Editor’s note

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.

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.
Nature as a Role Model

One day Maharajshri was strolling in the ashram. All around, sky-high eucalyptus trees were standing with their heads raised. Mango, gromia, lime, chickoo, custard-apple, neem and peepal trees also graced the surroundings. Marigold, small chrysanthemum, rose, yellow jasmine, xenia and other flowers were blooming. The ashram was looking very attractive. Maharaj stopped and said, “These trees, plants and creepers have a lot to teach an aspirant. Erasing the feeling of friendship or enmity, they give the same uniform cool shade to everyone. For aspirants this quality is worth adopting. They give shade even to the person who cuts them. They offer all their parts for pruning, without grievance, without complaint. Such is their tolerance that they endure everything — heat, cold, rain and storms. They themselves stand in the sun and allow a traveler to rest in their shade. They give fruits to others to eat. They themselves do not eat them. They do not have any attachment to their earnings. Neither do they censure anyone, nor backbite. Silently they witness the activity of the world. They please the mind of a pedestrian by their fragrance. Their flowers bloom and make the face of the visitor bloom. People who come to them receive whatever they have hoped for, be it fruits, flowers, leaves, bark or wood. They may become dry in the heat, but will not ask anyone for water. They do not care for their own lives.

“Now, think. How many aspirants have these qualities? Nature has spread these qualities in all the four directions in order to educate us, but which aspirant accepts the education? Everyone is involved in attachment and aversion and selfishness. No one is willing to give up his conveniences for another. No one comes forward to offer peace to anyone else. Hence their minds have no peace. Everyone’s face reflects inner turmoil. Still they consider themselves aspirants. Truly speaking, such aspirants, even after doing sadhan, are far from sadhan.”
Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

I was listening to Maharajshri attentively and at the same time churning my heart — contemplating and feeling shame because I, too, was lacking these qualities of the trees. Who knows what Maharajshri was saying, absentmindedly, in his conversation with the trees?

The clouds were roaring in the sky and lightning was flashing and thundering. It seemed that it would fall upon our heads at any moment. I was alone with Maharajshri. Maharajshri said, “Notice how the lightning thunders. No one knows when it will strike or whom it will strike. The same is the case with time. No one knows when it will come or upon whom it will swoop down. Man has become so negligent towards time, yet he moves about with death hanging over his head. Lightning at least flashes and thunders first, but the sound of time cannot even be heard. It pounces like a hawk and takes one away. A living being is so helpless, yet he still has so much pride.”

I said, “Maharajji, generally a human falls sick before his death. Isn’t this a forewarning?” Maharajshri said, “Yes, it is, but a living being treats it like an illness, not as a forewarning of death. He doesn’t give up the hope of remaining alive until the last moment. This is called abhinivesh [love for life].”

I began to feel rather scared upon hearing about the frightful nature of death, I started feeling, “I don’t know when the bed will get rolled.” All my plans and aspirations froze in their place. My mind thought it would be better if Maharajshri did not talk about this subject. That is a shortcoming in a human: that he does not wish to listen to, nor understand, nor accept anything about going away from this world. I tried to change the subject by saying, “Maharajji, the thundering of clouds can be heard internally and the flash of lightning can be seen there, too. How are these things related to time?”

Maharajshri said, “They have nothing to do with time. This internal experience is either related to accumulated impressions, or to manifestations based on the tattvas [fundamental cosmic principles]. The experience based on the tattvas comes at a very late stage. Generally an aspirant remains entangled at the level of accumulated impressions and that, too, at an unwanted gross level. Just as the impressions of actions are accumulated, so are the impressions of spiritual practices performed with a sense of pride. These impressions manifest in kriyas and cause such experiences. The basis of the tattvas cannot be understood by you now. As your mind is filled with samskaras, it is incapable of understanding this subject. For now, simply understand that just as tattvas are continually made, one after another, in the same way and in the same order, one after the other, they are absorbed back into the tattvas. The kriya which is manifest when the tattva is made, that same kriya is manifest when it is being absorbed. However, this subject is not to be understood merely on an intellectual plane. To attain a state suitable for that, you will have to do a lot of sadhan.”

I asked, “Do sound and light also have a relationship with one another?”

He said, “Yes, both take place due to friction. As of now you only understand gross friction, but the friction of sound and light is between infinitesimal, extremely infinitesimal tattvas.
Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

Thunder [sound] takes place due to the friction between clouds and the same friction produces lightning [light]. However, this is gross friction and is manifested in gross space only. Inner space is infinitesimal and the tattva, too, is extremely infinitesimal. To experience them, the valleys of impressions and desires have to be crossed."

I did not understand anything. The only thing I had understood, if indeed there was something, was that I had not understood anything. It seemed as if Maharajshri had read my mind. He said, “I have already told you that, as of now, you do not have any control of this extremely subtle subject. But yes, you definitely understand what I said about the visible gross world, the roaring of the clouds and the flash and thunder of lightning.”

Shaktipat and Love

There was a lot of activity in the ashram. The Bengali Baba Shri Ramdas Omkarnath was to arrive in a short while. Baba had a large number of devotees and disciples in India and abroad. This great man of Bhakti Marg [the path of devotion] was very simpler, straightforward and sensitive. After his arrival there was a conversation between the two great men. Baba was saying, “I know only one love: the love at the feet of God, love for all beings created by him, love for the world considering it to be the manifest form of God. How can attachment and aversion enter a heart that is full of love? Detachment starts rising inside on its Own, The mind moves away from sense objects and the mind starts shining with freshness and divinity. Love removes the distinction between a friend and a foe. A devotee full of love is totally dependent on God. God is everything to him. To meet, not to meet, when to meet, how to meet, and in what form to meet, all these are issues for God to decide. A devotee remains covered in the love of God.”

