

Medical Science Enlightened

New Insight into
Vibratory Awareness for
Holistic Health Care

By

Professor Umesh C Rai M.D.

Life Eternal Trust

London • New York • Sydney • Moscow

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First Edition : Feb, 1993
ISBN 81-900325-0-X

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Price \$: 20.00
Rs : 500.00

Medical Science Enlightened
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Design & Production
The Impact

44-B, Pocket A-14 Kalkaji Extension,
New Delhi-110 019 (INDIA) • Ph: 6466013

Jacket and all other photographs : Hemant Kumar Uppal

Graphs and illustrations : Deepak Maitra

Jacket layout : Ms Alka Nayyar

*Typeset : Pressworks, 1813 Chandrawal Road, Delhi-110 007

Printed at : Nu Tech Photolithographers, Delhi

Published by :

THE LIFE ETERNAL TRUST
C-17, Institutional Area, New Delhi-110 017

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Price
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Author: Professor Umesh C Rai M.D. FIMS

Design & Production

The Impact

44-B, Pocket A-1A, Kirti Extension,

New Delhi-110 019 (INDIA) • PH: 6166011

Texts and all other photographs: Dr. Umesh C Rai

Diagrams and illustrations: Dr. Umesh C Rai

Jacket layout: Mrs. Kiran Anand

Typeset: The Impact, 44-B, Pocket A-1A, Kirti Extension,

New Delhi-110 019 (INDIA) • PH: 6166011

Published by

THE LIFE ETHERAL TRUST

G-17, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110 008

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my deep sense of gratitude to Divine Mother Holiness Mataji, Nirmala Devi for her generosity, benevolence and love for science to allow research studies on her system of Sahaja Yoga for verification of its medical benefits. She provided all help and support to carry out the research work which was done in the Physiology and Medicine Department of Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi, without which this book would not have been possible.

In spite of her very busy schedule abroad and in India, She Mataji gave plenty of time for discussing her revelations, exchange of ideas and discussions on Sahaja Yoga which have been my richest source of knowledge and inspiration in writing this book. I owe a lifetime of gratefulness to her for all this kindness.

I am very grateful

to Mr. Ronald Varma, a renowned Cosmologist of India, for his generous help in allowing me to borrow many rare books from his personal library for a long time and also for inspiring conversations and for generous sharing his knowledge and resources. It has been kind enough to go through the entire manuscript. In moment of difficulty he was a source of great encouragement and inspiration.

to my post graduate students, Dr. Deepak Chandra, Dr. Sandeep Sharma and to Senior Resident Miss Usha Gudam who readily agreed to my suggestion for taking research projects on Sahaja Yoga for their Doctoral Thesis. to Dr. W. Selvarajulu, Director (Projects) D.P.A.S., Pondicherry, Prof. Suresh Gupta and Prof. H.L. Gupta of Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi, for helpful discussions on the role of Sahaja Yoga in the management of Epilepsy, Essential Hypertension and Bronchial Asthma respectively.

to Dr. Rami Mitter (Canada), Dr. Vinod Kumar Wadhwa (USA), Dr. Brian Wells, Dr. David Spira, Dr. Sarah Seidman (UK), Dr. Harish

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— to Dr. Ram Misra (Canada), Dr. Vinod Ramrao Worlikar (USA), Dr. Brian Wells, Dr. David Spiro, Dr. Sarah Setchell (UK), Dr. Hamid

Milany (Austria), Mr. Gregoire de Kalbermatten (USA), Mr. Guido Lanza (Italy), Dr. Bogdon Shehovyoh and Dr. Galena Penyazeva (Russia) for enriching discussions on various aspects of Sahaja Yoga.

— to Dr. Shyam Kishore, a renowned Homeopathic Physician of India for fascinating conversation on the treatment of Psychic Trauma and on the role of Homeopathy in Holistic Medicine and its compatibility with Sahaja Yoga.

— to my son Dr. Sandeep Rai, Senior Resident, Medicine Department, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi for briefing me on recent developments in the field of Oncology and Internal Medicine.

— to Mr. Yogi Mahajan, Dr. Mahendra Talwar, Mr. H.P. Salve, Mr. Sushil Kejriwal, Mr. M.K. Jalan, Rajeeva Goel, Arun Goel, Ajay Saxena, Dr. Sanghvi and Dr. Kalpana Naik for organizing Sahaja Yoga seminars for Medical Practitioners and general public at (1) Poona, (2) Delhi, (3) Nagpur (4) Calcutta, (5) Hyderabad, (6) Dehradun, (7) Lucknow and (8) Nasik respectively and inviting me to deliver Lectures on Sahaja Yoga.

