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.
Analysis of Selfishness

It was a full moon in autumn [Sharad purnima]. A very large pot of milk was kept in the front yard so that it would absorb the moonlight. With the moon shining down upon it, the hill above us seemed like an ornamented dancer, adorned with lunar light, performing a serene dance. A variety of flowers all around graced the landscape. The whole environment was filled with joy. For some time bhajans were sung. Maharajshri was sitting on a chair in the open. Devotees were sitting all around him. A spiritual discussion began.

Maharajshri said, “Literature and worldly usage have given a strange meaning to the word ‘swartha’ [selfishness], just as they have altered the meaning of the word ‘purushartha’ [self-effort]. The way in which purushartha means ‘for the soul,’ swartha means ‘for the Self.’ Now, the question arises: What is the Self? Often we consider our body as the Self.

“Swartha [selfishness] is the greedy attachment to accumulating means of comfort and happiness for the body, and for things related to the body. A selfish person only thinks about his selfish needs. A thief or someone who picks pockets will never think of the difficulties of the other person. He wants, somehow or the other, to snatch someone else’s property. Generally, selfish people live like gentlemen in the world and employ tricks to consume other people’s property. On the surface, all criticize selfishness while remaining fully immersed in it. From the point of view of spirituality and devotion, selfishness is a serious vice. The lowest state of greed is swartha [selfishness]. A selfish person will not hesitate to inflict a loss of a hundred rupees upon another for the sake of getting one rupee.

“Selfishness need not be related to money alone. It can be directed toward power, fame, sensual pleasures or protection of the body. It may involve the desire to be a well-known artist, actor or scholar. Jealousy, hate and disgust are sentiments helpful to selfishness.
Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

Once someone starts to sink into selfishness, then he continues to sink more and more. A selfish person is never content. Even if he has all the comforts in the world, he continues to want more and more. It is understandable that someone should want something for himself, but when the personal interests of someone else are chopped down one sees the worst form of selfishness.

“A selfish person is jealous of those who have greater comfort and happiness. He despises those who have nothing. He flatters those who may be able to fulfill his selfish needs. He is afraid of those who may snatch his selfish accumulations. He is friendly to those who may help in achieving his selfish ends. In a nutshell, the mind of a selfish person is never at peace. He is always busy with some manipulation or the other. The world is full of selfish people, even though selfishness is full of miseries, worries and restlessness.

“Selfishness is like a river that may flood in any season. It is like a well that is never filled. It is a hunger that it is never satisfied. It is like a desert where owls continuously howl. It is like a thorny bush in the desert that hurts all those who pass by. It is like a pot with a hole at the bottom that cannot retain any water. It is like a whirlpool that has swallowed many boats in its belly. It is a tornado that not only lifts those who want to go with it, but also drags up those who may not want to. The whole world burns in the fire of selfishness.”

Question: “The world does not respect selflessness. It is believed that no one can be selfless. Selfless service has become so difficult.”

Answer: “Selfless service has been very difficult in all eras, but for an aspirant, the example is not the world but the inner Shakti, which is totally selfless. The difficulty is that the aspirant must work in the world while keeping the ideal in front of him. Just as two different points cannot meet, similarly selfishness and selfless service cannot survive in the same place. Either the chitta will have selfishness or selflessness. A selfless servant will not be influenced or shaken from his path no matter how many difficulties arise. Yes, it is different if someone has put on a false garb of being selfless. Then selflessness is a pretense.”

Question: “When the flow of the current itself is full of selfishness, how then is selflessness possible?”

Answer: “It is difficult, but it is not impossible. Generosity and tolerance are absolutely essential for this. The path of sadhana is definitely very hard. A selfless servant will always be peaceful and joyful, irrespective of how many difficulties come his way. People may insult him, call him names, try to shake his selflessness, but he will always observe all these things like waves of the ocean and forgive everyone. This is the way to stay in the world and yet apart from the world. Many people use the metaphor of a lotus untouched by water, but the secret of this metaphor is known only to a selfless person.”

