

SACRED FIRE

By

Lee Timmerman

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dedicated

to the

one

I love

love

is the source

of life

beauty

the energy

of eternity

NOTE OF APPRECIATION

This book was compiled from a series of talks on the utilization of meditation for realizing our holistic nature. I would like to take this opportunity to say “Thank You,” to friends and family for the love given. I would also like to say “Thank You” to those who spent countless hours transcribing, typing and editing. Without their efforts this book would not have been possible. Lastly and most importantly, “Thank you all for being a part of my life.”

Light, Blessings and Joy --Lee

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INTRODUCTION

All of humanity has an innate desire to experience happiness. We seek after happiness throughout our life, each in our own way. The diversity amongst humanity is most evident in what we believe will bring us happiness and in the manner and process through which we strive to attain our beliefs of happiness. Most of our interests and activities are undertaken with the belief that our endeavors will help us to attain some or all of five basic qualities for happiness: love, freedom, friendship, health and knowledge of our immortality.

The *holy ones* of all times and traditions have told us that we are created in the image of God and must look within to discover our God-like nature. By quieting the mind, breath and ego we discover our true nature. Through this experience, we realize we are *Om Satyam* (eternal Divine love), *Om Shivam* (eternal Divine consciousness) and *Om Sundaram* (eternal Divine beauty and joy).

God (consciousness) is eternal, complete, without beginning or end. This consciousness (without form) is omnipresent love, harmony, virtue, beauty, and joy, and causes creation to manifest in both Spirit and material form. Just as H₂O is the nature of steam, water and ice, so too, love, harmony, virtue, beauty and joy are the nature of Consciousness, Spirit and material form. The omnipresent nature of God permeates all; the dance and the dancer are one.

Realized knowledge of our Divine nature will free us from eight basic conditions of human suffering: fear, hatred, grief, shame, condemnation, race prejudice, class prejudice and narrowness of thinking. Once we are free of these eight conditions of human suffering, we have the freedom to live our life within our nature of eternal love, harmony, virtue, beauty, and joy. Through the process of discovering our *Self*, we come to live within our true nature of eternal (*Sat*), consciousness (*Tat*), joy (*Aum*). We are happiness.

Meditation is a process of Self-discovery that leads to knowledge of our holistic nature. The goal of meditation is to realize that our nature and the nature of God are one and the same. Knowledge of our oneness leads to a natural unfoldment of the human Spirit into our nature of Divine consciousness. Realization of our holistic nature is a two-fold process of Self-awareness. Firstly, by calming down the mind, breath and ego (meditation) we discover who we are—our

human nature, our Divine nature and our *God-consciousness* nature. Secondly, this knowledge is then utilized to allow us to let go of our mindsets and go beyond our limitations, thereby freeing ourselves into our Divine nature and harmonizing with all life (God). We will then have true freedom (*mukti*) to live within our holistic nature of love, harmony, virtue, beauty and joy; freedom into life and life more abundantly.

The holy ones are a living inspiration and message of our oneness with God. Just as listening to beautiful music does not make us a musician, so too, simply listening to the message of the holy ones will not help us attain the completion we desire. To have lasting happiness, we must experience for ourselves our oneness with all life, realizing that unmanifested (*Shiva*) and manifested (*Shakti*) are ever in union.

Meditation can help us to attain one of the greatest blessings anyone could receive--to know our Self. Through discovering our nature as eternal (*Sat*), consciousness (*Chit*), bliss (*Ananda*), we will be freeing our Self into life, to live and harmonize with all life. There is only one life. The soul once born never dies and lives forever experiencing life within the many realms of existence. The realization of our nature and the nature of God as one and the same love (*Satyam*), harmony (*Shivam*), beauty and joy (*Sundaram*) is the awakening into our true Self of love, harmony, beauty, and joy.

Light, blessings and joy on your journey to your Self.

Namaste

Lee Timmerman

HUMILITY

Om Namo—I bow. The first quality of spirituality is to acknowledge life around us as part of us. Om Namo—I bow. Unless we have the awareness and the *humility* to acknowledge that life around us is greater than us and that we can learn, grow, and enjoy as a part of it, the spiritual life cannot begin. Without the acknowledgement of a larger Self or of Divinity, we feel we are the sole substance of the universe, the alpha and omega of life, and therefore, there is no need to learn from anyone else. Humility is a quality that is absolutely necessary if one is to grow in life. Most of us have experienced the drawbacks and habits of our childhood, family and the environment we were born into. We see that we are a product of that environment. We see the influences of that environment. If we are honest with ourselves, we will acknowledge that the strong influence of our childhood, environment, family and friends has shaped us. This process is a natural process of life. It is life giving unto life. We are all products of our past thoughts, words, actions, and interactions. Therefore, we will be influenced by life.

The spiritual life, as taught in ancient times and in the current scriptures, speaks of a “rebirth,” “transformation,” or being “born again.” They say that unless we are “born again,” we will not attain the kingdom of heaven. This “born again” means that we reach a point where we must choose to be a master of our destiny. We must reach a point where we choose the environment, family, friends, and education, according to how we want to grow. We choose according to what path we want our journey directed towards. We can actually begin to accept the responsibility and begin to choose the directions, choose how we want to be influenced, who we want to be influenced by, what type of behavior we wish to exhibit, what type of attitudes we choose to feel and what part of life we choose to interact and explore with. Once we are mature enough to begin to make these choices, not just wanting to go certain directions, but actually become mature enough to make the effort to move in these directions, then a rebirth takes place. We are “born again.”

The first time we are born on Earth, our parents choose for us. They choose where we will be born. They choose what name they will call us. They choose what we will eat. They choose how we will be educated. They choose our friends, our influences and our schools. Our parents make all of these choices for us. We grow up being a product of this influence. When we mature, it is time for us to choose for ourselves in which direction we wish to grow. This is being “reborn.”

Transformation, being born of water and Spirit, is another choice. This is a spiritual awakening that takes place through the awareness, the experience and the acknowledgement that we are infinite and eternal. The experience of being infinite and eternal, the experience of being consciousness, the experience of being Divinity is the spiritual awakening. This is all part of the rebirthing, awakening or maturing of the human Spirit.

The responsibility of this awakening is our own. We are the masters of our destiny. We have free will and whether we choose wisely or poorly, we are still the masters of our destiny. If we choose to continue being influenced by people, environments and vibrations that we do not like, it is our choice. We are choosing not to make the effort to correct it. If we choose to go beyond the limitations and habits, we are exhibiting the maturity to be responsible for our life, choosing to be a master of our destiny.

As a mature person, as a mature Spirit, each of us will choose in which direction we wish to grow. The lessons along the way are there by our choices. What we experience, whom we interact with and what we are interested in are all choices made by each of us. With this awakening will also come the awakening of personal or self-accountability, self-responsibility. This is *Self-realization*, realizing that we are infinite and eternal. We realize that we are responsible. We realize that we control and choose the directions, paths, and experiences. This is what it means to realize the Self.

Now we can go on to explore the rest of life, what we are interested in and want to experience. The rest of life is determined by our vision. What you see is what you get. The larger your vision, the more you can see. The greater your awareness, the larger life is around you and the more there is to experience and explore. The holy ones say that as beautiful as life is on Earth, it is the most minute and limited form of awareness available to the human Spirit or human being. They say to go out and explore the rest of life, it is your large Self. Expand your vision to see that there is only one life that each of us is a small interwoven part of it. This one

life has been given the name “God.” Go beyond the physical and the senses and explore this God, this life, your nature. When a person has done that, they find, like the holy ones found, that their nature is Sat Chit Ananda (eternal, consciousness, bliss).

Our bodies come and go. We call them incarnations. Even our senses will come and go. However, our conscious awareness will never go away. There is no place in existence, or in God, that is without awareness. Once we experience our eternal nature, this is the awakening. This is the transformation.

The spiritual journey is understanding that which is infinite and eternal and that which is temporary. It is finding the place and season for all things. This process happens for infinity. There will not be one large, cosmic, omniscient answer for this. It is an infinite process of growing, interacting and enjoying. The holy ones call this process Divinity. The holy ones call this process our nature, God-consciousness. This is the goal of spirituality. The goal is to have the awareness of our infinite and eternal nature and then to explore and enjoy the interaction with God, Divinity, throughout eternity.

The holy ones tell us that our nature and God’s nature is love. They tell us that the most beautiful experience we can have anywhere and at anytime is the experience of love. We pursue it with our body, mind and emotions, but always it seems to include pain. It always seems that somewhere in this love is pain. It is not that love has pain in it, rather it is that we haven’t gotten to our nature, to Divinity. We haven’t gotten to the love that the holy ones are talking about, the ecstasy of Divinity, the ecstasy of life. We haven’t gotten to experience the Om Satyam, the eternal love that is our nature. We haven’t begun to live within the holistic Consciousness. Once we go beyond the ego, the idea of separateness, and experience love without the limitations, then we are experiencing Divinity. Then we will experience love or as the Sufis say, “the Divine ecstasy” or as the yogis say, “bliss and intoxication” or our nature of Sat Chit Ananda (eternal consciousness bliss). Once we can throw off these ideas of separateness and limitations that cover our nature, we will experience our Self as God-consciousness, as Divinity, as love, as bliss.

The only things standing between us and our awareness of our absolute nature are our mindsets. The mindsets can be removed by going beyond them. You can go beyond the mind by living within the heart. You live in the heart by letting go of the idea of yourself, the ideas of, “I want this. I need this. If only I had this. Why do people say those things to me?” As long as

your mind is working on yourself, you are not living within your heart. As soon as your thoughts are for others, not of others, but for others, for their benefit, their upliftment and the welfare of others, this is from the heart. These are the seeds of love. You allow these seeds to germinate and allow yourself to always be thinking of others without the small self being involved. You think about the welfare and benefit of others. If your thoughts are for the benefit of others, this is the beginning of love. Your thoughts must be for others with no thought or condition for the Self. This is the beginning of love and this love will grow. This love will grow into the *Sacred Heart*, the heart that is full of the Divine ecstasy because it is in continuous union and oneness with its nature, with the nature of God. This is the goal. This is the spiritual journey.

In order to reach this point, one has to use the mind. You use the mind for discipline. You use the mind for proper choices. You use the mind to carry out the will of the heart. When the mind is properly disciplined and the heart is properly tuned to love, then the *devotee* will experience his/her soul. When the soul is in harmony, the union of the small Spirit and the large Spirit will happen. This is the Divine ecstasy. This is religion, the re-joining. This is the religious experience. Live within the heart. Use the mind to help you to always live within the heart. Love is the nature of the soul. Love is the nature of God. If you harmonize with love, this harmonization will tune you to God. It will tune you to the Holy Spirit, to the *Christ-consciousness* and to the God-consciousness.

We have all experienced love. When we have experienced this love, we have felt complete, we have been satisfied, we have been content. When we don't experience this love our mind says, "I need this, I want this, I wish I had this other. Why don't you give me this?" This is the mind clouding over. We are always love. "What would make me happy? It would make me happy to give this person a gift. It would make me happy to impress others with my generosity. It would make me happy to make them happy." When the mind is working on promoting or stroking the Self, the love is covered over and we cannot experience it. Always, when the mind is working, we do not feel complete. That is why we are working on "I need this, I need that, I need to do this other thing to be happy." At the moments we are experiencing love, we feel no other need. We feel no need to go do something else. We feel we are complete. Live within the heart. Educate the mind to constantly bring you back to living within the heart, then you will be able to tune yourself to the Holy Stream.

Utilize the mind to live within the heart. The heart will then tune itself to the heart of all life. In true religion, in the re-joining of the small Spirit and the large Spirit, the key is love and beauty. The more one practices love and beauty, the more harmonious, the more in union, the more bliss and intoxication one will feel both in their meditations and outside their meditations. The realization of the heart and the realization of God are the same thing. This is our nature. This is *sadhana*, the realization of Divinity, the realization of the heart, becoming our nature, that of love, Divinity, God-consciousness.

Namaste

NURTURING

True spirituality needs to address not only your knowledge of Divinity, but also the enjoyment of everyday life. If there is only one God, then true spirituality should include the enjoyment, knowledge, beauty, bliss, devotion and dynamics of this one Divinity. All religions are based on the premise that the small Spirit, or individual, can re-join with God. Spirituality is the pursuit and realization of this union. It is the re-joining of the individual Self with the universal Self.

When this re-joining takes place, there are two stages. The first stage is what the yogic tradition calls *sabikalpa samadhi* where the individual has union with Divinity, the oneness, in their meditation. The second stage is *nirvikalpa samadhi* where one immerses into God both in meditation and in everyday life.

The first step, *sabikalpa samadhi*, is the experience with Divinity. It is the knowing that there is God beyond the physical. The devotee calms the mind, breath and ego and has this union, this experience with God. When they come out of their meditation, they go about living their life trying to get back to that union. The devotee then pursues the realization of that knowledge on a continuous basis. We can only experience God the Absolute in the stillness of meditation. God the Absolute is absolute peace, stillness, *Shanti*. The only way to have this direct knowledge is to quiet the mind, breath, and ego and have harmonization or union with the absolute formless. This is what is defined as meditation.

Meditation isn't defined as a repetition of a mantra. It isn't defined as the repetition of certain rituals or practices. Meditation is defined as calming down and having the Divine union. This is why meditation takes you to your true nature. One must be quiet, one must be calm to realize or experience that part of themselves which is *Om Shanti*, absolute peace.

Once you have this experience, you then take your knowledge and experience and seek the enjoyment of everyday life. This will be different from how the rest of humanity perceives life because the majority of humanity does not know they are infinite and eternal. They do not realize that there is only a oneness. They may have a belief in it, but they do not have the realized knowledge. Therefore, they will seek their enjoyment of everyday life in the pursuit of the *four fountains*, in the pursuit of better food, better sleep, better sex, and better protection or shelter. They will define this as the enjoyment of everyday life because out of these four fountains comes security. They find their security in having food, shelter, relationships, and self-preservation. Without security, there can be no enjoyment, no happiness.

Once the devotee realizes they are infinite and eternal, then they can move from the four fountains into the realization of their holistic nature. Now security will come from knowing they are infinite and eternal. The realization of our Divinity allows each of us to pursue the enjoyment of everyday life.

The soul needs love and freedom to be happy. We experience love by loving the rest of life. We are the ones who must love the rest of life. Everyone can love us, but unless we feel the love or express the love or dive into that love, we won't be happy. We must fall in love with the rest of life. The other thing the soul needs is freedom. This is the freedom to be itself, the freedom to live its own *dharma*, the fulfillment of the very nature and purpose of its creation, the freedom to pursue its own interests and goals.

If you do not have hope, there can be no freedom. If you do not have hope of a better day or a better experience or a better life, you cannot look forward to living forever. Somewhere around middle age, humanity loses its hopes and dreams. All the hopes and dreams we had in our youth begin to fade. We begin to accept that we cannot fulfill them, or we feel the price is too high. We feel we don't have the strength or energy so we quit dreaming. We do not see tomorrow as being a better day. We see that now we have turned a corner and we are going downhill, everything is deteriorating. We have given up—given up freedom, even given up seeking freedom. At this point, we are beginning to starve our souls.

If you give up pursuing freedom, you can no longer pursue love because the two are like wings of a bird. You need both wings for the bird to fly. The soul needs both love and freedom in order to live within its realized state. If you give up hope or bury the soul, the enjoyment of everyday life will be buried with it.

The practices (sadhanas) of true spirituality are designed for the unveiling of the soul, the removal of the obstacles, the removal of the mindsets and the removal of the fears, doubts and insecurities that keep the soul covered. True spirituality is a process of unveiling and living within your true Self. All disciplines, practices and efforts are for the opening of the human Spirit into God, into the rest of life. All efforts made on a moment to moment basis are our efforts to unveil or unfold into Divinity.

The very foundation of spirituality is love and freedom, and the pursuit of love and freedom. The seeking after love and the seeking after freedom is the nutrition that each of us must take in to allow our soul to manifest as a fully realized consciousness rather than being hidden behind the veils or *samskaras*, the ideas of separateness. Nutrition for the soul is quite simple, love and freedom.

How do we nurture love? Love is simple. Love is giving. It is an out-going process. You love all life. You have reverence for all life. You love someone else. You love the beauty, you love the happiness, and you love the perfection of the creation. This is an expansion. Love is in the giving of love. This is our very nature. It expands and grows into life. Freedom is nurtured by having hopes and dreams and in the effort for making a better tomorrow, for making a better moment. It is a growing experience.

The nutrition for the soul is within the virtues. Only if we are striving to realize our true Self can we actually have hope that tomorrow will be better. If we are striving to attain more love, freedom, joy and beauty, then we will believe, or at least find it easier to accept, that others are also seeking more love, more freedom, more joy and more beauty. This allows us to have hope for tomorrow. We then see it all around us, believe it is around us, know and experience it around us.

If we do not practice the virtues or seek after love, freedom, joy and happiness, then we won't believe others are seeking it either. We then look around and see darkness and crime. We see humanity engrossed in self-centeredness; we see everyone pursuing the four fountains (food, sex, sleep and self-preservation). We will see that because that is what we are looking for. If we are looking for love and beauty within ourselves, we see that all around. If we look around and see pain, suffering, ugliness and selfishness, then that is what we are seeing within ourselves too. What we see within ourselves, we see outside ourselves. What we see outside ourselves is what we are looking at within ourselves.

In the pursuit of happiness, we must have love and freedom as our immediate goals each moment. We must look to see beauty, virtue, and Divinity everywhere. We must have reverence for all life and this reverence for all life must start with ourselves. If we cannot have reverence, love, hope, appreciation, and respect for ourselves, we will not be able to see it beyond ourselves. We must be our own best friends then we can be friends with the rest of life. It must start with us.

We must be generous because this is the very nature of life or creation. It gives back to us much more generously than what we give to it. It gives back to us tenfold what we give to it. We should strive to be generous in our love, in our dreams, with our hopes and with our freedom. This is simple to do in any given moment. We can be kind in our thoughts and with our love. We can give others kindness in our mind. We can give them “**Namaste**” which means “I bow to the Divine light within you.” We can pray for their happiness. This is being generous. This is giving love, hope and beauty to the rest of life.

We can give others kindness by striving to give all life virtuousness in thought, word and deed. If we are virtuous towards the rest of life in thought, word, and deed, it will be the greatest nutrition we can give ourselves. This kind of thinking gives us hope for a better tomorrow. If we are kind and giving to life, then we are excited about life, we are in love with life and we have hope that life will be better tomorrow. We have hope that it will bring even more life for us to love, be generous to and to realize and experience.

Practicing virtuousness and practicing reverence of all life is the nutrition the soul needs to manifest into our holistic consciousness. This starts with ourselves. We are kind and gentle to ourselves. We become our own best friends and then we can be a friend to others. Reverence for all life nurtures the love and freedom of which our very soul is made. This reverence must start with ourselves. It is love, respect and appreciation starting for and with ourselves and expressed into the rest of our reality, expressed into and including our waking time, our working time, our peer group, our family, our acquaintances, strangers we encounter, the plants, insects, animals and minerals. This inclusiveness of all life is what realization of our true Self is all about.

Meditation can take us to sabikalpa samadhi, to the union of God. After that experience, it is our manifestation into and inclusiveness of all life that is nirvikalpa samadhi, that which is one with God, not separate from God.

The first step of true spirituality is the experience. The second step is the living or the realization of that experience. One wing of the bird is the acceptance or the surrendering to our nature, that of love, freedom and beauty. The other wing is that of the discipline and effort it takes to continue growing into our holistic Self.

Everyone is seeking enjoyment of everyday life. However, not everyone succeeds into the enjoyment of everyday life. You will not attain permanent enjoyment of everyday life without realizing your holistic Self. You cannot attain more than moments of temporary happiness in life without the continuous unveiling of love and freedom into God.

If you look forward to life, it is because within your view you are experiencing love and within your perception of reality you have hope that good things are going to happen tomorrow. You are feeling love when you are feeling hope. When you have love and freedom, you are nurturing the soul. When you are discouraged with life and don't look forward to the next day or the next moment, you don't have hope that it will be better. You are discouraged because you see it as the same old situation. "Nothing is going to change. Same old people. They are going to respond the same old way. I'm going to react the same old way. It isn't going to be fun. Nothing will be different." You have lost hope.

Don't willingly give up hope. Make an effort to have reverence, to have hope, to experience love moment to moment. Make an effort to experience reverence for all life, for Divinity, moment to moment. Make the effort to enjoy everyday life by the nurturing of the soul, by the nurturing of love and freedom. Allow yourself to experience the love that is your nature. Allow yourself to experience the freedom that is your nature. Make the effort to remove the mindsets or ideas that keep you from your true Self. Proper nutrition for the body is a balanced vegetarian diet. Proper nutrition for the mind is hope or a philosophy of a better tomorrow. Proper nutrition for the soul is love and freedom.

Discipline is needed in meditation. Effort and discipline are needed in the fulfillment of your dharma. Spirituality should not be a difficult, joyless, long-suffering journey. Spirituality should be an unfoldment of more love, more freedom, more hope, and more beauty as you go along.

Make an effort to experience life fully, completely, and holistically by nurturing your true Self in both your inhalation (meditation) and your exhalation (actions). You need meditation and you need action. You cannot fly with only one wing. You cannot enjoy life with only one wing,

so you need meditation and you need action. You need the effort to calm down the mind, breath and ego to experience God the Absolute, and you need the effort to expand into and experience God in the form. You need both the inhalation and the exhalation in order to find life and life more abundantly, in order to enjoy life and life more abundantly. This process should not be difficult. Every part of us wants to experience and enjoy life. We are truly doing what is natural by pursuing our holistic nature. Sadhana (the practices) should be a joy.

Spirituality should bring more joy, more happiness, more laughter, and more excitement to life. True spirituality and true spiritual practices bring Om Satyam (eternal love), Om Shivam (eternal virtue), Om Sundaram (eternal beauty) and Om Shanti (eternal peace) into our realization of the moment. Spirituality brings our harvest of love, joy, happiness, bliss, and intoxication. True sadhana brings us God, a harvest of Sat Tat Aum (God-consciousness, Christ-consciousness and the Holy Stream), a harvest of Sat Chit Ananda (eternal, consciousness, bliss).

If we are doing the practices, then the harvest is coming. We cannot sit and repeat a mantra without bringing that mantra into our life. If we do “**Om Satyam**,” we have just brought into our view eternal truth, love and consciousness. It will be there while we repeat it.

Accept the harvest you have earned. Accept the love, the freedom the beauty that is your very nature. Use discrimination to accept that which brings more joy and beauty. We can choose this at every moment. We have the freedom to nurture our soul with love and freedom. We have as our very nature love, virtue, beauty and peace.

Namaste

MEDITATION

The holy ones of all times and traditions have said that our nature is Om Satyam—the Divine eternal love, Om Shivam—the Divine eternal virtue, Om Sundaram—the Divine eternal beauty and joy, Om Shanti—the Divine eternal peace or God the Absolute, which in its peaceful or still state is Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. The message of the holy ones is that there is only God and that our nature is the same as God's nature.

Most people are busy seeking and doing in the external because they believe that love, happiness, beauty, virtue and joy come from external activity. The holy ones have brought the message of meditation, the techniques of how to calm down the mind, breath, and ego (the idea of separateness) and then experience our very nature in its state of Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti. Only through experiencing our Self, our absolute nature, do we realize the wealth of love, happiness, and joy within. We begin to understand that our love, happiness and joy do not come from external activity, persons or events, but are within our nature.

Through diving deeply in meditation, we will experience our Self in the state of Om Shanti. We will experience that we are alive and aware. What we will be aware of is Shanti, peace, the absolute stillness. We will realize what Shanti is; we will realize that what we are experiencing is love, beauty, virtue, bliss, security, fulfillment, completion. In other words, we will realize we are experiencing our nature. This is the experience we will have when we come to our nature, our Self as Om Shanti. We will realize that we are infinite and eternal. We will realize that we don't need to chase after love because we are love. We don't need to demand freedom because we are freedom. We don't need to look for the virtues because we are the virtues. We don't need security from relationships because we are one with all life. We are the relationship. We don't need to pursue money, friends, careers, and prestige to be secure because we are infinite and eternal happiness, joy, beauty, and love. Nothing external can give us love,

beauty, joy, or security because we already are those things. In addition, nothing external can take away our love, beauty, joy or security because our very nature is Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti.

Once we have this realization in meditation, because only in meditation will we not give credit to some other person or event, we can go about our life harmonizing or as the sacred texts say, worshipping God. We begin to worship or experience God everywhere. We begin to see God, Divinity, behind the veils, costumes, and limitations. The holy ones talk about this responsibility. Now it is our responsibility to live our life.

The holy ones say we have free will to live however we want. We can live seeing Divinity or we can live seeing limitations. We can be complete and have life and life more abundantly, God and God more abundantly, or we can have a life of chasing after love, freedom and friendships hoping that someone else will give it to us. Meditation will bring knowledge of our absolute Self. No other practice, no other service, no other activity can bring us the awareness of our absolute nature. These other things can only bring us the enjoyment of interacting.

Life should be about love, harmony, joy, beauty, happiness, and the enjoyment of living, the enjoyment of Divinity. This is truly what God is — Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti. If we are not enjoying life, it is simply because we are not seeing or experiencing Divinity. Once we experience God, we begin to see the love, beauty, harmony and joy in life around us. In every time and tradition, the holy ones have given the same message, “Be ye still and know that I am God.” Meditation is the key to this experience.

There are different stages of meditation. In the beginning stage you get the techniques to begin exploring meditation. You work to develop concentration. You may discover paranormal phenomena. You will discover little idiosyncrasies, subconscious desires, fears and insecurities. You discover personalities, possibly even memories of other lifetimes, possible visions of the future. Beginning meditation is all about Self-discovery. We discover who we are, what our samskaras are, what our mindsets are all about. Beginning meditation is still within the idea of separateness. We can believe we are infinite and eternal, but still separate from God. Beginning meditation is where we need to develop the discipline and consistency that will help take us beyond the idea of separateness.

When the holy ones use the term “meditate,” they are using it with the definition of “stillness,” Om Shanti. This is the only distinction between meditation and thinking. Meditation brings you to Om Shanti. Thought and activity bring you the rest of life. Beginning meditation brings you knowledge of your personality, knowledge of your fears, doubts, insecurities, hopes, dreams, strengths and interests. Beginning meditation is necessary because we need this knowledge in order to discern and discriminate what we want to do with our life. Once we have explored our personality, idiosyncrasies, mindsets, samskaras, duties, enjoyments and interests, we are ready to begin to meditate seriously on discovering our absolute nature.

Advanced meditation has two qualities that distinguish it from beginning meditation. One aspect is the goal itself. The goal is to experience our God-consciousness nature. We want to experience our God-like nature in Om Shanti. This is the goal. We don’t want to know what this holy one is doing or what that holy one said about *kundalini* energy or what another said about *chakras* or *karma yoga*. What we want to know is our Self, our absolute Self.

The other distinguishing aspect is the willpower and determination to make a one-pointed effort each time we sit down to meditate to experience God. It is the willpower to be disciplined in our practices, to be consistent in our practices. Simply having the goal or desire to experience our absolute nature doesn’t mean we will experience it without the willpower, the determination and the consistent effort that it takes to realize our Divine nature. The proper use of the techniques or meditation practices is assumed. The goal, the discipline and the consistency determine advanced meditation.

The **Om** technique, for example, can be used as a beginning meditation or as an advanced meditation. However, you will get different results depending on whether you are a beginning or an advanced meditator. Our goal and our awareness determine the results. Meditation and the mantras are the vehicles. We determine where we want to go.

What all of us want is love, happiness, joy and friendship. Without the knowledge that we are Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti, we will seek happiness, love, friendship and security within the idea of separateness. The holy ones say there is only one God. We have to have faith that they are telling the truth, that they are experiencing God and their nature of God-consciousness. Then we will be willing to do the sadhana or practices that lead to the realization that there is only God. When we are experiencing God, experiencing our nature of God-consciousness, experiencing our nature of Om Satyam, we will realize that we are love,

happiness, joy and one with all life. When we realize that we are Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram and Shanti, like the holy ones we will have life and life more abundantly.

The meditation techniques are scientific in their results. If you do them consistently, you will begin to have the experiences. Done with concentration and discipline, the techniques will take you to the goal of reaching your true nature. They will calm the mental activity, the breath, and the senses. Finally, they will calm the ego, the idea of separateness. There will then be the experience of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram without any activity. There is only Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. There is only God.

When we realize our nature is Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, the enjoyment of everyday life begins. We begin to learn that there is a time and season for all things. God is not a God of chaos and randomness. There are patterns of living energy. We begin to learn and grow and experience life as an infinite Spirit rather than as a finite being who has to seek food, sleep, procreation, survival, and happiness.

When the holy ones talk about “mukti” or freedom, they are talking about the freedom into God, the freedom into life, the freedom to begin to explore and experience God and God more abundantly. Do not confuse realizing your Self as Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram with knowing God. It isn't the same thing. Now you know your God-like nature. Now you begin to worship God, to learn about God—God unlimited and God in the limited, God in the cycle of birth and death, God unmanifested without form and God in the manifested creation, God who was before, is now and forever shall be. You begin to learn about God, worship God through your experience with God. Do not confuse knowing and realizing your nature with knowing God.

Mukti is freedom into God. It is the freedom to go on experiencing God knowing we are Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, Shanti. It is to experience and see God as Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, wearing this costume and that mask, in this kingdom or that kingdom, at the physical manifestation, or the *astral* manifestation or the *causal* manifestation. It is to explore God. This is mukti. It is the freedom to enjoy life and life more abundantly. Mukti is to look forward to God and more God, each morning, each moment, each incarnation, whether on Earth or in the heavens or in the formless. This is **Om Sundaram**, the ever-new joy, the ever-new beauty, the ever-new excitement of learning, growing, expanding and experiencing more God or more life. The goal of meditation is to realize that our nature and the nature of God are one and the same.

Satmuktananda is when we are one with God, know God, explore God, and experience God. There is only one God.

BEGINNING TO MEDITATE

The first step of meditation is *pranayama* or breath control. Without regulation of the breath, there can be no regulation of the mind. If there is no regulation of the mind, there can be no meditation.

The first step of meditation should be the simple inhalation and exhalation of the 1-12 pranayama technique. This is inhaling to the count of 12 and then exhaling to the count of 12, trying to regulate or make the breath even. It is a deep, calm even breath. This should be done until the breath is quite relaxed and rhythmic.

We then go to the alternate breathing of the 1-4-2 pranayama technique (see Meditation Techniques at the end of this chapter). This is actually the first mantra of meditation. The 1-4-2 technique will bring focus, alertness and concentration to the mind. Without this breath regulation, without preparing the mind, your meditations will be slothful, regardless of which mantra you may be using. They will be filled with subconscious thoughts. They will be filled with external distractions. They will be filled with wandering here and there which is more like daydreaming than meditation. Pranayama is a necessary step in meditation. Without it, meditations will be shallow and unproductive.