— to all the people who came to my Lectures in India and abroad at Moscow, Leningrad and Yalta (USSR) for providing encouragement and a stimulating environment which prompted me to write this book.

— to Dr. S.K. Mathur and Mr. Jitendra Patpatia for reading the entire manuscript very carefully and giving me all the help needed in this connection.

— to Mr. Ghanshyam Bhatia and Ms Anju Bhatia of Computsoft (India) for excellent typing of the manuscript and to Miss Raji for her patience in taking the dictation and typing the draft manuscript over and over again to my entire satisfaction.

— to Mr. Hemant Kumar Uppal, Photographer and Printing Technologist and I owe him special appreciation for understanding the spirit of this project from the beginning and for taking all the pains to see the successful accomplishment of this work.

— to Mr. Deepak Maitra, Commercial Artist, for making art works for graphs and illustrations appearing in this book and Ms. Alka Nayyar for Jacket Lay-out.

— to Dr. Suresh Nigam, I owe special thanks for taking the trouble to look after the financial aspects and for the moral support during the publishing of this book.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife Lily Rai wholeheartedly for her every conceivable encouragement, support, inspiration and patience which she offered to me during long hours of work.

Umesh C Rai

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Introduction

Medical Science has advanced tremendously during the last three decades. Now it is possible to prevent many infectious diseases. Dreaded diseases of the past like plague, cholera, typhoid, diphtheria, smallpox, polio, tetanus and tuberculosis have been more or less completely wiped out of India and also from other developing countries. Heart transplatation has provided a new hope to the patients suffering from congenital heart diseases. Coronary bypass surgery has been another remarkable achievement in this era. Kidney transplantations are quite successful and they can now give a new lease of life to patients suffering from renal failure. Liver and Brain transplantations are also under experimental stage and the day is not far off when one might be able to transplant these organs successfully. In spite of such marvellous and thrilling achievements medical scientists have not been able to find an answer for the treatment of Psychosomatic diseases which are increasing every day in developed and developing countries. One such common disease is High Blood Pressure (Essential Hypertension). In 90 to 95% cases the etiology of these cases and thus the prevention and cure is still largely unknown¹! The cause of 60% of cardio-vascular diseases can be explained as a result of risk factors like High Blood Pressure, smoking and abnormal blood fats². The life expectancy in the most advanced country like U.S.A. is much lower in comparison to smaller countries like Cuba, Hongkong, Greece and Japan. This is really very surprising when USA is considered to be the Mecca of Medicine³. The incidence of High Blood Pressure (Essential Hypertension) in USA is 20% in white population⁴. In India about 50 millions are reported to be Hypertensives⁵. All these figures make us to ponder seriously as to what is the value of these advancements in Medical Science and particularly to community at large if one is not able to tackle such common public health problems like High Blood Pressure. Why is it so? Where lies the fault?

Answer to this vital question is that the tremendous growth of scien-

tific and technical knowledge has been only one-sided. The spiritual knowledge, moral values and social considerations have dissolved to a naught with the passage of time. The main reason for this lop-sided growth was the fact that mechanised concept of Descartes about the Universe dominated the thinking of Western Scientists. He further asserted that there is nothing in the concept of body that belongs to mind⁶. This division between body and mind produced a lot of confusion in the mind of Biologists and Medical Scientists. Afterwards Newton, one of the topmost physicists of his time in the world, also developed a complete mathematical formulation of the mechanistic view of Nature. In 18th and 19th centuries scientists used Newtonian mechanics with highest precision and could explain the motion of planets with minutest detail. This was then practically demonstrated and proved by successfully putting a man on the moon followed by placing satellites and spaceships in orbit. This concept continued till now and that is precisely the reason why psychic and spiritual aspect of man which is so very important remained neglected and could not be studied in detail by the Western system of Medicine. The doctor of today practising Western medicine has entered into the age of super-speciality to a point where separate parts of the body are being treated by different specialists. For example, Heart is treated by Cardiologist, Brain by Neurologist, Stomach and Intestines by Gastroenterologist, Blood by Hematologist, Kidney by Nephrologist, Urinary bladder by urologist, Skin by Dermatologist and so on. This approach of western medicine has gone to a stage where doctors are no longer able to view disease as a disturbance of the whole organism. The net result of such a approach is that they treat a particular part of the body without taking into consideration the rest of the body. They hardly look into the psychological, social and environmental aspects of the patients' illness which are so very important. As a result of this there is nothing much with the western system of Medicine to look after the Psychic aspect of human beings except to use tranquilizers and sedatives to control this aspect. Increasing use of tranquilizers and sedatives in medical practice is not only harmful but also habit-forming. It also illustrates the extent to which the stress and strain of modern life has permeated our society. The use of tranquilizers for long term are habit-forming and on withdrawal produce symptoms like lack of energy, impaired memory, sleep disturbances, agitation, restlessness, irritability, tremors, muscle pain, aches, twichings, loss of appetite, nausea and depression. Moreover, the current advances in the concepts of physics have brought about a profound change in our world view from the mechanistic conception of Descartes and Newton to a holistic and ecological view. We live today in a globally interconnected world in which psychological, biological, social and en-