Maharajshri said, “You have said such a beautiful thing. The essence of spirituality is detachment towards the world and love for God. First someone moves away from the world, and then love for God is generated. First someone fills his heart with love, and as a result he develops detachment towards the world. Detachment and love complement each other. The more one increases, so will the other. On the reduction of one, the other will reduce. Thus a devotee must remain alert in protecting his detachment in order to maintain his love. Otherwise a lack of detachment can destroy the feeling of love. For this it is important to have a disciplined way of life. Devotion [bhakti], knowledge [jnana], yoga, dutiful action [karma], whatever be the sadhan, love of God is equally important for all of them. Otherwise everything becomes dry. The door of the heart can be opened only with love.”

At this Baba asked a question. “You are a preceptor of Shaktipat. In the sadhan of Shaktipat where do you place love?”

Maharajshri said, “Root impressions [samskaras], ripened samskaras [prarabdha] and tendencies of past lives [vasana] are the most important obstacles in progressing on the path of love and detachment. Without removing them, neither can detachment arise in the mind,
Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

nor love in the heart. As they are purified, love and detachment will progress accordingly. Shaktipat is the art of attaining freedom from these. If a disciple surrenders to the kriyas of the Shakti with overwhelming love in his heart and with the sense of observation in his mind, love and detachment begin to increase. There is no major difference between surrender and love. There is surrender in love. In other words, you can say that love is incomplete without surrender. Surrender increases with an increase in love and love increases with an increase in surrender. The sadhan of Shaktipat begins with surrender, which, over a period of time, with regular sadhan turns into love. How an aspirant does his sadhan depends on his sentiments. If there is a feeling of attachment and aversion in his mind, that feeling will keep on increasing. If there is a feeling of love and detachment, then it will grow. Basically the goal of sadhan is to promote love and detachment.”

Baba said, “The Shakti of some devotees is awakened while singing devotional songs [bhajans]. Then what is the need of Shaktipat?”

Maharajshri replied, “Shaktipat is not important; awakening of the Shakti is important. But in how many people has the Shakti been awakened while singing devotional songs? Only a few. Isn’t that true? On the other hand, the Shakti has been awakened in most of my disciples who are initiated in Shaktipat. This is a simple solution by which there is direct experience of the actions of the inner Shakti. The progress of an aspirant is dependent on his sadhan and his feelings, but at least his inner door is opened. That makes it very easy for him.”

Presented here with kind permission from Swami Shivom Tirth Ashram, Inc. Thanks to Mrs. Alison Kamat for transcribing the excerpts.

“Churning of the Heart” trilogy by P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj is available from Amazon.com, or in India from:
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Over seven hundred years ago, the great Yoga Master and Saint Shri Dnyaneshwar Mauli, through his literary work Bhavartha Deepika, introduced to the common man the concept that Bramha (The Ultimate Truth) can be experienced by directing and centering one’s thoughts inwards, towards one’s own Atma (Soul). Those were very revolutionary thoughts that were not available to the common person at that time. These concepts were the foundation for the Universal Dharma, available to everyone regardless of any of the differences that separate us, and which continues to this day in the Warkari tradition. In Pasayadaan, the verses with which he ends Bhavartha Deepika, he offered a prayer that all human beings find the Ultimate Truth through this Universal Dharma by seeking it within one’s own Atma.

Despite this revolutionary message, most common people were unable to achieve the state of Ultimate Truth. The problem was that, it was difficult for most people to intentionally direct their minds inward and to merge it in their own Atma. Shri Dnyaneshwar Mauli mentions in Verse 78 of Bhavartha Deepika, the importance of diligence and patience for reaching the state, but for most people who get distracted by external activities and ties, directing one’s mind inwards and centering it on one’s Atma is an extremely difficult, if not an impossible proposition.

Against this background, P. P. Shri Dhekane Kaka Maharaj proposed a path breaking, revolutionary thought. Citing Yoga Vasishta (spiritual text written by Sage Valmiki) he asserted that Atma (Soul) and Prana are two sides of the same coin. All activities in the universe take place because of Prana Shakti (Life Force). It is the Universal Energy that sustains the universe. That is why Prana, which is universal, is superior to the mind, which is individual. In fact the mind itself is completely dependent on the Prana Shakti which animates it. So, instead of trying to direct one’s mind on one’s Atma, which for most people is a completely abstract concept, it would be far easier for most of us to direct our minds on the Prana Shakti within us, the gross manifestation of which is the air we breathe in and out as long as we are alive! And once we are able to direct our minds to observing our breathing process, the Prana Shakti which our breath represents will gradually remove the sheaths (Koshas) which cover up the Atma within and eventually lead our consciousness to the Atma within.

P. P. Shri Dhekane Kaka Maharaj, like Shri Dnyaneshwar Mauli before him, is an epoch making personality who made the complex process of Atma-Sakshatkar (self enlightenment) very simple by proposing that merging the mind in the Atma (Soul) can be achieved by merging the mind in the breathing process which represents the Prana Shakti within us all. What was buried in complex scriptures in hard to comprehend language was made available to the common person. He provided a very practical tool for the common man/woman to achieve divine communion with the Lord. It is a sure shot way of seeking and obtaining Divine experiences. Keeping in mind his engineering background, it can be said that, he provided an analytical tool to explore the divine power. Using his suggested approach, anyone can reach the highest level of spirituality, regardless of caste, religion, gender and
the other differences that divide us. In my opinion, his very actions and his relentless efforts, to spread this knowledge to the masses, makes him a divine Avatar. It may take many years for us to realize the significance and the true value of his ground-breaking gift to humanity.