Question: “Where did selfishness come from, when the nature of consciousness is selfless, and an individual soul is, in reality, this consciousness?”
Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

Answer: “From misconception, from attachment, from samskaras. The true nature is selfless, but the original true nature and form has been forgotten and the individual soul has become selfish. The affliction of attachment and the cover of samskaras solidify this misconception. Then the nature of the individual soul appears to be selfish.

“Saints totally lack this selfishness. Kabir, Mirabai, Surdas, Tukaram, Jnaneshwar — who of these was selfish? They lived for the benefit of others, and for ultimate spiritual benefit. It may be said that a saint is that person who is not selfish at all.

“The basic nature of an unselfish person is spiritually oriented. Hence his selfish pursuit is to attain the true nature of the spirit. The world is in selfish pursuit of the body, while spiritual selfishness is for ultimate spiritual benefit. The word ‘selfishness’ here, is the same, but there is such a difference in the implication. The progression of selfishness can be described as follows:

(1) Worldly Selfishness — directed towards physical purposes only.

(2) Selflessness — the effort to get rid of worldly selfishness.

(3) Spiritual Selfishness — the desire to merge with the Absolute Self. The ultimate spiritual goal is such selfishness.

“If worldly selfishness is the heat of desires then selflessness protects one from this heat, and spiritual selfishness is like a cooling shade. Travelers feel peace and joy as soon as they come under its shade. Selflessness and surrender are two sides of the same coin; the only difference is in the perspective. Purusharthta, or self-effort, can also be placed in the same category because it is nothing other than surrender and selflessness. All of them have only one goal: to establish in the Absolute Self. Hence the use of the prefixes swa [self] and para [real].

“The wealth of an aspirant is true [spiritual] selfishness. Only true selfishness can destroy all the inner enemies. True selfishness is the herb that can eradicate the disease of birth, life and death from its deepest roots. True selfishness is a garden full of different varieties of fragrant flowers. It is the flow of the holy river Ganges, which can wash all sins. And true selfishness is that level of sadhana from which one does not have to return to the world.

“But, in the end, I must remind you that only a rare person can attain true selfishness. Physical selfishness has become so powerful that a person’s discretion is swept away by its force.”

Question: “Does this mean that efforts in this direction are useless because one can rarely attain it?”
Churning of the Heart - Excerpts (continued)

Answer: “No, it does not mean that. When I said that only a rare person attains true selfishness, it was in reference to the fullest degree of spiritual selfishness. As a man begins to walk in the direction of reaching that state his mind becomes peaceful and free from miseries. To establish one’s self with the Absolute Self is not easy for everyone. However, one can be free from great miseries of life if he can attain an unselfish (in the worldly sense of the term) state of mind that is not easily perturbed.”

Pure and Impure Selfishness

The next day, during the morning walk, I asked a question related to the same discussion. “What is the role of Shakti in worldly selfishness and spiritual selfishness?”

Maharajshri said, “Shakti not only destroys worldly selfishness, it also destroys its root cause. Samskaras come before it after awakening, and the cause of selfishness is samskaras. Samskaras take the form of vasanas, behavioral tendencies that create waves in the mind and give rise to a mind filled with desires and volition. Thus abolition of samskaras is the main problem in the way of elimination of selfishness. Some call it the abolition of tendencies and others call it purification of samskaras. As such, vasanas are the result of samskaras. Therefore the process of purification of samskaras includes abolition of vasanas.

“Now a different perspective will be presented: impure selfishness and pure selfishness. Impure selfishness is worldly, and the mind is filled with worldly desires, attachments, hate and jealousy. It is also filled with vengeance, anger and egoism. The mind does not hesitate a bit before causing harm to others. There is pride of wealth, youth and power. These are the qualities of impure selfishness. In pure selfishness, worldly desires, attachments, hate, jealousy, vengeance, and so forth, withdraw. They are replaced with the desire for self-realization, and give rise to qualities such as detachment toward the world, love of God, restlessness due to separation from God, tolerance, forgiveness, compassion, and so forth. Impure selfishness burns one all the time, whereas in self-realization, pure selfishness merges into the soul along with all the virtues.