Prana is the life force of the creation. The word of God is prana. It is this life force, coming from the mouth of God, that manifests everything. It is the life in life. When we begin to work with regulating the breath, we aren't just doing a few deep-breathing exercises. We are beginning to focus on and experience the breath. We concentrate and pay attention inwardly to the breath or to the feelings of prana.

If you do regulated, even, deep breathing you will begin to feel prana spreading throughout the body starting with the lungs. You will feel the sensation of prana beginning to spread out and flow through the pranic channels or throughout the limbs and the rest of your body. This is what we focus on in pranayama. We don't just focus on counting from 1 to 12. We aren't focusing on a number. We are actually focusing on the prana itself.

In the yogic tradition, they say that if you know prana, you know God. One cannot come to Self-realization without an understanding of prana. One cannot have consistent, deep meditation without doing consistent pranayama. Whenever someone comes to me saying, “I’m having difficulty with meditation. It is hard for me to get it in twice daily. I’m even having trouble getting it in daily.” I ask if they are doing pranayama—the 1-4-2 technique. Ninety-nine percent of the time the person will respond with “No.” That is because without the preparing of the body and mind for meditation, there will be no meditation. You will have subconscious thoughts, attractions and distractions filling the time you sit there. Pranayama needs to be done. It is the “diving into” part of meditation. It starts with just a few minutes of regulated, deep breathing, then you move into the 1-4-2 technique. The 1-4-2 technique should be done in sets of twelve. It should not be done for more than thirty minutes unless you have permission from a competent meditation teacher.

Preparation for meditation is pranayama, proper breathing. The average person breathes 16 to 24 times a minute. The average person is breathing in approximately 500 cubic centimeters of air per breath. With deep, diaphragmatic breathing, the average person will be breathing in approximately 3500 cubic centimeters of air with each breath. Prana means life force. Yama means extension. So literally, we are talking about the extension and expansion of life force or your life.

During the next few weeks, pay attention to your breath. If you have a watch, pay attention and count your breaths. Pay attention to how often you are breathing per minute. If you are sitting at work and there is a clock, pay attention. At home, pay attention. When you are talking on the telephone, pay attention. Pay attention throughout the day. Pay attention during your happy times, cheerful times, depressing times, discouraging times, angry times and frustrating times. Count the number of breaths during these different moods and write the numbers down. Within a couple of weeks you will begin to see that certain attitudes that come up from time to time, like frustration and irritation, will have the same amount of breaths each time they come up. The number of breaths per minute will be the same. You will begin to see that by regulating your breath to full and diaphragmatic and by increasing or decreasing your inhalation and exhalation, you will be able to transcend the great majority of moods, attitudes, frustrations, irritations, and depressions that you encounter. Certain physical conditions like hay fever, sinus problems, digestive problems and sleeping disorders can also be regulated out of

your life simply by regulating the breath. This is what it means to work on your breath – pranayama.

The preparation for meditation is the regulation of the breath. You do the 1-12 technique to get the evenness between body and mind. This brings a harmony to the body and mind. You do the alternate breathing, the 1-4-2 technique, to get a balance between the *ida* and the *pingala*. That allows the *sushumna* channel to flow freely to our crown. Both pranayama techniques are necessary. Deep breathing is used to find the balance and rhythm between the body and mind. The 1-4-2 alternate breathing technique is used to balance the body, mind and Spirit

If we pay attention, we will notice in the several minutes that we are doing pranayama before meditation how it changes our body, changes our mind and thoughts; how we go from a state of tension, worry, concern and mental activity to a calm state before we begin to meditate. If we notice this process, we know what it will do for us and we can utilize it throughout the day. Pay attention to how powerful pranayama is and how it affects you.

Once we have done the pranayama, we have prepared our body and mind for meditation. Now is the time to begin to meditate. Now is the time to do “**Namaste**” or “**Om Namō Ari Hantanum.**” Now is the time to state our appreciation to all that has been given. Now is the time to say a small prayer or statement of appreciation. Once this acknowledgment is done, then we start meditating with the *So Hum* technique. As we inhale, we listen to the sound of our breath. The sound of the inhalation is “So.” As we exhale, we listen to the sound of our breath. The sound of the exhalation is “Hum.” We are listening to the sound of the breath. We are focusing on the breath. We are focusing on the prana. The inhalation, the prana – the exhalation, the prana.

We pay attention to all the thoughts and distractions that come. We are not letting them keep us from focusing, but neither are we ignoring them. These thoughts or distractions are telling us something about our days, something about us. We are not evaluating them during meditation. We are just paying attention.

The deeper we dive into **So Hum**, the deeper our meditation will be and the deeper we will be in Sat Chit Ananda. We will begin to transcend the mind and areas of mental activity. Once we begin to do that, it is time to go to the **Om** technique. Instead of using the **So Hum** mantra, you now use the **Om** mantra. We will then feel our Self expanding out beyond our

limited identities. We will experience our Self expanding out into the rest of life. We will experience our Self expanding out into the Christ-consciousness.

This meditation of deep, even 1-12 breathing, the 1-4-2 technique, the **So Hum** technique and the **Om** technique should be done on a daily basis. One of your meditations each day should be this basic meditation. The **Om** mantra is the most sacred of all mantras. The **So Hum** mantra is the most focused on Self-realization of all the mantras. The 1-4-2 pranayama technique is the most powerful pranayama technique for finding the harmony and balance within our life. This meditation is the very foundation on which we build meditation.

The second meditation of the day you can add different mantras—**Om Satyam**, **Om Shivam**, **Om Sundaram**, **Om Shanti**, or the **Aum** mantra, or the chakra meditations or any of the other mantras you may want to experience for that meditation. However, the foundation of Self-realization is within the 1-4-2 technique, the **So Hum** mantra and the **Om** mantra.

Meditation is simple. In each meditation you should dive into your Self and come away feeling energized. You should feel calmer and more relaxed while doing the deep breathing. You may feel energized while you are doing the 1-4-2 technique. You should have more Self-awareness while doing the **So Hum** mantra. You should feel more expanded into Divinity, the rest of life, with the **Om** mantra. With each meditation, you should feel all these things. If you aren't feeling them in each meditation, it means you are not concentrating or paying attention. You haven't prepared yourself.

I know most people have active schedules, but to prepare yourself for meditation is simple. When it is getting close to meditation time, you begin to put the rest of the stuff away. You use *non-attachment* and say, "I'll get back to that after my meditation. This does not need to be dealt with for the next hour." Right before you sit down to meditate you might want to chant a little bit. Pick out your favorite chant and chant it either mentally or audibly. You can also use the mantra **Hrim** at this time. The **Hrim** mantra, always done audibly, means, "Invoking the indwelling energy." Five to fifteen minutes of **Hrim** or chanting will help set the atmosphere or mood you want for your life and for what you want to experience with your meditation. Prepare yourself for each meditation. Prepare yourself to have a glimpse of your true Self. Don't go, "Oh! It's five o'clock. It's time for me to meditate now. I'll sit down for a quick half-hour and then get on with my life." If that is the attitude you take into meditation, that is the kind of meditation you will have—a very distracted, hurried sitting.

You don't have to spend a long time in the preparation for meditation. Take a few minutes before you sit down to clear your mind of all the things and activities you have been doing and will be doing afterwards. Take a little time to begin to get perspective on why you are meditating and what you hope to gain. Then sit down to meditate. Do the 1-12 deep breathing. Do the 1-4-2 pranayama technique. Do the **So Hum** mantra and then do the **Om** Mantra. If this meditation is done on a consistent basis, Self-realization will come to you because you will have made the effort to discover your Self, to realize your Self. You'll be using some of the most powerful and sacred meditation techniques available to humanity.

During the second meditation of the day, try a different type of meditation. It is better to have two half-hour meditations than to have one hour-long meditation. It is recommended that you have one meditation at the beginning of your day and the second one at the end of your day. If you only have an hour a day, then it is best to take a half-hour in the morning and a half-hour in the evening. Two meditations a day is recommended. This will give you the best results. For your second meditation you are welcome to use any of the mantras, the chakra meditations, whatever you would like to explore. But the very foundation of Self-realization will come with the basic 1-4-2 Technique, **So Hum** and **Om** meditation.

The timing of your meditations is important. You need to be alert for your meditation. Meditating right before bed is not a good time because most people aren't alert at that time. Meditating immediately after getting out of bed is also not a good time because most people are not alert upon waking. Each person needs to find the proper time. It may take you from ten minutes to an hour after you get out of bed to feel alert. If you get up early and want to meditate before you go to work, increase your pranayama. You can do more 1-12 deep breathing. This will bring alertness. Find the time of day that is best suited for you and try to make it consistent.

If you are consistent about going to work to earn money, and if you are consistent about the time you eat your meals, then you should be able to be consistent about the time you set for meditation. If you are consistent about when you get up and when you go to bed, then you should be able to be consistent with meditation time. Experiment and find the time that works best and then keep that time. Don't become too rigid in your schedule or structure, but be consistent in your scheduled meditation time.

Your place of meditation should be inspirational. It should give you the feeling that you will be able to attain something. Don't go off in a dark closet and close the door because it is the

only peaceful place in the house. There is nothing inspirational about a cluttered closet. Find a time when you can sit somewhere that is comfortable and open. If this is your bedroom, that is fine. If this is your living room, that is fine. If this is your back porch, that is fine. It should be a space in which you feel comfortable and open to life.

Find a place that is well ventilated with clean air. Keep the air as fresh and clean as you can. Heavy-scented fragrances will dull your senses, whether it is incense, candles, cigarette smoke, or food. With these fragrances, you will not have the mental alertness that you want for meditation.

As for posture, you must be comfortable. If you are comfortable sitting cross-legged, do so. If not, find a good chair in which your spine can be kept comfortably erect for a half-hour or an hour meditation. Do not get sloppy in your posture. The main pranic flows, the ida and pingala and sushumna, flow from the base of the spine to the crown. If the spine is not kept erect, then the prana channels cannot flow freely. It is important to have proper posture.

You need discipline because your experience with your holistic Self comes in meditation. It doesn't come after the end of a lifetime. It comes in a focused and one-pointed meditation. This is when you will expand into your larger Self. Sit down to each meditation with the focus that meditation will bring you more Self-awareness, more harmonization. Do not get lazy in your meditation time. Just because enlightenment isn't instantaneous, there is no excuse for slothfulness. Be disciplined and one-pointed in your meditations. This discipline and one-pointedness will help in all areas of your life.

A disciplined, consistent effort in meditation will bring knowledge of our holistic nature. By taking the knowledge we gain in meditation and incorporating it into our daily life, we will be harmonizing with our holistic nature. We become Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti, the manifestation of Divinity—our true Self.

MEDITATION TECHNIQUES

Meditation is the process of calming the mind, breath and ego for the purpose of realizing ones holistic nature of Sat Tat Aum. Meditation is a very simple and gentle process and should be practiced with a gentle yet firm discipline.

POSTURE

Sit in a relaxed, upright position with the head and spine straight and erect, but not tense. Sitting on a blanket or pillow against the wall or sitting in an upright chair are both acceptable. Sit upright with the eyes and mouth closed. Take a few deep diaphragmatic inhalations and exhalations. Maintain this posture throughout the meditation. Your posture should be one that is comfortable for a thirty to sixty minute sitting.

1-12 PRANAYAMA TECHNIQUE

Inhale a full diaphragmatic breath through both nostrils while counting, and then exhale through the nostrils to the same count. The mental counting should be calm and even. The count need not be to the full count of 12, but does need to be the same count for both the inhalation and the exhalation. (Example: Inhale to 12 then exhale to 12, or inhale to 6 then exhale to 6.)

1-4-2 PRANAYAMA TECHNIQUE

Press your finger to the right side of your nose to close the right nostril. Inhale a full diaphragmatic breath through your left nostril while counting to 4. Retain that breath while mentally counting to 16. Now press your finger to the left side of your nose, to close the left nostril, and exhale all of that breath through the right nostril to the count of 8.

Keeping the left nostril closed, inhale through the right nostril, a full diaphragmatic breath, to the count of 4. Retain that breath for a count of 16. Now press your finger to the right side of your nose again and exhale through the left nostril for the count of 8.

This is one complete 1-4-2 pranayama breath. Repeat this twelve times for a 1-4-2 pranayama set. If you feel short of breath, you may reduce the ratio to 3-12-6 (Inhale to 3, hold to 12 and exhale to 6). It is important to keep the ratio in multiples of 1-4-2.

SO HUM TECHNIQUE

Breathing through the nostrils, take a very gentle, slow and full diaphragmatic breath while mentally saying “So.” After inhaling the full diaphragmatic breath, exhale gently through the nostrils while mentally saying, “Hum.” Repeat.

While mentally repeating this mantra, listen to the sound of your breath. The breath’s natural sound will be “So (inhalation)” and “Hum (exhalation).”

OM TECHNIQUE

Take a full diaphragmatic inhalation through the nostrils. Then, while exhaling through the nostrils, mentally say “Ommm..” for the full exhalation. Feel the **Om** vibration during each exhalation. Repeat.

AUM TECHNIQUE

The **Aum** technique is the same as the **Om** technique except you say “**Aum**” instead of “**Om**”

HRIM TECHNIQUE

Take a full diaphragmatic inhalation through the nostrils. As you began to exhale through your mouth, contract your stomach muscles slightly, and audibly with force, say “Huh.” You will then continue, still audibly, with “Ree” and end the exhalation with “Mmm. All three parts of this mantra are done continuously on one exhalation, and it is always done audibly.

All mantras should be done calmly with concentration and in harmony with the breath. Remember that the mantras are a sacred vibration we use to re-identify with our holistic Self through the calming of the mind and breath. You can pay attention to any thoughts that come in but save thinking about them for after your meditation. Then, gently bring your focus back to the mantra. Properly doing the techniques will bring a calming of the mind and breath.

Namaste

ADVANCED MEDITATION

The purpose of mantra meditation is to calm the mind, breath, and ego so that the experience of the mantra can happen. After doing the pranayama technique, choose a mantra corresponding with the part of your nature you would like to experience. Mentally repeat the mantra, allowing it to flow with the breath. If the mind wanders from the mantra, gently but firmly bring it back to the mantra. In the beginning, you will notice that the mind frequently wanders from the mantra. It isn't important how many times the mind wanders. What is important is how many times we gently bring it back to the mantra with discipline and determination.

As focus remains on the mantra, the mind will naturally grow calmer and will wander less. When the mind is calm and the mantra remains steady, soften the mental repetition to a mere whisper. The mind, breath, and ego will grow even calmer. The mantra and breath will be intricately linked as one goes deeper into the mantra. As you continue this, the mental whisper of the mantra will naturally fade and you will begin to "feel" or experience the mantra. Going deeper still, you will begin to immerse into the mantra. For example, if you are using the mantra **Om Shanti**, you will first begin to feel or experience the absolute peace and then immerse into and become your nature of absolute peace. This experience of your true nature is the goal of mantra meditation.

It is indeed very rare for someone to immerse into his or her true nature when they first begin to meditate. Meditation is a process of going deeper and deeper within to experience our true Self. Every time we sit quietly to meditate with sincere effort and discipline, we will go deeper and deeper with each meditation. Even if we are unable to recognize any advancement in the beginning, the process of Self-realization will happen and with consistent daily effort we will

attain the goal. Once the goal is attained, we will find that there is no limit to our higher Self and meditation becomes a joyful, blissful and loving journey into our Self, into life, into God.

CHAKRA MEDITATION

There is a column of energy, of light, that runs up and down the spine. Located within the spine are seven energy centers or chakras. Using the Chakra Meditation, one can experience and integrate the seven energy centers. The Chakra Meditation begins at the first chakra and ascends to the seventh. It is important that the spine is straight so the energy can flow freely. We begin on an inhalation mentally saying the mantra “**Lam,**” and then exhale mentally saying “**Om.**” Each inhalation will be the individual chakra mantra (see chart below) and each exhalation will be “**Om,**” for a total of seven inhalations and exhalations. A full set of the Chakra Meditation would be: “**Lam/Om,**” then “**Vam/Om,**” then “**Ram/Om,**” then “**Yam/Om,**” then “**Ham/Om,**” then “**Om/Om**” and for the seventh chakra just inhale quietly and then do “**Om**” on the exhalation. Repeat each set six to twelve times. As you do each mantra, concentrate on that energy center and you will begin to experience the mantra or chakra.

<u>CHAKRA</u>	<u>MANTRA</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>QUALITY</u>
1 ST Muladhara	Lam	Base of spine	Security
2 nd Swadhisthana	Vam	Pelvis area	Creativity
3 rd Manipuri	Ram	Navel area	Expansiveness/Power
4 th Anahata	Yam	Heart area	Love
5 th Vishuddha	Ham	Throat area	Abundance/Space
6 th Ajna	Om	Spiritual eye	Clarity/Insight
7 th Sahasrara	Om	Crown	Consciousness

SRI VIDYA TECHNIQUE

The Sri Vidya is a combination of five meditation techniques. All five steps can be done separately as individual techniques. The individual steps are developed to neutralize the inhalation and the exhalation. When the steps are combined they become the Sri Vidya, a technique which brings the energy to the crown. It is the five physical senses that tell us that

everything is separate. The Sri Vidya is designed to bring our energy and consciousness inward, which allows us to transcend the senses and the idea of separateness. The Sri Vidya allows us to transcend into the superconscious state. The five techniques done together as the Sri Vidya are very powerful.

The Sri Vidya should be done with regular discipline. If you are not able to do it daily, it is best not to do it at all because of the amount of energy it brings. It will activate or vibrate a certain intensity about you that will attract situations or karma of similar intensity. If you are not doing it regularly, you will simply add more intensity to your life, not necessarily more bliss and knowledge, just more intensity. It is important that it be done regularly. It can be added to the daily meditation or added as a second meditation for the day, depending on your schedule or determination for meditation.

STEP 1: **1-4-2 TECHNIQUE**

The first step is the 1-4-2 pranayama technique, which was described, in the last chapter.

STEP 2: **AMEN TECHNIQUE**

The second step of the Sri Vidya is very powerful for two reasons: first, because it neutralizes the breath and second, because it is built on the **Aum**, which is very powerful and very sacred. It is called the Amen Technique because it sometimes seems to break up into two different parts. The inhalation and the exhalation will make it sound more like an “Amen” then an “**Aum**.” The technique itself is supposed to be done with one continuous “**Aum**,” but sometimes you may notice a pause in your breath on the exhalation.

This technique begins by mentally saying “Ahh” as you exhale. Then there is a minimal pause before you inhale. The inhalation is the “Mmm” part of the **Aum**. . One mentally says “Ahh” on the exhalation and “Mmm” on the inhalation. Once in awhile the pause will be long and if this occurs, you should go right into the “Mmm” during the pause

While doing the “Ahh” on the exhalation, you may visualize white light or energy going from the medulla oblongata (at the base of your brain) down the spine to the first chakra. On the “Mmm,” visualize bringing the light or energy back up again. This may intensify your experience because it is the actual process that is taking place. You are offering the inhalation breath into the exhalation breath, and offering the exhalation breath into the inhalation breath.

Normally, as you exhale you see yourself as expending the energy into the air and getting rid of the carbon dioxide. By bringing the focus inward, into the spine, you are pulling energy through the medulla oblongata down the spine. You are “inhaling” prana during the exhalation. Then when you are inhaling air, you are running prana in the spine from the first chakra up to your medulla oblongata. You are beginning to bring your attention and conscious awareness to the prana that keeps you alive rather than thinking in terms of air. During the Amen Technique, while mentally doing the “Ahh” and “Mmm,” keep visualizing light or energy going down and up your spine.

STEP 3: SEED MANTRAS OR CHAKRA MANTRAS

The third step is the seed mantras. They are also known as the chakra mantras because each seed mantra correlates to a chakra: **Lam**—first chakra, **Vam**—second chakra, **Ram**—third chakra, **Yam**—fourth chakra, **Ham**—fifth chakra, **Om**—sixth chakra and **Om**—seventh chakra. The majority of people who do the seed mantras with the Sri Vidya technique do all the mantras in one breath. As they inhale, they go up the spine with “**Lam, Vam, Ram, Yam, Ham, Om, Om**” As they exhale, they continue with the “**Om.**” Doing this all in one inhalation makes a person more aware of the energy in the spinal system or within the chakras. Once again, the focus is internal.

STEP 4: AHH-EEE TECHNIQUE

The fourth step is done audibly. Instead of inhaling through the nostrils, as with the Amen or Seed Mantra Techniques, on this step you inhale and exhale through your mouth, with your throat. You open your mouth, inhale and try to bring the breath in so it makes an impact at your throat. As you inhale it makes an audible sound of “Ahh.” The inhalation actually does make that sound, but you also mentally say “Ahh.” As you bring the breath in, you also visualize the energy. As you exhale, you let the air out of your mouth with “Eee.” You will actually start this step on an exhalation. You start by taking a normal breath in. Then exhale through the mouth with “Eee,” while visualizing energy going from the medulla oblongata to the first chakra. Next, inhale with “Ahh” and visualize the energy coming up the spine.

It may take a little while to remember which direction you are moving the energy. Think in terms of offering the prana in the exact reverse of that which your air is flowing. When you

are inhaling, the prana is coming up the spine and when you are exhaling, the energy is going down the spine. Also, the “Ahh” vibrates the first chakra and the “Eee” vibrates the spiritual eye, the sixth chakra. On the “Ahh,” you are vibrating the first chakra and willfully bringing the energy up to the spiritual eye and crown. Never visualize the energy projecting outside, neither through the crown nor through the first chakra. The energy stays internal.

STEP 5: AHH-EEE WITH SEED MANTRAS

The fifth step is a combination of Step 3 and Step 4. As you inhale with the audible “Ahh” and the energy is coming up, you bring it through the individual chakras by mentally saying the seed mantras—“**Lam, Vam, Ram, Yam, Ham, Om, Om.**” When you reach the end of your inhalation and you are on the final “**Om,**” hold the “Mmm” part of the “**Om**” as long as comfortably possible, then exhale with the audible “Eee.” Following this exhalation, do a regular “Ahh-Eee,” as in Step 4. This will keep you from feeling like you are losing your breath. So, the fifth step is an “Ahh” - “Eee” with mental seed mantras, followed by a regular “Ahh” – “Eee.”

You can do the Sri Vidya in sets of six, twelve or twenty-four. It is best to start with a set of six and after a few weeks or months, when you are comfortable with this, increase it to twelve sets. If you find yourself getting dizzy, reduce the number of sets by half. Remember that this is a powerful meditation technique with each step building on the others. One should include this in their meditation schedule only if they have time to do it on a regular basis. It generally takes forty-five minutes to an hour to do the Sri Vidya properly. This is a very powerful and very sacred technique. It will bring results. It should be done with commitment and, most importantly, with consistency.

After you complete the Sri Vidya, you can either go to the **So Hum** or **Om** mantras, or you can just bathe in the bliss. You will be expanded. You may even go into the superconscious state.

SRI VIDYA (Set of six)

SIX: 1-4-2 pranayama sets

SIX: AMEN Technique

SIX: SEED MANTRA sets

SIX: AHH – EEE sets

SIX: AHH-EEE sets with SEED MANTRA

Namaste

RE-EDUCATION

The unfoldment of spirituality should be a natural unfoldment of the soul or of the infinite Spirit. The process we use for unfoldment should equate to our daily efforts in seeking our own true Self, our holistic Self.

We need to understand that we are created in the image of God. The small Self is just a small aspect of the rest of God. God always has been, is now, and forever shall be, whether creations are here or not here. We also, as part of ourselves, have this absoluteness, this eternalness. The creation comes with the Word or the Light, the Christ-consciousness, and as we are created in the image of God, we also have the Christ-consciousness as a part of us. We have this holy stream of consciousness, the Holy Spirit, the Aum, as part of our make-up. We also have, as part of us, the soul which is made up of Sat Chit Ananda. This is part of our true Self.

Then we have the ego. The ego is the idea of separateness. We need to understand what this idea is. We need to understand how to see it, how to perceive it, and how to work with it because it is part of us. It is this idea of “I-ness.” “I exist separate from this person, separate from the mountains, separate from the animals, separate from God. I exist separate from the rest of life.” This is the ego at its most immature state. This sense of, “I exist. I am concerned with only myself—my body, my happiness,” is the ego at its most immature state.

The ego in its most mature state will still provide the idea of separateness, but not, “I am separate from life.” It will be like a prism. When sunlight shines into a prism, it is one light but it comes out the other side of the prism as many colors. It appears in many colors, but it is now colored light. It is still light. In its immature state, the ego will say, “One is blue. One is yellow. One is red. They have nothing to do with light because light is clear.” In its mature state, the ego will say, “This is light. This is all the same light. It is just diverse. It appears different. I can appreciate the diversity. I can appreciate the contrast, the beauty, but I will not think that it

isn't light. I will not think that it is not from the same source. I will know it is one light passed through a prism to reflect different colors." This is how an ego in a mature state perceives life. It perceives it as diverse, but coming from the same source and made up of the same source, just made up at a different vibration or frequency. It perceives it as another aspect of Divinity.

The mountains are from the same source as the trees. The trees and mountains are from the same source as the air. The animals, the body, the Spirit are just different vibrations of the same Christ-consciousness, the same light. If you remove the ego or the prism, you will only have light. You will only have God. You add the ego or prism and things will appear different.

The ego is there for our enjoyment. The ego is there for us to experience and enjoy eternity. We cannot get rid of the ego while in the three bodies (physical, astral and causal). We can only go beyond the limitations of the ego. We can go beyond the immaturity of the ego. We cannot do so with the mind. The mind is the tool we use to appreciate and acknowledge the diversity. We use the mind to appreciate the beauty of the diversity and creation.

Only by calming down the mind in meditation and perceiving with the pure consciousness of our soul can we perceive that life is pure, is the Christ-consciousness, is the Divine. In this way we can see the light before the prism. We can see the light before the ego. We can also see the light after the ego prism. We can see what goes into the ego and how the ego reflects it into diversity. This comes in meditation, in calming down the mind. This is where we understand our true Self. This is where we get glimpses of and understand our temporary self.

Our personality is through the prism, through the ego. It is our diversity, our beauty. This is where the mind comes in. The mind can work with the diversity. The mind has been created to appreciate and understand the diversity of God. However, the mind can only work for us if we, our consciousness, are directing the mind as to what to look at, how to put things together, and how to harmonize with what we are perceiving. This comes about through the training or education of the mind. In meditation we see how we should perceive things. We see the truth or reality, but the training of the mind is a mental effort. We must train the mind as to how to think clearly, how to think logically, how to think with precision and how to have it go where we want it to go. We must train it not to wander off wherever it wants to go.

In meditation, we get glimpses or perceptions of reality. In active times, we have to make the effort to harmonize our small Self with our large Self. This takes our effort. No one

can bring this harmonization to us. The holy ones give us glimpses of truth, of eternity, of life, of Divinity. However, we must make the effort to harmonize the small Self with the large Self.

Spirituality is two-fold. It is the inhalation and the exhalation. We get glimpses of there only being one God in our meditation. We get glimpses of how this oneness passes through the ego and appears as diversity or separateness. Then we have to re-educate our mind to view this new perception or reality. This will take practice because the mind is not used to dealing with relativity. The untrained mind is used to dealing on a linear basis with one thing at a time.

Try a simple experiment: Go appreciate a flower. The majority of the people will experience only one thing at a time. They will look at the flower. “Oh, it looks beautiful.” Then they will smell it. “Ah, it smells nice.” Yet while they are smelling it, they won’t be appreciating how it looks. Then they will touch it. “Ah, it feels soft and silky.” Yet they won’t be appreciating how it looks and smells. Maybe they will taste it, but they will forget about the other things. Maybe they will even try to listen to it, hear it. While they are doing that, the rest is gone.

For most people perception of reality, or of everyday life, is like that. They perceive it linearly, one thing at a time. Approach life with a view that is whole rather than linear. How we view life needs to encompass this wholeness, needs to have the whole experience within the moment. We need to appreciate life holistically with all the senses and all the awareness of both the oneness-side of the prism and the diversity-side of the prism. The mind can be trained to perceive life holistically instead of linearly. However, this takes effort and practice. We were trained to perceive reality linearly, so we can train ourselves to perceive it holistically. We need to look at life with new perception. We need to open ourselves up to what we are experiencing.

The mind and the emotions are the same mechanism. One is mental, or the perception of something, and the other is the power of that perception. In working with ourselves, we need to understand how the mind and emotions are connected, how they work together, how they work for us, how they work against us, how they help us fulfill our goals and how they stand in the way of fulfilling our goals.

We can see the mind and the emotions as a vehicle, a car. The mind, with its clarity and reason, is the steering. The emotions are the fuel or the power. We can see something clearly. We can see the direction we want to go. If we don’t add the emotions and power to the car we will get nowhere. Likewise, if we add the power without a clear direction in mind and aren’t

watching where we are going, we will not arrive. So this balancing of mind and emotions has to be understood.

When there is something beautiful, positive, or beneficial, we need to get our emotions behind it. We need to add the power, in order to achieve what we are working towards. When there is something we don't like or something that discourages us, disturbs us or brings us pain and suffering, we need to take the power away. Do not add emotions to broken expectations. Do not add emotions to situations that are harmful. Remove the power at these times. Learn what you like and how to bring the emotions into these things. Learn what you dislike, what brings you pain and suffering, and how to take emotions out of these things.

An untrained mind reacts just the opposite of a trained mind. To those things that are good and beneficial, the untrained mind will very cautiously add emotion. It is afraid of broken expectations. It is afraid it won't be able to get what it wants so it doesn't add the power. Yet, to something that is destructive, the untrained mind will add all that power and emotion. It is so easy to get angry, rant and rave for minutes, hours and days. It is easy to rage with no clarity within our mind at all, even when we are not exactly sure what the situation is. A perfect example of self-destruction is the idea that someone else is doing something that we don't want him or her to do—jealousy. Jealousy is a perfect example of all power and no thought. You are going along having a good day when...”What is this other person doing? Maybe they are doing something I don't want them to do.” You're off in a rage. You don't even know what they are doing. We create our own self-destructive patterns. The other side of that pattern is, ”I want to do something good for this person or friend. However, I better be cautious. I'm not sure how they will take it. I'm not sure they will really appreciate it.” We don't get excited about it or add the power of enthusiasm. This is how humanity is working with an untrained mind.

We have to learn to take the power away from the destructive patterns and add the power to the beneficial patterns. This can happen if we evaluate what is beneficial and what is proper mental nutrition, proper mental patterns. This will happen if we are honest with ourselves, if we study and pay attention to ourselves.

When we meditate, we need to use the mind to appreciate our holistic Self. We need to choose a meditation. “What do I want to experience today? What do I need? What do I wish to enjoy or dive into? Do I want to get in touch with Divinity? Do I want to get in touch with myself, the individual soul? ‘Yes.’ Okay so I will use the *Hrim* mantra.” If we do this mantra a

few times, we can feel it, feel the vibration coming to our heart, our soul, ourselves. “**Hrim.**” Feel the upliftment, the melting of the small Self into the large Self. It truly invokes the indwelling energy. Meditate on the **Hrim** mantra. Invoke the indwelling energy. Experience your soul, your Self.