P. P. Shri Dhekane Kaka Maharaj codified this approach in the Maha Yoga Introductory Practice ([http://mahayoga.org/introductorypractice.htm](http://mahayoga.org/introductorypractice.htm)) to help everyone on this earth become directed towards his Atma within, (Pratiprasav Marg) as urged by Shri Dnyaneshwar Maharaj. For the welfare of the individual and for society as a whole, it is said that a proper balance needs to be achieved among the body, the mind and the soul of each individual. Yoga is the only sure-fire way to achieve this. P. P. Dhekane Kaka Maharaj's Maha Yoga Introductory Practice provides the easiest possible path for individuals and for society to achieve such balance. In simple terms, it can be said that, connecting the mind to the soul is Yoga. In our day-to-day activities, the mind is the decision maker, whereas, in Mahayoga the Prana Shakti within is the driving force, a person is not the doer, the Prana Shakti within is the doer. The absence of doership breaks the vicious cycle of accumulating new samskaras and allows the elimination of existing ones.

1. Close the eyes while relaxing the body
2. Merge the mind, in the breathing process, i.e. observe the breathing process
3. Observe whatever happens.

These three steps are the crux of the matter. By following these three simple and easy steps, anyone can dive deep into the vast ocean of spirituality. It is easily available to all and it is very simple, yet very powerful. The sky is the limit for the seeker.

Another revolutionary thought that was proposed by P. P. Dhekane Kaka Maharaj was that Prana is the Dharma for the whole world. The different religions, as we know them, are just different ways of worship. New religions were founded because the existing method of worship, being carried out at that time, was felt inappropriate or inadequate. Instead of worshipping external Gods, we can all “worship” the Prana that resides within each of us and is the common element that supports the whole of humankind. If each one of us considers Prana as his/her mother, all human beings can be considered to be children of our common mother, thereby establishing Universal Brotherhood throughout the world.

Shri Dnyaneshwar Maharaj had envisioned Universal Brotherhood in Pasayadaan in the thirteenth century. It was, perhaps, destiny that chose P. P. Dhekane Kaka Maharaj to propose such revolutionary thoughts for the spiritual progress of the masses and for achieving that vision.

P. P. Dhekane Kaka Maharaj not only proposed the revolutionary path for Maha Yoga, he actively took relentless efforts to spread those thoughts all over the world with the ultimate aim of ‘spiritual uplift of the entire world’. He traveled extensively throughout India and in different parts of the world in order to make people aware of the availability of the simple
and easy path that would eventually lead them to the highest level of spiritual progress. On the 51st Death Anniversary of his Guru, P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj, he proposed the Mahayoga Introductory Practice that could be undertaken by anyone in the world irrespective of gender, nationality, religion and social status.

Since his childhood, P. P. Shri Dhekane Kaka Maharaj was fond of the Sanskrit language, ancient Hindu scriptures, yoga path and so on. He also had some hard to find qualities. His personality had the foundation of strong detachment towards worldly things and he practiced celibacy throughout his life. However, he remained socially aware and was always concerned with the well-being of others. He had a special interest in interacting with members of the young generation from all sorts of backgrounds; he used to teach kids with low scholastic performance to help them improve their grades and would always be on the lookout to help kids who have gone astray get back on track. By providing a spiritual foundation, he helped several families in staying together during their difficult times.

In entrusting P. P. Dhekane Kaka Maharaj to lead the Maha Yoga Ashram established by P. P. Shri Gulavani Maharaj in Pune, India, P. P. Shri Datta Maharaj Kavishwar, who previously led the Ashram, had the following to say about him, “He is a truly blessed soul because he is virtuous, pious, devoted to his Guru, self-sacrificing, and someone who brings people together. He is very diligent in organizing various spiritual activities such as Gurupournima, the observance of P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj’s Death Anniversary, etc. at the Ashram he established in Nashik. His blessed nature and the virtuous way he lives his life give him the necessary spiritual foundation to guide seekers and Maha Yoga Sadhaks on their spiritual journeys. India, as a country has been blessed because of the existence of multifaceted personalities such as him. P. P. Dhekane Kaka Maharaj deserves to take over and expand the work begun by P. P. Shri Gulavani Maharaj”.

Spiritual Master P. P. Dhekane Kaka Maharaj not only proposed the idea of Universal Brotherhood through Prana Shakti, but he also kept working on it in a disciplined way throughout his life. Even in his eighties, he undertook a strenuous 75-day multi-city tour of the UK and the US in 2007 and a two week tour of the Middle East in 2008, to personally take the message of Mahayoga and Universal Brotherhood outside of India. He continued to be actively engaged in such activities till his last breath, having been the guest of honor at the International Yoga Seminar in Ujjain just a couple of weeks before his departure from this world. Thousands of Maha Yoga Sadhaks and others around the world who aspire to lead a spiritual life are grateful to him for enabling them to actually experience what Shri Dnyaneshwar Mauli described in Bhavartha Deepika - inner peace and Universal Brotherhood.

By: P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj
Translated from the Marathi version by: Shri Milind Joshi
Maha Yoga Path and Guidance from our Gurus

Shri Hemant Bhayde, a US-based Sadhak who recently received Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) along with his wife and son, writes about his long spiritual journey and the guidance he has received from his Guru on issues that many early Sadhaks experience.