“With the kriyas of Shakti and seva [selfless service], impure selfishness diminishes and pure samskaras increase, which gives rise to the good qualities mentioned above. Then Shakti, with the help of kriyas consumes these good qualities and finally merges itself into the soul.”

Question: “However, from a worldly and practical standpoint, this effect is rarely seen. Let us forget about worldly people; even most of the aspirants who claim to have spiritual experiences of a higher nature are in a state of mind that is contrary to this. Anger, ego, attachments, hatred, disgust, and so forth, fully occupy their mind. For such people, even the names of qualities like tolerance, forgiveness and generosity do not exist. They get
upset at small matters. Events leave a marked impression on their psyche, as if a line were engraved in stone. This is hard to understand. On the one hand there is the joy of sadhana, and on the other hand there is such a state of mind.

Answer: “I have told you before that only a rare person can enter into the Lord’s city of love. Many start on the inner journey, but only a few lucky ones reach their destination. Most of them fall to the ground before reaching it. What I talked about is the usual sequence of progress of Shakti. It is the duty and responsibility of the aspirant to allow selfishness to transform into kriyas of Shakti. It is also said that the psychic tendencies, impressions and selfishness do not leave you at once. They perish and are reborn again and again. They disappear and manifest again. This is the play of Maya [the grand illusion]. Even in the dry desert the harvest of faults is very rich. A sadhak may be absorbed in his sadhana, but this selfishness is busy weakening its roots from inside. In reality, this is the carelessness of an aspirant. The Gita says that a devotee is alert. Alertness is moving forward on the spiritual path and, simultaneously, remaining cautious about inner enemies.

“Parallel to the journey on the spiritual path, there is another journey that is known as the journey of prarabdha, or destiny. One foot of the sadhak is on the path of sadhan; the other foot is on the path of his prarabdha. As long as both feet fail to take synchronized steps one cannot go forward on the spiritual journey. Generally sadhaks take an interest in the journey of sadhan, but neglect the journey of prarabdha. One foot tries to move forward, but the other foot is tied to vasanas and the stone of selfishness and does not want to rise up. Consequently the psyche remains impure.

“The journey on the path of prarabdha is even harder than the journey on the path of spiritual practice, because in this the foot tries to alter the path over and over again. If the foot on prarabdha moves further away then the foot on the sadhana path slips. The journey of prarabdha has a greater effect on the journey of sadhan than the journey of sadhan has on the journey of prarabdha. On the journey of prarabdha you have to remove rocks in the way and you have to prevent new rocks from falling in your path. This work is not easy, but it is an absolute requirement to progress on the spiritual path. Often aspirants tend to overlook this very important task, or they cannot manage to do this in spite of millions of attempts.

“I have tried to explain again and again that walking on the spiritual path is not easy. Only a rare, brave person, who has wagered his head and body, can proceed on this path. Others fall flat upon meeting obstacles. How many catastrophes I had to face and tackle, and what kind of difficulties I had to endure; only I know. To describe them would be arrogance, so it is better not to talk about them.”

Maharajshri went on talking and, as I listened attentively, an incident from my days prior to ashram life came to mind. I was reminded how difficult spiritual life can be. The incident involved getting lost in Himachal Pradesh.
"Five or six of us were walking on a road. Some were chatting about things of very little interest to me. I was walking behind them at a distance doing japa. My mind was totally focused on japa, and I became oblivious to everything around me. Other people were so engrossed in their conversation that they never looked back at me. At one point we were to leave the road and make a turn onto a mountainous footpath. Everyone turned and started on the footpath, but I was so absorbed in japa that I missed it. I kept on walking along the road. I came back to Earth after about an hour and realized that I had gone three or four miles too far. Darkness was descending. There was no time to return. I met a traveler on the way and gave him the name of the village I was traveling to. He said it was five or six miles by road. Since it was getting dark, it would not be a good idea to go through the forest, but if I had the courage to go over the mountain, the village was on the other side.

