



PROGRAM E-30

**OM SRI SURYA VA NAMAH
OM SRI CHANDRA VA NAMAH
OM SRI BUDDHA VA NAMAH
OM SRI SHUKRA VA NAMAH
OM SRI MANGALA VA NAMAH
OM SRI BRI-HAS-PATHI VA NAMAH
OM SRI SHANI VA NAMAH**

THE AWAKENING

Theory of Yogic Practice

The practice of esoteric Kriya Yoga has several steps, often referred to as 'platforms'. The word 'platform' symbolizes a stage in which the seeker can rest until ready to move on, and when ready it is easier to lift from a platform to another platform or stage of awareness of the Inner Reality.

The **first platform is that of yama**, which the wise seeker will adapt to a few of the more basic and fundamental psychological practices. These are 'non-violence' and 'detachment', which are vital to gaining a quiet, peaceful mind.

The **second platform is that of niyama**, which the wise seeker will adapt to a few of the more basic and fundamental psychological practices. These are 'contentment' and the study of the True Self, which will assist the seeker in gaining harmony with the world. This in turn reinforces the Yamas.

It is here that the **first and second platforms** of yoga — yama & niyama— are indispensable for the rapid and harmonious evolution of the soul.

Yama and niyama should be looked upon as a mental cleansing.

The **third platform** is asana. This stage is vital for without a still and steady body posture it would be impossible to transcend body-consciousness.

The asana must be stable and yet so comfortable that the seeker can totally forget that s/he has a physical body for a few minutes.

Without this asana state being reached transcending body-consciousness and entering into the mind would become most difficult.

And this is the first step to awakening to happiness and enlightenment.

Posture, or asana plays a vital role. It is comforting to know that only one meditative asana needs to be mastered.

Mastery of an asana reveals that the seeker can override the most elementary human inclination: to be restless.

Although the goal of yoga is to stop the restlessness of the mind, the first concrete step is stopping the restlessness of the body.

The **fourth platform** is breath-control, or pranayama. This stage is vital because pranayama cleanses the physical body, the mind and later, cleanses the astral body.

It is vital to realize that control of the prana, and its cleansing powers can only be mastered after an asana has been mastered.

Breathing rhythms link, and reveal the various states of consciousness. This is why pranayama is a sacred technique for unifying and thus lifting the mind states to consciousness.

Pranayama makes accessible mystical states of consciousness that are inaccessible to the normal everyday waking state.

By the somewhat mastery of breath-control, the mystic penetrates deeply into the deeper layers of consciousness.

It is through these platforms that the mystic attains direct knowledge of the cyclical pulses of one's own life, and thus releases pranic energy trapped in the standard breathing pattern of everyday life.

As the seeker begins the practice of pranayama, there is an awakening awareness of:

A deep sense of harmony.

A rhythmic sense of plenitude.

A balancing of all physiological and psychological states.

A mystical awareness that one lives outside of one's body, and not inside it.

An awakening awareness of the quintessence of the Atma.

This awareness has been brought about by a three-fold concentration, which causes one to transcend everyday consciousness and everyday conditions. This three-fold technique consists of

- (1) Motionless posture,
- (2) Logical consistency,
- (3) Rhythmic, deep breathing.

Sense withdrawal, pratyahara, is the **fifth platform**, which allows the seeker to leave the physical world of the macrocosm, and enter into the internal, prior microcosm.

The **sixth platform** is dharana or concentration. It is at this level that the seeker finds the vital, essential 'concept' in which to fix the mind: wisdom, happiness, and unselfish love.

The highest yogic concept is that of 'Ishvara', the pure, personal indwelling divinity. Ishvara did not create the world. It did not, nor does it intervene in history. It is simply pure existence: sat-chit-ananda, the motionless, the non-participating, inward being.

Never, never in yoga do you find a yogi emulating a suffering divinity. This would be sheer self-punishment caused by guilt or self-hate. According to mysticism and the Sages, divinity does not suffer, cannot suffer. . .

Nor should you suffer . . .

OM

Shanti & Prem,

Goswami