If you want knowledge, meditate on the holy ones—**Om Namō Ari Hantanam, Om Namō Siddhanam.** “I bow to the conquerors of their inner enemies. I bow to the realized souls.” Focus on them. Pick out a holy one and focus on him/her. Start repeating the mantra **Om Namō Ari Hantanam, Om Namō Siddhanam.** Truly appreciate who the holy ones are and what they represent and what they can offer you. Don’t just sit down and say, “Hey, I want some answers. I deserve some answers. Someone come and give me answers as to why I am struggling with this. I need to know how to get beyond this.” If you take that type of attitude to the holy ones, they will be very kind and say, “Hey, life is available to us all. Go learn.” However, if you come with appreciation, humility, and the willingness to truly have reverence for all life, then you are compatible with the holy ones and they will appear and help you in the discovery of the knowledge you want.

If you want to harmonize with the rest of life, if you want to feel like you are a harmonized part of Divinity, then meditate on **Om.** Feel yourself expanding out. “**Om**” Feel yourself expanding out and disappearing into the oneness. With each **Om** you should be able to feel that. Then there is only God. “All life is good – ‘**Om**’ – I have no individual problems. I have no samskaras. I have nothing – ‘**Om**’ – there is only the rest of life.” With each **Om** you can experience that.

If you can’t experience it with one or two repetitions, do one or two hours. If you can’t experience it with one or two hours, do one or two hours every day until you can experience it. If you are desperate, do one, two or three days. Anyone who feels they cannot do that simply has other priorities. An eight-hour meditation of doing the **Om** mantra will bring anyone into a state of dispersing into the oneness. There is no one who will thirst to death, or starve to death, or whose family will starve to death. You will not lose your job. You will not lose your life, your friends or your family if you take eight hours and say, “Hey, I’m taking this day all to myself.” Then begin doing the **Om** mantra. Eight hours of **Om** and the individual self will melt away and you will experience the oneness. If you feel that you are so meshed with life that you have no individual self, then do eight hours of **Hrim.** Invoke the indwelling energy.

Use the mind to explore and appreciate the diversity of the creation. Pick out a meditation. Pick out what you want to explore. It is your life. It is your meditation. Begin with the **So Hum** mantra—"I want to know why I have a problem. I want to know why I feel so insecure, so frightened, so afraid." "**So Hum**"—I am this. I am that." Just keep doing it. "What am I afraid of? Why do I feel insecure? '**So Hum**.'" Soon you will discover what it is. "Oh, I'm afraid I won't be happy if this person doesn't love me. I am afraid I won't feel good about myself if that person doesn't like me." Now you have discovered why you feel afraid, why you feel insecure. Now you need to add perspective. "Is it true? Would I be different in my holistic nature if this person did or didn't like me? What is it that I really want from this? Do I want a relationship with this person? Do I want warm fuzzies? What is it that I need from existence?" Maybe it is, "I need it for my security because I am too lazy to do my own gardening. I am too lazy to do my own preparation to nurture myself. I want this person to feed me. I am too lazy to say '**Om**' and experience the oneness. I want this other person to say, 'Yes, you are part of the oneness.' I am too lazy to go '**Hrim**' and feel the power or the true Self. I want this other person to tell me, 'Yes, you can do it. Go ahead and do it. I know you can do it. You can do a good job. Go and do it. I support you.'"

One can discover these things. I am this. I am that. A meditation on "Who am I? Who am I really?" is what you get from the **So Hum** mantra. It is self-analysis—"Who am I? I am this thought. I am this feeling. I am that thought. I am that feeling. I am all of it. Why am I frightened? Why am I insecure? What is it I want life to give me? What is it I want someone else to give me? Why is it? Why is their opinion of me more important than my opinion of me? Why do I need their approval." See, you discover this with **So Hum**. It is a meditation on—"I am this. I am that."

You also need to add proper perspective in order to know that others cannot give you self-worth. They cannot give you security. There is no one alive that does not know that changes happen all the time. Death, disease, attraction, coming and going happen all the time. If you can only be secure with a certain job, a certain house, a certain amount of money, a certain friend, then you know you will be in for pain and suffering because life changes all the time. This is the beauty of creation.

Our security comes from knowing we are Sat Chit Ananda, eternal, consciousness, bliss. We should never confuse our security with appreciation for the rest of life. "I can appreciate a

relationship with this person. I can appreciate their perception of reality. I enjoy spending time at this job. I enjoy this hobby.” But, let’s never confuse our appreciation with our very security, our Self, our worth. With the **So Hum** mantra we can get this perception. “I am this, I am that,” becomes part of everything we think, feel, perceive and express.

Choose a meditation you want to experience and appreciate the diversity. Meditation is something that helps one to dive into life. It helps a person to experience their holistic Self. Meditation doesn’t take you away from life or away from your troubles or away from your job or away from your conflicts. Meditation takes you into your life, into Divinity. It helps you realize that you can throw off limitations. It helps you realize that limitations are just perceptions. It is like experiencing a flower—to just see it and not smell, touch, taste or hear it is a limitation of beauty. It is a self-imposed limitation. To not appreciate or dive into the rest of life in your meditation or in your active time is a self-imposed limitation. To throw off these limitations you have to become non-attached to these limitations, but do not become non-attached to life.

Meditation is meditation into your holistic Self. Active time is the interaction with your holistic Self. Meditation is the vehicle that takes you to the soul. It takes you to love and freedom. Meditation takes you to your absolute nature. Meditation is the vehicle, but unless you dive into life in your active time, you will not experience your true nature. Like any vehicle, meditation can take you there. A vehicle can take you to the Grand Canyon or the ocean or to the concert, but unless you get out of the vehicle, you will not experience the Grand Canyon or the ocean or the concert. Meditation will take you there, but in your active time, you have to dive into life. You have to break out of that meditation, that vehicle, and live your holistic Self. This is true spiritual practice.

If you want to experience yourself as eternal love, want to be intoxicated, in love with all life, dive into the **Om Satyam** mantra. Add your emotion and your devotion. Then you will be there. Take the experience of your Self, of your eternal love, into your life.

The mind helps you discriminate and appreciate the diversity. It gives you direction. Your emotion adds the power. Your consciousness makes the choice, it is directing. Meditation is the seed. You need to plant those seeds in your everyday life. The seed germinates into the flower, the tree, into your harvest of life and life more abundantly.

To the flower is given the fragrance and to the fragrance is given the flower. To the soul is given the body and to the body is given the soul. To the essence of the Spirit is given the

creation and to the creation is given the essence of the Spirit. They are together. They are not separate. You cannot take the fragrance from the flower. You cannot take the flower from the fragrance. You cannot take the consciousness from the creation. We are created in the image of God. We are all holistic. We get to choose what we want to experience. True spirituality is about life and life more abundantly.

Namaste

UNFOLDMENT

The realization of one's holistic nature is a two-fold process. One is the inhalation, or what is referred to in the yogic tradition as sabikalpa samadhi, the direct experience of one's holistic Self or God. The other is the exhalation or nirvikalpa samadhi, the state of living within one's holistic Self.

Spirituality is the process of coming to your holistic Self. It is the unfoldment from the small Self and the idea of separateness into that of the God-consciousness or the oneness. This process cannot be done without diving inward to realize your holistic Self then expanding outward to harmonize with the rest of life.

We have talked about meditation. We have talked about the nature of the soul. We have talked about the ego, mind, and emotions. Now we are going to talk about the human Spirit and the personality, what we have to live with on a day-to-day basis.

No matter what state of realization we have, we live with our conscious awareness. While we are incarnated at the physical, we are a holistic consciousness entrapped within bodies. If we have bodies - causal, astral or physical, then we must have an ego. The ego helps us to maintain those bodies, the idea of separateness. The ego actually creates those bodies. However, the ego does not bring us pain and suffering. The ego does not bring us misery or happiness. The ego is quite simply a mechanism from which we can take one God and disperse it into the beauty and diversity of creation.

If we need a culprit as far as pain, suffering, conflict, and misery, the culprit is our mind. The mind is what imprisons us within our samskaras or within our perceptions of reality. The mind is made up of thoughts, words, and actions in the past, present and future. The prisons we live in are self-created. We need to understand how to free ourselves from our mental prisons.

Our mind is a tool. We need to learn how to understand and work with this tool. The mind works on relativity. It works linearly. The untrained mind is linear. It will deal with one thing at a time. This is untrained conscious awareness. Yet, while we may be aware of only one thing at a time or one thought at a time on a linear basis, the mind has other levels working on relativity. While we are thinking about our job or a relationship or our life or our dharma or God, part of the mind is telling the body to digest food. Part of the mind is telling itself that the soul is entrapped and wants to live free to experience itself. All this is happening while we are watching the playoff games or while we are reading a book. The mind is working at many levels.

In order to truly re-educate the mind we need concentration. We need to be able to make the effort to get one-pointed whether we want this one-pointedness to be towards the playoff game or what we are reading or what we are evaluating or doing. Through concentration we can get one-pointed to accomplish whatever our desire is. This is where the prison comes in. We create the walls of this prison with whatever we desire to do.

Self-centered desires or desires for the small self will create more walls and more prisons. Selfless desires or desires to help or benefit others will tear down the prison walls. A human being is no more than the soul of Divinity manifested into solid form. Its very nature is that of love and freedom. The very nutrition it needs is to experience that love and freedom.

Pain, suffering, conflict, and discord are the covering of happiness. We are no longer happy. We are no longer experiencing ourselves as Sat Chit Ananda. If we truly evaluate anything that brings us pain, misery, conflict, or discord, we will see that the root cause of it is within the mind. Our desire was such that we wanted something for ourselves without thought of others or without thought of it benefiting others. We wanted something for our own Self. Therefore, we lost our happiness because we didn't get the desire fulfilled when we wanted it.

If we have a desire to do something for others, even if we aren't able to do it immediately, it won't bring us pain. It will still bring joy and happiness. If we want to do something for ourselves and aren't able to do it, it will bring us conflict. Evaluate the times in your life when you wanted to do something for someone else and weren't able to do it. You were just as excited, thrilled and happy even if you had to wait a week, month, or year. You still wanted to do it. It is still a good and beneficial thing. You can still bubble over with the idea of doing it for another person or society or the community. Then think of those times when you

wanted something for yourself and you couldn't do it. Circumstances changed so you couldn't do it. You got frustrated, angry, and sad.

The human Spirit is nothing more than the solidifying of the soul's consciousness. Its very nature needs love, freedom, and expansion. In order to be happy as human beings, we need to nurture ourselves, not as physical beings, but as souls who are manifested into the physical creation. In thought, word and deed, we need to see and perceive both ourselves and others as Divinity made up of Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti (eternal love, virtue, beauty, peace).

If we can begin to look at ourselves and others as this state of consciousness manifested at the physical, then in thought, word, and deed, we can begin to attain happiness in everyday living. We can live with the realization of the human Spirit because our thoughts, which we all live with every moment, will have a tendency to be striving towards happiness. If we understand the law or the process, we will begin to strive towards happiness and we will stop building the prisons around ourselves. We will stop doing that which removes happiness from our lives.

The process is simple—if the desire is selfless, expanding and beneficial to all life, then it will bring a person and society more joy and happiness. If the desire is just for our own personal happiness without thought, concern or regard for others, then it will bring us pain, suffering and misery. This goes back to the Garden of Eden story which says you can have everything, but you cannot eat the fruits of one tree. You cannot have your own fruits.

We must live for the unfoldment of our very nature. This will bring happiness. This will bring nirvikalpa samadhi maybe for five minutes a day or for five hours a day or maybe for five days in a row until you encounter the mind and its desires again. This is a struggle because the soul has been manifested into a physical body. Through evolution the physical body has memories and instincts and the four primal instincts, the four fountains,—the need for food, sleep, procreation and self-preservation. These four primal instincts are there to help develop the desires for personal wants. It is natural for a human being to be self-centered. It is natural for the soul to want to expand out and harmonize with the one Consciousness. It is natural for humanity to be born into a state of conflict between their lower nature of the body and their higher nature of the soul with the mind being caught in the middle. Desires for self-preservation and personal happiness without regard for others is a natural state. Desiring holistic realization and beneficial thoughts for all life and reverence for all life is a natural state.

The spiritual path is about finding the balance. Realizing your holistic nature is about realizing, accepting and living within your holistic nature while you are manifested at the physical. It is re-educating the cells and atoms, which make up the physical body, the *astral body*, and the *causal body*. This process is done by the realization you have in your meditation and by the practicing or living of this realization in your everyday life. This process takes disciplined effort. Yet, you also must want that state of realization in order to work for it. It is very simple—you must want to live in a state of happiness and joy and completion.

It is simple to override the four fountains. Just choose to do so. You choose to do what will bring you happiness even when your body or lower nature is saying, “No, never mind that. Feed me now. Take care of me now. Put me to sleep now. Save me now. Pleasure me now. I want it now.”

Your mind is a tool of communication between your soul and your body. Those desires that bring self-centeredness are from your lower nature. They only include your pleasure, your joy, and your happiness. They are from the lower nature. Desires that include other’s happiness, a benefit for all life and a reverence for all life are from the soul’s nature. The mind is the communicator. The mind is the vehicle through which intuition comes in. It is the vehicle in which desire comes. The vehicle communicates that the body is hungry, tired, lusting, or afraid. The process of realizing our holistic Self is to not deny any part of ourselves, but to work with, accept and live the kind of life we choose to live in accordance with what our consciousness chooses.

The yogic tradition talks about karma. Karma is the law of action or the law of motion. There are two types of karma. One is binding karma and the other is unbinding karma. If it is for the self or selfish, then it is binding karma. If it is for others or selfless, then it is unbinding. If it is for others, it is freeing you from limitations. If it is for yourself, then it is imprisoning you in more limitations. When you have desires in thought, it doesn’t take much effort to evaluate the thought, the desire, and the planned action and to ask if it is beneficial for both yourself and for others or if it is just beneficial for yourself. Then evaluate and pay attention. “Did this bring me happiness by thinking about it, by talking about it, by doing it? Did it take away happiness?” This is the way we learn to understand. We gain knowledge of living by evaluation, by paying attention and by doing.

If we aren't sure if something is motivated by selfishness or by selflessness or what percentage of each is involved, evaluate the best you can then go ahead and do it. Pay attention then to the harvest. When the experience is all over, you will have an answer to that question. You will know whether it brought you happiness or whether it took your happiness away. Just pay attention.

Living life is about living your life. It isn't about not living or running away. It is a process of self-discovery. It is a process of exploring Divinity. It is a process of the fulfillment of the soul. The soul was brought into creation to fulfill a purpose, to fulfill its life. The fulfillment of the soul is what the holy ones refer to as "dharma." When the soul fulfills its purpose, this is doing its dharma. Dharma is of the soul. When they talk about duty in spirituality, they are talking about the fulfillment of the mind or our samskaras. This is why our duty can change from day to day and from year to year. The mind comes up with duty. "It is my duty to provide for my parents. It is my duty to do this for my family. It is my duty to do that for my friend." Yet, ten years later our idea of duty changes. "It is my duty to be happy. It is my duty to realize God."

All of humanity has dharma and all of humanity has duty. Each of us has duty and dharma. Dharma cannot be changed. We cannot negotiate with dharma. Duty is based on the four primal instincts. We have a duty to feed our body, but how much we feed it and what kinds of food we feed it is negotiable. We have a duty to pay back to others who have helped us. How much we pay back is negotiable. Duty is self-created in our mind. It is all binding karma. We had selfish desires for our own self-satisfaction, thus creating our duty. That is why it is negotiable with us. We say, "I am going to do this for these people. I am going to do this for this job. Now it is my duty to do it." When we came up with the idea, we thought it was great. It brought us happiness, joy, pleasure, excitement, and an enthusiasm for living. Yet two months or two years down the road this self-imposed duty has become a burden. "Oh, now I'm trapped. I have to do this. I no longer enjoy it, but it is my duty." This is how the mind imprisons us. We create our duty and then we try to uncreate it. If our duty was truly created in a selfless manner, we would never feel imprisoned or entrapped by it. We would want to fulfill it. If it was created selfishly to bring us pleasure or happiness, then our duty will entrap us.

In the evaluation and fulfillment of your life, you need to evaluate what it is that you consider duty. Where did you get the duty? How did you determine that duty? See if you

would like to re-negotiate the contract with your mind. It can be done. The only one who can free you from your duty, your self-imposed prison is you. Each of us must free ourselves from the prison we created. The thing that stops us from being free of this prison is what we consider to be our duty. “It is the right thing to do. I have determined that this is my duty. I have to do this. I hate it. I despise it. It is killing me. I don’t want to do it, but I have to do it.” We have imprisoned ourselves. Only we can free ourselves, but we need to understand the difference between dharma and duty in order to do so.

Dharma is the fulfillment of the soul. When we are seeking our dharma, we will recognize it by the feeling of love, joy, bliss, and intoxication. It will wash over our whole consciousness, our whole body. We will feel good. This is how we will recognize dharma or the fulfillment of the soul.

We recognize duty by the ways in which we think about it. “It makes my mind feel good. I like the idea. It pleases the mind to think this. It pleases me to think I am going to do this for society. I am going to do this for my family. I like this idea that I am going to be someone special to these people.” If we can think about it conceptually or with ideas, it is of the mind, it is of the duty, it is of the prison. If we can’t put it into ideas or concepts and it brings us feelings of love, joy, and happiness, then it is of the soul, our dharma. This is how we know whether it is of the soul, which we are trying to uncover and free, or whether it is of the mind, which we are trying to break out of by tearing down the samskaras or walls. If it makes us feel good, it is of the soul. If it makes us think good things, then it is of the mind. If it is of the mind, it is self-centered. “If I do this for others, it will be beneficial.” This is our duty. We create our duty every day. When our duty becomes a prison, we have created that prison. We need to tear it down and build better living quarters.

Without meditation we cannot get the glimpses of our soul or of our holistic nature and we will begin to think that our life is the fulfillment of the soul, the fulfillment of God's purpose. If we can think about what we are doing, evaluate what we are doing, if we can put it into ideas and concepts, it is not the fulfillment of the soul. If we can feel what we are doing and it brings us love, bubbling and joy and we can perceive in others this bubbling and joy, we know that we are harmonizing with our holistic Self. Unless we use meditation, we cannot go beyond the mind to the realization of the heart and soul.

To go beyond the mind we simply use the **So Hum** meditation. “I am this. I am that. I am my lower nature. I am my higher nature. I am separate. I am one. I like pizza. Conflict gives me indigestion. Pranayama gives me bliss.” Unless we explore and discover ourselves, we cannot come to our holistic Self; we cannot live in a state of freedom, love and joy. Unless we pay attention to which seeds we are planting, pay attention to which plants grow and pay attention to the fruits of those plants, we cannot learn or free ourselves from our samskaras. It starts with meditation, with the sabikalpa samadhi experience, with our Self. We then take this into our daily living and experience how this Self fits in with the rest of life, with the rest of creation, with God.

The realization of the human Spirit is the harmonization and reverence for all life. What is building up more walls? What is tearing down walls? What do you want to do and how do you want to do it? Meditation should bring the inspiration for life and life more abundantly.

If we are meditating, self-evaluating and coming out of it discouraged, then we have only meditated as far as the mind, into the prison, as far as our self-imposed duty. We then must concentrate on the mantras, focus on the meaning of the mantras, repeat the mantras with concentration until we pass through the mind or the prison and come to our soul, come to the part of ourselves that is Sat Chit Ananda. We are holistic. Think of it as being out in your yard on a cold day until you get chilled. You come from your yard into your house where it is a little bit warmer, but you can't get rid of the chill. This is what it is like to go from everyday life where you get discouraged and encounter your prisons and then go into meditation and get only as far as the mind. You come in and it is a little warmer, but you are still chilled. You can turn the heat up, but it isn't removing the chill. If your meditation doesn't remove the discouragement, you are only meditating as far as your mind. You need to concentrate. You need to crank up the heat, fill up the bathtub, and dive into it. Just soak in the hot water and warm the body. You need to dive deeper into meditation. You need to dive deeper to get to the soul.

If none of the mantras are taking you past the mind, if your meditations are not taking you past your mind, you must go to the very source—prana. Prana is the life force of which everything is made. You begin doing the 1-4-2 pranayama technique. You begin focusing on the breath, on the very life force of which all creation, the manifested body of God is made. Pranayama will take you to your soul. Pranayama will take you past your mind. This is why

pranayama or the 1-4-2 technique should be the first step of every meditation. It takes you past your mind to your soul, to Divinity. It takes you past the prisons, samskaras, and distractions.

The realization of the human Spirit is about the harmonization with the rest of life. The realization of our holistic Self is about harmonization with the rest of life. In order to harmonize with the rest of life, we have to remove the idea that we cannot harmonize because we have other things we must do. “I need this house. I need this table. I need this partner. I need this career. I must do this for my friends. I must do this for my family. I must do this for my children. I must do this for society.” These are all duties that keep us from the realization and fulfillment of our soul or our dharma.

We do not have to renounce life. We do not have to renounce our duty; we just have to add perspective to it. We realize that we have imposed the prisons upon ourselves. We should willingly do our duty, but we should not make it a prison. We should not make our duty be about us. Duty is what we are willing to do for others. If we make it for others, it will bring us joy and fulfillment. If we make it for ourselves, it will make us feel entrapped. We need to change how we view duty and how we view living.

If we can't control our mind, then we must get past it in meditation. When we get that glimpse of Divinity, we take that glimpse into everyday life. This is the fulfillment of holistic living. If we understand that all pain, suffering, and discord are nothing more than the covering over of happiness and that happiness is the state of our soul, then we can trace the source of our misery, pain or conflict to the mind, to the idea or samskara in which we got caught up in. How did we limit ourselves?

If we understand that our soul is Sat Chit Ananda, then we can see all the conflict, pain and misery as a prison that the mind has created with its desires, with its unreasonable expectations, with its selfishly seeking pleasure or security. We can trace these to the root cause and remove them. This can be discovered in the **So Hum** meditation—“Who am I? I am this. I am that. I am my lower nature. I am my higher nature. If I am both, with which one do I enjoy identifying and living? Which one brings me daily laughter? Which one doesn't? What do I choose to do with my life?”

Meditation can bring us knowledge of our Self, our holistic Self. However, only our conscious and willful effort can take that knowledge and put it into daily living. It isn't enough to know that we could be warm if we took a hot bath. We actually have to run the bath and get

in. It isn't enough to know when we are hungry that if we eat we won't be hungry anymore. We have to prepare the food and eat. It isn't enough to know we are holistic and infinite and eternal. We have to live holistically within our infinite and eternal nature of love, virtue, beauty, and peace.

Namaste

SELF DISCOVERY

In the realization of our holistic nature and the enjoyment of everyday life, meditation is the key we need to utilize. It is a tool or vehicle that gives us Self-knowledge, or knowledge of our holistic Self. Only through calming the mind, breath and ego can we experience our infinite nature, the infinite nature of Divinity. Whether we call this process meditation, sitting quietly or call it blessings from the holy ones, in order to experience Divinity or God, our mind, breath and ego must be calm.

The process of meditation is a technique that is used to calm the mind, breath, and ego in order to have a holistic experience. The holistic experience may be an experience of our Self or an experience with God. At some point the individual soul melts into God or God manifests into the individual soul. Through diving deeply into ourselves, we can have this experience. This is the purpose of meditation – to have the Divine experience.

What we do with that experience, how we live our everyday life, whether we pursue more of that experience or take that revelation and store it away in our memory and continue on with our life, is up to us. How we choose to live our life is always our choice. We have free will. We are the masters of our own destiny through free will. Our whole life is an accumulation of past and present choices. Whether or not we like the results of the choices we make is not a question of whether or not we have free will, we are the master of our destiny. If we choose unwisely or foolishly, we still choose. We still exercised our free will.

The vehicle of meditation is just that. It is a vehicle. It can take us where we want to go. It can take us to the Divine experience, to that of Sat Chit Ananda, our true nature. It can take us to God the Absolute, that of the formless, our permanent nature. It can take us to the astral heavens. It can take us to the causal realm. It can take us to our workday. It can take us to our childhood. It can take us to our past lives. We can go anywhere in this vehicle. We can sit

down, dive into meditation, and fantasize. We can think about sports, family, or the holy ones. Meditation is a vehicle. We are consciousness. We determine where we are going in a meditation. We determine whether we are going to visit our Self or go astral travelling or go to the causal or to the Christ-consciousness or to *Divine Mother*. This is all determined with free will plus the proper meditation techniques.

We must never forget that we are always in control of our destiny. If we have a deep meditation, or a blissful meditation, or a knowledgeable meditation, we were the ones who had that meditation. We are the ones who made the effort for that experience. It is never more obvious than in meditation that we are in control of our destiny. In everyday life, it may not always appear that we are in control.

If we use meditation properly, we will get the results we are after. If I feel like understanding something, I have a meditation pursuing that knowledge. If I feel like I just want peace, just want a break from all the activity, then I have a meditation to have peace. If I want to heal myself, I meditate on allowing the prana to flow. I choose where I am going with meditation. We all choose where we are going with meditation.

Unfortunately, most people have this vehicle and have a desire to go travelling, but they don't know where they are going or how to get there. This is where the holy ones come in, where the *guru* comes in, where the guidance of where you are at and where you would like to go comes in. All the sacred books are maps of how to explore the infinite Self. They are about how to go from identifying with being a human being to the realization of Divinity, to the realization of one's holistic Self. We need this guidance because without it, we will be right where we are today.

If we know how to get somewhere, it is because we have been there already. If we knew how to arrive at a place we wanted to be, we would have already arrived. To go beyond where we are today, we need the guidance and the assistance of someone who has been there, who has made the journey. This is where reverence and appreciation for the holy ones comes in, because we do need their guidance. They made the journey and know how the process unfolds. Without this guidance, we are stuck with our *samskaras*, our ideas and limitations and with our desire to go beyond them. We have a vehicle. We have a desire to travel. Yet, we don't have a map. When we read from the holy ones, we have to pay attention to the guidance they are giving us.

They are not just cranking out novels with a nice ending—“Oh, I struggled, had a few good times, but in the end it was all worth it.” It isn’t just a story they are telling.

In the process of realizing our holistic Self, we have to strive after our Self. This does not mean chasing the holy ones. It doesn’t mean chasing God or Divinity. We have to truly strive after our Self. Before we can have the experience with God, before we have the experience with our holistic Self, we must come to our Self. We must accept our Self and work with our Self. This is where meditation will help you to discover your Self and to accept your Self.

The first things we need to discover and accept within ourselves are reverence, self-respect, self-appreciation, self-discipline, self-motivation, self-honor and self-integrity. We need to discover these qualities within ourselves. If we cannot respect ourselves, then there is not respect for the rest of life. If we cannot be honorable with ourselves, there is no honorable interaction with the rest of life. If we do not have self-integrity, then there is no integrity in our daily living.

We must discover our Self in the very beginning. At whatever level of our personality we are aware of, we have to come to our Self. If we don’t know how to do that, if we are so used to looking at others or outside of ourselves, then we must begin to come to our Self by seeing our view of life as a reflection of our view of our Self.

How we look at life is not any different than how we look at ourselves. How we look at ourselves is not any different than how we look at life outside of us. We need to look around with self-respect. We need to look at our actions, our thoughts and see if we have respect for ourselves. Do we respect our accomplishments? Do we respect what we have done with our life? If we aren’t sure, then we look to others—do we have more people we have met and know that we respect and admire than those we don’t? If the answer is, “Yes, out of all the people I’ve met, I have respect and admiration for most of them,” then we will know we have respect and admiration for our Self and for our accomplishments. If we say, “No, there are only a few holy ones I have met and respect and admire,” then we will know we have little respect or admiration for our Self.

If we believe others we have met and encountered have integrity, then we can know we have integrity. If we look around and see the majority of people we have known this life and think or feel they are honorable, then we can know we think we are honorable. We may look around and think, “There are only one or two people who I may have respect for and there is no

one I really admire and there aren't too many I call honorable and there isn't much integrity around." Then we know we have low self-respect; low integrity, low honor, low self-worth, and we have not even begun to come to our Self. We have this image or false idea that life should be perfect according to the fantasy that we have created.

In the process of meditation, we need to come to our Self. We need to develop, nurture, and seek the qualities within ourselves that make us human beings – honor, integrity, and respect. These distinguish humanity from the animal kingdom. The animal kingdom experiences love. It is their nature. The animal kingdom experiences a desire for freedom. It is their nature. The animal kingdom does not experience honorability. It does not experience integrity. It does not experience respect. These are qualities of humanity. We need to look within ourselves to discover these qualities.

When you evaluate respect, you need to evaluate what you have done, what your goals are, what you are working towards. When you evaluate respect for others, you need to evaluate what they are working on, what their goals are, what their efforts have been, what they have accomplished in their lives.

When you evaluate honorability within yourself, you need to evaluate—"Am I being honorable to myself, to others, to God, to the country? Am I being honorable? Am I giving them my best? Am I being a role model for others? Am I doing my best today? Can I respect myself?" These questions should be easily answered. "Yes, I am striving after my goal. I am doing my best. I am growing, becoming a better person, becoming a happier person, becoming a benefit to life." This evaluation needs to be done within us. "Am I living with integrity? I will have self-integrity, self-respect, self honorability." This is what it means to come to ones Self.

To come to ones Self, you begin to see yourself as a role model because you are created in the image of God. You are a role model of Divinity. Everyone is a role model of God created in the image of God. We can be none other than a role model for God.

Respect, honorability, and integrity start with us. We look for it within ourselves. We live it within ourselves and then we look for it and see it in others. Once we can begin to perceive this Divinity within others, then we give ourselves the greatest nutrition we can possibly have for the enjoyment of every day life – reverence for all life.

Reverence is a combination of love and respect. Because the soul is both love and freedom, because life is both mental and emotional, because holistic-ness is both inhalation and

exhalation, in order to be balanced and receive proper, balanced nutrition, love and respect must go hand-in-hand. Appreciation, admiration, respect, and love bring this reverence. This reverence must start with us.

We must start with self-love, which is our nature, self-appreciation, which is our nature, self-admiration, which is our nature and integrity, which is our nature. These qualities distinguish humanity from the lower kingdoms. We must come to these qualities within ourselves. We then begin to experience and perceive insights and revelations that allow us to respect ourselves and help us to live with integrity on a day-to-day basis.

We must come to these qualities that distinguish humanity from the animal kingdom or the plant kingdom or the mineral kingdom. These are all within us. Sometimes people on the path of Self-realization get caught up in the “large picture.” “I want to experience God. I want to get liberated. I want to get free. I want to realize my Self. I want to save the world.” We get caught up in these big pictures and we forget to come to our Self.

After each meditation, come out and bathe in the experience of the meditation whether you experience light, colors, knowledge, bliss, or peace. Then you need to look at the day, the exhalation, and exercise your free will to live the day the way you want. Come out of your meditation and get ready for every day living by affirming – “I am Sat Chit Ananda. I will be honorable towards myself today. I will be respectful to myself today. I will live today with integrity. I will live today with enjoyment. I will live today as a role model.”