“I thought for a little while, checked my courage, and decided to go over the mountain. I was young; my body was strong and energetic. Still the climb was very steep, covered with trees and bushes. It was pitch dark, there was no path, and I was afraid of snakes and scorpions. The task was difficult but I started climbing. I usually wore pants, a shirt and shoes in those days. I was fixed on one obsession: climbing the mountain. Holding trees and jumping like a monkey from one branch to another, falling and getting up, I went on climbing. The jungle became so thick that not even a ray of moonlight could pierce through the trees and strike the ground. My efforts were being carried out in this pitch darkness.

After climbing for about half an hour I reached the peak and saw the moon. The other side was clearly visible in the moonlight. Lamps twinkled in some places. I could see farms full of grains glistening in the milky white moonlight. As I looked at this beautiful sight, all my fatigue disappeared. After enjoying the view for a few minutes I started to climb down. That was even harder. Somehow I managed to reach the base of the hill. There I slipped in a field of grain. The farms were all muddy, and I looked like a ghost smeared with mud. Somehow I reached the village.

“Sadhan is also similar to climbing a mountain in the dark. The deep darkness of illusion, ego, desire, anger, greed, selfishness and wild animal instincts in the form of vasanas [deep-rooted psychic tendencies] make it difficult to see the path ahead. Sometimes we need to grab the branch of japa, and sometimes we need the help of scripture study, singing God’s praise and prayer in order to climb the steep incline of sadhan. If one foot slips, you can slide thousands of feet into the valley. How difficult is the climb of sadhan. The awakening of Shakti does make it somewhat easier, but difficulties and hardships persist.”

Maharajshri said, “You are right. Sadhan is a similar journey, filled with difficulties. Only a few people turn toward this. Of those, a few begin the climb and, of those, some succeed in climbing one peak. The biggest obstacle is prarabdha. A sadhak may start to climb but prarabdha pulls one down.

“I was staying in an ashram. The Dewas ashram did not exist then. People come to where there are ascetics. The priest in charge of the ashram did not like people coming to me. At
night he told me to leave the ashram. I was very angry. You know that anger is a very big obstacle; nevertheless I convinced myself that this was a play of prarabdha and accepted the situation. If I had given over control to anger, I would have accumulated too many samskaras and the routine of sadhan would have been disturbed for a few days. Such occasions come in life at every step of the way. A sadhak gets carried away by them. He even forgets that he is a sadhak. His behavior as a sadhak must continue through all his social interactions — while eating, drinking, and while performing all his activities. Very often a sadhak cannot maintain this. Some believe anger to be an ornament of a sadhak, but what good is an ornament if it makes you ugly?

“If someone comes to clean your room and you sit in his way, how will he be able to clean where you are? You have to get up. To vacate the space to be cleaned is the same as surrender in spirituality. The psyche of the sadhak is covered with ego and selfishness. For some time ego must be steadied in the state of a witness and withdrawn from the mind. Then only will Shakti be able to clean. Not only that, Shakti will also provide your chitta the foundation for spiritual experiences. This is sadhan.

“When a sadhak descends from sadhan and acts in the world, he commits this mistake: His ego, selfishness and doership take on a strong form again, and their effect is dearly visible in his behavior and attitude. He again becomes responsible for the fruits of his action. Again samskaras are accumulated. All that was earned during the time of sadhan is gone. His special spiritual income is lost. It is as if the person has a dual personality — one of a sadhak and the other of a worldly person. He is angelic at the time of sadhan, and back in the world becomes a demon. At the time of sadhan he undoes knots, and after sadhan he tightens them.

“Due to this dual personality he cannot make progress in sadhan and spirituality. He complains about the lack of progress in sadhan, and he also looks for limitations in his sadhan. As long as every moment of life, every action, every thought and feeling rising within is not spiritual, to look for progress is like daydreaming.”

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:
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Opening the Gate

When Sadhaks receive Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) and begin their practice of Maha Yoga Sadhan (meditation), some of them experience the existence of mother Kundalini, the play of energy within themselves, but others do not. Those who do not have such experiences often tend to leave this path, while only a few continue to persevere on this path.