I am fairly new to the Maha Yoga path. I have not written any article in my life on a topic like this. For me, it all started sometime back in 2001. During a visit to India in 2001, we came across a booklet “Siddhayoga (Mahayoga)” published by P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust. Prior to this I had read only a few books on Yoga. After coming back from India, my wife and I read the booklet and we both were very impressed the way P. P. Shri Dhekane Kaka Maharaj had explained Maha Yoga, Spiritual Mother Energy, Life Force (Prana), Consciousness (Chaitanya), Guru-Tattva, Maha Yoga Deeksha (Initiation) and the purification of body, mind, and senses by surrendering to the awakened Prana Shakti within. We both applied for Maha Yoga Deeksha right away, but due to some computer glitch or some other reasons we could not establish communications with P.P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust. We were both very disappointed, but over time we forgot all about this booklet and our application for Maha Yoga Deeksha.

In early 2013, I am not sure how, we came across the same “Siddhayoga (Mahayoga)” booklet in a cabinet in our prayer room. This time we both read the booklet several times. It really had a big impact on us. We researched the Mahayoga website and enjoyed reading all newsletters & articles, and watching videos of our beloved Guru P. P. Shri Kaka Maharaj. We came across a video “3rd International Yoga Seminar (12 - 14 October 2012)” where P. P. Kaka Maharaj conducted a workshop on Shaktipat Maha Yoga. In this video P. P. Kaka Maharaj appeared on stage after an inspiring introduction by P. P. Shri Prabhune Maharaj. Even though it was a video, it was an amazing experience for both of us to sit for meditation with P. P. Kaka Maharaj instructing and guiding all Sadhaks in that auditorium with a strong but very comforting spiritual voice. Our eyes stayed closed for long time even after the video stopped and when we got up we both felt very emotional. We both felt so bad that we had to wait twelve years for our “God” to wake us up. I remembered what our Guruji P.P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj wrote in one of his articles about P. P. Kaka Maharaj. Guruji wrote “He holds the key to unlock the vast store of Universal Life Energy that resides in each and every one of us, just by his Sankalpa (intention) - the “Open Sesame” that can unlock the vast treasures that reside in each and every one of us to grant us the incomparable experiences that come with true spiritual awakening. This “God” has the ability to make the rose of a person’s inner spirituality come to bloom. In his presence, the Tamasik and Rajasik tendencies of people get diminished while Sattvik tendencies become automatically enhanced”. This is exactly what we observed and experienced in that video of P. P. Kaka Maharaj. Immediately after that, with some guidance from our Guruji and Shri Dilip Kamat (editor of this e-newsletter), we both applied for Maha Yoga Deeksha and we were initiated on May 13, 2013. Since then, it has been a very joyful experience for our family (our son also received Maha Yoga Deeksha on September 18, 2013) to continue on this path.

It is very difficult for me to explain what it is but I feel like I am a totally different person after the initiation. I have always been very skeptical of believing in any kind of miracles, but now I feel that I am actually experiencing the same. My state of mind, thinking process
Maha Yoga Path and Guidance from our Gurus - (continued)

and interactions in daily situations are constantly and gradually changing for the better. I would like to share one such experience/miracle. In my office, my filing system is not as organized as it should be. I have several files on several technical issues (hard copies and e-copies), and they are not properly organized. It used to take me a long time to locate the required documents to continue research or analysis on new issues. Lately I have noticed that as soon as I start looking for the needed documents in the files on my desk or in my filing cabinets or on my hard drive, I have started going to those files right away. I do not know if it is a state of mind, but this has never happened to me before. I am sure that all Maha Yoga Sadhaks must be experiencing similar, seemingly trivial, experiences/miracles, but I think that we either do not observe these experiences carefully or we do not analyze them in a spiritual frame. Later on I was reading a book “Trek of Spirituality” written by P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj where he writes, “Like electricity that comes into contact with a light-bulb, initiation by the Guru brings light to the disciple. A disciple spirit soars high when it comes into contact with the consciousness of the Guru; he experiences the gate of meditation being opened before him. From this point on, the disciple has set his feet on the correct path, supported by the guidance of the Guru.” This has been really true for us.

I would like to share some of the guidance we received from our Guruji for two situations. We were having too many thoughts come up during meditation and we felt like we should be able to control them. Also, I was experiencing some body shaking and unusual body movements during meditations. I felt that I was the doer in the process because I was able to control the shaking and body movements and I wasn’t sure what I should do about these activities. I requested our Guruji to guide us. He responded to us very promptly. I have put together his responses from several e-mails.

Regarding controlling the thought process our Guruji wrote:

“Thoughts are not coming. Thoughts are going. Hence do not get disturbed by the thoughts. You have to simply observe them and they will vanish! You should not follow them or try to control them. You should just observe them and let them go. You will find periods of no thoughts without any effort. You have to observe the roots of the arising thoughts. That is, you have to observe how one thought arises after another has left. And you should simply observe this as if you are not a party to the process; just an observer. You are independent of the system or separate from the thought process. You are the observer (Sakshi).”

Regarding the unusual body movements he wrote:

“If body movements happen automatically during meditation let them happen. One need not do anything with intent to stop them. The Kriyas (involuntary physical, mental or Pranic activities) that happen are an indication that Mother Energy has bestowed her blessings. These need not happen all the time. They may or may not happen. Sadhak should not strive to make something happen. Whatever Kriyas you are experiencing, let them happen. Although you may feel that you are the doer, if you observe carefully, you will notice that whatever surge in activity is happening is automatically coming from
within. You have to let yourself go with the surge, i.e. surrender. Hence whatever is happening, let it happen spontaneously. After that happens you may feel a bit relieved or relaxed. This is nothing but the gradual uncovering of various sheaths (Koshas that cover the Atma within). Let it happen.