Others might be able to see if you get disturbed, angry, or frustrated, but only you will know how long and hard you struggled not to get frustrated, angry, or disturbed. If we worked hard and made our effort, yet lost our peace, it is nothing to be ashamed of because we know how hard we worked to maintain it. We can respect ourselves for our accomplishment. We lived with integrity, with honor. This is what it means to start with your Self.

You are always with your Self. You start at the human level. You start and end with your Self, with your Self-identity. You must add self-respect, self-integrity, self-honorability. These are part of the Divine qualities that are manifested at the human level. Meditation helps us see this. Meditation helps us realize this. Everyday living helps us to practice and accomplish and attain it on a day-to-day, moment-to-moment basis.

The four fountains are easy to be in control of if we have self-respect. The need for food, sleep, sex, and self-preservation are all seen as desires and needs, but if we have self-respect,

then we know these are legitimate needs which need to be taken care of, which need to be fulfilled. We also know that we will decide and choose exactly how and when we will deal with the four fountains. “Well, my body says I am hungry now, but I want to do something. I have too much respect for myself to give in to this hunger, this desire, or this fear at this point. There are other things I’d rather do.” This is how we conquer the four fountains. This is how we conquer all the samskaras in our life. One by one, we face them with self-respect, self-integrity, and self-honorability.

Through meditation, we will see ourselves as more than the limited, more than the samskaras, more than the personality. Then we can say, “No. There is more to me than I previously thought. Therefore, I do not have to give in to this old habit. I do not have to give in to this old perception of myself. There is more to me. I have respect for myself. I will not do what brings me pain and suffering. I will not do this old habit, this old samskara repeatedly. I have too much integrity to give in out of habit. I don’t feel weak or even desirous. No, I have too much integrity to keep repeating the same old things over and over again.” We must come to this new view of ourselves.

We need to redefine ourselves, redefine Divinity. We need to redefine role models. With this redefining, we will be able to appreciate, have respect for, have love for and have reverence for the majority of life, rather than just for a small minority. Reverence for all life starts with us. We have to have reverence for ourselves. If we have gone for one hour concentrating on a mantra, we can have respect for that accomplishment.

We need to redefine what we respect, what we accomplish. A person who brings laughter, joy, and happiness to themselves has accomplished something. A person who can respect their everyday living has accomplished something. A person who has found the balance between the inhalation and the exhalation has accomplished something. They are to be respected. A person who worked for forty years in a factory and gets his gold watch has accomplished something. Forty years at the same job to feed his family and pay for a house and buy clothing is a great accomplishment. If we wonder how great an accomplishment it is, all we have to do is evaluate our age, how many different jobs we’ve had, and are we happy where we are at.

We need to redefine respect back into the human category. Have respect for humanity, for Divinity, not for a few phenomenon. That is just awe. We must come to respect our

everyday life, respect ourselves for what we accomplish. This self-respect helps us come to our Self. More importantly, it helps us come to reverence.

Reverence for all life is the key to the enjoyment of everyday living. Our heart will then be happy and our mind will be happy. If we then keep nurturing our heart and mind, our soul will be happy. Our soul's very nature is happiness. When our heart and mind have love and respect, the soul will never cover itself with limitations. We will be able to live in our state of Sat Chit Ananda.

Whether we perceive it or not, humanity is universal, everyone is created in the image of God, and every soul is striving to unveil. This very knowledge is what “**Namaste**” is all about—“I bow to the Divine light within you.” It is the knowledge for which every soul strives to reach its fulfillment. This, in and of itself, is something we can respect.

Respect, integrity, and honorability start with us. Without them, we will not find joy, happiness, peace and hope in life. With them, we find joy, happiness, peace, hope, and fulfillment of our dreams. With them, we find life and life more abundantly. With respect, integrity and honorability we discover our holistic Self. The individual soul will immerse into the God-consciousness.

Namaste

NON-ATTACHMENT

In the process of realizing our holistic Self, each of us will encounter our limitations, our samskaras, our personality. If we pay attention, we will begin to recognize our own relative identities throughout the days, the months, and the years. These relative identities are who we "think" we are at any given moment. This identity is a self-imposed limitation we have accumulated from our past.

In order to identify with our holistic Self, we must have the idea that this is what we truly want to do, that we truly wish to discover our holistic nature. Then we must find a way of going beyond our relative or limited identities to attain this holistic consciousness.

Meditation is a scientific way of calming the mind, breath, the relative identities, and the ego to realize our holistic nature. However, if we come out of meditation and pick up where we left off, where we were before meditation, we will go right back to the same old habits and patterns in our lives. We must create a plan or purpose for our own changing of identities. We must come from our meditations and decide that we will take a new identity into the day or evening rather than take what we had before we sat down to meditate.

When we come out of meditation, we should be changed. We should see life with new eyes or different eyes from those we sat down to meditate with. We need to take this new view into everyday life. We need to take it into our job, into interacting with our family or friends. Whatever it is we are going to do after meditation, we must have a new perspective. In order to do this, we must first have an idea or goal with which we want to identify. Secondly, we must have a willingness to let go of the past, of the limited. These two ingredients are necessary. A desire for a larger, more expanded future or relative identity is necessary. Also, there must be a willingness to give up or surrender our limited self, our habits, and our samskaras. If we have this desire to expand or grow and have a willingness to let go of the past, then we have what is necessary to begin working on non-attachment. Non-attachment is the process of letting go of

the limitations; the process of untying the shackles that keep us bound to our limited small self.

If we do not have the desire or goal of expanding out to our holistic consciousness, then we cannot let go of our limited self. If we have the desire to expand, but are unwilling to let go of our past, then we are also stuck in the limited relative identities.

Each of us is created in the image of God. Each of us is made up of the ingredients of Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti. God the absolute never changes and yet is still ever-new. We also are ever-new. We must have this willingness to continue our evolution, this willingness to continue to harmonize and grow within our own nature of Sat Tat Aum.

In order to do this, we must come in contact with our soul, with our higher consciousness. This is done through meditation. This is done through identifying with Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram and through identifying with Om Shanti. We do this by focusing on these qualities within ourselves. This focusing is done by the repetition of a mantra with concentration, a one-pointed effort to identify with this part of our Self. We use this one-pointedness when we strive to identify with our nature, Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti.

When we get one pointed, we will begin to experience our Self as Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti. Then, when we come out of meditation, we will have had the experience of our true Self. We can now begin to interact with more of an unlimited identity – “I am Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram manifested at the physical. I have duties to do. I have dharma to do. I have responsibilities and interests and desires.” We can begin to do these things. We don’t have to give up our identification with our higher Self. We can say, “I am Sat Chit Ananda and now I am going to go off to work. I am going to go interact with the rest of Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram that is manifested at the physical.”

It is quite easy to give up Sat Chit Ananda because the world isn’t asking for Sat Chit Ananda. They are asking for our undivided, one-pointed attention for a few moments until they go on to something else. If we give them our attention, we are saying that the temporary, the limited, is more important in our lives. We find it more important to go from temporary-to-temporary situations and satisfy each temporary situation the best we can, rather than to identify with our holistic Self.

When we dive deeply in meditation, identifying and becoming the quality we meditate on, we must carry that through into our daily living. To be successful at this, we must want to do

it. We must enjoy the feeling of our higher nature – the feelings of bliss, beauty, intoxication, love, and freedom. We must enjoy these feelings. We will then be willing to sacrifice our limitations.

What is it that society is asking from us? Are we willing to give it? Are we capable of giving it? We have to ask ourselves these questions. We have to answer them within ourselves. Are we willing to play limited roles? Are we willing to accept limited relative identities to be able to please and satisfy others? Is it worth it? All these questions and issues must be answered from within us. Do we want our holistic nature and are we willing to give up our limited nature? Once we have answers for those questions, we are ready to begin to enjoy life.

Some of us will say that nothing but *liberation* will finally satisfy us, nothing but holistic consciousness will fulfill us. Some of us will say, “No I can’t give up my limitations, my relative identities. I can only be happy if I am a janitor, an artist, a musician, a mother, a father, or an athlete. This is what I want. I want this quality and I want the world to see and respect that. I want recognition.” We have to come to our Self and find out what we truly want and what it is we are willing to strive to attain.

In order to succeed in attaining our goal, whether it is a limited relative identity or our holistic nature we seek, one quality we must develop is non-attachment. We have to be able to learn to let go of our past, our limitation. Even if it is a worldly prize we are seeking, we still must focus on that one prize and begin to let go of some of the others. We must use non-attachment for the attainment of our goals.

Non-attachment is quite easy. We just let go of thinking about those things we don’t want to think about. We quit putting energy towards those things. If we are moody, then we just think about something cheerful or uplifting. If we are materialistic, then we think about something that is more mentally and emotionally beneficial. If we have a *samskara* or weakness which brings us pain and suffering, then we let go of that idea and begin to think and do things that bring joy and happiness. We let go of the limited, which we no longer want, and begin to pursue those things we do want.

If there is something we want, and yet it doesn’t bring us happiness, we must evaluate whether we are willing to pay the price. “I am unhappy unless I have these things, but I’m not willing to give up anything to get them.” We need to evaluate whether we can realistically have something without it changing us.

If we want a relationship for security and companionship, we are looking in the wrong direction if we are looking for them in a relationship with another person. We need to look within and find that security and companionship within ourselves. If we want a relationship with another person because we truly enjoy interaction and would like to interact more with this person, this is part of our nature and we need to pursue this – the relating for the love of relating. If we have a need from the relating, then we need to look within to find the fulfillment of that need.

A relationship should add to what we are giving to life. It should add to us. It cannot add security to us. It cannot add self-worth to us. It cannot add happiness to us. Nothing outside of us can give us security, self-worth, self-respect, integrity, happiness, or fulfillment. They can be part of our life, but they cannot fulfill the basic needs we have.

Through diving into meditation, we see our relative identity, that with which we are identifying. Are we identifying with limitations or the Divine vibration manifested at the physical? If we need a vibration or chant on which to focus, try “**Om Mani Padme Aum**– I am the jewel within the lotus, I am the small God-consciousness within the large God-consciousness.” With this vibration, we come to our true Self. We come to our soul, that of God-consciousness. This is where the mantra will take us.

If we dive into this mantra in meditation, and then come out of meditation with a beautiful experience, we need to take that new identity into our day and night. We don’t say, “Oh, life would be great if I could just be in meditation all the time. However, now I have to go interact with people. Now I have to go do physical labor. Now I have to go serve others. All this joy is going to disappear because I have to go be around the rest of life.” This is an unhealthy view. If I have the experience that I am the Divine intoxication or Divine bliss, then that is who I am. It is that with which I am identifying.

We need to let go of old habits by wanting to let go, wanting to change, wanting to see the world with new eyes. This doesn’t mean that we create a new world. The world is just fine the way it is. God has done a phenomenal job with the creation. We don’t need to add or subtract anything from it. What we need is to change our view of life. This is what meditation does for us. It helps us to get new and larger views. However, we must take these views into our everyday life by having a willingness to change, a willingness to take an expanded meditation into work each day, or into a family gathering or even into a family crisis. Take that expansion

and identify with it rather than fall back into the limited habits.

If we are going to change ourselves, we must also accept that changes will happen around us. If we see the world differently, we will have to accept that the world is going to begin to see us differently. This is where non-attachment comes in. We must be willing to accept that we want changes and let go of the past. We must accept that if we no longer listen and empathize with people and their moods, attitudes, depressions, criticisms, and condemnations, these people might no longer want to associate with us. Therefore, we might have to change peer groups. We might have to find new friends with which to interact. We might have to find new interests and new topics. We must accept that this change may happen.

As we grow, expand, and identify with our larger Self, we will want to interact with those who are also expanding. Those who cling to their limited identities are not going to be happy with us and they will seek other folks who will make them happy. This is part of the willingness to let go. If we are going to change ourselves and truly live within our holistic consciousness, we will have to accept that some of the old will fall away and something new will take its place. If we are willing to do this, then non-attachment is a tool that will work for us. It will work to help us attain our goals. However, if we want the limited, then non-attachment is not something we will ever practice.

This desire to realize our holistic nature, to live in intoxication, bliss, joy, and happiness must also be accompanied with the desire to let go of the limited. We need to see our Self as infinite and eternal. We need to experience our Self as Sat Chit Ananda and know our true nature.

If we are willing to go beyond our limitations, but are having a hard time letting go, then we need to dive deeper into meditation. We need to get more experience with our holistic Self and make more effort to carry that experience into our everyday life, into our exhalation. We need to do this rather than say, "Meditation is nice when I get to it, but what has that got to do with activity?" Meditation helps us to experience who we really are. Our activity helps us to experience what we are interested in doing.

Diving deeply in meditation will help us to come to our holistic Self, but only self-discipline and continuous effort will help us change the old habits into new habits. Only non-attachment will free us from our samskaras, freeing us from our past and allowing us to get on with today. Non-attachment will allow us to live for the moment and for the future instead of

living shackled and chained to the past.

Meditation helps us to see our holistic nature. What we do with that insight and vision during our everyday life is what everyday life is all about. There is only one part of existence that is about meditation and that is Om Shanti, the Divine eternal peace. It is always a legitimate part of life. It is our permanent state. Creations will come and go, but Om Shanti will always be there. While there is a manifestation, creation is also legitimate. Therefore, just meditating during a creation is incomplete. Finding harmonization in the exhalation is completion.

The key to finding harmony in the creation is to identify with your holistic Self while you are active, while you are out “doing.” It is letting go of the limitations and beginning to live within the holistic consciousness. To do so, you must desire to do so and desire to let go of the limited. After those two desires, the process is quite simple. It will just take repetition. It is like walking ten miles – once you have decided to do it, the process is quite simple, it just takes your effort to complete the journey. Once you decide you want to live within your holistic Self, the process is quite simple. It will just take your effort to complete the journey.

Namaste

TRANSFORMATION

No matter what age or culture you look at, you will find humanity seeking after happiness. With the diversity of the different ages and cultures, the common thread in humanity is the seeking after happiness. The difference between most of humanity and those seeking Self-realization is in where they are looking for happiness and what they are finding brings them happiness.

As criteria for happiness, humanity uses the four fountains or the four primal instincts – the need for food, procreation, sleep, and self-preservation. These four primal instincts are all within humanity. Most of the world seeks happiness through the development or embellishment of these four primal qualities. As humanity evolves or as each human being evolves, they like to add love and freedom to the four primal qualities.

This pursuit of happiness connected with the four primal instincts is what brings the illnesses or the ailments to humanity known as the eight meannesses of the human condition: hatred, fear, shame, grief, condemnation, race prejudice, pride of class, pride of pedigree and narrowness of thinking. These illnesses or unbalances come because the individual is seeking happiness connected with their self-centered gains. The eight meannesses of the human condition come about because humanity gets stuck with seeking after food, sleep, procreation, and self-preservation.

The key to going beyond the four primal instincts is to realize or experience your Self as infinite and eternal. Without the knowledge that you are infinite and eternal, all you have is a finite view of life dictated by the primal instincts. If all you can embrace is the finite in life, there is no reason to work to go beyond the four primal instincts. There will be no reason not to “Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we may be gone.”

Humanity can say they believe in Christianity or Hinduism or Islam. They can say they believe in life after death. They can say they believe humanity is a step above the evolutionary

animal kingdom. However, if they don't actually experience and know they are infinite and eternal, then all their decisions, choices, thoughts, and actions will be bound by the four primal instincts.

In order to go beyond the eight meannesses of the human condition, in order to go beyond the four primal instincts, we must first dive deeply within our Self to have the experience with our infinite and eternal nature. Only then will we be willing to consider going beyond life in the temporary because we cannot consider doing so without the knowledge that there is a future beyond the human body, a future beyond the five physical senses. If we cannot experience that future or reality, we will not work for that future or reality.

In meditation, we can have the experience of our infinite nature, of our Self as Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti. We have that eternal consciousness. Then, when we come out of meditation, we can begin to make the choices in our lives that transform us from being enslaved to the primal instincts to becoming someone who lives in harmony with their holistic Self.

We can begin to live as someone who sees food not as something we need for survival, but as something that is a vehicle in which prana comes. We can begin to see that we don't live by physical food, but rather by prana. We see that the body is not supported by physical food, but rather, it is supported by prana. It is simply that food is the most convenient vehicle in which prana is carried. In order to get the prana to maintain the physical body, we need to use the vehicles of food, water, air, and sunlight. However, for us to convert or use the prana, we need to get it into our system. The most natural and convenient way for a human being to do so is to consume food and water. It isn't the only way. There are advanced pranayama techniques that will bring in the same amount of prana. There are airtarians who don't really live on air, but use the air as a vehicle to bring in the prana to nurture the physical body.

We need to have the experience of our infinite and eternal nature to know that we are not just an animal body. Then we can begin to eat foods that are harmonious with our holistic consciousness, or the prana foods. Fruits, vegetables, and nuts are types of food that contain more prana. In order to use food, we need to see ourselves as infinite and eternal. We then begin to draw nutrition not just from the food we eat, but from the types of foods we eat. It is not a matter of, "Well, I grew up eating meat, poultry, vegetables, and potatoes cooked this way so my taste buds are used to it." It is a matter of, "Well, fruits and vegetables have much more

nutrition than these other foods. This is a healthier food. I'll eat it." We can choose to alter our diet. We can choose to alter why we are actually eating. We are making choices in our need for food. Now we no longer need food, we now need prana. We no longer need meat, potatoes, bread, butter, and gravy. Now we need prana so we can switch our diet to those foods that give us the most prana. These will be the foods which are most exposed to sunlight. This is obviously the fruits and vegetables that are exposed to sunlight. The root vegetables that are not exposed do not have as much prana in them as those that are exposed. Now we have choices that go beyond our past habits or "what we are used to".

When it comes to the instinct of sleeping, we know we get tired, fall asleep, then wake up and feel refreshed. We play and work until we get tired and go to sleep, then we wake up hours later to continue the whole process again. If we realize we are infinite and eternal, we can experience what we do during that sleep time. What we will discover is that part of the time we spend dreaming and what we dream about are all those things that happened during the day. All sorts of stuff that happened during the day needs to be sorted out and integrated. We do that in our dream time.

Part of our sleep time is alpha rest – about one and one half to two hours in duration. This is the actual resting and recharging part of our sleep. If we are aware during this alpha state, we will realize we are not really asleep or unconscious. We have just dived deeply into that part of our Self that is calm, that is aware, that is our causal nature. There we feel rested. We come in touch with our higher nature in this alpha sleep. If we pay attention during our sleep time, we will see that one and one half to two hours per night is all that it takes for most of humanity to be rested and recharged. It is not all the time it takes to integrate all the subconscious stuff. It is the time you drop off and are quiet to get recharged. Then you come back, start dreaming again, and are more active again.

You will discover that you can get that same experience, that same state of awareness, in meditation. Through concentrated meditation, you get to an alpha state. You'll discover this through your own awareness and experience. It has been proven scientifically and medically that meditators can reach this alpha state quite easily. This is the same state that people reach in their deep sleep. You can reach that same state in meditation through concentration.

In the beginning, meditation is added to your schedule. It is added to your awake time. You add an hour or two a day to your schedule. When you discover that you can get the same

rest in meditation as you get in sleep, then you can begin to displace that sleep time. The average human being sleeps seven to eight hours per night. After a few months of concentrated meditation, you should be able to replace minute for minute meditation time for sleep time. If you are meditating, concentrated, an hour per day, you should be able to reduce your sleep time by one hour per day. If you are normally getting seven hours of sleep and now add an hour of meditation, once you learn to concentrate deeply, you should now be able to sleep or rest for six hours. If you are meditating two hours per day, then you should be able to reduce your sleep time to five hours per day.

I've encountered a lot of people in my life that have said they don't have time in their life for more than a brief meditation. They wonder where to find time for two or three hours of meditation. Most people are sleeping between seven and eight hours per day. They have plenty of time for meditation. Very few people that I know are working sixteen hours a day, so they have time to meditate. They can begin transferring time from their rest time. It will take a little effort to change from eight hours of sleep to seven hours, but if they are meditating an hour per day, that effort shouldn't be very difficult. Add another hour of meditation and switch to six hours of sleep. There is time to meditate for an hour, or two, or three each day without giving up your busy life, your busy schedule, things you want to do during your active time.

Food and the need for food can be looked at differently once you have your infinite and eternal experience. Sleep and the need for sleep can be seen differently after you realize what you are actually doing when you sleep.

Realize you are infinite and eternal and the desire for sex or procreation can be viewed differently. If you just look at it as a human being, you have this urge and desire that is quite demanding. Not only is it natural, it is powerful and it is being promoted throughout this whole culture – more sex, more desire. Without the experience of being infinite and eternal, sex is one of those pleasurable experiences, one of those experiences that go along with life.

Most people cannot see sex and spirituality together. Even if they see sex as legitimate, they cannot perceive it as part of spirituality, of God. They see God as part of the higher nature and sex as part of our animal nature. Religion, society, parents, and cultures have taught us this. When we have the experience of being infinite and eternal, we begin to look for healthier views and lifestyles. We begin to have choices. Now sex has been brought from an animalistic urge, a need that has to be satisfied, into a clearer perspective of what it truly is, a vehicle for

procreation. It is like food is a vehicle for prana. Sex is a vehicle for procreation.

When we have the sex desire, we can think, “Do I want to procreate?” For most young people, especially young women, this very thought is enough to take away the sex desire. “No, I don’t wish to procreate and be pregnant right now.” Most young men don’t think this because they think, “Procreation takes part outside of me. It isn’t inside me so this isn’t one of my big concerns. But, do I wish to be responsible for my procreation – which means feeding and clothing the mother and child?” This thought, in and of itself, begins to lessen the sexual desire. Then we must consider, “This child is an infinite Spirit who is not mine. I am here to provide for, to nurture, care for, and help this infinite Spirit in his or her experience with this incarnation. It might take from 18 to 25 years. Am I willing to accept the responsibility of helping this person fulfill his or her life?” When you think about that for a few minutes, any powerful lust and passion that were making you crazy usually fade away. Just add the perspective of being infinite and eternal to this primal urge that people say they cannot live without. It will help you to make choices.

We have to make choices in our life. Sex is not evil. It isn’t animalistic. It is beautiful and powerful, a vehicle that brings another infinite Spirit to the planet. It has everything to do with spirituality. Yet, like so many things in our life, how we perceive it is our mindset. If we see it as bad and ugly, evil and animalistic, we are missing the whole beauty of life. If we perceive it as being for procreation only, then we are missing the whole beauty of sex. It is like saying food is just for nutritional purposes and there should be no taste. It should just be to fill our stomachs. Sex should be viewed as something natural and healthy. It should also be seen as something powerful enough to bring another infinite Spirit to the planet. It is also powerful enough to influence us, to change us.

We need to understand the nature of this primal desire. This can only happen through the experience of being infinite and eternal. We need to understand why the primal desire is there. It isn’t there just for sex, procreation, or pleasure. The primal desire is our desire for completion, for fulfillment. It is what drives humanity to the next day. It is what drives humanity to the next level of attainment: ever-new life. In our finite nature, the primal desire transforms into the sexual desire, the desire for procreation. However, if we realize we are infinite and eternal, then this primal force is a desire for creation, a desire to experience change, a desire to experience the ever-new, a desire to become the ever-new.

If you take the primal/sexual desire away from people by suppression or repression of it, you will usually end up with a very unhealthy human being. They will slip into depression and want to die or commit suicide. They will no longer want to live. You must find a way of channeling this energy to promote an enjoyment of everyday life. If you go off and indulge in your sexual desire every time it comes up, you will get just as depressed and again life will not be worth living. Each person must find a balance in dealing with his or her primal/sexual desire that is healthy and uplifting. Just because the sex desire comes into the mind or body, it doesn't mean you have to go out and have sex. Just as you don't have to eat something every time the idea of food comes into the mind. The primal/sexual desire is a natural part of humanity. It is a natural part of spirituality. It is a drive towards ever-new, ever-learning, ever-growing, ever-changing enthusiasm for life. If you suppress the primal/sexual desire, that enthusiasm and looking forward to life goes away. That enthusiasm and looking forward to life will also go away if you totally indulge the sexual desire.

Each person must find the balance in their diet, their sleep, and their sex life. There is nothing bad, evil, or unspiritual about sex, food, or sleep. However, in order to begin to develop healthy views of the four primal instincts, we need to have the experience of our infinite and eternal nature. We need to have glimpses of how the four primal instincts compliment life, not take away from life. We need to have glimpses of how the four primal instincts are part of God. They are part of the holistic consciousness not part of our lower nature or part of the world.

Views and limited ideas that come out of the dark ages need to be gone beyond. These limited ideas come from the teachings of religions and parents and grandparents, from their fears and superstitions, from ignorance. We need to look at life with new eyes and new ideas and new concepts.

If we do not realize or experience that we are infinite and eternal when it comes to self-preservation, we will obviously preserve our body at any cost, at the cost of our neighbors. This is where greed comes in. "I'm finite. Who knows how long I will be here? So I am going to make sure I have everything I want and need to enjoy life while I am here." Possessiveness comes from not knowing we are infinite and eternal. "I know I am only going to be alive a certain number of years, therefore I am going to possess all these materials, wealth, people, lovers and children.

Jealousy comes from not knowing that we are infinite and eternal. Hatred, shame, and

grief, all these come from the idea that we are finite. If we realize we are infinite and eternal, then fear begins to go away. Possessiveness, greed, and grief begin to go away. Why mourn? If we are all infinite and eternal, then when someone passes on to another plane of existence, they simply move to another location. If we can meditate, then we can go visit them because we have freed our Self into our larger Self. If someone dies on the planet earth, they are merely living on another plane of existence.

If we realize we are infinite and eternal, life is open to us. Then we have opened ourselves into life. We will have embraced life rather than having tried to hoard life. Self-preservation will take on a whole different perspective. “Am I preserving this body?” This is a noble thing to do, to fulfill your duty and dharma, but how much else do we add to it? “I am protecting the body.” This is also natural and normal. “I am protecting this body with this house, with this furniture, with this spouse, with this type of attitude. I am protecting my body because others don’t like me. They are different from me. They have different values.” This is unhealthy.

The whole self-preservation thing gets distorted into race prejudice, condemnation, hatred, and greed. However, if we realize we are infinite and eternal, we will say, “They are different than me, they disagree with me. Are they actually threatening my physical life? Are they threatening my fulfillment of my dharma or are they just disagreeing with me? If they aren’t physically threatening my life, then I don’t need to feel threatened. I can go on fulfilling my life. I can allow and appreciate and enjoy the diversity of life.” Self-preservation then takes on a different meaning. “What I am doing today or tomorrow is being done for an infinite Spirit. My choices are being made for an infinite life.”

When we think in terms of embracing eternity, we think in terms of doing things which will benefit us twenty years from now or two hundred years from now. We think in terms of benefiting those we leave behind or humanity a hundred years from now. If we think we are infinite and eternal, then we know that what we do today will affect us a thousand years from now.

Through meditation we can have the glimpses, the knowledge, and the realization of our infinite Self and begin to make the changes in our life, which will lead to more joy and happiness. These changes must start with our perception of whether we are infinite and eternal or whether we are finite and mortal. We must change our views of diet, rest, sex, and self-

preservation. We can change these views by having more knowledge. It starts with the experience of knowing you are infinite and eternal. However, without the effort to change these ideas, limitations and concepts, without the work done to make the changes, we have will seeds that never get planted or nurtured and will never sprout.

When seeking after happiness, it isn't just having knowledge; it is also putting into practice the knowledge we attain in meditation. When we have that experience in meditation, it may seem like a transformation because it is so powerful and beautiful, but when we try to change an old habit, we feel like the same old person. The experience and revelation give us the seeds to transform the old self into a new Self. With will power and consistency, we will make the changes to become who we want to become. We will live within our holistic nature rather than our mortal nature. We have these choices once we realize we are infinite and eternal. We are not limited to 60 or 70 years, disease, and then death. We have the freedom to embrace eternity and the freedom to embrace Divinity. The freedom to live life and life more abundantly is our nature.

Namaste

SACRED FIRE

The realization of the true Self is about harmonizing the individual soul with that which we call God. One cannot discover God without knowing ones Self. One cannot know God without discovering ones Self. The saints and sages of all times and traditions have said that God is love and resides, expresses, and manifests in the heart of humanity.

Communion with God is communion between our unique soul, our higher Self and the soul or higher Self of all. We cannot separate the Self from God other than in our imagination. Our imagination is assisted with this process by the ego, the idea of separateness. This idea of separateness that we carry is the only thing that separates us from our holistic nature. Since it is only an idea, then there is no separateness except in our own mind, in our own relative identity. This is why the holy ones, when asked if they have seen or experienced God, answer: “Yes, I immersed in God when I walked in the forest. I communed with God when I washed in the river. I have lived with God when I have lay down and slept under the stars. And I saw God every time I looked into your eyes.” The holy ones have renounced the idea of separateness and they live within the one reality. They experience the one true God that everyone lives within, that everyone is experiencing. However, with the idea of separateness, everyone is busy categorizing and dichotomizing this one God into tiny little limited definitions and places within their heart/mind.

When asked about Divinity, the holy ones say that God is love. The reason they say this is not so that humanity can have some relation points; it is because God is love. This is the true nature of the whole. To experience this Divinity or love, we need to go beyond the idea of separateness. Religious and spiritual practices have been designed to go beyond the idea of separateness so that we can commune or immerse back into our holistic Self.

The path of renunciation is not renouncing anything external. It is renouncing the ego. The true renunciants are those that attain God communion because they renounced the idea of

separateness. This can be done as a monk. It can be done as a householder. This can be done in your youth or in your old age. Renunciation is not about renouncing Divinity. It is not about renouncing God, or the forest, or the city, or family and friends. It is about renouncing the idea of separateness.

This renunciation can only be done one way. There is only one process that a devotee can use to go beyond the ego. That one process that destroys the ego is called love. Love is the only thing that will melt the separateness. Love will melt the four primal fountains. Only in love does the idea of self go away.

In love, there is only the other. This does not mean what the other will bring you. It doesn't mean how the other makes you feel. It is not how you will make the other feel. In love, there is only the oneness. There is only the other. The "I-ness" has gone away. There is no one on earth that has not experienced love or has not experienced that melting away of the ego. Going beyond the ego is not a new experience for anyone. The difficulty with renouncing the ego is in the ability to go beyond continuously and to be continuously in the oneness, to be continuously within the Self, to be continuously in love or with love of all else. This does not mean for a moment here or a day there. It means on a continuous basis.

The gentlest way to go beyond the ego is to begin to fall in love with life. Then the thoughts of "I want," or "I need to have," or "my happiness depends upon" all fade away. To fall in love with life is simple. You begin to appreciate, enjoy, and look for the beauty. You begin to look for what you find beautiful. However limited that may be, that is where you start. You focus on it in your daily life. You focus on it in meditation. That love and beauty will begin to expand because that is the law. That is the grace of God. Whatever you give your time, energy, and attention to is what you will attract more of and more abundantly.