This is because in this modern day and age many people want short-cuts and they think once they have the short-cut they do not need to make the effort, put the energy and do the hard work themselves. They just want somebody to put a hand on his/her head and make it happen for them. Many Sadhaks who seek Maha Yoga Deeksha have such tendencies. They think that once they receive Maha Yoga Deeksha they will experience Self Enlightenment right away without having to follow the rules and restrictions they signed up to follow and the daily Sadhan they agreed to sit for. So, when they do not experience the Kriyas or feel the sense of calm that comes with the diligent practice of Maha Yoga, they blame the Maha Yoga path itself.

I would like to suggest to Sadhaks that there is no shortcut in the spiritual world. Spirituality is like mathematics and science to some extent; the output is commensurate with the input. Maha Yoga Deeksha only opens the gate to the path to attain Self Enlightenment. A Sadhak’s progress on that path is entirely dependent on the baggage of Samskaras he comes with, the attitude of surrender he has toward the awakened Prana Shakti within him, the diligence with which he sits for Maha Yoga Sadhan and how carefully he follows the rules and regulations he signed up for.

My advice to novice Sadhaks is that you have to start by following Yam and Niyam, the rules and regulations and the discipline of regular Sadhan, which are the basics of spirituality. If you are not able to follow these basic tenets you are unlikely to make progress in the spiritual realm and you might as well remain in the material world and enjoy it. Staying on the spiritual path requires your own commitment to it. Nobody will make you follow it by force; it is entirely up to you to sit for Sadhan diligently and to follow the rules and restrictions, thereby allowing the Prana Shakti within you to do her job of taking you to Self-Enlightenment.

By granting Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha, Gurudev will only open the gate and show you the path, warn you of the ups and downs on the path and light your lamp so that your path can be illuminated. But don't expect him to carry you on his shoulders all the way on the path; he will be there with you as your Inner Guru but you will need to develop the ability to listen to him with regular Sadhan and diligent observance of the rules and restrictions.

If you ask me what one thing I would recommend Sadhaks do, I would suggest a very simple but very difficult thing: control your tongue. By this I mean control your food intake and your speech, two very difficult things to do. Controlling your food intake and speech will make a great deal of difference in your spiritual progress. This is why the rules and restrictions for receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha require Sadhaks not to eat garlic, onion, and non-vegetarian food. The food you eat has a direct effect on your mind; the consumption of
Opening the Gate (continued)

garlic, onion and non-vegetarian food makes the mind irritable and unstable, making it difficult to sit quietly during Sadhan.

Controlling your speech is also very important because your speech has a direct effect on your mind. Speaking in a loud manner, shouting at someone, asking questions in a loud and/or angry manner, telling lies, etc. also causes your mind to become unsteady, making it very difficult to experience a sense of calm during Sadhan.

So in Atharvashirsh our rishis have suggested right at the beginning ऋतं वव ऋतं वव

Let me speak softly and truthfully.

It is also important to understand that a Maha Yoga Sadhak is not just involved with Maha Yoga when he is sitting for Sadhan, but that Maha Yoga is an important element of his life at all times, even when he is not sitting for Sadhan. He may be a professional, a son of the soil, or a laborer, Sadhan should not be just the small part of his life when he is actually sitting for Sadhan for an hour or so. He should try to maintain the attitude of detachment that he experiences during Sadhan at all other times as well. This constant awareness, a clear vigilance in one’s life is the key to success. That is the only way to ensure that the opening of the gate to the spiritual path, i.e. the Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha, will lead to Self-Enlightenment.

By: Dr. Vikrant Tikone
Questions:

**Question:** I received Maha Yoga Deeksha (initiation) a year and a half ago, but lately I have been having some doubts about some of my actions after I received Deeksha.