It is good that your faith, interest, confidence and understanding are increasing with Sadhan. This is the main benefit of Sadhan; unknown fears and anxieties disappear and the mind gradually becomes calm and serene. As the various sheaths (Koshas) get removed with diligent and regular Sadhan, the Sadhak experiences different type of Kriyas. Through these Kriyas many deep rooted impressions, scars, anxieties, unknown fears from the Sadhak’s present life as well as from earlier births are cleared, gradually resulting in a clean, calm and anxiety free mind.”

We have tremendous respect for all those Great Saints and Gurus who devoted their lives to help us (Sadhaks) to live life at a higher spiritual level. We are eternally grateful to the Maha Yoga Parampara (lineage), P. P. Shri Dhekane Kaka Maharaj and our beloved Guruji P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj for his blessings and continuous guidance to us.

By: Hemant G. Bhayde
Answers to Questions from Sadhaks

**Question:** I received Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) a few months ago. Given the importance of surrender in Maha Yoga practice should I continue to follow the two directions below:

- Initially a Sadhak should inhale breath speedily and exhale slowly for seven or eight times
- Think that you are not the body but only the pure air which is the gross manifestation of Prana (Life Energy)?

**Answer:** Yes, you can continue to begin your Sadhan with the initial structured breathing a few times and having the initial thought that you are not the body but the gross manifestation of the Prana Shakti. But there is no hard and fast rule that you do so. Some Sadhaks benefit from it as it separates their Sadhan time from what they were doing before they sat for Sadhan. But other Sadhaks get into the meditative state right away and do not have to begin with the structured breathing and the explicit thinking part. It is also important to have an attitude of surrendering to the awakened Prana Shakti within you when you sit for Sadhan.

In any case, once you have done the structured breathing and the explicit thinking part for say your first 30 seconds or so and have relaxed your body, quit doing anything explicitly. Let your body resume its normal and automatic breathing, surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within you and gradually put yourself in the role of an observer (Sakshi) of what happens. If certain physical Kriyas happen (they might be subtle or vigorous), let them happen; simply observe them. If you feel some sort of energy flows within your body, once again they might be subtle or vigorous, simply observe them. If some random thoughts arise in your mind, do not get frustrated, simply observe them. These are all physical/Pranic/mental Kriyas and the Sadhak’s role is to simply observe them as they happen, not make them happen, or get attached to or afraid of them when they happen, not expect them to happen nor get frustrated if they don’t happen. This is all a process of bringing up Samskaras (impressions from current and past lives) and getting rid of them by playing the detached role of an observer during Sadhan. If no specific Kriyas happen, simply observe your normal and automatic breathing, since that is a Kriya that happens to all of us as long as we are alive.

**Question:** I think I have a big problem of being lazy. I find it very difficult to wake up early to sit for Sadhan so I just keep postponing it. I really want to sit for Sadhan regularly, but I am not sure I know how to overcome my laziness. Please advise.

**Answer:** The only solution to laziness is to not be lazy. That’s it.

If you cannot wake up early enough to sit for Sadhan then figure out another time when you might be able to do so. Nobody else can advise you on when you should sit for Sadhan; it is entirely up to you to figure that out and to get over your laziness. You have to have enthusiasm (लगन - lagan) to sit for Sadhan, and such enthusiasm can only come
from within yourself. The more you sit for Sadhan the more enthusiastic you will become about sitting for Sadhan. So make a commitment to yourself that you will sit for Sadhan every day, figure out when you can devote an uninterrupted hour to do so, and draw on your will-power to honor the commitment you have made to yourself. Once you begin to sit for Sadhan every day you will gradually develop the लगन (enthusiasm) for it, and once that happens you will get addicted to it and you won’t be able to go through a day without sitting for Sadhan!

So please draw on your will-power in the initial stages and the लगन will follow.

- **Question:** I am a Maha Yoga Sadhak, but more recently I have been wondering about the true nature of God. Some people say that God does not have any form or attributes (Nirguna) while others show Him/Her as having form and attributes (Saguna). Is the worship of God in Saguna form easier for self-realization than Nirguna worship? How can I develop the Bhakti (devotion) needed for worshipping Saguna God?

**Answer:** God, who we refer to as Paramatma is within us all and is formless and infinite. Paramatma is the Tattva (principle) that pervades all creation.

It is very difficult for most people to understand an abstract concept like a formless and infinite Paramatma; they personalize the Paramatma, and depending on their Samskaras (accumulated impressions from current and past lives), depict the Paramatma in some physical form. This is the basis for all religions that are devoted to one form or other of the formless and infinite Paramatma. They embody the Paramatma (the common Tattva) into various Roopas (forms) such as Lord Rama, Lord Krishna, Lord Dattatreya, Jesus Christ, Gautama Buddha, Mohammed, etc. Of course, all these personifications are based on the fact that these historical entities were self-realized (some to a greater extent than others, perhaps) and were able to lead their followers to various levels of self-realization. So it was easy for their followers to see God/Paramatma in them and surrender to such embodied entities rather than surrendering to an abstract concept like the formless Paramatma or the awakened Prana Shakti (once again, a manifestation of the Paramatma) within. In other instances, Paramatma, which has no attributes (Gunas) i.e. it is Nirguni, was depicted by various easily understood attributes (Gunas) such as creation, sustenance and destruction. This led to the embodiment of these primary attributes as Lord Brahma, Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva, with various sub-attributes assigned to the rest of the pantheon of Gods such as Lord Ganesh, Mother Shakti and all her Roopas, etc. Many people find it easier to pray to, meditate on, and surrender to Saguna entities such as these.