Start with what you know you can experience and what you know you appreciate and simply keep appreciating and experiencing it. Soon, the beauty you see will have grown. The love that you feel will have expanded until it is there every day. It will be there in your meditation and in your rest. Soon you will be experiencing love or God in the rain, in the mountains, in the desert, in the flowers, in the eyes of others. Wherever you look, you will be experiencing more beauty, more love. In order to have this experience; it takes a conscious effort to make it grow. The desire to have more love in your life, the desire to have more God communion in your life takes a conscious willful effort. It is just like anything else. It takes a

conscious willful effort to eat a meal. It takes a conscious willful effort to read a book. It takes a conscious willful effort to meditate. It will take a conscious willful effort to expand the love.

When you make this conscious willful effort to expand love or expand your God communion, this is called the Sacred Fire. It is the desire to be consumed or immersed into your true nature. It is not the every day thought, “Oh, I would like to be happy today” or, “Oh, it would be nice if I felt a little more Divinity today.” It is thinking, “I will look for the love and beauty and Divinity, not ‘today’ or not in my meditation, but right now. I will look through my heart/mind, pick out an experience, and re-experience it. I will remember it. I will remember the beauty. I will remember the love. I will recall other experiences until I am feeling the love and want more and desire more, then I will begin to look around in the present and will continue working on this.”

Bhakti is talked about in spirituality as a path. There are some people whose path is the path of devotion. Those who truly want their Self, truly want God, follow the path of bhakti and devotion. Without devotion or love, we cannot go beyond the ego. If we cannot go beyond the ego, we will never know the truth that God is love, omnipresent and omnipotent love, a state of consciousness, a state of Sat Tat Aum that is love. Until we immerse into this Divinity, we will not know. We will think God is this or that. We will think that God is cold, male, female, vengeful, Moslem, Hindu, or a thousand different things. Our minds will tell us that God is something we can’t experience or understand as it is beyond our knowledge.

If you have bhakti and devotion, you will immerse into God and realize that God is your Self, the true Self of omnipresent love. It is not omniscient knowledge. It is omnipresent love. The Sacred Fire is the desire to experience your true Self through love, beauty, and devotion. This is not necessarily the path of peace. It is the path of love, which is why they call it the Sacred Fire. There is a poem I have written which best explains the Sacred Fire:

I am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

“The sacrifice most beautiful” is the idea of separateness, our lower self. “I am the flame” is our true Self.

This dance of fire and light, this dance of oneness and separateness is not always a calm and peaceful dance. Nevertheless, there is nothing calm or peaceful about living with the idea of separateness anyway. The realization of the true Self comes down to realizing love within your life. This is not a love that is possessive or jealous. That is the separateness kind of love. Pure love is a love that brings ever-new joy. It is a love that continues to grow. It is not exclusive. It is all-inclusive. It will grow on a daily basis, providing you make the willful effort to expand your true knowledge of Divinity.

It is not a matter of whether we can intellectually explain the law of karma or how creation was created. All of this stuff is irrelevant. All this stuff is dualistic or the separateness. It is not a matter of whether we can levitate or whether we can heal the multitudes, whether we can explain someone's karma, or whether we can see into the future. All of this is separateness. This is secondary, just entertainment. This is all fun in the creation because eternity is a long time. This separateness stuff is all for play.

True love of Divinity is love in all situations, at all times. It is not something you can fake. Trying to fake it was tried quite often in the sixties. "Oh, I love this. Free love. Oh, I love all races. Oh, I love everything. Oh, everything and everyone should be love – except those who have colored TVs, those who want a Porsche, those who want no part of government, those who felt called to the warrior class." This kind of love is theology. Theology belongs to the mind. It is mental entertainment. For those that like to work mental puzzles, it is fine.

Love is of the heart. God is of the heart. Divinity is of the heart. It doesn't have an answer. It doesn't have language. Love can only be experienced and then be shared. This is our true Self. This is the nature of our soul. It is the nature of our heart. This is the nature of God.

True sadhana is those practices that help promote our true nature. If meditation helps us experience peace, calmness, love, and expansion, then it should be part of our daily practice. If chanting helps us to experience love, peace, and devotion, it should be part of our daily practice. If remembering the beauty and Divine experiences in our lives helps us to experience peace, love, and devotion, then it should be part of our daily lives.

When we do a mantra like **Om Satyam**, we don't just repeat it. Believe it. Identify with it. "I am **Om Satyam**. I am **Om Shivam**. I am **Om Sundaram**." Remember the poem:

I am
the flame

you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

I am Sat. I am Tat. I am Aum. We identify with our eternal Self. Identify with your true Self. Don't make mantras just small mental placebos to quiet down the mind and get rid of some negative things that have gone on during the day. It will do that, but don't use these sacred mantras as a tranquilizer to escape from life. Use the mantras as an identification with the true Self. Begin to go into "**Om Satyam**". The **Om** represents Divinity. We have just identified with "I am Divinity", so now the **Om** is just a shorter version of "I am **Satyam**." Now we are just saying "**Om Satyam**," but feeling it just as strongly as when we were saying, "I am **Satyam**." Make a willful effort to experience your Self, your eternal Self. This is the Sacred Fire.

The Sacred Fire has a couple of ingredients that distinguish it from other meditations and practices. One ingredient is that there is an offering. The offering is an offering of love, to Divinity, to your total Self. The other ingredient is that there is a sacrifice. The sacrifice is of the idea of separateness. The focus is on love. The focus is not on the sacrifice that will happen. We go into it saying, "I am going to experience my true nature of love, joy, Divinity. I am going to sacrifice the idea of separateness."

I am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

If you focus one-pointedly on Divinity, on love, this is the Sacred Fire and sacrifice will take place. It is just like a candle; in order for the candle to shed light, the wax must melt away. If you want your true Self, then you will have to allow your limited self, your separate self, your lower-nature self, to melt away. This is the beauty of your true Self. This is the beauty of grace.

The Sacred Fire meditation is something that must be prepared for. It is not something

we can sit down to do in the afternoon and say, “Well, I am going to meditate on the Sacred Fire now unless someone calls, then I’ll get up and answer the phone.” We need to prepare a block of time. We pick the length of time – an hour, three hours, a weekend, three days. Whatever the available time we choose, there can be nothing else to do or no other distraction.

Next, we need to identify with, “ I am Sat. I am Tat. I am Aum”. This allows us to go beyond the limitations of the physical/or the physical body, the senses/or the astral body, and the reasons that life exists/or the causal body. It is helpful to have flowers and a candle for the Sacred Fire meditation because they remind us of the purpose of this special meditation. Three flowers would represent the physical, the astral and the causal body, our ideas of separateness. The fragrance of the flowers represents Sat Tat Aum, our true Self. Therefore, the offering turns out to be the Aum, our true Self. So, the offering turns out to be the sacrifice, but without making the offering, there is nothing to sacrifice. The candle is symbolic. It is to remind us that once the impurities melt away, something still exists. It is to remind us that Sat Tat Aum is not just a concept that the holy ones throw out. If we go beyond our lower nature, we will find our true Self.

Liberation, freedom, God realization is about going beyond the idea of separateness. Once we are beyond the idea of separateness, we realize that life, God, is all about love. We realize that we knew that as a child, as a teen-ager, as a young adult, and that we knew that always. We knew that love brought joy, happiness and intoxication and we wonder why we didn’t pursue it more. When we finally do discover our Self, we will also discover that we have been living with our true Self always. We just had times of distractions and separateness where we thought something was more important than love.

The practice of the Sacred Fire is concentrated and intense. The results will be there. The law of karma and grace says it will be there. Our true nature is Sat Tat Aum – eternal consciousness bliss.

Om Satyam Om Shivam Om Sundaram Om Shanti

Namaste

ACCEPTANCE

The Sacred Fire is the love of the Divine or the love of life. In order to experience that love of Divinity, love for life, we have to understand that although Divinity is all around us, we also have within us the idea of separateness, the ego. This keeps us from seeing and experiencing Divinity as a oneness and a harmony.

The process of the Sacred Fire is diving into love. It is diving into Divinity. It is the willingness to surrender or go beyond the ideas of separateness, the ego, the smaller self. The process is very simple in theory, but very difficult in practice because of the years and even incarnations, which we have spent developing the habits within the idea of separateness.

The love that is our nature is always there. It is not an idea. It is not a feeling that comes and goes. Sometimes, we are in contact with this state of being and other times, through the blessings of the ego, we become distracted from it.

To practice the Sacred Fire is to be in love with love. In order to experience the love, one needs to go beyond the ego. In order to practice the Sacred Fire, one needs to be willing to surrender to love, Divinity, God.

This process is not always peaceful because when we experience love, we are not continuously beyond the ego. Sometimes we experience the pure love and then something happens that brings us back to the idea of separateness. Now, love doesn't feel like ever-new joy, intoxication or bliss. Now, love feels like it is going to tear us apart, like we can't breathe, like we are going to explode. This is what the ego or idea of separateness actually does when we are in contact with our true nature. When we have that experience and then come back, it is very painful to experience the limitations. This again brings us back to sadhana. We do all that we can to live within our true nature of Sat Tat Aum.

The pure love, which is our soul, is beyond the ego. This is without the thought of "self" or "I". It is for love of the rest of life. This brings most devotees to a dilemma. They have been taught in this incarnation and for many incarnations that to know love we must first love

ourselves, but not in the sacred sense. In the sacred sense, we are love. When the holy ones say that first you must love yourself and love all others as yourself, it means to go beyond the self, the separateness, the ego.

When we start looking at our self, we don't experience our self in the same way we experience the love of life. Our very nature is love. We need to experience our Self without the distractions that stand in the way of that love. This means without the judgments, without the condemnations. To love the Self is a process of calming down all limitations and going beyond the samskaras. Then, once we have the mind quiet and it is no longer defining our Self as good, bad, ugly, unacceptable or acceptable, then we can come to our nature of Sat Chit Ananda. We experience love of others, love of life, love of Divinity. Now we are living in our true Self beyond the ego.

This self-acceptance process is very difficult. We have all had periods where we, to be kind, have not been pleased with ourselves. We have not been satisfied with who we think we are. We have gotten into condemning, ridiculing, disliking and not finding anything worthy or good about ourselves. Even at our lowest times, when we are hammering on ourselves and are finding ourselves the most despicable things in creation, there is one little part of us that we know is pure. We know this one little part is good. We find this even more despicable because we can't get to this part. Yet, we know it is there. We can feel it. We know that we know. This is the part we have to accept. It is the part we know is there and is pure. The rest we accept as habits – good and bad habits or skills we have learned along the way and that come and go in our lives. Some days are good and some days are bad. Some days we are the latest and greatest and some days we are the worst and the least. These habits come and go.

When it comes to accepting our Self, we must accept that purity that we know is there. The rest we must accept as learned behavior that we can change. We may not like the learned behavior. It may even bring us pain and suffering. It is okay to dislike habits. It is okay not to be happy with some of our habits that bring us pain and suffering. It is even better to want to change them, to go beyond them. We have to learn to be gentle with ourselves. We have to learn to be honest and truthful. Mostly we have to learn to be with our Self and to acknowledge that part that is pure and to acknowledge all else as habits, or learned behavior, or samskaras that bring us pain and suffering.

We must begin to make the adjustments. Don't ever identify with the habits. Don't ever

say, “I am worthless.” Say, “I am Sat Chit Ananda. I am Sat Tat Aum. I simply have some bad habits which don’t bring me joy.” Make that distinction between “I am Divinity” and “I have some habits. I have some pain and suffering. It came into my life and it can leave my life. I was doing just fine until this habit reared its ugly head. Now I am suffering.” Do not ever identify with the habit as the Self. This is self-acceptance. We are not denying the fact that we have veils or impurities, but we aren’t accepting them as our very nature. We are accepting them only as learned behavior or habits that we have to change or go beyond.

Once we make this distinction or discriminate between what is real or pure and what is false or temporary, then there is no problem or samskara that we cannot go beyond. This step is necessary in order to experience the Sacred Fire. We must be able to distinguish between the flame and the wax. If we cannot distinguish between the flame and the wax, what is pure and what is temporary, then we cannot practice the Sacred Fire. We cannot find joy and happiness in life. If we cannot come to love within our Self, we cannot experience love beyond the ego. The ego will then destroy us because we will be afraid of losing love. We will be insecure, jealous, and possessive until we are finally strangled with our own fears and insecurities.

This is why we must always acknowledge our true Self even if we haven’t spent a lot of time immersed into it. There is part of our conscious awareness that knows this pure consciousness of the soul.

The Sacred Fire is about identifying with that purity and acknowledging it as our very nature. “I am Om Satyam. I am Om Shivam. I am Om Sundaram. The rest of life around me that I am working on may be falling apart, but I am Sat Tat Aum. I am pure. I am just not skilled at dealing with the world. I can’t communicate with people. I can’t do my job. I can’t find anything interesting to do. I’m miserable living here in the world because I keep losing my sense of identity. I keep identifying with the body and world instead of identifying with I am Sat Tat Aum.” In order to practice the Sacred Fire, we need to distinguish between that part of us which is pure and the part that is limited. Once we discern this, life and sadhana become the journey, not always easy, but always with the faith and hope that we will succeed.

Once we come to accept our Self, both our infinite nature and our temporary nature, then we can practice the Sacred Fire. We can then focus and go beyond the ego because we will know that what we are going beyond is not our Self, but our limitations and habits. We will know that it is okay to let go of all this mental activity. We will know it is temporary and we

won't have to constantly abuse ourselves or constantly harass ourselves to make changes. We don't have to be perfectly skilled in every worldly situation or activity we have ever encountered. It is okay to continue learning as an infinite Spirit. We can take a break from learning to interact in the world, identify with our true Self, and go beyond our limitations and ego. We can begin to experience love and more love, and to experience the desire to be in love with love, and to experience the desire to be in love with life. The intoxication that we call Ananda is no more than our true Self. It is no more than love beyond the ego.

The Sacred Fire starts from the separateness. It starts from the world. It is a struggle. We begin to identify and look at the purity, at the love that we have. We allow it to expand. We let go of the boundaries, the limitations, and the definitions. We allow it to expand out to include our holistic Self. We don't define others by judging, condemning or praising. We don't judge ourselves. We allow ourselves to live within the very nature of love, within the very nature of Divinity, without bringing the mind in to dichotomize or define others or ourselves. This is the process of the Sacred Fire.

In order to become proficient or realized within our true nature, we must practice. In the beginning, we are forever practicing discriminating between what is pure, our true nature, and what is temporary, our lower nature. This is where meditation comes in. It is identifying that part of us that is pure. It is beginning to do the mantras to expand that vibration and identify more strongly with, "I am **Om Satyam**. I am **Om Shivam**. I am **Om Sundaram**." We don't just peacefully repeat, "I am **Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram**," while making a nice musical sound in our head which pleases the mind. We are identifying, discriminating and accepting our nature as Sat Tat Aum, eternal consciousness bliss. This is what meditation should be.

If we identify with our nature of Divinity, we will experience love, feel love and be love. Everything will be experienced through this intoxication. This is what Christ meant when he said, "I come to bring you life and life more abundantly." He didn't mean more friends and larger families. Only through love do we want more of life. When we are immersed in love, we can't get enough. Everywhere we look, it will be even more intoxication, more bliss. It is only in our true state, without the distractions and limitations of the mind and samskaras, that we feel like we want more. Only then will we feel like we actually want to live forever. Until we are immersed in love, the thought of living eternally is not always pleasing to the mind.

The mantra, **Om Satyam**, vibrates our very nature of eternal love. The mantra, **Om Shivam**, vibrates our very nature of pure consciousness that is also eternal love. The mantra, **Om Sundaram**, vibrates pure beauty, the Divinity of all life, which is also love. This is sadhana. This is meditation.

Anything we think, feel, or do to experience that love and to expand that love to include more is the Sacred Fire, is sadhana, is Self-realization. It may come in formal meditation, in a walk in the wilderness, in a relationship, or it may come while watching a movie or reading a book. Anything that helps us go beyond the ego and experience that love is considered a spiritual practice and we should practice it and do more of it. Spirituality is not a dry formal ritual. Spirituality is the process of identifying with our true Self.

The mantra, **Sat Tat Aum**, helps us to identify with our true Self. The mantra, **Shivaya Namah Om**, also helps us to identify with our true Self. The mantra, **Shivaya Namah Om**, is the merging of Shakti into Shiva, rising above limitations, transcending the temporary, moving up to the crown where Shiva resides, the rising of the phoenix, or that point where the soul immerses into God. **Shivaya Namah Om Namah Shivaya Namah Om** is a very beautiful meditation or chant that we can do. It is very pure. It is very transcending. It is the very union of Shakti and Shiva and Shanti.

Discrimination is a key to spirituality, a key to happiness, a key to life. Never misidentify the samskaras for the Self. Never say, “I am miserable.” We can say, “I am Om, but I am having a hard time feeling like that today. I am Satyam, but this work situation is making me crazy and I can’t seem to communicate or feel satisfied, but still I am Om. I am Sat, I am Tat, I am Aum, however, in the world I am like a child who hasn’t learned the rules. I am like a child that doesn’t have the skills to play with the big kids.”

The secret to the Sacred Fire is to want to be in love with life. It is the willingness to be in love, to be in the Self. It is the willingness to suffer for that love during the times when we get caught in the separateness. It is like my poem:

I have danced
on the mountain tops
insanely high
and crawled across
the desert floor
dangerously low
desiring
more mountains
and more deserts

I wanted to want only love. Then as I got more skilled at that, I added a little more:

with
the delirious intensity
of losing control

This is about me letting go of the images, letting go of the opinion of the world, letting go of others for security, letting go of my habits.

with
the delirious intensity
of losing control
i have danced
on the mountain tops
insanely high –

It is so intoxicating it is beyond description.

and crawled across
the desert floor
dangerously low
desiring
more mountains
and deserts

Always more life to be in love with, more life to experience, more of God to know. This is the Sacred Fire. This is the bhakti path. This is devotion. This is love. This is what brings happiness. Feeling secure and comfortable does not bring happiness. It is in wanting more, in having life and life more abundantly. At some point, the soul that wants this love and life will immerse into life. Another poem:

to
the rose
is given
the fragrance
to
the fragrance
is given
the rose

Accept this immersion of form and formless. This is realization, liberation. It is like when we go beyond the ego, immerse into love, and are in love with life, then life is beautiful. We don't care that we might have to spend a hundred more years here. When we are living within our true nature, eternity is acceptable no matter where we are. Experiencing life beyond the ego, we just want more because at that moment we are liberated from all limitations. We are living our Divinity, living within our true Self.

As we all strive to attain, remember that what we are striving for is not something far off down the path. This is not something that we can only attain after hours and years of practices. To immerse into it is all within our very heart and within our ability. We have all had those experiences of love. Coming to our Self is just letting go of our limitations. It is just sacrificing

the bad habits, the limited habits. It is accepting that which is real, pure and that which is Sat Tat Aum.

To want to be in love with life, to want to be in love with love, to want and to love only God is the Sacred Fire. However, we only call it the Sacred Fire because we are sitting in separateness. When we experience it, we don't call it the Sacred Fire; we call it our nature.

Namaste

SURRENDER

When the flame
becomes
the fire
and the fire
becomes
the flame
the dance
and the
dancer
are one

This is a poetic way of saying that in order to live holistically, one must accept the physical reality and one must also accept that which is without form. Life is a dance between the two. Life is incomplete at the physical if one doesn't have knowledge or awareness of his or her Divine consciousness that is without form. Life is incomplete if one is aware of the consciousness without form, but cannot function skillfully here on earth.

Spirituality is about a union of these two things. Divinity is about the balance of the essence and the flower. Each person will find his own balance because each has his own karma and interests. However, each person must realize his or her holistic Self before they will get any lasting peace. In some traditions, they say that until you get liberated, the weight of your karma will bring you back to earth again and again and again. Some other traditions say that all you need to do is pray to be saved from the earth, or resurrect yourself, or die and immerse into the

Spirit realm. There is no place we can go in the existence where we are without our Self, our awareness, our consciousness, our ideas, feelings, samskaras and desires.

Whether it is in Phoenix, Colorado, Hawaii, the astral heavens, the astral hells, the causal realm or the Christ-consciousness, the one thing all these experiences have in common for the devotee is that the devotee is there. We can dive into the formless and experience our absolute nature yet, when we come back out, we are still here. If we dive into the formless enough, we will realize that we exist eternally.

To accept our true Self, we have to accept the Sat, the eternal. We are eternal consciousness. We must accept that we are eternal. By accepting that which is Sat, we will come to realize that it is our life. We are alive forever. We are once born, never dead. Now that we have eternity, it is up to us to live in the manner in which we choose.

Spirituality is finding the balance, finding happiness, joy, and security in where we are and in what we are doing. This process can only be realized if we accept the responsibility to live our own life, have our own dreams, have our own hopes and fulfill those dreams and hopes. If we have other people's hopes, ideas, or concepts, we cannot be happy. If we try to live someone else's way of life, we will not feel complete and we will not attain happiness. If we accept that we are eternal consciousness, then we can accept responsibility to live our own life.

On the spiritual path, the devotees always question what the role of the guru is. Is the guru a guide? Is the guru a savior? Is the guru a vehicle? Is the guru a cosmic Santa Claus? Is the guru a spiritual parent? According to the holy ones, their view of a holy one is that of a "stream of consciousness, a dispeller of darkness." This is how they perceive their dharma – as a stream of consciousness. To the devotee, this is often confused with being a stream of knowledge. The devotee is always asking the guru, "What about this? What am I supposed to do? Why am I here? Why does the law of karma twist this way? How is the creation created? How do I do this *siddhi*? What is the best mantra for me to attain my goal?" This is all knowledge that the devotee wants to know. The guru does not see answering any of those questions as part of his dharma. It does not fit into his job description. A "stream of consciousness" fits into his job description. He helps the devotee expand out their awareness and consciousness so the devotee can see within their self, within creation, within Divinity to find answers to their questions and to find fulfillment of the desires that they each have.

Some devotees wonder about the distinction between a holy one and a guru. In knowledge, awareness, consciousness and in relation to Divine Mother, there is no distinction between a guru and a holy one. However, to the devotees there is a distinction. That distinction is that the gurus are willing to accept the spiritual children and listen to their question - maybe answer and maybe not - and allow that stream of consciousness to be available for the devotees to mature into the realization of their own true nature of Sat Tat Aum.

This process happens within the stream of consciousness. It does not happen because of anything the guru says or by any miraculous type intervention. The guru is the gate, the doorway through which the devotee matures. No one can realize his or her true Self without the grace of the guru. However, no one need be concerned about the grace of the guru because that has been provided by Divine Mother.

One needs to surrender to one's own soul. If we can surrender to our soul's call to Divinity then the stream of consciousness, the Divine light, will be there to help the devotee to reach a level of maturity where they can commune directly with their holistic Self. This process has been set in motion. It is our nature. It is the nature of Divinity. It is the nature of karma.

When working with the Sacred Fire, with the idea of "I am the flame – you are the sacrifice most beautiful," the devotee will encounter an unwillingness to surrender. This unwillingness to surrender is the ego. It is not an unwillingness to surrender to the guru. It is an unwillingness to take a chance that there will be something left once we make the sacrifice. It is a fear of going beyond what we know, are used to, and are familiar with.

This habit, this familiarity, even affects the holy ones. In Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramahansa Yogananda, there is a story of Sri Yukteswar bringing a message from Babaji to Lahiri Mahasaya that his time would be up shortly. Lahiri Mahasaya immediately quit talking to the devotees that he had been discoursing with and went into meditation. His body shook and trembled. When the devotees asked him about it later, he said, "Even a bird that is in a cage will take a moment before bursting out when the door is opened." You get attached and familiar with your body, or your bodies, or your environment, or surroundings. There is a moment of breaking the attachment even for the person who has worked their whole life for liberation.

For the devotee, the Divine consciousness can be a frightening or intimidating idea; they must go beyond and make sacrifices of their limited self in order to dive into the Divine current. If one thinks about it logically and reasonably, they will never dive into the Divinity. This is

where it is only love that will melt the ego. It is only love that will allow the devotee to go beyond that with which they are familiar.

Each devotee must come in contact with the devotion and their nature of love in order to go beyond, or surrender, or make the sacrifice. If we are in contact with and immerse into this love, then there is no fear or insecurity. Then it is a natural, blissful and intoxicating experience. It will continue to be beautiful, blissful, and intoxicating until the mind comes in and inquires about what is going on. “What is this that is happening to me? How can I explain this? How can I understand this?” If the mind has not been educated to intellectually understand what is going on, then fear and insecurity will come in. Then the most beautiful experiences of love will suddenly frighten us. This is an unwillingness to surrender.

When we begin to dive in, when we begin to surrender to our Divine nature, something seems to be holding us back. That something which is holding us back is our mind which is undisciplined and uneducated. Intellectually we do not know what is beyond the physical reality. This is where religion, theology, and philosophy come in. We must know intellectually what our nature is, what the nature of creation is. This is where books like, The Book of Wisdom, by Swami Rama and The Holy Science, by Sri Yukteswar, explain intellectually the make up of our holistic Self. One must intellectually understand so that when it comes time to surrender, our mind does not need to be activated with fear and insecurity at that which is new and unfamiliar.

The process of unfolding into our holistic Self should be a very gentle and beautiful process. It is not always easy. It is not always blissful. However, it should always be very gentle and beautiful even when we encounter our samskaras, and pain, and conflict. There should always be a certain beauty that we can appreciate.

I am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

We should be able to see the beauty within our limitations. In the oneness, there is only love, harmony, and beauty.

Around the age of five or six, the majority of humanity has been here on earth long enough to discover their mortality. They come to accept that physically their body is mortal and there is such a thing as death. This is a very frightening and terrifying idea to most children because they have come into the world believing they are infinite Spirits. Somewhere in these five or six years, they have started to identify with their body. They forgot the part of themselves that is consciousness without form. Suddenly they begin to be aware that death does happen at the physical. Suddenly they are entrapped in their body consciousness. Most children will ask their parents and most parents don't know how to answer their questions. They say, "Don't worry. You'll live to be eighty, ninety or a hundred and twenty years old." The children believe the parents. Yet, some time later in life the idea of death comes back. They have a fear of death, fear of the unknown. There is an attachment to our physical surroundings. There is an attachment to our cage, which enslaves us.

Surrendering to our higher Self is opening the door, which allows the soul to be free. When you understand that the attachment to the cage, to the vehicle, to our environment is a natural process, then you can accept a bit of intimidation. If we can also accept that we can be non-attached to the limited and that we are Sat Tat Aum, then we can fly from the cage. We can let go of our limitations. This is a natural process, but we need to understand how it works. This knowledge can only come from those who have made the journey.

This brings us back to the guru, to the holy ones, to the stream of consciousness. All the philosophy in the world does not help anyone feel secure. When it comes to the idea of death, Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism have already taught the world that they are infinite and eternal. Yet, humanity still lives in fear of death. Intellectual knowledge is not enough.

Being around the stream of consciousness or being around someone who has no fear will not bring anyone enlightenment unless their desire and goal is to go beyond limitations. It is like sitting beside a river. Unless we dive into the river, it cannot carry us anywhere. If we have the desire to go beyond our limitations, then we can dive into this stream of consciousness. This is grace. It has been provided. A transformation will take place. Answers will not necessarily be given, but we know that we have been changed. Something is different. We may have no idea what the transformation was. The mind cannot always understand the transformation that

happens. Allow the heart to accept the transformation. Do not worry about defining it. Do not be frightened about feeling lost or not being able to relate. Allow the transformation to happen.

Decide before you come into the presence of a holy one whether you feel it is beneficial. If you feel it is going to be a beneficial experience for you, then surrender. Allow the transformation to happen. Don't be confused or have conflict because you don't understand all that has happened. Allow the daily meditations to fill in those answers because the presence of a holy one will expand you. *Darshan* of the holy ones will expand your consciousness. During that expansion, you will have greater awareness. It may take you a few days or weeks to begin to relate to some of the experiences. Allow it to happen naturally. Don't try to force it. Don't try to understand it mentally as this may only bring fear and confusion. We allow ourselves to reside in the peace, the beauty, the revelations, the insights and the excitement for living, and we allow ourselves the enjoyment of this experience.

The process of living within our holistic nature is not something that is going to happen in an instant. It is a learning process. Our nature is love. However, to live at the physical is a process of skill, of learning and unlearning. It is unlearning habits and practices that we no longer enjoy. It is learning practices and habits that we enjoy.

Allow the Self to be the guru, the stream of consciousness. The only difference between the holy ones, the gurus, the devotees and humanity is the limitations or the lack of limitations. The stream of consciousness is the Divinity that flows in everyone. The holy ones removed the limitations so that there is only that stream of Divine consciousness. The devotee still has some limitations, which keeps them from accepting, experiencing, and realizing themselves as a stream of consciousness.

Allow the Divine current to flow. Surrender to the higher Self. We must sacrifice the limitations, the pain, the suffering, the bad habits. This is done by affirming our true Self:

i am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

I am Sat Tat Aum
I am Sat Chit Ananda
I am the master of my destiny
I am responsible for my life
I am responsible for my samskaras
I am responsible for my happiness
I am responsible for fulfilling my dreams and hopes
I am the fulfillment of the Divine light

Affirm this within. Surrender to the true Self. Once we learn to surrender to our higher nature, we will experience love. Once we experience love beyond the ego, we will experience life and life more abundantly.

This wanting life and life more abundantly happens when we surrender to love, when we surrender to our true Self. Do not confuse surrender with gratitude. Service for a guru or a holy one who is asking you to fetch water, chop wood, and run errands has nothing to do with surrendering. This service may have to do with paying back a karmic debt incurred at an earlier time, or about gratefulness, affection, and our willingness to learn. Although we can offer service to others, surrender is to our true Self, not to others.

The surrender is to love, to our very nature, to the Divine current. Then life is worth living. Life is worth experiencing. We look forward to it in our awake time, our dreamtime, in our dreamless time and in our meditations when we go beyond the bodies. In all these states, we have awareness. There is life. There is an experience. If we cannot find joy in everyday life, we need to surrender to our higher nature. We need to sacrifice some of the enslavements; ideas and samskaras that are keeping us enslaved.

Surrender to the heart. Be submissive to love. Be submissive to our Divine nature. Be assertive to the separateness. Be assertive to the external. Be assertive to others who are trying to control, influence, or rule our life. Be submissive to the heart and our true Self.

within
the beauty
of the
dance
and the love
of the
dancer
is you

We can find that which is our own by looking within. No one else can do that for us. No one else can hammer us into submission, nor can anyone save us from ourselves. No one can carry us to our Self. Surrender to Om Satyam. Surrender to Om Shivam. Surrender to Om Sundaram. This is our nature.

Namaste

EXPANSION

I am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

This is the key to our true Self. When one comes to God or to their large Self, the very nature of it is Sat Chit Ananda. If one comes to their absolute Self, the very nature is Shanti, peace, Sat Tat Aum. If one wishes to live within this nature, they must identify with their nature of Sat Tat Aum. To do this, we must affirm and identify with and dive into our true Self.