I have been quite diligent in sitting for Maha Yoga Sadhan regularly and gradually I am experiencing deeper states of meditation and I am feeling the Kundalini doing its work without my trying to interfere in the process. However, I think I made a mistake, when in the space of a few months after receiving Maha Yoga Deeksha I received other spiritual initiations like Reiki. I think I should not have done that, because following those other initiations I feel that my energy has become unbalanced and I feel interferences in the flow of energy within me. I wonder whether these initiations will have a permanent impact on me or will the practice of Maha Yoga succeed in correcting over time the imbalances caused by the Reiki type initiations that I shouldn’t have taken? Will the awakened Kundalini eventually be able to overcome the effects of these other initiations and will I be able to regain my energy balance and well-being? Please advise me.

**Answer:** Please do not worry about whatever other initiations you might have had. As long as you do not practice, with intent, any of those approaches, you have nothing to worry about.

Practices such as Reiki, which from my understanding, have the Sadhak be the “doer”, only add to the accumulation of Samskaras (impressions) within the Sadhak’s Chitta (mind stuff). The initiations into such approaches by themselves cannot do you much harm; it is only the Samskaras that get created in the Sadhak’s Chitta by the practice of such approaches that can retard the Sadhak’s spiritual progress. Maha Yoga Sadhan on the other hand, during which the Sadhak surrenders “doership” to the awakened Prana Shakti within him and simply plays the role of an observer, results in Samskaras getting eliminated from his Chitta. It is the antidote for overcoming the effects of the other approaches.

So, please discontinue the spiritual practices that have you be the “doer”, and just sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan with an attitude of surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within you and put yourself in the role of an observer. Gradually, the Samskaras created by the other practices will also get eliminated from your Chitta. Nothing to worry about; all you need do is to sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan every day and have the patience to let the awakened Prana Shakti do what is needed.

**Question:** After I receive Maha Yoga Shaktipat initiation (Deeksha) will it be okay for me to continue to do physical exercises (in a gym), Yoga Asanas, etc. for the betterment of my health?

**Answer:** Yes, you can do physical exercise of any kind, including going to the gym, doing Yoga Asanas, etc. after Maha Yoga initiation.

But, please don’t do anything with intent when you are sitting for Maha Yoga Sadhan. Just surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti when you sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan and let her be...
Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)

the doer, putting yourself in the role of an observe (Sakshi). If Yoga Asanas or Pranayam or physical movements happen during Maha Yoga Sadhan, let them happen. Just observe them as they happen.

At other times, when you are not sitting for Maha Yoga Sadhan, you can do whatever physical exercises you want to do.

**Question:** I have taken Deeksha from P. P. Haribhau Niturkar Maharaj (a Deekshadhikari from P. P. Kaka Maharaj’s lineage) a few days ago but I had no noticeable experiences or Kriyas on Deeksha day except a tingling sensation in my lower back which lasted for a couple of seconds. Since then I have been sitting for Sadhan on a regular basis but I haven’t experienced any Kriyas except for a sensation of tingling pain in my lower back. However I feel that my nature has changed and I have become much calmer than I used to be. I just wanted to know whether I am on the right track or do I lack the devotion required. I followed all the instructions during Deeksha and the rules post-Deeksha. I hope you can guide and help me.

**Answer:** Glad to read that you have received Maha Yoga Deeksha from P. P. Niturkar Maharaj. And despite your misgivings, you are showing clear signs that the Deeksha has indeed happened. The tingling sensations you feel in your lower back are indeed Kriyas that result from your Prana Shakti having been awakened. And the fact that you have become aware that your “nature has changed and have become much calmer” is actually a more important indicator that the Deeksha has happened than the tingling sensations you feel in your lower back.