However, while it might seem easier to follow a Saguna path, as Radha did in her adoration of Lord Krishna, it is very difficult for a Sadhak to develop devotion (Bhakti) to a Saguna form of God when his Samskaras do not naturally create such Bhakti within him. So, unless you have a natural devotion towards Lord Krishna or Lord Ganesh or Jesus Christ, etc., it is very difficult to develop such Bhakti with intent. Practicing Maha
Yoga Sadhan might bring up some Sanchit (accumulated) Samskaras from within a Sadhak’s Chitta (mind-stuff) which might lead to such Bhakti in due course, but otherwise one has to have such Samskaras already brought up in one’s Chitta to have such Bhakti occur naturally. Also, most Sadhaks who follow such Saguna devotion based paths encounter a great deal of difficulty in the final stage of self-realization. This is when they have to free themselves from the concept that their Saguna object of devotion is separate from them, to the reality that the Nirguni Paramatma is within them and has been there all along! Radha was able to do this when she saw herself as Lord Krishna; that Radha and Krishna are one and the same. But it was because of her Samskaras that led her to Lord Krishna and the eventual realization through his grace that she and he were one and the same. Most Sadhaks pursuing the Saguna path may not be as lucky.

It is far easier, in my opinion, to practice Maha Yoga Sadhan and do nothing with intent during Sadhan, simply surrendering to the awakened Prana Shakti within (a manifestation of the Paramatma) so she can do what is needed to lead the Sadhak to self-realization. One does not need to contemplate on a Saguna form of God, or try to understand the abstract concept of a Nirguni, formless and infinite Paramatma. Just leave it up to the awakened Prana Shakti to take us where we need to go and have faith that she will get us there. If during the course of Maha Yoga Sadhan you develop a Bhakti/devotion to a specific Saguna form of Paramatma, then that is fine. It would indicate that there are some Sanchit Samskaras related to such Bhakti that you need to experience and observe, before those Samskaras get eliminated from your Chitta. But otherwise, there is no need to try to intentionally develop Bhakti for any Saguna form of God.

**Question:** I hope to receive Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) in a few weeks and I am wondering about what the Maha Yoga tradition has to say regarding sexuality. More specifically is semen-retention critical for Sadhaks, and should Sadhaks be celibate? Also, is there a danger of a Sadhak who has his Kundalini awakened triggering the awakening of a sexual partner’s Kundalini when the partner may not want it to happen or be ready for it? And if that is the case, is there not a responsibility for Sadhaks with awakened Kundalini to only have sexual intercourse with long-term serious relationships where the partner is also spiritually inclined, ideally with awakened Kundalini, or on a similar spiritual path?

**Answer:** Glad to read that you will be receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha shortly. Hope you have a wonderful Deeksha experience. You are probably aware of this, but in case you aren’t, you are welcome in the interim to sit for the Introductory Practice of Maha Yoga as described at [http://mahayoga.org/introductorypractice.htm](http://mahayoga.org/introductorypractice.htm).

Now, about your questions regarding sexuality and what the Maha Yoga tradition has to say about it.

On the topic of semen retention and celibacy, semen retention is a good practice for Yogis in general, because by doing so Sadhaks avoids dissipating the Shakti within.
Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

However, since most Maha Yoga Sadhaks, as well as most of the Rishis (accomplished Yogis from ancient times) are/were householders, they have a duty to their households and spouses to engage in sex both for procreation and for their own personal release. The principle that should guide Maha Yoga Sadhaks in this respect, as in all other actions, is whether the action will result in creating new attachments or aversions, or in reinforcing existing attachments or aversions; i.e. does it create new Samskaras or reinforce existing ones materially? And further, is the Sadhak capable of avoiding the action without creating a deep sense of frustration within his Chitta (mind-stuff) as a result; i.e. will the avoidance of an action result in the creation of other Samskaras that arise out of a deep sense of frustration? Both considerations are important.

The desire for sex is a more intense desire than most others, which is why avoiding it with explicit intent is a very difficult proposition for most Sadhaks; and which is why the Maha Yoga rules and restrictions do not specifically call for avoiding it. So, avoiding sex and practicing celibacy for the sake of semen retention, if it can be done without the Sadhak feeling a deep sense of frustration, is fine. But avoiding sex and having it result in the Sadhak becoming extremely frustrated, is not good for his/her spiritual progress either. So Sadhaks are advised to continue to engage in sex as they deem appropriate, and when they do engage in it, they should try to do so with a certain level of detachment. While it is easier said than done, try to participate in the act as more of an observer (Sakshi) rather than the doer (Karta), thus minimizing reinforcing your attachment to the act. Gradually, with regular Sadhan, the Samskaras related to sexual enjoyment will get dissipated through Kriyas during Sadhan, and your attachment to sex will automatically decline. At that stage you will be able to engage in sex more as a duty to your household or to your spouse/partner, seeing the sex act as the work of the awakened Prana Shakti within, and your role as a Sakshi rather than the Karta, thus avoiding reinforcing any attachment that may still exist.

On the topic of accidentally triggering an unwanted Kundalini awakening in your partner/spouse as a result of a sex act, this indeed can be a potential risk. However, for such an event to happen, the Sadhak will need to be at a fairly advanced spiritual stage. For most newbie Sadhaks this is not a major issue. Sometimes though, Sadhaks who may have only recently begun the practice of Maha Yoga, but because of their spiritual development during past lives might suddenly find themselves at a stage advanced enough to trigger Kundalini awakenings in others. For such Sadhaks, this can become a very important issue. And one can never really predict when exactly a Sadhak might find himself with such a capability. Also, an uncontrolled and accidental Kundalini awakening in a sexual partner may result in a sense of harm to him/her, and the awakened Kundalini in the partner may need to be regulated through a formal Deeksha (initiation) following such an accidental awakening. So, it would be best for a Sadhak to have sexual intercourse only with his/her spouse or with a long term partner who is also a Maha Yoga Sadhak or is on a similar spiritual path and who, if his/her Kundalini gets accidentally awakened would be willing and interested in receiving formal Maha Yoga Deeksha.
Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