In order to do so, we must leave the limitations behind. They cannot go with us to our true Self. It is just like when we go to sleep at night and leave our body behind. So, too, when diving into meditation we need to leave our body and those things in association with the body behind. Leave the four primal instincts behind. Leave the senses behind and the joys and pleasures that come with the senses. Leave the ideas, the concepts, the knowledge of the creation, the knower, and the known, behind.

The body is a vehicle and the primal instincts help maintain that vehicle as long as we need it. Maintenance of the body is different than enslavement to the four primal instincts. With the senses, we can enjoy the beauty within the idea of separateness. Utilizing the senses in this manner is different than living and seeking our joy and happiness within the sense pleasures. The mind can be used to focus and concentrate on perceiving the beauty, the laughter, and the

joy that can be experienced within the bodies, within the idea of separateness. However, our mind does not have to be out of control.

If you remember the candle, “I am the flame,” then remember the body, and the qualities associated with the body as the wax. They will melt away. One can live in harmony with ones holistic Self by finding this balance of essence, or consciousness, and form, or bodies. But, in order to find this balance, one must accept and realize ones holistic Self. We must accept that we are infinite and eternal by experiencing our infinite and eternal nature. We must accept that we are love. This is our true Self – a state of ever-new joy, a state of Sat Chit Ananda.

We must accept that we have a body, have a form, but these bodies or forms need not be enslaved by the ego. We accept that our true Self is within us covered with the sheaths of these bodies. We don’t identify our body with the clothing that we wear. We take our clothing off and throw it in the washing machine, yet no one thinks, “Oh, what am I doing to myself?” When we identify with our true Self, we see our body as a vehicle or as clothing we wear to express and fulfill what we wish to do here in the manifested world. Just as we properly maintain our clothing, we also need to maintain our body with proper nutrition, exercise, and health care. Proper maintenance of the mind comes with positive affirmations and positive readings. Proper maintenance of the emotions comes with balancing the right and left brain by balancing intuition and spontaneity with reason and logic.

In order to fulfill our life, we must first realize that we have a life and realize that we are infinite and eternal, not something that is temporary and enslaved to the environment. Once we realize that we have a life, that we are alive and will always be alive, then we can go about living that life as an infinite Spirit, whom while manifested at the physical has certain dharma, desires, and karma to fulfill and to do. While in the Spirit body there are certain dharma, desires, and karma to fulfill. While in the causal body there is certain dharma we wish to do. When we know we are infinite and eternal, we can live our life in a manner that brings joy, happiness, and fulfillment. This is not what someone else feels we should be doing, not what someone thinks we would be good at, but what we feel we would like to explore.

Life and life more abundantly can only come if we realize it is our life. “I am infinite and eternal. Now I can pursue my interests. I can explore what I would like to experience.” This is what the Sacred Fire is – the realization of, and the living within our holistic Self. It is finding a balance for our holistic Self. Some of the insights and revelations of our true Self need

to be fulfilled. It may take years, even a whole lifetime, to attain that fulfillment. However, if it is something we want to do, a lifetime is not very long for someone who lives eternally.

Spirituality is synonymous with living. Sadhana or the practices we do are done to attain knowledge of our holistic Self. The sacrifices we make are limitations that keep us enslaved or bound to confusion, suffering, and conflict. These are the things we want to go beyond.

The process of living happily is different for each person. The goal is the same, but the ingredients are different. We each must find our own balance. If we come to our true Self, we will do so in meditation. When we calm down the body, the mind, the breath, and finally the ego, we will then experience our Self as pure consciousness. We recall this experience of pure consciousness when we come back from meditation. Then we go about harmonizing in our day-to-day life with the inner knowledge that we are Sat Chit Ananda. We must interact and fulfill our dharma in a seemingly limited world, but that doesn't mean we have to identify with and take on all the limitations.

Life is not an either/or situation. "Either I am here in the world, here in the now, because I am at the physical or I am off to my higher nature." That is an idea of separateness. "I am here. God is there. I am here. My higher nature is there. I have to be doing physical labor so how can I possibly be there and expand into my higher nature?" These are bondages of the ego. One is here and there and can be aware of this simultaneously, but to do so takes practice.

When we have the experience of our higher Self, that of expansion, revelations, and love in our meditations, we need to bring it back with us. When we get up from meditation, don't forget about it. Don't say, "Well, that was a nice meditation now I have to go do my duty. I can't wait to get back to my meditation." Take what you experience with your Self with you into your everyday living and then you will enjoy living. Live holistically. When you are doing your duty at the physical, don't get so concentrated on the limited that you forget about your holistic Self. Affirm: "I am Sat Chit Ananda." Recall the joy and love of your true Self, which you experienced in meditation. Do this while doing your duty or interacting. Work on Self-realization from the physical to the formless. Work on Self-realization from the formless to the physical. Those who have experienced their true Self can never be satisfied with just the physical reality. It will always be unfulfilling. It will make them miserable unless they allow themselves to open up and experience their larger Self while at the physical.

At times when everyday living is difficult, the reason it has become difficult is because part of you wants more than you are living. Your attention is being focused on the limited. You are not allowing yourself to open up and experience your holistic Self. When you feel this dissatisfaction, open up. Take a moment to breathe deeply and allow the memory and identity with your larger Self to come. Then continue your duties with that openness that you had in your meditations, at retreats, or at different times in your life.

When one is dissatisfied, it is not dissatisfaction with life, but dissatisfaction with limitations, ideas, feelings, and sensations of being enslaved or in bondage. The Spirit wants to be free or wants more. The ideas and concepts, or what we are working on, keep us enslaved to something we no longer find comfortable. Make the adjustment within to live, feel, and experience more holistically while doing the same job or duty.

The physical reality hasn't changed much since the beginning of creation and it will not change much. There will be times of lightness and darkness. Yet, the reality of the physical is still limited. There are two types of people who enjoy the physical: those who have never glimpsed what is beyond, these are the spiritual children, and those who live within their holistic Self, these are the spiritual adults. These two types of people can enjoy the physical. The children are enjoying it because they know nothing else. The adults are enjoying it because they see the physical reality as a play of light and consciousness.

To enjoy your everyday life, you must accept your holistic Self. You must accept it in practice, in theory, and in moment to moment living. Live within the moment. Take that deep breath. Experience the physical, experience the senses, experience the mind, experience the heart, experience the love, and experience the pure consciousness. It is all there. We are all created in the image of God. It is all there for each of us. Allow yourself to experience it in day to day living, not just in meditation, not just in hours of calming down. It is our true Self. What keeps us from experiencing it continuously is our ideas or limitations. "I need to do this job and it takes a lot of concentration so I can't pay attention to my holistic Self." This is a rationalization. This is a limitation. Concentrate. Focus. You can be aware of your holistic Self.

Anyone who thinks being aware is a difficult process, just think about eating. While you eat, you can chew, taste, smell, and think simultaneously. Therefore, if you can do four things at once just in the simple act of eating, then you can also have awareness of your duty or skill, your

thoughts, your feelings and your Self. It is a matter of practicing “opening up.” If you are going to think, it is just as easy to think about love, joy, beauty, and your experience with your holistic Self. It is just as easy to do this as it is to think about relationships, conflict, and limitations during your activity and duty. People are fantasizing and analyzing during these times. If you have time to fantasize, analyze, and think about this and that during duty, then you also have time to direct your thoughts to your holistic Self. Instead of remembering what someone said to you seven years ago, remember your experience of love, your experience of joy.

It is not difficult to work and be active with our holistic consciousness. We do the necessary skills everyday. It is just in what we choose to think about or focus on during our activity time that makes the difference. We can choose to think about this old thought pattern or behavior or we can also choose this new thought pattern - about the love we feel, the beauty we perceive. It is our choice. It doesn't take much skill to do these things because we are doing them day in and day out.

The skill comes in directing our thoughts to that which is more holistic. In order to do this, we must be willing to let go of or sacrifice the limited thoughts and feelings, our old habits. We acknowledge that our true Self is Sat Tat Aum and the rest are habits and ideas we have picked up along the way like clothing that is old, worn out or that we just don't like anymore. We can throw these things away or let those in the world that still want to explore these things have them. We don't have to keep them just because we once liked them. Just because we once believed them doesn't mean we have to keep them forever. If we no longer like them, want them, or believe them, let them go. Old toys, old clothing, old ideas, old habits can go away easily if we let go. If we identify with our true Self, we will be willing to let go because we won't see the old ideas and old habits as part of our Self. We will see them as things we have collected on our journey.

It is simple to live holistically. However, it takes practice because we are creatures of habit. As long as we know we are creatures of habit, then we can create habits that we enjoy. As children we got toys, dolls, and played games that we enjoyed until we outgrew them and then we got new toys. We played new games until we outgrew them. It is the same with our habits. Samskaras and mindsets are nothing more than toys of an infinite Spirit. They are things we were once interested in, wanted to know about, or explore. We formed an idea about it. When we get tired of it, all we have to do is let go of it, sacrifice it. We don't have to keep holding on

to it just because we once had it. This is the key to the Sacred Fire. We need the wax to have the candle. Once we light the flame, we can allow the wax to burn away. So, let go of the old that brings us pain, suffering, conflict or confusion.

In love, there is only ever-new joy. You don't need to figure out what it takes to keep love within you. You don't need to understand what it takes to experience love. You don't need to know or find someone to fall in love with. You need none of this. All you need to do is calm the mind which wants all this knowledge. When you calm the mind, it will be quiet. Soon you will begin to feel the love and joy. It is there.

Watch children. If you take away their activity, their toys, puzzles, and books and make them just sit there, soon they are all giggling, laughing and silly. They are experiencing love. You have taken away their mental stimulation and soon they are intoxicated. If you take away your mental stimulation, your attachments to ideas, duties and concepts, then love will be there and soon you will be silly and intoxicated. You will be experiencing love. If you can calm down the mind, your true Self will be there.

To live in love is to have ever-new joy. If you want to live in ever-new joy every moment, then this is something worth working towards. You do this by controlling your mind and by maintaining your body and your emotions by feeding them proper nutrition and by taking time for your Self. Let go of what the world wants from you. Come to your Self. What do you want from you? Allow yourself those moments with your Self. Even in the most stressful times, when the world is demanding, breathe in and get in touch with the love, joy, and intoxication. Then come back, give the world your answers, and continue with your role.

To live our holistic Self is very simple. However, it takes effort to change the habits. It takes effort to change and let go of the ideas we have collected along the way. It starts with the desire to want to live life more abundantly. Then it is a matter of practicing that which brings us joy and practicing letting go of that which brings us less than joy. If we keep practicing this process, we will let go of the limitations and accept our true Self. If we enjoy something for a while and then find we don't enjoy it anymore, then we let go of that, too. Move on to a new experience. The quality that the Lord loves the most is humility – the willingness to learn and to experience more. It is our nature, Sat Tat Aum.

I am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

Namaste

CONSCIOUSNESS

I am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

The path to realization leads to the heart. The path to God leads to the heart. The path to liberation leads to the heart. The path to ones true Self leads to the heart. If the devotee treads the path, whether as a bhakti yogi, a *jnana* yogi, or a karma yogi, whatever the path, to their true Self, the path will lead to the heart. If one is to find enjoyment in the world, it has to lead to the heart. If one is going to find virtue in the world, it has to lead to the heart. If one is to find joy and laughter, it has to lead to the heart.

Most people in the world and most devotees think that the path of love or devotion passes through the heart and then goes on to higher knowledge, higher consciousness. The Sacred Fire that leads to the Sacred Heart is the heart that is referred to as the Godhood State, the Divine consciousness. This is the heart that is our true nature.

If we keep moving on the path, from the mineral kingdom, to the *deva* kingdom, to the holy stream, to the Christ-consciousness, and finally come to the absolute God-consciousness – that which is without form, that always has been, is now, and forever shall be – we will not find ideas, concepts and knowledge. We will find love. We will find the Sacred Heart, our absolute Self.

Meditation is a practice that has been developed to help us get to our true Self. This is done by calming the mind, breath, and ego, which are ideas of activity that stand in the way of us realizing our true Self. Our true Self is consciousness or love consciousness. All of us incarnated at the physical, experience our nature. We get brief glimpses or experiences with this true Self. We get experiences of the intoxication, the bliss, and the overwhelmingness of love. We all experience this from time to time. The majority of humanity mislabels it. We think, “Oh, I am in love with this environment. I am in love with this person. I am falling in love with this puppy or kitten.” This is a mislabeling of what is happening. Whatever the external environment is, it has allowed us to momentarily come in touch with our Self, our true Self, our absolute Self.

There are two main paths to the realization of our holistic nature. One is the right-handed path and the other is the left-handed path. The right-handed path is that of yoga, reason, discipline, sadhanas, knowledge, and purification. The left-handed path is that of surrender, devotion, reverence and purification. All of the paths come to these two paths or are a combination of these two paths.

All true spiritual paths will lead to God the absolute. Each person will choose a balance between the left and right-handed path according to what they are interested in exploring at the time. No matter which path we choose to follow, whether predominantly left or right, we must remember that our absolute nature is that of love. We cannot be liberated into life; we cannot be liberated into God without immersing into our heart, into love. We may feel more comfortable with the right-handed path by choosing to gain knowledge, utilize discipline, by choosing to go beyond, to conquer one obstacle after another and leave it behind. However, we must remember that at some point we will have to acknowledge and immerse into our Self as love.

If we choose to follow the left-handed path, we must pay attention to the love that we experience. If it is with the idea of separateness or duality, we must keep striving towards a greater experience, a greater love, to keep ourselves from beginning to isolate and from being satisfied with just a little bit.

We cannot attain our true Self without coming to love. However, we can attain to our true Self without a lot of knowledge. Once we attain our Self-identity and know our Self as love, the knowledge will begin to come. Now we are in love with life and look forward to experiencing life. Now we will grow from our interactions with the rest of existence. We will

come to realize that we are not isolated. We realize that the rest of life, including the mountains, the trees, the animals, the plants, the rest of humanity, the angels, the devas, all of life is God. The rest of life is our larger Self, life, God.

At this stage of the journey, we begin to live as a devotee – someone who is devoted to God. We cannot be devoted to God if we do not appreciate our neighbors, if we do not like the insects and animals, if we would just as soon not be around other people, if Spirits showing up frighten us, if different holy ones confuse us. To be a devotee, one must feel devotion towards God. In addition, as a unique soul, there is no place we can look and nothing we can experience that is not God or is not Divine.

A devotee begins his journey when he realizes he is the Divine consciousness. Devotion towards, for, and within God begins by experiencing, worshipping and appreciating God in an ever-expanding and ever-enlightening path. In order to reach this point of becoming a devotee, we must do the work necessary to realize our true Self through the balancing of the right and left-handed paths to find a balance that suits us. We find a balance of the right-handed path that will please our minds and satisfy the questions we have. We find a balance of the left-handed path, the reverence, joy, and surrender to our true Self so that our life does not become sterile, without laughter or tears. We each must find our own balance. It doesn't help to look around and say, "Well, that person has a nice balance. I'll try what that person is doing." Each of us has our own unique karma. This will help us to choose our own balance. We must each realize our Self as Sat Chit Ananda. Once we realize our Self as Sat Chit Ananda, then we become a devotee. Then we become someone who is in love with Divine Mother. "I'm just in love with life. I'm just in love with God." This is where our true spiritual path begins.

When we are born, our parents take care of us, nurture us, and send us to school until we are 18 or 19 years old and are ready to live on our own and to go out and experience life. When we start the spiritual path, we are that child or baby being born or "reborn". We do the practices, the disciplines, the reading, the studying and purification that spiritual parents give us until we reach maturity and are able to go out on our own. That maturity of going out on our own does not come after ten years or three incarnations. It comes at the point when we realize we are love, we are Sat Chit Ananda, we realize our nature as the God-consciousness. Now we are ready to live our life into and within our true Self. This is the spiritual journey. This is why the holy ones when asked if they are liberated from life, from karma, will never say they are liberated "from"

because how can you be free from life? How can you be liberated from life? You can only be liberated into life by going beyond the shackles or samskaras that have kept us separate or away from life.

The Sacred Fire meditation, the Sacred Fire practices are very simple. We focus on love, beauty, joy, and bliss. We don't spend time analyzing weaknesses or samskaras or conflicts, but we brush them aside and let them melt away like the wax of a candle melts away from the flame. We focus on what brings love, joy and happiness and keep focusing until the love, joy, and happiness expands.

The law of karma is that whatever we give to life, life will give back generously. If we give love, joy, and beauty, then life will give love, joy, and beauty back to us. The bhakti path says that when joy and beauty are given to others and God, through the grace of God we will receive even more in return. Whether we call it the law of karma, or the grace of God and guru, or getting in touch with our true Self, life gives unto life.

The Sacred Fire practices allow us to let go of anything that is limited and focus on that which is expanding, loving, virtuous, joyful and beautiful. We do this in meditation, in our awake time, in conversations and in interactions. If we are standing at the edge of the forest, we can do this by thinking, "What a beautiful sky." We can touch a tree, "What a lovely tree." Allow the Self to experience and open up to the rest of life. Allow the Self to look for and perceive the beauty, love, and joy that is all around.

We can meditate on **Om Satyam**, the Divine consciousness of love. We want to feel the waves of love, bliss, and beauty washing over us. We don't meditate on knowledge because knowledge will bring evaluation, and evaluation will bring positive/negative, good/bad, or beautiful/ugly. We want oneness and harmony. We don't want to know what the **Om** is; we want to bathe in the **Om**. We want bliss and light from the holy stream. We want to become the Divine virtue. We can do this by the discipline of *Na Hum*: "not this/not that". We can also do this by surrendering to **So Hum**: "I am this/I am that. I am **Om Satyam**. I am **Om Shivam**. I am **Om Sundaram**. That is my nature. This is what I feel. This is what I experience."

Let go of your past. Let go of the mistakes, samskaras, and memories that are less than beautiful, less than loving, less than joy-filled. Anyone can do this for an hour. Anyone can do this for two hours. Anyone can do it for a Sacred Fire meditation. When we are able to do this for an hour or two hours, we will be able to do it for three hours or four hours. Then we will be

able to do it for the majority of the time except for those environments or situations that really activate the samskaras. The more we come in contact with our true Self, the less the samskaras and situations will influence us to leave our state of Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram.

Everyone created is unique; all fit harmoniously within the whole. The holy ones are around people all the time. The holy ones are intoxicated, are in love and enjoying the interactions. We may wonder, “What do they have that the folks who come to hear them don’t have.” The holy ones have knowledge of God. Everyone thinks, “That explains it.” However, what is this knowledge of God? It is knowing to look with love. They look at life with love, at people with love, and at each encounter with love. This is the God that they experience. They have love for all life – love for God. We can all have this because it is our nature. We have had the experience of being in love. We just need to take this experience and keep extending it out, keep expanding it.

This experience of being in love is our nature. It isn’t given to us by another person. It isn’t caused by another person. It isn’t some special cosmic circumstance involving the other person. We have allowed it to happen. We have allowed ourselves to experience our Self. At some level we said, “I feel comfortable enough in this situation with this person that I am going to be myself without the fears, insecurities, mindsets, without all the wants and desires.” For our own reasons, we decided we could be our selves. That decision has allowed us to feel our true Self. Then we fall in love or we fall into our Self. We can take that love we have for another person and expand it to include the rest of life. This is what the holy ones do.

The holy ones accept the rest of life as God. They surrender to their true Self, that of love. They go beyond the mind, limitations, and ideas of separateness. They are satisfied and fulfilled experiencing love. Love is fulfillment. Love is our true Self. Love is the nature of God. Love is the harmony we feel with the rest of life or with God. When the unique soul immerses into the universal soul, love is the common language, the bond. The Sacred Heart is the discovery and experience of the unique individual soul melting into God and God manifesting as a unique individual soul.

The key to discovering our true Self is either to go beyond the ideas, fears, insecurities, and ideas of separateness or to surrender to our Self, our higher Self. Alternatively, it can be a combination of going beyond and surrendering. Each must find what works for him. “I can surrender to this situation. That other situation is one that I will have to go beyond.” We must

come to our true Self and then we are liberated into life. Once we are liberated into life, we are truly worshipping God because we can appreciate and enjoy our life, God, Divinity.

The first step is the realization of being infinite and eternal Satyam consciousness. Then we can choose to surrender to our true Self and go on exploring and enjoying the rest of God. When we are exploring and enjoying our life, our larger Self, this is true worship of God.

Ananda Lahari Om

(wave of bliss)

Sundara Lahari Om

(wave of beauty)

Satya Lahari Om

(wave of love)

Namaste

LOVE

I am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

The Sacred Fire, God, Self-realization, is really all about love. Even all the conflict people have is all about love, or seeking after love, or being afraid of losing love, or being afraid of not being loved, or not having love. One thing you can take from this book is that spirituality is about love, Self-realization is about love, liberation is about love, not a few moments here and there or a few meditations, but all life is about love.

The following poem is about different times in my life. Some of the times were happy and some times were a struggle, some when I was young and some when I was older.

i've stood beside
golden fields
watching you move
and i was in love
with you then

i've seen you naked
in the lakes
glimpses of shimmering
sunlight and beauty
and i was in love
with you then

i saw you silhouetted
against the night sky
embracing the stars
as only the young can
and i was in love
with you then

i watched while you played
with the ocean
an ancient ritual of
awe and intoxication
and i was in love
with you then

i walked with you
in the forests and meadows
in deserts and mountains
in the sunshine and in the rain
and i was in love
with you then

i've danced with you
beneath the moon
with the snow falling
and on the mountains
and i was in love
with you then

i've touched you
in the spring and summer
in the fall and winter
in the daylight and in the night
and i was in love
with you then

i sat with you
beside the river
hearing our tears
our joy our laughter
and i was in love
with you then

This is what spirituality is. It is being in love, being in our nature, being in love with the oneness, being in love, in God. This is everyday life. This is what we should be in love with, not just a few moments, not just a few mystical experiences. The intoxication of God or the intoxication of love should be in the formless. It should be in a walk. This is what the Sacred Fire is. You look for the love, you look for the beauty. You're always looking and always seeing. You are sacrificing the limitations. If someone comes up to you and they are depressed, angry, frustrated or demanding and you see that, look deeper and see what a beautiful soul they are. You experience the love.

Spirituality is not just sitting in meditation and having mystical experiences. It is not just having the formless and diving in. Spirituality is having the formless and diving in then coming back and seeing the perfection, purity and beauty of all of God. Life is incomplete with just the unmanifested. Life will be incomplete with just the manifested. Our nature is holistic. We are created in the image of God. We come from the formless so the formless is part of our nature. We are manifested all the way to the physical, as is God, so the manifested is also a part of our nature. To see the perfection of life, to see the beauty of life is spirituality. The Sacred Fire is about surrendering to our nature. Spirituality is about surrendering to our nature.

All the problems, all the samskaras, all the pain in the world are within God. We are all holistic. We are all Divine. Whether we see it or don't see it doesn't change the reality of what is. Meditation, knowledge and spirituality will not re-create us, but will help us be aware of how we are created, make us aware of our nature.

Through years and incarnations we developed the habit of looking at the limited. The limited is what we looked at, perceived and believed was the truth, was the reality. The holy ones come to tell us the limited is not the reality but rather an aspect of the reality. When we have mindsets, ideas, and samskaras, they are real for us, but their temporariness or their permanency depends on our view.

A samskara is part of our reality as long as we keep it alive with our attention and our belief and the proper environment. We have all had experiences of working on our samskaras to the point where we feel we will never get beyond them. Yet, when we have a meditation, the samskara is not there. It is gone. When we come back from that meditation, there it is again. These samskaras have their own environment. If we transcend that environment or expand beyond that environment, we leave the samskara behind. Samskaras have to be left behind in their own place. Through meditation we can transcend to different levels or subtler realms of existence and live without the samskaras, conflicts, and confusion. However, more important than escaping them is the realization that they are not part of our nature, they are part of the habits that we have. If we don't like them, we can give up those habits.

If we can experience beyond the samskaras, then we know they are not part of our nature but are only a part of our temporariness and therefore can be gone beyond. We can discover this in meditation. In meditation, we can discover our pure Self, our true Self. Then when we come back, we can let go of the limited, of the temporary. Once we let go or make the sacrifices, then

we can live within our holistic Self. We then realize that all life and our own life is about love, beauty, and joy. Then we can withdraw all of our time and attention from these temporary things.

The holy ones look at a person and see purity or the Divinity of the soul. They see the samskaras. They see the personality. However, what they look at is the soul. They enjoy the soul. The holy ones enjoy the person, not the clothing. It is as if you went to meet someone and didn't look at them or listen to them and just evaluated their clothes then drew your conclusions, "Well, this person is about socks and sneakers and dirty blue jeans and tee shirts. I'm not interested in that kind of clothing." That is how absurd it would be to look at someone with their samskaras and temporariness and think that is the person, and that is what life is all about, and that is all that person has to offer. When looking at people, don't look at the temporariness, the "clothes" or sheaths or samskaras they have chosen to wear. Instead look at the soul and see the beauty, the God-consciousness, the love that is their nature. When we look at our Self, don't look at the clothing. That isn't about us. Look at the true Self, that of Sat Tat Aum. If we don't like the clothing we are wearing, we change it. If we don't like our samskaras, or mindsets, or views of reality, we change them. Look at something different. View life differently. If we don't like walking around seeing frustrated, angry and dissatisfied people, then change our view. See the soul, the beauty and love, the Sat Chit Ananda. Sooner or later, everything we were "in love with" and "really had to have", we no longer like and want to discard. We now want something new. The samskaras and mindsets are the same things. From an infinite Spirit's point of view, we are interested in God, we are interested in exploring and experiencing life. We look for something we like, something that brings joy, happiness and beauty. Sacrifice the things that don't. This is the path of surrender, surrendering to our higher nature. It is surrendering always to love and beauty.

We use discipline to control our mind. We use our mind to bring us back to the path of love and beauty. When our mind wants to be active, we don't fight with that. We say, "Okay, the mind wants activity so I'll put it to work remembering experiences of love, moments of beauty." Now the mind is happy because it has something to do. It's working. It's not harassing us. Soon the mind gets tired and calms down. That is the time to surrender to our nature. We've been looking at Divinity, beauty, love, joy, and happiness and now we are just bathing in it. We are just "being" our nature of Sat Chit Ananda. This is the path of surrender.

We cannot fight with our nature any more than we can fight with the law of gravity. We cannot rebel against our nature so why fight with our nature. Those times when the mind wants activity, we put it to work seeking our nature. We surrender to our nature. At times, the body is energized. We don't fight with it and say, "I will sit. I will calm down. I will do my meditation." We need to surrender to our nature. We go for a walk or interact with the rest of God. After two or three hours of walking, your body is ready to sit quietly. After two or three hours of working, cleaning the house, doing the laundry, your body will be ready to sit quietly. Surrender to your nature. Always remember that it is surrendering upwards and outward.

Liberation is liberation into God, not away from God, or this quality of God, or that part of God. Renunciation is renunciation of the idea of separateness or samskaras. It is the sacrifice of the limited. It is not renouncing this part of God with which you have a hard time. "I don't like God when He comes this way." Surrender to your true Self.

One time I wanted to see God. So, I prayed, "Divine Mother, I want to see you." I was feeling worn out. I was feeling restless. I was feeling confused and bored. "Divine Mother, I want to see you. I need this experience to re-charge." Along came a vision of some person. "No, Divine Mother, I want to see you." Along came a vision of a building, "No, Divine Mother, I want to see you." I had vision after vision and they kept getting better and clearer. "Oh, Divine Mother, I am cursed with a visual meditation. All I want to see is you and what I see is the rest of this stuff. Divine Mother, I just want to see you. I don't want to see landscapes, Spirits, holy ones, children, homeless people, animals, births, or deaths. I want to see you." This went on for an hour, one vision after another. My fervor was getting more intense. My loneliness and separateness were getting more intense. "Divine Mother, why can't I just see you? I just want to see you." Then I realized that I was seeing Divine Mother. "Divine Mother, I see you behind that mask, but I want to see you." This went on for another hour. "Yes, that is a beautiful costume you are wearing, Divine Mother, but I want to see you. I want to see you." This went on and on until I could no longer think, talk or call out because I was so filled with Divine Mother everywhere. I just sat in meditation another hour, feeling intoxicated.

What I experienced was that if I really wanted to see Divine Mother, I just had to open my eyes and look around. It was my image or ideal that I had wanted to see. I had a certain aspect of Divine Mother I wanted to see, not the whole, but a special image I wanted to see. Finally, through all the Divinity that was shown, I surrendered. Two or three days later in

meditation She manifested in the form or image I had called out for. I was overwhelmed with appreciation because I no longer needed that form, I understood that whether She was standing naked or wearing clothes, it was still Divine Mother. It was up to me to look beyond the clothing, the costumes, and the images She was wearing. It was my own choice to see landscapes, or clothing, or sheaths, or to see the Divinity, or God-consciousness.

I have learned that we don't have to wait for those special experiences to happen. We can make them happen by giving them our attention and by looking for them. We don't have to wait for a special weekend to make them happen. We can make it happen in meditation, in sleep, while we work, in the daylight or at night, in the desert, or in the mountains, sitting at the computer or on top of a mountain. There is no place outside ourselves that we can be or look that is not Divine Mother wearing one form or another. There is no place we can look inside ourselves that is not Sat Chit Ananda, that is not Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram wearing one form or another. It is simply our choice what we wish to look at.

If we look back over our life, we can see the times or different periods where we looked at the love, at the beauty, at the joy. These are great memories. We all have them. Now what we need to do is stop waiting for "special moments" in our life and make each moment special by what we look towards. I can talk about being in love, being in my nature, "I was so in love with you, Divine Mother." My poetry is filled with these experiences.

oh you know
i was so much
in love
when i saw

the yellow moon
walking up the lake
stepping over the trees
and standing tall
on top
of the night

This poem is very beautiful. It always brings love and intoxication. However, what the poem doesn't say is where that day started. I felt persecuted, unrelated to, unwanted, lost and felt everyone had too many demands on me. I felt I didn't even want to be around people so I left the cabin. I looked up and along came the moon, along came the surrender. Then and there, I was so much in love. It was a matter of what I looked at or what I identified with.

Our lives are pretty universal. We all have times of intoxication, depression, loneliness, and completion. What we haven't learned is that we can control these. We can be the masters of our destiny as easily and simply as choosing to look for the Divine, for the virtue, for the beauty, joy, and happiness. That night sitting out in the cold, I could have continued to feel sorry for myself, "Woe is me. No one loves me. No one appreciates me. Oh, I can't do anything right. Why am I even here?" I chose to look up. I chose to surrender to my higher nature.

We can choose to look at what we want. We have free will. Our nature is Sat Chit Ananda. We all know that because we enjoy love, joy, and laughter more than we enjoy anger, frustration, and depression. So, surrender. Look for the beauty. Be in love with life. If we don't feel intoxicated with love or Divinity, then we simply have to look for it. It is all around because that is the nature of God.

Om Shanti...the absolute stillness, the absolute peace

Om Satyam...the God-consciousness

Om Shivam...the Christ-consciousness

Om Sundaram...the Holy Stream, the Holy Spirit

This is what the material world is made of. This is what the entire creation is made of. "In the beginning was the Word." The Word, the first form coming out, was Om Satyam., from that word came Om Shivam, from that came Om Sundaram. The whole creation, ourselves included, is made up of Om Shanti, Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram and from this point on we have an infinite number of costumes which we can put on and take off.