Let me briefly explain what Maha Yoga is all about and the role of Kriyas. The purpose of Maha Yoga is Self-Enlightenment, which can only happen when the Samskaras (accumulated impressions from current and prior lives) and the Vruttis (behavioral tendencies) that make up one’s Chitta are eliminated. Each one of us came into our current life with Samskaras and Vruttis that have been accumulated during all our past lives. And every day in our current life when we do any Karma (action) with a sense of attachment to the fruits of that Karma, existing Samskaras and Vruttis get strengthened and new ones get accumulated. In this manner we continually build on or strengthen our accumulation of Samskaras and Vruttis as we go through our current life and possibly in future lives as well. Maha Yoga Deeksha is the solution to begin the elimination of all accumulated Samskaras and Vruttis from the Sadhak’s Chitta (mind stuff), eventually leading to him experiencing the Atma within him being one and the same as the ParamAtma that pervades the universe. The purpose of Maha Yoga Deeksha and Sadhan is चित्त वृत्ति निरोधः (Chitta Vrutti Nirodhah - the elimination of all Vruttis from one’s Chitta) which leads eventually to आत्मसाक्षात्कार (Atma Sakshatkar - Self Enlightenment).

When a Sadhak sits for Maha Yoga Sadhan with a sense of surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within him, playing the role of an observer (Sakshi) and allowing the awakened Prana Shakti to be the doer (Karta), the Prana Shakti brings into his Chitta some of the Samskaras
he has accumulated during his current and past lives. When this happens, the Samskaras get manifested as physical, mental or Pranic Kriyas (involuntary activities), depending on the nature of the Samskaras within the Sadhak’s Chitta. If the Sadhak has a preponderance of Rajasik (action favoring) Samskaras and Vruttis, he will likely experience physical Kriyas like body movements, Asanas, Mudras, Pranayam, etc. If a Sadhak has a preponderance of Tamasik (negative or indolence inducing) Samskaras and Vruttis, he will likely experience Kriyas in the form of feelings like anger, envy, hate, or tiredness, sleep etc. If a Sadhak has a preponderance of Sattvik (good, pure) Samskaras and Vruttis he will likely feel a sense of joy, happiness, calmness and pleasant-feeling movements of Prana within himself. By simply observing these Kriyas in a detached manner, the Sadhak allows the awakened Prana Shakti within him to erase these Samskaras and Vruttis from his Chitta. This is the main purpose of Maha Yoga Deeksha and Sadhan. It is the removal of the “garbage” of Samskaras and Vruttis accumulated over lifetimes.

Since each Sadhak comes into his current life with a unique mix of Samskaras and Vruttis, and goes through his current life by doing various types of Karma with intent to get the fruits of his actions, he comes to Maha Yoga Deeksha and Sadhan with a unique mix of Samskaras and Vruttis. Therefore, the Kriyas he experiences during Maha Yoga Deeksha and Sadhan, being just the expressions of the Samskaras he has accumulated in his Chitta, will be unique for each Sadhak. As I explained in the previous paragraph, you can think of the process of Kriyas happening as a process whereby the garbage (Kachra) of Samskaras accumulated in one’s Chitta over innumerable lifetimes gets eliminated. When the Samskaras that get expressed as specific types of Kriyas get eliminated, those Kriyas will stop happening and some other, perhaps more subtle, Kriyas will take their place as the Samskaras related to the subtler Kriyas get brought up into the Sadhak’s Chitta. It is therefore very important for a Sadhak to not get attached to specific Kriyas or expect certain Kriyas to happen just because he heard that some other Sadhak experienced them. In fact, as the Rajasik and Tamasik Samskaras get gradually eliminated with regular Sadhan, the Kriyas will get less physical and emotional, becoming much more subtle and calming. Eventually, with regular Sadhan and by living his life as a Karma Yogi, the accumulation of Samskaras goes down to zero as even Sattvik Samskaras get eliminated. So, at some point the Sadhak will cease to experience any Kriyas at all. This is when the Kachra (garbage) of all accumulated Samskaras has been eliminated and all the layers (Koshas) that keep a Sadhak from experiencing the ParamAtma within him get cleared out, leading to आत्मसाक्षात्कार (Self-Enlightenment).