- **Question:** My wife and I live in South Korea and we both received Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha a few months ago. While I experience very few Kriyas during Sadhan, my wife has recently begun experiencing some very strong physical Kriyas. A few days ago she began to sing and dance like a small child, wandering around during Sadhan and making hand gestures like an Indian or Chinese dancer. She feels happy when she is experiencing these Kriyas but I am beginning to worry a little if she might hurt herself. She does not lose consciousness when she experiences such Kriyas and is quite aware of what is going on when the Kriyas are happening. Today her Kriyas began to happen even when she was working at her computer and not sitting for Sadhan. What should we do about her situation? Does she need to be in the presence of a Siddha Guru who can make her Kriyas less vigorous?

- **Answer:** Glad to read that both you and your wife have received Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha. Despite the concerns you might have, it seems like you are both progressing very well in each of your Sadhan experiences. Clearly, your Sadhan experiences are very different from each other, reflecting the type of Samskaras (impressions) each of you has accumulated over your current and past lives. Your wife’s Kriyas are vigorous, physical and emotional, while yours are more subtle. Both types of Kriyas are perfectly fine, they just reflect the type of Samskaras that are being brought up into each of your Chittas (mind stuff).

Your concerns regarding the vigorous nature your wife’s Kriyas during Sadhan and even during times when she is not sitting for Sadhan, are perfectly understandable. Here are some suggestions for her to follow:

- She should sit for Sadhan daily on a regular schedule for at least an hour. This will allow the Kriyas associated with the Samskaras that are being erased to happen during Sadhan, thus minimizing the chance that the Kriyas will occur when she is not sitting for Sadhan.
- If she senses the Kriyas begin to happen when she is not sitting for Sadhan, as happened when she was working at her computer, she should open her eyes wide and direct her attention to her work. This will keep her from going into the Sadhan state when she does not want to.
- She should pray to P. P. Kaka Maharaj or to P. P. Loknath Tirth Maharaj, or to the God of the religion she was raised in, Jesus Christ, for example, to have her energy flow be sustained and calm. She could also chant the name of whoever she prays to for calming the energy flow within her. Such a sense of surrender and an attitude of prayer, to whatever deity of her choosing, will help reduce the undesired vigor of her Kriyas.
- Please make sure that the place where she sits for Sadhan is free, as much as possible, of obstructions or things that she might run into or trip over if her Kriyas get too vigorous. If by chance she might find herself running into some obstruction
like a wall, she should avoid doing so by drawing on her conscious mind. The fact that she does not lose consciousness completely during Sadhan and is aware of what is happening (i.e. being the observer/Sakshi) will enable her to avoid such obstructions.

- Given what you have described, especially the fact that she is aware of what is happening during Sadhan; it is unlikely that she will hurt herself. The awakened Shakti will keep her from harm. With regular Sadhan, the intensity of her Kriyas will get reduced and she will begin to experience the more subtle and calm Kriyas that happen when the Rajasik tendencies get reduced or eliminated from her Chitta.

Given the fact that your wife is aware of what is happening when the Kriyas happen, we don’t think she needs to be in the presence of an external Siddha Guru to have them be made less vigorous. She can simply open her eyes to reduce the intensity of the Kriyas. The hand gestures she experiences are Yoga-Mudras which serve to clean up the Samskaras from her Chitta. They can often be pleasurable, so she should not get attached to them or to any of the other Kriyas that happen. She should just observe them and let them go. And if she finds the Kriyas too vigorous or scary, she should simply open her eyes until the Kriyas become less vigorous and continue her Sadhan.

Your wife is among the relatively small percentage of Sadhaks who have experienced vigorous physical Kriyas after Deeksha, a situation which many Sadhaks yearn for. To the extent a Sadhak has vigorous physical Kriyas as opposed to the more subtle physical, mental or Pranic Kriyas, the vigorous Kriyas tend to solidify the Sadhak’s faith in Maha Yoga very quickly. So your wife has a good reason to feel fortunate. But the Kriyas by themselves are not very important because they are only the process of “garbage removal”, i.e. the removal of Samskaras from one’s Chitta. So, she should simply observe what happens, not get attached to anything that happens, and if the Kriyas get too vigorous or scary she should just open her eyes for a short while until the Kriyas get less vigorous or stop, before resuming her Sadhan once again. If at some point she decides that she needs to be in the actual presence of a Siddha Guru, she may visit P. P. Dr. Deshpande Maharaj who lives in Thane, near Mumbai, India, or P. P. Prakash Prabhune Maharaj who lives in Nashik, India or any of the 12 other Deekshadhikaris located in India.

Editor’s note: Please send your questions regarding Maha Yoga and Shaktipat to: self.awakening@gmail.com.
The first anniversary of P. P. Narayan Kaka Dhekane Maharaj’s departure from this world (according to the Hindu calendar) was observed at the Maha Yoga headquarters in Nashik, India from October 18th to October 26th, 2013. Various religious and social events were held during that time in the presence of spiritual leaders and other invited dignitaries in an atmosphere that was imbued with spiritual grace.

Although spiritual leaders such as P. P. Kaka Maharaj are always present in the hearts of Sadhaks who have received their Grace, such anniversaries are observed and celebrated because they give Sadhaks an opportunity to convey their gratitude to the departed leaders and to reinforce their commitment to the spiritual path that these holy men have laid out for them.