Spirituality is about living within our nature. Life is about living our life, our nature, our interests, about choosing the life we want to live, not what parents, spouses, children, our bosses or co-workers, society or the environment want us to live. We live our life within our nature. This is spirituality. This is the Sacred Fire. This is the Sacred Heart.

when the flame
becomes
the fire
and the fire
becomes
the flame
the dance
and the
dancer
are one

Namaste

CELEBRATION

To celebrate life, we need love, harmony, and beauty. Love, harmony, and beauty are part of our nature, part of the God-stuff of which we are made. God created us, by throwing this thin, golden net around Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. Each soul is created of this God-stuff.

The harmony is the **Om Shivam**, that of the Christ-consciousness, that which is the intelligence of activity or motion. The beauty is the interaction, this little golden net interacting in a sea of golden nets or creation. Love is the God-consciousness.

All of us are seeking after love, harmony, and beauty. The holy ones have come to tell us that our nature is love, harmony, and beauty and that if we want to experience that continuously, we need to look within ourselves. However, it is a difficult process because most of us have been educated to seek love externally. Most of us have been educated to seek harmony externally in cooperation with another person or a group of people. Most of us have been educated that beauty is the external. When the holy ones come and say, "Look within," we don't know what to look for.

We have to begin redefining terms like love, harmony, and beauty, then continue to redefine them. Most people define love as the feeling that they have when they find another person whom they think is beautiful and with whom they think they are in harmony. This feeling really isn't love at all. This feeling that they are experiencing is the intoxication of two souls coming together with **Om Shivam**, a little harmonization. This is the bliss that we experience, the overflowing. Love is our nature. It is that feeling, that experience, that we have when we look around and everything we see is beautiful, everything we experience is in harmony, there are no needs or desires to have anything beyond what we already have. This is our nature; this is love.

When we redefine love, we have to begin to discriminate. We have to discern between what is love and what is the intoxication of love, the bliss of interaction. We have to begin to discern what is harmony and what is buying and selling with another person or a group of people. We need to redefine beauty as not what we think is beautiful or what we are attracted to, but as everything that we can possibly see.

When we look inward, we are not looking for an answer that would satisfy our mind. We are looking to redefine. Mostly the redefining is **Na Hum**, not this / not that. The redefining is a process of unfoldment and letting go of our more limited definitions and beginning to accept our Self as Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram.

Only after we accept ourselves as love, harmony, and beauty will we be complete enough to experience our Self as Om Shanti. Until we feel complete, our mind cannot be calm because we will be seeking after completion, seeking after fulfillment and we will not experience Om Shanti, our absolute nature, even temporarily or momentarily without first coming to our Self as Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram.

When the holy ones say, “Look inward, do the inward journey,” it isn’t a matter of looking into our mind waiting for the right answer to pop up, waiting for that one revelation that will enlighten us. It is a matter of looking inward and accepting our nature and letting go of the mindsets and samskaras with which we define ourselves.

Every celebration, whether it is a wedding, the birth of a child, a promotion, a birthday or just New Year’s, whatever celebration we have, the necessary ingredients are love, harmony, and beauty. If we are going to continuously celebrate life, we have to come to our Self, not pray to the holy ones, not pray to God to give us a little peace in life, not pray to Divine Mother to give us a little love, a little harmonization. We need to pray to the holy ones, to Divine Mother to help us get in touch with who we are, help lead us past the mindsets and ego that keep us separate from the realization of who we are.

This process of celebrating does not need to be long, serious, and hard work. It just needs to be consistent effort towards finding the love, the harmony, and the beauty. It is not years of doing yoga, years of doing mantras, years of studying theologies, years of *pranamming* to the statues, but an instant of coming to our Self, a moment of looking for the love, the harmony, and the beauty in any given situation. Then once we get that glimpse, once we have the experience that we are Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, then we need to take this experience and

begin to use it like a pair of glasses through which we view everything. Once we can clear past the samskaras and the mindsets, then we perceive God, perceive our holistic Self. We need to begin to perceive life through this glimpse that we get.

When we are beyond our mind, when we are into our true nature, then there is nothing but love and beauty. Then we look at our family, friends, co-workers, and life around us and we don't see depression, we don't see egotism, we don't see opinionated people, we don't see thieves, we don't see liars. What we see is the Divine light. We see the love, harmony, and beauty. These are the eyes we need to look through.

Whenever you can find anything that the world would call less than positive about a person, anything critical, anything that you would think less than the highest virtue, then know that you are not looking with the proper eyes, you are not looking from the state of your nature. You are looking from the state of worldly education, the kind of education that teaches that you are finite and inherently sinful, that you are ugly, evil, and selfish. Whenever you see this, throw off this view, throw off this philosophy because it is not from your nature, it is not who you are. It is what you have been taught. Look to discover within yourself Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. When you discover this within yourself, you will realize that not only are you love, harmony and beauty manifested, but so is everyone else, so is everything else.

The fights and disagreements that people have, the ego conflicts people have are actually no different than the sporting contests people have. If you didn't know football was a sport, you'd think people were going to war over something like gold or property or who's right. However, because you know it is a sport, it is okay. When people argue, fight, and even smack each other around, in a couple hundred years they get together in the astral heavens where they talk and laugh about it, and have a good time. There is no such thing as immortal enemies. There is no such thing as race prejudice or hatred in the soul. All this stuff comes from fear and insecurity, from not knowing we are complete, from thinking we have to have something like a relationship to have security, or gold to feel secure, or power to feel secure. We have to have all these things because we feel insecure without them. If we accept our nature and see ourselves as our soul, as love, harmony, and beauty, we wouldn't even wonder if other people like us. We would know that the nature of God is life giving unto life. Then others cannot help but be attracted to us.

There is only one God. We cannot be separate from God. We cannot be separate from the laws of God. The law of God is life giving unto life. There is no need to wonder if people will like us because the rest of God is attracted to us just like we are attracted to God. Once we come to our nature, all fears, doubts and insecurities will melt away. When the river comes to the ocean, you no longer see the river water. You no longer see the river because it flows into the ocean and becomes the ocean.

The holy ones come to show us that we are created in the image of God, that we are infinite and eternal, that we are made up of Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. This is the message of the holy ones and they spend their incarnations sharing that message. However, it is up to each of us to learn that message, to look inward and let go of the mindsets, the old definitions, the past. We keep looking inward until we discover that we are Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. Once we discover that, life becomes a celebration because we no longer have needs. We are now complete. We are now fulfilled. We can now celebrate because we aren't lacking anything. Once we reach this point, we are free. Now we have mukti. We are free into life. Before we were struggling with life, we would feel good until this person questioned our integrity. We felt good until something else threatened our security. There always seemed to be something that took our celebration away. We ran here and there to avoid it – seeking after freedom by running away.

Once we discover we are Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, we are freed into life. We now see more Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. Before, people were able to take it away from us. Now they can only give us more. The more they give us, the more love, harmony, and beauty we experience. Therefore, when people come and tell us their views, their words are Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. The only thing that can be exchanged between two souls is bliss, beauty, intoxication of communion. Whether they come in a Rolls Royce or a beat-up old pickup, whether they come with words of beauty and poetry or words of anger and slang, what they are truly bringing is more beauty, more prana, more God-stuff. This is freedom into life.

Freedom is the freedom to get manna from the sky, from every word that comes out of someone's mouth, from every smile and from every frown, from every laugh and from every teardrop, from wherever a communion is happening. What is being communed is love, harmony

and beauty because that is what God truly is. The anger, the eight meannesses of the human condition, all of that is seen and perceived only within the idea of separateness.

Through the eyes of separateness, we all have our opinions, our interpretations, our fears and insecurities. However, this is just temporary education. We need to look beyond this. Whenever we see our opinion coming, whenever we see our view or our idea coming in, we need to say, “**Na Hum**, not this, this is of the world, the separateness, this is of childhood. I’ll look deeper within myself until I can look outwardly and see life with love, harmony, and beauty. I will look as a soul, as an infinite Spirit. I will celebrate life. I will free myself into life. I will throw off the shackles of my mindsets and samskaras.” This is the message of the holy ones. This is what celebration is all about – coming to our nature.

I know I am making this sound very simple and easy and very matter of fact – “Just do it.” It can be. All we have to do is remember a moment of experiencing the love, a moment of feeling in harmony with life around us, remember what it felt like to experience beauty. Then we know we are capable of this state of viewing things. If we can’t remember, if we can’t get there, it is our mind that is standing in the way. All we have to do are a few mantras. **Hrim** is always a good mantra. **Om Satyam. Om.** We can use any mantra that will carry us past our temporary mindsets, temporary thoughts, to get to a state of love, harmony, and beauty. Once we get there, then we are freed into life. Once we are Satmuktananda, then life is a celebration. Because once we are experiencing Satmuktananda, we are worshipping God, we are in harmony, we are experiencing the wholeness.

The process of celebration is a process of being willing to let go of our mindsets and accepting ourselves as Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. If that takes using our memory to remember past moments, if it takes using a mantra or if it just takes walking outside and staring at life around, whatever it takes to help us expand or come to our true Self is the sadhana we should be using. We should even change that terminology around. Instead of calling it the spiritual practices, we should call it practicing being in love, practicing being in harmony, and practicing being in beauty. This is truly what it is. We practice and identify until we can identify continuously. This is the realization of our holistic Self.

Namaste

SACRIFICE

Coming to our nature of God-consciousness, we must sacrifice the limitations and go beyond the ideas of duality, beyond the ideas of personality, beyond the ideas of whom we think we are. We begin to listen to our inner Self. We begin to hear, feel, and accept our Divine nature, our eternal nature.

In going beyond the limitations, we discover that the most difficult of all to go beyond is who we think we are, our relative identity. Each time we think we have gone beyond it, something happens and we feel insecure, we are uncertain, we don't know. Then we have to go back to a time we felt secure. That time for us is our identity. We ask, "Who am I?" and we don't have an answer. Then we have to run through the mind, "Well, who was I the last time I knew?" This running back to our past or to our childhood is what we need to sacrifice.

We have to listen to our Self, feel our Self, even when we don't know who we are until we begin to form a new identity. This new identity is formulated out of the experiences that we will be having. We will be seeing life differently. We will soon have a new identity. "I am someone who enjoys music. I am someone who enjoys chanting. I am someone who enjoys service. I am someone who enjoys devotion. I am someone who likes these kinds of experiences." We feel comfortable and secure with this identity.

Then, as they said in our childhood, "Lo and behold, something else happens." That "something else" usually happens around the holy ones because that is where "something else" always seems to be happening. Suddenly we don't know who we are any more. Our initial reaction is joy and bliss and then after the joy and bliss wear off, we realize we don't know who we are, so we want to run back to who we were. This process of unfoldment, of going beyond our limitations is a continuous process.

When folks ask the holy ones, “Who are you?” The holy ones say, “I am nothing. Only God is.” Folks say, “What a humble answer. What humility they have.” It has nothing to do with humbleness or humility. They are in a continuous state of being open to God, of not having a limited identity. The difference between the holy one and the devotee is that the devotee feels frightened by this experience and the holy one feels union with God. When it comes to truly knowing who they are, they have accepted that there is only God and that the enjoyment of everyday living or the celebration of life is all about having ever-new experiences.

If you have an identity, an idea of who you are, you know what you do and don't like. You've been there – the knower and the known. “I know who I am. I know what I can do. I know what I can't do. I know I can go into samadhi in seven minutes and eight seconds. I know I can levitate after two hours and thirty-five minutes of intense pranayama. I know that I can tolerate anyone getting into my face (except for maybe a holy one) asking, ‘Who are you now that you have left the past behind?’” This is the knower and the known. This is still within the idea of separateness. In redefining ourselves, we have to accept that the process of spirituality, the process of the realization of our holistic nature is an unfoldment. We go beyond the limitations, beyond the relative identities every day until we are not only secure and comfortable with the ever-new, but the ever-new is our freedom.

Freedom into life is something to look forward to each day, each night, each meditation, whether we are going for a walk or interacting with our family, peer group, co-workers, or whether we are by ourselves. If we are truly experiencing the oneness, it is ever-new. Each mile on the freeway covered every day on the way to work and back is ever-new, unless we have an identity and “know” who we are. “I'm a person going to work. I know this road. I have been here. I recognize some of the cars that go at the same time. There is nothing new about this. It is boring and redundant.” If we accept our holistic nature, then it is ever-new. Our family is ever-new. They might talk about the same old thing, but it can't be the same old thing because they have talked about it before so they must have a different view. Even if they don't and it is just the same old story, well, we listen to songs repeatedly, same old song, CD, record. The words don't change. The music doesn't change. We listen to it over and over again because there is something about the song that brings an experience we like. So listening to people telling the same old stories should bring an experience we like. If we don't like the story, then dive a little deeper. As the song goes, “Dig a little deeper in the well.” The words are just the

vehicle that is bringing in the prana, the life force. Words have power. Forget the definition or relative identity of the words and go with the ever-new Divinity being experienced.

Going beyond our mindset of who we are takes the courage to live without knowing a limited identity for an hour, or a day, or sometimes weeks, until finally we like it so much we can live without knowing who we are continuously. Then when people ask, “Who are you?” you just say, “I am. What else do you want to talk about? I can tell you what I experience or what I like doing. I can tell you what I used to like doing. I can talk about the ‘glory days.’”

We redefine ourselves in the unfoldment towards our true Self by letting go of our image, of who we think we are, and by being willing to explore something new. Sometimes something new is just positive thinking. Sometimes something new is sitting quietly with the TV off and with the family off sleeping. Sometimes it is being willing to be with God, God when we are interacting, and God when we are quiet. Sometimes it is being willing to be with our true Self, the Self without all the conceptual mindsets. This process of realizing who we are should be continuous.

Once we can go beyond our idea of who we are, we will begin to feel our Self as love, as harmony, as beauty and experience life as love, harmony, and beauty. We won't have to have definitions. Our mind can be quiet. We can accept life as it is. We can surrender and accept that God is perfect, not nearly perfect in every way, but perfect in every way. Love is our nature and the nature of God, all things, all beings, all interactions.

This love is an ever-new joy, an ever-new fulfillment. We begin to experience harmony as a reverence, as an appreciation for God, ever-new. Then we realize that beauty is the way we feel when everything that touches our senses is an overflowing. There is so much bliss and intoxication that it is too much. It is too much beauty, too much bliss, too much intoxication. We have to close our eyes, ears, and the sensation in the body, because it is too much, it is overflowing. We have to go into samadhi because of too much beauty. We have to do **Om Shanti** so we can have some peace because God is just too beautiful, too overwhelming, too overflowing. This is the nature of the soul when it does not have a limited identity of who we are. When we can truly experience God, it is just too much joy, too much bliss. The creation is just too beautiful. It isn't something we want to be free from, but it is so overwhelming that we need Shanti, peace.

This is how the soul lives. The inhalation is the peace. The exhalation is our experiencing Divinity, the love, harmony, and beauty of our holistic nature. How do we get to that which is our nature? We get to it by dropping one idea at a time. As it comes up, we say, “**Na Hum** – not this. I am not that. Who am I then? I am just someone who loves God. Well, what is God, what is love? Now I have to go beyond that one too. Who am I?” When there is so much love, so much reverence, so much beauty, just go out and dive in, experience it. When we get to this point, this is the celebration. This is the worship. This is what the old scriptures talked about when they said we should have an awe of God, an overwhelmingness, too much joy, too much beauty, too much love. “God is too much, therefore I have to have peace. I have to go back to my absolute nature because God is so overwhelming in the experience of love, harmony, and beauty that I need peace.” The holy ones live this reality. The realization of our holistic nature brings this reality.

You see the holy ones walking across the meadows. You see the holy ones helping the poor and the sick. You see the holy ones working and interacting 20 to 24 hours a day. You think, “Wow! I’m not sure I want to become realized. Look, all they do is work. All they do is help others and never seem to get a lot of credit. They are poor. Look at their clothes. Look at where they live. Look at what they have. Look at how hard they work. They even cry. Their body gets sick, old, and diseased. I’m not sure this realization is all they say it is.” The holy ones don’t live in the duality. To the holy one, it is ever-new joy, ever-new bliss, ever-new God. To the holy ones, whether they are laughing or crying with compassion for those who are suffering, it is ever-new. It doesn’t matter if it is heads or tails, it is the Divine coinage, that is what they are experiencing.

The holy ones surrender, experience, and accept God as God is. To get to this state, we have to have the faith that if we go beyond our identities, go beyond who we think we are, it will be better. This is where most devotees begin the “holy war” because they cannot make that leap of faith. They wait until “who they are” is so painful that they have to make the leap. “Any place has to be better than this, so I will take the next step.” A year or two later they come to that place again. “Any place has to be better than this, so I will take the next step.” After a number of steps come quicker, they realize that life can be enjoyable if they keep moving and unfolding. They begin to look forward to the change or to the transformation, the unfoldment. Their mind then begins to become quieter because they don’t have to have answers, they don’t

have to understand, and even more importantly, they don't have to be understood. It is enough to appreciate life. Then the journey truly becomes enjoyable because we have then come to our Self.

We are created in the image of God. Our nature is love. To feel love is different than to be loved. To be loved is when someone else feels love. It is like being warm. It isn't enough to know someone else is warm. We want to be warm. When we realize that our nature is love, then for us to experience our nature of love, has little to do with other folks. If our mind is involved, we say, "They are experiencing love, so I must be good so I can experience love." Yet, if they are angry and not experiencing love, our mind says, "Maybe there is something wrong with me." When we think something is wrong with us, then we ask, "Who am I and what is wrong with me?" Then we don't experience love. We now experience thinking. While we are experiencing thinking, the knower and known, we cannot experience the peacefulness of love. We don't experience the peacefulness of not having questions. We begin to learn that when we do have a question, we don't have to have the answer in order to feel love or experience beauty. Things have happened this incarnation and I don't know why they have happened. Maybe someday, there will be an answer, but I don't wait for that someday before I experience the love, harmony, and beauty. I just continue celebrating, continue the worship of God. Someday maybe there will be an answer. I hope that when I see the answer I will remember the question.

The process of celebrating life has to do with appreciation, reverence, and perception. The idea of being the solver of puzzles and riddles, the idea of being knowledgeable about the creation can get to be a very non-celebration type experience. Stop and think about it. All the times when you really had to know something, really wanted to know something, were you laughing? Were you having a good time doing your research? Was there joy bubbling over? Was there love for everything you encountered? Was there beauty all around? Or, was it more like, "I need an answer here. I don't want any distractions. I don't want laughter, joy, love, or beauty. I just want to know why this is happening to me!" You don't have any laughter, love and beauty in your experiences because you are pushing it away to get that answer. "Why am I not enjoying my life?" Because you are busy wondering why you are not enjoying your life instead of simply living it, instead of just experiencing it.

God is our nature. Love, harmony, and beauty are our nature. If we accept this as our nature, accept it as truly who we are, then it is all around. However, instead, we accept: “I’m a mother. I’m an athlete. I’m a musician. I have weaknesses and strengths. I have to go beyond my weaknesses. I’m worthless. I’m great.” We create all these fantasies and believe they are greater than our actual nature. They are less than the experience of God. The greatest fear, the most frightening, is the one of not existing. “I won’t exist. I won’t have an identity. I WON’T BE REAL.” We have to be willing to sacrifice the idea that we will go out of existence if we don’t define ourselves. Then we can begin to experience love, experience enjoyment, experience being in love with life, being in harmony with life, being in beauty with life.

How precious is the sense of the small self? How much should it be treasured when it brings us pain and suffering, fear and insecurity, depression, anger, greed, and need? How precious is this idea to which we are willing to cling? This is why I say the unfoldment takes place very grudgingly, when the sense of the small self is so painful that anything will be better. “Even surrendering or not existing is better than suffering.” This is the step that most of us will make several times before we realize the ever-new joy involved in opening ourselves up and embracing life wholeheartedly.

At times when we don’t have a clue who we are, when we are not in *brahmachari*, when we are not feeling the joy and overwhelmingness, this is when we are standing with our back to the sun and all we see is the past. We know we aren’t there, but if we will just turn around and let go of the past, turn around and look to the now, we will begin to feel the love, the joy, the beauty, and the harmony. If we look towards the past, we will see pain, suffering, and limitations. When we don’t know who we are, when we don’t have a clue, that’s the time to begin the celebration because we are right there. We have worked hard to get to that point. We have worked hard to crawl to the edge of the cave. We’ve stumbled over the stones, dead ideas, and all sorts of things. Why stand at the edge of the cave and look back into the darkness and say, “I don’t want that, but I can’t leave it.” There is nothing to be afraid of. If you don’t like pain and suffering, just let go of the past. Look towards tomorrow. This is the whole debate between the East and the West. The East says, “Without knowing the past, you can’t go forward wisely and not repeat the same mistakes.” The West says, “If you keep looking at the same mistakes, so you won’t repeat them, there is no hope for the future.” They are both unbalanced.

The past helped us get to today, but without hope or dream of tomorrow, we won't take another step.

Coming to our Self is about going beyond who we think we are. It is about accepting who we really are – we are just an aspect of God who lives in love, harmony, and beauty with all the other aspects of God, or the wholeness of God, of love, harmony, and beauty.

Namaste

GRACE

A number of years ago when Paramahansa Yogananda was getting ready to leave the body, his devotees asked him what they would do, what should they do, when he left. He said that only one thing could take his place and that was love. Even before that, when Christ was getting ready to leave, his devotees asked him the same thing and he said they would know they were his devotees if they got to a state of love. God-consciousness is that love.

Each of us is created in the image of God. In order for us to be able to perceive and realize this, we have to experience our Divine nature or love. This is the indication that we are living within God-consciousness. It isn't something we do. It isn't something we experience when we interact with others. It is our nature.

When we interact with others, this outpouring of love is then called devotion. This is the overwhelmingness of love. This is devotion towards Divinity, God, or the Divine light. When we add compassion to this outgoing love, when we don't want harm, but rather we want bliss and joy, this is reverence. When we begin to perceive this going out of love and reverence and begin to appreciate and see the Divinity, the dance of light and shadow, this is an appreciation of Divinity. This is also part of our Divine nature. This devotion, this reverence and appreciation are emotions the devotee doesn't know what to do with because there is still enough ego left that they feel the only one deserving of their devotion, reverence and appreciation is God (and once in a while, a holy one). We are caught with this love and have no way of channeling it. We don't know what to do with it. Sometimes we feel like we just want to throw it off, throw off the age-old shackles of our mindsets. Sometimes we feel like we have too much love, we can't stand it, our chest must surely burst unless we can rip it open. This is the state of devotion, reverence, and appreciation. This is when our nature of love wants to be expressed. Our nature

of Om Satyam now wants to move into Om Shivam, the Christ-consciousness, the creating, the virtue, the giving. This is the manifestation of love.

This manifestation may take many forms – karma yoga, bhakti yoga, *japa* yoga. We need to find a channel to allow our nature to begin to flow. If you dam a river, the river will fill until at some point it will overflow the banks and seek its way to the ocean. Usually with flooding there is damage to property around, since people like to live on the riverbanks. It is the same with this **Om Shivam**. If we do not find channels for this devotion, or reverence, or appreciation, for these times of intoxication when this overflowing happens, it will overflow the banks. It will overflow beyond our ability to see what the damage is because we will be so intoxicated. Therefore, the process is to find a channel for our nature because our nature is going to happen. We are love. We are reverence. We are beauty.

Whether this channel is chanting to God in a devotional state, whether it is going out and showing our appreciation to the holy ones, whether it is going out and helping the less fortunate ones, we need to find a channel. If we do not find a way to allow our nature to flow, then it will cause damage to others, which will in turn come back to us.

While we are quiet, while we are going beyond our samskaras, we will experience times of bliss and intoxication and overflowingness. During these times we will act intoxicated, but what we need to do is pay attention to what is happening around us. Through this process of paying attention, we will see what we said and did while intoxicated and which part comes back to us, which part overflowed the banks and did damage. Then we will know which part wasn't channeled well. There are always risks because for too long we have thought of ourselves as no different than anyone else. "We are all equal. I am no different. I don't feel any different." However, when this Divine consciousness begins to flow, the power and energy are different and will effect those around us differently.

As Satmuktananda, we are freed into life, not free to do what we want in life, but free to see and experience love, God, our nature. We are free to harmonize with God, our nature. We are free to experience the beauty of God, our nature. This process or journey is ever-new. Each experience is new. Each interaction is new. We need to be sensitive to what is happening around us. Throughout the years, devotees have come to me and said, "I had this experience. Did you do that?" I have to respond with, "No, but I do notice things happen around me." Life is happening, our nature of love, harmony, and beauty is happening.

When we feel that overflowing, that overwhelmingness, we need to remember that the manifestation of our nature is devotion, reverence, and appreciation. The devotion is the overwhelming love we feel towards/for/with life around us, or God. Appreciation is for life around us, God. If we come back to devotion, reverence, and appreciation, then we will be channeling our Divine consciousness in a way that is beneficial for the individual and the international community. This process can be done in meditation, in thought, word, and deed. We can begin to harmonize our nature with the nature of God, the nature of life.

When it comes to the holy ones, we can show our appreciation, be thankful. **Om Namō Ari Hantanam, Om Namō Siddhanam.** If that is just a Sanskrit mantra to you, you can say, “I bow to the saints and sages of all time and traditions. I bow to those who have come before and I bow to those who will come after me.” To the people around us we can pronam mentally – “**Namaste.** I bow to the Divine light within you.” We don’t have to worship their samskaras. We don’t have to praise or appreciate their samskaras, but we can worship and praise the Divine light.

When it comes to God, the whole, we can just say, “Oh God, thank you for being so generous. Oh Divine Mother, thank you for being so generous.” We can begin developing **Om Shivam**, this outpouring of our Divine nature, in thought, word, and deed. In our devotional state, it can be “Oh, my Beloved One. Oh, my Beloved One.” We begin to develop these channels.

The more we develop the devotion, reverence, and appreciation, the more we can harmonize with life around us – because then we are communing. We are no longer afraid of aloneness because we feel the fullness, the expansion. We express and manifest that in our vibration because we are feeling it within ourselves. The rest is the grace of God. We free ourselves into it by attaining to a state of experiencing love, devotion, harmony, reverence, beauty, and appreciation. Now we are freed into God. Now we are Satmuktananda. Now “God happens.” Notice the difference there – now that we are free, “God happens.” It isn’t “shit happens,” but “God happens”. Now it is life and life more abundantly. Now the love is there. The harmony is there. The beauty is there. Everywhere we look, it is Satyam Shivam Sundaram. We’ve become Satmuktananda. We have freed our Self into God, into our nature.

Once we have freed our Self into our nature, we begin to experience the grace of God, the full grace. Then we need to accept and continue to surrender to this grace of God. I know it

seems difficult to perceive that we would have a hard time accepting the grace of God. The thing about God is – God is so large, so infinite and eternal that it seems like too much. It is too much love, too much beauty, too much joy. The grace of God is happening and our tendency is to say, “It is too much. I must have less.” We have to keep surrendering to the grace of God.

Om Shanti Shanti Om Shalom Shalom – I chant this mantra. This is also a chant that I chanted to my children, the chant I chant 95 percent of the time when I am in that devotion, when I am in that state of **Om Shivam**, when I am just flowing – **Om Shanti Shanti Om Shalom Shalom**. The **Om** represents God as Sat Tat Aum, God as creation, God in the form. **Shanti** is the formless, God the Absolute, the One who always has been, is now and forever shall be. Therefore, it is God manifest and God unmanifest. **Shanti Om** – God unmanifest and God manifest.

Creations come, creations go. God always is, whether manifested or unmanifested. **Om Shanti** ... I’m manifest, so my chant is from here to there. Once I’m there, it is from there to here ... **Shanti Om**. Humanity is the limitation of God. God is the potential of humanity. From the manifest to the unmanifested, from the form to the formless and then from the formless to the form. This is the nature of God. Since we are God-stuff, it is our nature also.

Shalom means grace, the grace of God. Once we have prepared our Self by getting to our nature of love, harmony, and beauty, then all else is the grace of God. We receive it, accept it, and experience it. We just need to allow the grace of God to happen. When we allow the grace of God to happen, as though we could do anything else, then we are in a state of celebration. When we don’t allow the grace of God to happen, as if we are really changing anything, then we don’t enjoy it. We may use other terminology when we don’t allow the grace, but basically what we are saying is, “God, this is too much. I need less. I need much less.”

This process of unfolding we go through is just that. We are going beyond our limitations until we come to our Self, our nature of love, harmony, and beauty. Then we become Satmuktananda, for maybe a moment or an hour. If we go back to less than our nature, back to having a limited identity, then we can work back to our nature. However, what we discover when we come to our nature, when we come to freedom into life, is the grace of God which is more love, more harmony and more beauty. That is what the God-stuff, the Christ-consciousness, the holy stream is all about. We need to accept, appreciate, realize, and live it.

The acceptance, appreciation, and realization of our nature is a two-fold process. It is the

process of calming the mind and the mindsets, and the ego or the idea of separateness. It is the process of experiencing our Self as Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti. Then coming back from that experience, it is the keeping of that experience and going beyond our relative identities. We can then begin to celebrate. All life becomes a celebration and we become a celebration within our nature of love, harmony, and beauty. When we are identified with that, there is nothing else left except celebration. There is nothing left but God. We are Satmuktananda, too much joy, ever-new joy, too much bliss, and too much virtue until we need that peace, that Shanti again. **Om Shanti**. Then we have peace. Then it is **Shanti Om**, too much joy, then it is **Om Shanti** again, back and forth, the inhalation and the exhalation. This is our nature. This is the nature of God both manifested and unmanifested. This is our nature at this time, manifest and unmanifest. All of it is the grace of God, including all the *avatars*, all the realized souls that are manifested on earth

When we do the chant – **Om Shanti Shanti Om Shalom Shalom**, we are throwing off our relative identities and identifying with our true nature, manifest and unmanifest, unmanifest and manifest. We are accepting the whole process, the grace of God.

In our journey, our experience of who we are, in our search for truth, Divinity, Self-realization or God, we have our Self. How much of our Self depends on how much we are willing to accept our Divine nature. This true Self, this absolute Self is the Divine nature. It is Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram in its purest state, that of the God-consciousness, whether manifested and unmanifested.

Our nature is Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, Om Shanti. This is Divinity. This is the pure God-consciousness. It is like a wave on the ocean – it is part of the ocean, of the ocean, and the same as the ocean. The realization of our holistic nature is surrendering to our nature of Divinity, surrendering to God. There is just God. There is just life giving unto life. We see the rest of God. There is, Om Shanti Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram in this form and in that form, in this wave and in that particle. That is all there is – Om Shanti, Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, only God.