So, please sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan with a sense of surrender to the awakened Prana Shakti within (your inner Guru), allow the Prana Shakti to be the doer, simply observe what happens without being judgmental of what happens and without expecting or anticipating any Kriyas to happen. If you think there are no Kriyas happening, or they are too subtle for you to notice them, simply observe your natural and normal breathing. That is one Kriya that happens to all of us as long as we are alive! Also, please do not get attached to any Kriyas that happen or fear them, simply observe them with a sense of detachment and most importantly, be patient. Good things will happen to those who develop a sense of surrender.
to the awakened Prana Shakti within, acceptance of whatever happens during Sadhan and the patience to be diligent in sitting for Sadhan no matter what.

**Question:** I have been practicing the Introductory Approach to Maha Yoga for the past couple of years and have applied to receive Deeksha on the next Deeksha Day. Since I began practicing Maha Yoga I have experienced that my body has completely healed because of Divine Grace from a severe chronic disease that I had contracted some time ago. However, despite this cure having happened, I experience a feeling of sadness. Please advise me on why I feel sad when I should be feeling very happy, and also what is my stage of inner awakening?

**Answer:** It is heartening to know that you feel completely healed from a severe and chronic disease due to divine grace. I must advise you though, that the purpose of Maha Yoga is not for curing physical ailments but it is Self-Enlightenment. If physical or other benefits happen as a byproduct, as might have happened in your case, that’s great. But it is very important for Maha Yoga Sadhaks to develop a sense of acceptance of their Prarabdha-Phal (the fruit/result of our Karma from all our past lives) with equanimity.

Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha and subsequent Maha Yoga Sadhan will further help your spiritual growth as it will help you get rid of the Samskaras (impressions) and Vruttis (tendencies) accumulated over your current and prior lives, eventually leading to Self-Enlightenment. During this process of the elimination of accumulated Samskaras and Vruttis during Maha Yoga Sadhan, a Maha Yoga Sadhak typically experiences Kriyas (involuntary physical, mental, or Pranic activities) that are the result of the prior Samskaras being brought up into the Sadhak’s Chitta (mind stuff) and which get expressed as the Kriyas that happen during Sadhan.

In some situations, as some of the negative Samskaras from the Sadhak’s current or past lives get brought up, they get expressed as negative emotions such as anger, envy, sadness, etc. This is what might be happening in your case even though you have not yet been formally initiated through Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha. The Introductory Practice of Maha Yoga is like a mini-Deeksha because it has the Sankalpa of P. P. Kaka Maharaj behind it. Therefore, it is quite likely that during Sadhan, the elimination of some negative Samskaras from your prior lives might have resulted in the healing of the chronic disease as you experienced, but it might have also brought to the surface of your Chitta some of the negative emotional baggage (Samskaras) you might have been carrying from your prior lives.

Continued Maha Yoga Sadhan by following the Introductory Maha Yoga Practice will help eliminate the negative Samskaras that underlie the feeling of sadness you are experiencing, a process that will get accelerated once you receive Maha Yoga Shaktipat Deeksha in June. Please sit for Maha Yoga Sadhan with an attitude of surrendering to the Prana Shakti within you and let her be the Karta (doer) of what happens during Sadhan. Put yourself in the position of a Sakshi (observer) and observe what happens with a sense of detachment and acceptance. And please do not worry at all about your “stage of inner awakening”;

**Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)**


**Answers to Questions from Sadhaks (continued)**

leave it in the hands of the awakened Prana Shakti within you. The more you surrender to her, the faster will be your progress.

Editor’s note: Please send your questions regarding Maha Yoga and Shaktipat to: self.awakening@gmail.com.
P. P. Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj’s biography - English translation

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
Upcoming Events:

Deeksha Day (Initiation Day) on June 18th, 2017
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.

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.

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.

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

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:**

We 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.

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

We also recently began a Twitter feed at https://twitter.com/Mahayoga_Org. Please check it out for photographs of the recent events held at various Maha Yoga Ashrams.
May all desire to follow this nectarous Siddhayoga Path!

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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Self Awakening is the English language quarterly e-newsletter of the P. P. Shri Loknath Tirth Swami Maharaj Mahayoga Trust.

Editor: Mr. Dilip Kamat

Design: Mrs. Neha Vishwarupe

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