**Bhagwat Saptah (week) and Dnyaneshwari reading:**

Bhagwat Saptah was conducted over seven days from October 18th to October 24th, 2013 by P. P. Shri Mukund Kaka Jatdevlekar, a leader of the Warkari tradition that was established by Shri Dnyaneshwar Maharaj in the thirteenth century. His narration of the Bhagwat from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm every afternoon from the 18th to the 23rd and in the morning on the 24th, in his wonderfully sweet voice and full of devotion, helped create a spiritually charged atmosphere throughout the week.

We were indeed very fortunate to have a spiritual leader of the stature of P. P. Jatdevlekar conduct the Bhagwat Saptah. Ever since his childhood, he had memorized the Dnyaneshwari and several other spiritual texts, and having led a life as virtuous and as disciplined as P. P. Kaka Maharaj, he was indeed the ideal person to have conducted the Bhagwat Saptah. The 500 or so Sadhaks and others who attended the event were all touched by the Bhakti (spiritual devotion) that seemed to emanate from him. The attendees included the Mayor of Nashik and several other dignitaries.
Observance of the First Anniversary of P. P. Kaka Maharaj’s Departure (continued)

from government and other institutions. It is important to note that following the narration each evening the attendees participated in a session of the Introductory Practice of Maha Yoga.

In addition to the Bhagwat Saptah being conducted each afternoon, a recitation of the Dnyaneshwari, which is one the foundational scriptures of Maha Yoga, was conducted each morning of October 18th to October 23rd, 2013 from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Shri Madhavrao Rathi of Nashik conducted the reading in his mellifluous voice creating a blissful atmosphere for the 150 Sadhaks and others who attended the event each day.

Publication of a Book of Remembrances:

A special event was held from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm on October 24th, 2013 to launch the publication of a book of remembrances of P. P. Kaka Maharaj. The event was held at the Kalidas Kala Mandir in Nashik.
Observance of the First Anniversary of P. P. Kaka Maharaj’s Departure (continued)

It was indeed a memorable occasion. In attendance were Shrimad Jagadguru Shankaracharya Shri Gangadharendra Saraswati Swami Maharaj of the Shirshi Pith in South India, Vedacharya Pandit Shri Ganeshwarshastri Dravid from Varanasi, and Dr. Baba Maharaj Taranekar, who is the head of the P. P. Nana Maharaj Tripadi Parivar. These eminences launched the Marathi language publication which was named Mahayogacha Panthastha (महायोगाचा पांथस्थ). Each of them also gave discourses which were memorable on account of their having known P. P. Kaka Maharaj over the years. Shrimad Jagadguru Shankaracharya’s discourse was especially noteworthy for having touched the hearts of everyone present.

The event was attended by various dignitaries from Nashik and about a thousand Sadhaks and others interested in Maha Yoga.

Maha Yoga Sadhan Shibir (event):

A two day Maha Yoga Sadhan event was held for Sadhaks on October 25th and 26th, 2013 at the Prasad Mangal Karyalay in Nashik. The head of P. P. Swami Shivom Tirth Maharaj’s Dewas Ashram, P. P. Swami Sureshanand Tirth Maharaj, was the honored guest. Also in attendance were the Deekshadhikaris authorized to grant Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) by P. P. Kaka Maharaj. Attending Sadhaks were given guidance through discourses and question and answer sessions.
Observance of the First Anniversary of P. P. Kaka Maharaj’s Departure (continued)

On October 26\textsuperscript{th} 2013, the official date of P. P. Kaka Maharaj’s passing according to the Hindu calendar, several religious rites were conducted by members of the Dhekane family. These events were attended by about 1,500 Sadhaks and others. Shri Charudatta Afle, the famous Kirtankar (singer of spiritual songs) gave a special Kirtan (musical discourse) from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm to commemorate P. P. Kaka Maharaj’s passing at 9:00 pm on that day a year earlier.

The observance of the first anniversary of P. P. Kaka Maharaj’s departure from this world was conducted with traditional religious rites and rituals, but more importantly for Maha Yoga Sadhaks and others, it was a golden opportunity to get better grounded in Maha Yoga and to seek guidance from Maha Yoga leaders. The reverence that the attendees felt for P. P. Kaka Maharaj was evident throughout the event as was the spiritual presence of P. P. Kaka Maharaj.

By: Shri Nikhil Prabhune

Translated from the original in Marathi by: Dilip Kamat
The English language translation of P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj’s biography is now 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

A couple of copies of the book are available for Sadhaks in North America. Those interested can send an e-mail including their postal address, to self.awakening@gmail.com. The cost, including shipping, will be $11 for shipment within the US, but about $24 for shipment to other countries.
Upcoming Events:

Deeksha Day (Initiation Day) on March 27th, 2014
Those desirous of receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) should go to the website: www.mahayoga.org for instructions.

Lecture Series at the Maha Yoga Ashram in Thane, Maharashtra, India
The Thane Ashram will be hosting a series of lectures/talks on Maha Yoga and Yoga on the first Sunday of every month.
The Thane Ashram is located at:

A/9 Sector # 7, Behind Omega Apartments
Vasant Bungalow, Shree Nagar, Wagle Estate, Thane 400604

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.

Website Updates:

The Program Calendar at http://mahayoga.org/progcal.htm has been updated.

The Maha Yoga videos website at http://www.mahayogavideos.org/ has available videos of various Maha Yoga related events and speeches by P. P. Kaka Maharaj.

We also have an active discussion group at:
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kundalinishaktipatayoga/
Please feel free to post messages there about Maha Yoga, the website, or this e-newsletter. You will need to join the group to read or post messages.
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

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Editor: Mr. Dilip Kamat
Design: Mrs. Neha Vishwarepe

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May all desire to follow this nectarous Siddhayoga Path!

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