Namaste

HARMONY

Let your life be a song of love, let your voice be the music of the heart. Realization of our nature, living holistically, is what we all seek after, either knowingly or unknowingly. The soul strives after liberation or mukti. We have been created in the image of God, Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, Shanti, or Sat Tat Aum – eternal, love, consciousness and joy. We are forever seeking our nature or the nature of the soul and the fulfillment of the three bodies. These are the causal body, the astral body, and the physical body. The soul also wants to be free of these encasements. This doesn't mean throwing them off or being done with them. It means the soul doesn't want to be limited by the encasement or limitations of each of the three bodies.

The physical body is primarily concerned with the five physical senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. It seeks its fulfillment through these senses by exploration and experiences of these senses. The astral body seeks its fulfillment through the experience and expression of joy, beauty, love, and delightful things like the arts, dance, music, and painting, which are expressions of our joy. The causal body seeks its fulfillment through understanding, being in harmony with the laws of nature, the laws of God. The causal mind seeks to understand why we have a desire to fulfill certain events, or understand the working of creation.

The process of seeking this fulfillment is innate within our nature. This is why in seeking after liberation we still enjoy the physical manifestation with the senses. We enjoy the fragrance and beauty of flowers, and the beauty of the human form. Although we realize that the physical is temporary, we still seek it and enjoy it. This is natural, fulfilling, and part of living within our holistic nature. We need to understand that the physical, astral, and causal manifestations are all legitimate parts of God. They, in and of themselves, will not bring us fulfillment. However, neither will we be fulfilled without them.

Now we come to the nature of the three bodies. The nature of the physical manifestation

is action. The nature of the astral body is joy and expression. The nature of the causal body is to understand and be in harmony. The nature of the soul is to experience Satyam, Shivam, and Sundaram. Our God-Conscious nature is an ever-new, ever-expanding experience of all these qualities and aspects of Divinity.

Shiva and Shakti are ever in union. Shiva is the intelligence or consciousness of Divinity and Shakti is the manifestation or power of the Divine. Our not understanding the Shiva and Shakti union allows us to live within the idea of separateness. If we accept the Shiva/Shakti nature of all life, then we can begin to harmonize with our holistic Self.

There is a process to help us go beyond the idea of separateness. In the yogic tradition it is called the *Royal Path*. The Royal Path has karma yoga, bhakti yoga, jnana yoga, and meditation. The balance of these four yogic traditions will lead to Self-realization or the realization of our soul, Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. Realization of our soul leads to an ever-expanding awareness into God-consciousness.

If we understand that the nature of the physical body is action and make our actions, the fulfillment of the five physical senses, beneficial to the individual and the international community, we are serving in a karma yogic manner. We are becoming an example to others around us. We are living a life that is an inspiration to others. We are doing service while we also enjoy and appreciate the material creation.

Next, we have the astral body. The fulfillment of the astral body is to express and enjoy the love, the devotion towards God and life. This uplifting expression through the arts, chanting, prayers, or appreciation of being alive is bhakti yoga. We can fulfill the desires of the astral body while going about our everyday life being a fine bhakti yogi. We just have to experience and express the love and joy that we have within us.

The causal is the jnana yoga. Here we understand our karma, what is beneficial, what is mentally civilized. We come to understand that some things need to be expressed and some things need to be understood. This is how we fulfill the causal body. We had desires, which is why we are here. We have desires to do, to learn, to experience, to know, and to understand. That is why we have a causal body, an astral body, and a physical body. The jnana yoga tradition is to take those desires and direct them towards the fulfillment of our dharma.

If we combine the karma yoga, bhakti yoga, and jnana yoga practices, and then balance them with the sacred science of meditation, we will attain our nature, Om Satyam, Om Shivam,

Om Sundaram, Om Shanti. This process is the experience of life and life more abundantly. We don't have to renounce the material world. We don't have to starve ourselves. We don't have to go off and live in a stone monastery with gray walls. We can truly enjoy the creation, the dance and the dancer, on our way to liberation.

The process of realizing our Self, realizing our holistic nature takes continued energy and effort. This is where we come back to Shakti and Shiva. Shakti is the power, the energy of God. Shiva is the Christ-consciousness and the God-consciousness. By accepting that Shiva and Shakti are inseparable, we can always utilize the Shakti energy. There is always an abundance of energy. However, we need to keep in mind to be mentally civilized by doing what is beneficial for the individual and the international community.

Everyone who takes an incarnation makes their best effort to have an enjoyable day and an enjoyable life. They eat foods they think will bring them happiness and joy. They do activities they think will fulfill them and bring joy. They desire the feelings and the activities they think will benefit them and bring happiness. They think thoughts and believe in concepts and ideas that they think will bring them happiness. This is something everyone does instinctively. The difference between the holy ones and the rest of humanity is in the belief of the idea of separateness. The holy ones accept that the idea of separateness exists, but that it is an illusion. It is an illusion that will keep you limited to the three bodies, entrapped in the physical, astral and causal bodies.

The science of meditation is directed towards calming down the breath (the physical body), the mind, with its thoughts, feelings and desires to be active (the astral body), and the ego, the idea of separateness or duality, the knower and the known (the causal body). The sacred sciences of meditation have been designed to help develop concentration and calm down the physical, astral and causal bodies in order that we might surrender to our nature, Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram and thereby experience our eternal nature. This is the process of re-identifying and temporarily going beyond the limitations in meditation so that we can experience our true nature. We go beyond, in meditation, on the inhalation and come back and experience on the exhalation, allowing us to live more and more within our nature. The mantras are aspects of our eternal vibration.

How do we develop discipline in our sadhana? We have faith that our nature is Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, that our nature and the nature of God are one and the same. Once we believe

that, or have faith, then there is a purpose to everything we do in life, including trying to see, experience, understand, and express.

We need courage to go beyond our mindsets, our beliefs, our present situations. We need the courage to say, “I’m not all that happy. Maybe I need to go inward and surrender to my nature of Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram.” It takes courage because we have always believed that love, joy, beauty, and happiness have come from external sources, from relationships or activities. It takes courage because we are going to look within for our own nature of Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. While we are looking within, we aren’t looking externally.

Next, it takes trust in the holy ones. The holy ones are the only ones that have the message to look within and that our nature is one and the same with God. Think about how many people you have met this lifetime and how many of them have made the effort to say, “Look within. Your nature is Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. Your nature is the same as God’s nature. Your nature is love, harmony, and beauty.” This is why it takes trust. The world and everyone we know, everything we see, hear, feel, taste, touch, enjoy, and experience is saying other than what the holy ones are saying. We have to trust that the holy ones have our best interests in heart/mind. This takes trust.

It takes faith that our nature is Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. It takes courage to surrender and to make the time and effort to experience Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. It takes trust to believe that the holy ones have our best interests in mind. It also takes strength to withstand the “growing pains” that will come. We may want to think, “This isn’t for me,” because it will be difficult to go beyond our beliefs without discomfort. There will be “growing pains” and it will take strength to continue making the effort towards Self-realization. This is all part of life, part of the natural maturing of the soul, of the infinite Spirit.

If we are fortunate enough to have the guidance of a *Sat guru*, we will develop another quality, which is harmonization. An obstacle to this harmonizing is our ego, which we are trying to calm down and go beyond. The ego will resist the Sat guru. The world has resisted and won’t have anything to do with the holy ones. The devotee wants to harmonize with the Sat guru, but he or she will resist. The ego will resist its own demise.

The nature of the ego itself is the idea of separateness. With the idea of separateness, we are in competition with everyone else, including the Sat guru. The devotee comes to the guru

and resents his own suffering and ignorance and his guru's enlightenment. There is resistance. In the eyes of God, we are all equal. In the eyes of the ego and the three bodies, the Sat guru is a master of his own destiny and the devotee is a slave to his own samskaras and desires. More resistance and frustration at not being equal is a natural process. It is the nature of the ego and the nature of the idea of separateness. Every devotee will encounter it, and however subtle, it will be an obstacle.

We have to decide about our life. Is our life the way we want it? Are we going to change our life? The Sat guru and the holy ones are the only ones with the Divine messages, with the pathway to our holistic nature. They are the teachers and liberators. We must emulate their example. The ego will resist surrendering to the Sat guru. So, what do we surrender to? We surrender to our nature. We surrender to Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. We surrender to experiencing the love, the joy, the harmony, and the beauty that is our nature, the nature of God, the nature of all life and the nature of the Sat guru. This is what we surrender to. Remember that all guidance from the Sat guru, whom we already trust, is for our best interest towards our Self-fulfillment. We need to follow the guidance in order to surrender to Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. This is where meditation, chanting the sacred mantras, and making the consistent effort to identify with our nature comes in.

Harmonize with the Sat guru by becoming Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, becoming the holy stream of consciousness. Have the willingness and courage to make the effort to go beyond our samskaras one at a time. Go beyond the limitations of the three bodies. This helps us to harmonize and become Satmuktananda like the holy ones. Harmonize using *upanishad*.

Om Namō Ari Hantanam – I bow to the conquerors of their inner enemies. That's what we want to do. We want to conquer our samskaras. We want to go beyond our fears, insecurities, weaknesses, and doubts. **Om Namō Siddhanam** – I bow to the realized souls. That's what we want to do. We want to live within our nature of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. Satmuktananda – we want to be free. Do the mantra, **Om Namō Ari Hantanam, Om Namō Siddhanam**. Focus in on the holy ones. Focus in on their vibration, on the holy consciousness.

What is the Sat guru? The Sat guru is Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. When you picture a holy one say, "**Om Namō**. I am the manifested God-consciousness. Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram." **Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram**. If we keep identifying with

this, we will come to our nature. We are all equal in the eyes of God. We all have the same amount of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, we just have to come to it, uncover it, unveil it.

Use upanishad. Experience the presence. Harmonize with the Sat gurus, the holy ones. Then we can use darshan. Darshan is the holy sight/presence, the stream of consciousness of the realized ones. We utilize it. We use it to calm down the physical, astral, and causal bodies and the ego. So we come into the presence of the holy ones and have darshan. We begin to identify with Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram until we begin to surrender to our nature of love, harmony, and beauty. Love will quiet the ego. The ego will calm down with the experience of love.

We use the sacred mantras to harmonize with our nature of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. We harmonize with the Sat guru by becoming Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, by becoming our nature. The realization of our nature is no more than **Na Hum**; let go of the samskaras of the physical, astral, and causal bodies and the idea of separateness. We can do that in meditation. Then we come out of meditation and begin to enjoy everyday life, seeking fulfillment of our nature in the activity and action of the physical body. We seek fulfillment and enjoyment in the expression of love, joy, and beauty for the astral body. We seek understanding, harmony, and thankfulness for the causal body. Experience the love, harmony, beauty, and joy of our soul because our nature is Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram and Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram more abundantly, or God-consciousness, our large Self. This process of unfoldment, or this journey towards the soul is a natural process of fulfillment.

Although I am fifty-one, I am still striving after attaining athletic accomplishments. I enjoy it. It fulfills my physical body. My physical body is an aspect of my holistic nature at this time. I enjoy doing it. I enjoy the flowers, the beauty, the poetry, the music, and the chanting because it fulfills my astral body. My astral body is part of my holistic nature. I enjoy and appreciate the dynamics of the oneness of karma and dharma and my nature because this fulfills the causal body, which I have at this time. The difference, though, is that I don't believe my athletic endeavors, enjoyment of poetry or art, or my understanding are what will bring me happiness or completion. I know that this is part of life and life more abundantly. I know that happiness, joy and completion is my very nature because when I sit to meditate and calm down the physical, astral and causal bodies, and the ego, I can experience love, harmony, and beauty even without any form. Within the formless, my nature is still one and the same with God's

nature, that of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. I know these activities that I enjoy and appreciate and that fulfill the three bodies are partial aspects of my holistic nature. They are temporary enjoyments and fulfillment of having the bodies.

The realization of our infinite and eternal nature is a matter of proper effort. If we surrender to our nature, we will enjoy living. If we do not surrender to our nature, we will be on a roller coaster of pleasure and pain, happiness and suffering because we will look for happiness in the idea of separateness. Understanding that which is temporary and that which is permanent, working with enjoying and appreciating are all part of the dynamics. However, to enjoy, appreciate, and have the energy for the dynamics, we have to accept that Shiva and Shakti are ever in union. Shiva and Shakti are inseparable. We are holistic.

The primal energy is what drives humanity. It gives us the energy to go on. One of my favorite poems is:

love
is the
source
of life
beauty
the
energy of
eternity

Science and humanity see primal energy as that force which drives man towards self-preservation and procreation. This primal desire that starts at the physical body, the first chakra, Shakti, seeks fulfillment at the physical. Just direct it to the astral body. Love is the source of life, beauty the energy of eternity. Beauty is the fulfillment of the astral body.

You take all this primal energy, this dynamic force, and instead of putting it into action, you put it into expression, enjoyment, experiencing the love, beauty, and dynamics of God. Love is our nature. It is the nature of God. It is the nature of all life. Believe in the union of Shiva and Shakti. Allow the primal energy to flow. Don't suppress it or repress it. Direct it towards the fulfillment of your life. Direct it towards the fulfillment of your soul, your holistic

nature. If you direct this towards the fulfillment of your holistic nature, this is called the kundalini energy, Shakti to Shiva.

Allow the energy of Divinity, the primal force, to energize you in your efforts towards mukti, towards Satmuktananda, towards surrendering to Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. Instead of sad love songs coming out of your mouth, let it be more of “**Hey Hari Sundara** – Oh, God beautiful!” Make the songs of your life, the songs of love. Make the words that come out of your mouth the music of your heart, “**Om Satyam**, Oh, God beautiful! Oh it’s a beautiful day, the birds, the bees, the energy, the dynamics. Wow!” Let it be the music of the soul, of the heart, of love. Allow your voice to be the music of your heart, of your soul, of your nature.

It takes your effort to re-direct your beliefs, ideas, actions, and your whole Self towards fulfillment of your holistic Self. Transform your awareness into your larger Self. It doesn’t take years, or lifetimes. It just takes a coming to your nature, identifying with Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram.

Namaste

UNION

When the flame
becomes
the fire
and the fire
becomes
the flame
the dance
and the
dancer
are one

This is a poem about the union of the small Spirit, as the flame, the soul, Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram, expanding into the God-consciousness. The nature of God and the soul are one and the same. We realize our nature of Om Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram and surrender and expand into God. The flame becomes the fire. The nature and will of God, Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram expresses itself in the unique soul. This is the fire becoming the flame, the fulfillment of our dharma. The dance and the dancer are one. We are a harmonized part of the dance and the dancer. We are a conscious and aware part of the oneness. We are one with God, Satmuktananda (eternal liberated bliss).

A devotee has devotion to and for God. This is our goal – to become one with, to surrender, to experience, to be in love, to become the flame and the fire.

i am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

We understand that the pure Divinity, the God-consciousness of the soul, is the flame, and that the idea of separateness, or the external you, is what we sacrifice. We sacrifice the idea of separateness by coming to our nature – we are identifying with our nature of eternal love, joy, harmony, and beauty. We are sacrificing all the ideas of separateness, all the habits, all the samskaras. This is what it means to sacrifice. We don't sacrifice children, animals, incense and myrrh, flowers, or candles. We sacrifice our beliefs in the idea of separateness in order to go beyond them. Be willing to give up the attachment to what is familiar.

i am
the flame
you are
the sacrifice
most
beautiful

This is what the Sacred Fire is. The Sacred Fire is the sacred love becoming the flame, starting at our pure nature. The flame is the pure Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. It then grows into God-consciousness. It grows with love and love more abundantly, for eternity. This is what the Sacred Fire is all about.

The yogic practices are techniques that we use to discipline our body, our Spirit, and our mind so that we can get a glimpse of our soul, of our true nature, our pure nature. Once we get this glimpse of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, we begin to purify our causal, astral, and physical bodies in the sense of going beyond the samskaras, the limitations with which we identify. We harmonize our Self at the causal, the astral, and the physical level. We purify. We stand within the fire, the flame of love, of Divinity. We allow it to purify us. Sometimes it may feel like it will consume us. Sometimes it may frighten us. We must remember that we are the flame, the samskaras and ideas are the sacrifice, which will be burned off.

If we continue to seek after happiness in the limited physical, astral, and causal bodies,

the soul will begin to starve and we will feel unfulfilled. We seek fulfillment of our holistic Self by living for our holistic Self. We do what is beneficial for the individual and the international community, or what is beneficial for the soul and for God, the mineral kingdom, the plant kingdom, the animal kingdom, the human kingdom, the angel kingdom and the deva kingdom.

By living in this manner, we will develop a passion for humility, the willingness to learn, grow, and expand. We really don't have time for fears and insecurities. Incarnations pass so fast. The greatest blessing of the holy ones is that they inspire us to attain liberation and to live holistically. The holy ones try to inspire a passion for love, for harmony, for beauty, a passion for life, for God.

God is love, harmony, beauty, and joy in abundance. Ancient scriptures talk about fearing God. Fear is a poor translation. What they mean is that anyone who truly experiences God lives in awe. They are overwhelmed with love, beauty, joy, and happiness. It overwhelms the senses. It is too much. It overwhelms the mind. It is such an abundance of love, harmony, beauty, joy, happiness, bliss, intoxication and ecstasy that you just want to go to the formless to have peace and quiet, Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram.

Start immediately and begin to develop a passion for living, a passion to know your Self, to experience your Self, to experience God, to live life fully, realizing that the dance and the dancer are one. The nature of God and the nature of the soul are one and the same. Begin to develop this passion for life.

Start developing a passion for being in love. Be in love with love. Develop a passion for harmony and realization because this is what **Om Shivam** is, the Christ-consciousness, all knowledge, all intelligence. Have a passion to experience and learn about the physical, astral, and causal bodies, the soul and God. Have a passion for beauty, harmony, and joy. Look for it within. Look for it everywhere. Develop a passion to experience, to want to live in a state of joy and harmony and beauty and love. "Allow your life to be a song of love, allow your voice to be music of the heart."

Look for love, harmony, and joy in your thinking, in your speech. Make sure that when you speak, you are allowing your voice, the sound and the words you choose, to be from your heart, to be of love, virtue, harmony and beauty. It is a simple thing. As children, every one of us was expected to speak within the boundaries our parents defined. Each of us, who are now parents, has verbal boundaries that we allow our children. If young children with little

discipline, can speak within the boundaries of what they have been taught, then we as adults who make our lives an expression of love, can certainly choose the words carefully that represent us. Our words are expressions of our astral body, our astral karma. We are fulfilling and developing our karma with each word spoken. Allow your life to be an expression of the soul, of the God-consciousness.

The realization of our nature is – “I am the flame. I am Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram.” When the flame becomes the fire and the fire becomes the flame, the dance and the dancer are one. When we can get to our nature and experience our Self as Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, then we can begin to expand to experience life without limitations, fears, insecurities, doubts, questions. We can become Satmuktananda and we can enjoy this whole life. We have become Satmuktananda and others will be influenced because we are expressing it. We are expressing love, harmony, beauty, joy, and freedom. This is what passion, directed inward, brings us.

Direct your energy inwards. The primal force was created to serve not only the physical body, but also our holistic consciousness. The primal force rises through the whole cerebral-spinal system. When it rises, it is called the kundalini energy or Shakti piercing/wedding Shiva, or union between the soul and God. If you want more from life, awaken the primal force and begin directing it upward to your causal body, your causal fulfillment, your soul, your soul’s fulfillment, up into the fulfillment of the Christ-consciousness and God, your dharma. Become **Ananda Lahari Om** – a wave of bliss, **Satya Lahari Om** – a wave of love. Become the expression of your Divine nature.

A simple technique for Shakti/Shiva meditation is the 1-4-2 technique. It is one of the first techniques of meditation. Now, take that 1-4-2 and add a passion for life, a passion for God, a passion for love and the primal force will begin to flow upward, into and within your nature of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. Develop a passion and an enthusiasm to experience life fully, holistically. Then begin to direct it, with mental civilization, towards your own happiness.

If you would like another Shakti/Shiva mantra, which is very powerful, it is the **Aum** mantra. Instead of doing **Om**, which vibrates inside the crown and the crown, you do **Aum**. “AH U M-m-m-m.” The “Ah” vibrates the first chakra, awakens and opens the doorway so the primal force, the kundalini can now flow. The “U” part of it opens the heart, like Yam, which is the seed mantra for the heart chakra. The “U” opens the doorway in the heart. The “M-m-m-m” vibrates the crown. It is a simple and powerful Shakti/Shiva mantra. It will awaken the primal

force and direct it upwards. The Shakti/Shiva meditation is “Ahh uu mmmmmmmmm.” When you hit the beginning “Mm” that hits the 5th chakra, you keep going with “mmmmmm” up to the crown, the thousand-petal lotus. Now you are going to have Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram.

Another powerful Shakti/Shiva mantra to awaken the primal force and bring it to Shiva is **Hrim**. “Huh” opens the doorway. “Ree” opens the heart. “Mmmmm.” Use the Shakti/Shiva mantras to awaken the primal force and direct it to Shiva.

The realization of our nature is an inward journey. To make the inward journey we have to begin to develop passion, passion for love, passion for harmony, knowledge, beauty, and joy. We add passion and begin to work with our energy and power. The primal force flows continuously when you remove the samskaras that stop the energy from flowing. We do the sacred mantras to help identify with our sacred nature, to live in mukti.

Begin to develop this passion for living. Have passion when you meditate. Have passion when you do affirmations. Have passion when you “**Na Hum**” the habits and samskaras. Have passion to go beyond the fears and insecurities. Have passion to have courage, faith, trust, and strength. Add the dynamics of our Divine nature and life becomes enjoyable, fun, liberating, exhilarating, ecstatic. This is what the holy ones hope to inspire when they tell us to do these practices. “Here’s a mantra. Do it and identify with it.” They know the mantra will help calm any samskara so we can experience Om Satyam, Om Shivam, Om Sundaram. This is what the trust is all about – that the realized one knows the gentlest and easiest way to come to Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram, to the soul, to our nature, and then to the nature of God.

Add passion, even for the littlest things in everyday life, in work, driving, chanting, affirming, for the flowers, the bees, the mountains, the birds, the buildings, the desert, the ocean. Begin to develop appreciation and thankfulness. Begin to be in awe of God. “What an awesome sky. Oh, my Beloved One. Oh, Divine Mother, I love you. What an awesome cloud. What a beautiful sunset. What a beautiful ocean. What a beautiful storm. My Beloved One, I love you. What a beautiful car. Oh, Divine Mother, I love you. What a beautiful person. What a beautiful child. What a beautiful age to be born into. Oh, Divine Mother, I love you.” Begin to be in awe of the soul and life around. Appreciate. Have passion and enthusiasm for each moment to experience God, experience life.

If we don’t live in the moment, we are willingly throwing away the rest of our life, our astral, causal, soul, holy stream, Christ-consciousness, God-consciousness. It is all there. We

just have to make the effort to look inward and push past some old ideas and habits, some old fears and insecurities. We just calm the body, calm the mind, calm the breath, calm the ego, and we are in samadhi, in union, into our soul and in union with God.

We can have that perfect moment of the flame becoming the fire each moment if we go inward with concentrated focused meditation. It does take our willful effort. There are no holy ones that will come down and save us from ourselves. The holy ones don't own us. No one owns us.

We must make the effort to realize our nature. The holy ones are here to inspire, to show that we can live holistically. We create our own heaven and hell. Our actions are our physical creation, our physical karma. Our words we speak each day create our astral karma. Our thoughts begin to create our ideas and our ideas create our beliefs and our beliefs are our causal samskaras and karma. Work towards happiness, love, joy, and beauty holistically in thought, word, and deed.

What we have now is the moment. Each moment, begin to develop the passion for life. Begin to not just repeat the mantras, but to express the sacred vibrations of our soul. Begin to do new mantras. Have a passion for life. **Om Shakti Ram Rama Shiva Om, Om Shakti Ram Rama Shiva Om.** Have a passion for God. **Hari Shakti Hari Ram Hari Shiva Hari Om.** Begin to identify and willfully add intensity into your holistic life.

Live holistically. Come to your soul. Become the flame into the fire in time to enjoy this incarnation. Even when you are *mukta* and free, incarnations are not easy to come by. Don't throw away the opportunity to experience and live within God-consciousness holistically. Become Satmuktananda. Come to realize your nature as Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram. Allow the flame to become the fire and the fire to become the flame, the inhalation, and the exhalation. Then the dance and the dancer, the formless and the form, God and you are one. Allow your Self to live by directing your passion towards things that you know bring you joy, love, harmony, beauty, towards your nature.

Have a passion for love with Om Satyam. Have a passion for harmony and joy with Om Shivam. Have a passion for beauty, to experience it, with Om Sundaram. Have a passion for peace with **Om Shanti**. Have a passion for all life with **Om Shakti Ram Rama Shiva Om, Om Shakti Ram Rama Shiva Om.** Have passion, harmonize, we are ever in union, but we must

harmonize in our life, in our experiences and in our consciousness. Then we will have a passion for living, a passion for living within Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram.

There is only one life. The soul once born never dies, and lives forever experiencing life within the many realms of existence. The realization of our nature and the nature of God as one and the same – Satyam, Shivam, and Sundaram is the beginning of mukti and living life within love, harmony, beauty, and joy.

love is
the source
of life
beauty
the
energy of
eternity

Namaste

MANTRAS

VIBRATION OR MEANING

Namaste	I bow to the Divine light within you
So Hum	I am This/I am That
Na Hum	Not This/Not That
Hrim	Invoking the indwelling energy
Sat Tat Aum	Eternal Consciousness Joy
Om and Aum	God-consciousness
Om Satyam	Eternal Truth/Love
Om Shivam	Eternal Virtue/Harmony
Om Sundaram	Eternal Beauty Om and Aum
Om Shanti	Eternal Peace
Om Namō Ari Hantanam	I bow to the conquerors of their inner enemies
Om Namō Siddhanam	I bow to the realized souls
Om Mani Padme Aum	I am the jewel within the lotus
Hey Hari Sundara	Oh God beautiful
Satya Lahari Om	I am a wave of love
Shiva Lahari Om	I am a wave of virtue
Sundara Lahari Om	I am a wave of beauty
Ananda Lahari Om	I am a wave of bliss
Shivaya Namah Om	I surrender to Shiva, to Aum, transformation
Om Shanti Shanti Om Shalom Shalom	Celebrating the Grace of God
Om Shakti Ram Rama Shiva Om	Rejoicing in God holistically
Hari Shakti Hari Ram Hari Shiva Hari Om	Rejoicing in God holistically

GLOSSARY

Ananda: Bliss

Astral: Consciousness of senses.

Astral Body: Spirit body, host of senses and chakras; pranic body.

Aum: Name given to God-consciousness in action; Holy Stream; also a mantra.

Avatar: One who has been liberated and has chosen to incarnate and serve humanity.

Bhakti: Love of and for Divinity.

Brahmachari: The state of Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram consciousness.

Causal: Consciousness of ideas.

Causal Body: Subtlest of three bodies, host of the mind.

Chakra: A force center or wheel in pranic body. The seven chakra seed mantras are: Lam Vam Ram Yam Ham Om, Om.

Chit: Consciousness

Christ-consciousness: Tat; God-consciousness in the first form of manifestation.

Darshan: The presence of a holy one's consciousness, holy sight.

Deva: Realized one residing in astral or causal heavens.

Devotee: One who is devoted to God.

Dharma: Duty of one's soul, the harmonization of one's uniqueness within the universal God-consciousness.

Divine Mother: God

Four Fountains: The four primal instincts of eating, sleeping, procreation, and survival.

God-Consciousness: Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram without form.

Guru: A stream of consciousness; the dispeller of darkness.

Holy One: One who realizes his/her nature of Sat Tat Aum.

Hrim: A mantra for invoking the indwelling energy.

Humility: The willingness to learn.

Ida: A cooling current; one of the three main energy channels in a pranic body.

Japa: Repetition of a sacred sound.

Karma: Motion; action; law of motion.

Kundalini: Primal energy rising from the gross physical to the God-consciousness.

Liberation: The realization of one's holistic nature of Sat Tat Aum.

Mukta: A liberated soul.

Mukti: Liberation; freedom into life.

Na Hum: A mantra meaning not this/not that

Nirvikalpa Samadhi: Samadhi without seed.

Non-attachment: Process of letting go.

Om Satyam: The Divine eternal love, also a mantra.

Om Shanti: The Divine eternal peace, God-consciousness without form, also a mantra.

Om Shivam: The Divine eternal virtue, also a mantra.

Om Sundaram: The Divine eternal beauty, also a mantra.

Pingala: A heating current; one of three main energy channels in the pranic body.

Prana: Life force

Pranayama: Control of life force.

Pranic Body: Spirit body, host of senses and chakras.

Pronam: To bow to Divinity.

Royal Path: Combining Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Jnana Yoga and meditation.

Sabikalpa Samadhi: Samadhi with seed, realization of one's holistic nature.

Sacred Heart: Love of God; soul's nature.

Sadhana: Spiritual practices and disciplines.

Samadhi: Union with God.

Samskaras: Mindsets; view of reality that is incomplete.

Sat: Eternal

Sat Guru: One's personal, eternal guru, determined by similarity of soul vibration.

Satmuktananda: Eternal, liberation, bliss

Satyam: Eternal God-consciousness as love; part of the threefold nature of God: Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram.

Self: Includes the purity of our soul and the limitations of our personality.

Self-realization: Realization of one's nature as Satyam Shivam Sundaram.

Shakti: God manifested, the Omnipresent Power.

Shalom: Grace of manifested God-consciousness.

Shiva: God unmanifested, the Supreme Reality.

Shivam: Eternal God-consciousness as harmony, part of the threefold nature of God: Satyam Shivam, Sundaram.

Siddhi: Mystical power developed through practice.

So Hum: The sound of the breath; a mantra meaning "I am this, I am that."

Sundaram: Eternal God-consciousness as beauty and joy; part of the threefold nature of God: Satyam, Shivam, Sundaram.

Sushumna: Largest of the three energy channels rising from the base of the spine to the crown.

Tat: God in manifestation; God-consciousness in form.

Upanishad: Sitting close to God-consciousness.

Yoga: Union

Yuga: Age; cycle of approximately 24,000 years. This cycle is made up of Kali, Dwapara, Treta and Satya yugas.

Recommended Reading

Books by or about:

Paramahansa Yogananda
Lahiri Mahasaya
Daya Mata
Sri Yukteswar

Swami Rama

Gurudev Chitrabhanu

Swami Satchidananda

Sai Baba

Hazarat Inyat Khan
Pir Vilayat Inayat Khan

Ramakrishna
Vivekananda

Donald Walters (Kriyananda)

G. I. Gurdjieff
Osho (Bhagwan Rajneesh)
Ramana Maharishi

Contact:

Self-Realization Fellowship
3880 San Rafael Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90065

Himalayan Institute
RR1, Box 400
Honesdale, PA 18431

Jain Meditation Center
244 Ansonia Station
New York, NY 10023

Satchidananda Ashram, Yogaville
RR1, Box 172
Buckingham, Virginia 23921

Satya Sai Book Center of America
P.O. Box 278
Tustin, CA 92681-0278

The Sufi Order
P.O. Box 574
Lebanon Springs, NY 12114

Vedanta Press
1946 Vedanta Place
Hollywood, CA 90065

Crystal Clarity Publishers
14618 Tyler Foote Road
Nevada City, CA 95959

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