, Shrirang Nagar, Gangapur Road, Nashik 422013, Maharashtra, India.
Tel. no.: +91 - 253 - 2311616

Lecture Series at the Maha Yoga Ashram in Thane, Maharashtra, India
The Thane Ashram hosts a series of lectures/talks on Maha Yoga and Yoga on the first Sunday of every month. Please contact P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj in Thane, India at 22-2581-2811 for additional information. The Thane Ashram also hosts Samuhik Sadhan (communal Sadhan) every Sunday from 8:30 am to 9:30 am. The lecture will follow the Samuhik Sadhan (communal Sadhan) on the first Sunday of every month. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, this and other communal events at the Ashram have been suspended indefinitely consistent with the governmental directives. Please check with the Ashram for when such events will resume.

The Thane Ashram is located at:
A/9 Sector # 7, Behind Omega Apartments
Vasant Bungalow, Shree Nagar, Wagle Estate, Thane 400604, India
Website Updates:

We have a Facebook page, Mahayoga World at: https://www.facebook.com/SiddhayogaMahayogaGlobal/.

We also have a Twitter feed at https://twitter.com/Mahayoga_Org.
How to contribute content to the e-newsletter

The goals of our e-newsletter are:

1. Spread the word about Siddha/Maha Yoga.
2. Provide virtual Satsang to Sadhaks
3. Share relevant life experiences which might help the Sadhak community
4. Seek and provide guidance on Siddha/Maha Yoga
5. Share news about Siddha/Maha Yoga events around the world

If you want to contribute content (articles, news reports, questions, life experiences) or comments related to any of the above objectives please send them to:

self.awakening@gmail.com

We’re on the Web!
http://www.mahayoga.org/

May all desire to follow this nectarous Siddhayoga Path!