vironmental phenomenon from mechanistic to holistic conception of reality are likely to dominate the present decade⁷.

In view of this in recent years our ancient cultural heritage of 'Yoga' which deals with both the physical and the psychic aspects of human beings has gained a tremendous momentum to become a world philosophy. But there are many false Gurus who have established worldwide Yoga organisations for money-making purposes and this has given a big blow to the good name of Yoga. There are also many Satanic cults which are shockingly destructive. As a result of this now a days Yoga has been mostly misunderstood in the west as a science of physical and breathing exercises. In the west it is a good conversational standby : 'I do yoga every friday afternoon, I find it relaxes me'. Someone else does 'Yoga' to help his bad back. One could see many flourishing 'School of Yoga' that teach a sort of Swedish-drill with pauses for breathing. It is really dishonest to reduce 'Yoga' to some sort of physical training⁸.

The word 'Yoga' is derived from sanskrit root 'Yuj' meaning to 'Yoke' or to unite as one or to join. Yoga in real sense means union of Primordial energy (Kundalini, situated in the triangular bone called sacrum at the base of spine) with the all pervading cosmic energy. There are many 'Yoga' systems. Important ones are Raja Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga and Kundalini Yoga. The ultimate purpose of all 'Yoga' systems is the union with the all pervading cosmic energy. Kundalini yoga described a technique to awaken the primordial energy (Kundalini) but its arousal was thought to be quite dangerous and difficult as it was accompanied by tremendous heat and pain. Hardly anyone was supposed to succeed in it except sages and that too after years of practice in seclusion on mountains or in the forests. In view of this it was meant only for a selected few who would renounce the wordly life and go to the Himalayas or to a secluded place for the rest of their life. Further there is a mention in the literature about the trembling of body, involuntary laughing and growing heat which sometimes causes unbearable pain during Kundalini awakening⁹. As such it was not meant for the common man, and could be practised only by sages. Consequently, it lost its popularity. In reality the above-mentioned symptoms actually show a kind of short circuiting of the energy and have been described recently by some authors but not by the sages like Gyaneshwara¹⁰ who was an authority on this yoga during his time. Against this background Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi's unique contribution has been to rediscover **Sahaja - Yoga** which was first described in Markandeya-Purana ages ago and later on by other sages, but was forgotten by people with the passage of time. Although born in a Christian family she embraced the truth of all the religions in her teachings

of Sahaja Yoga. She started a systemic reappraisal of the obscure and conflicting statements made in the ancient religious literatures in India and interpreted them in the light of that direct experience of cosmic-consciousness which she had on the 5th May, 1970. She achieved the opening of the seventh centre (the Sahasrara-Chakra). It is the greatest event of the spiritual happenings of the universe. With the opening of 'Sahasrara', Her Holiness Mata Ji knew that the time has come for the human beings to rise up to get their 'Self' Realisation. Thus the Microcosm becomes Macrocosm (Virat)¹¹.

She told the world that the last breakthrough of evolution can be achieved by awakening of the primordial energy (Kundalini) which is present in 3-1/2 coils in Sacrum bone at the base of spine of every individual. It is effortless and without any penance or fasting on the part of the seeker. Sahaja - Yoga is for everyone; it is an Internal Divine Technology in Subtlety based on our Central-Nervous-System. Therefore one deserves to know as to how to use it, regardless of one's particular background or way of life. It does not interfere with any religious belief. When Kundalini reaches the Sahasrara chakra its petals open and one goes into a stage of Samadhi, one's individual consciousness becomes one with the Cosmic consciousness and there is flow of subtle cool breeze from the palms of hand and from the top of head and one gets his Self Realisation. These cool vibrations have been described as 'Chaitanya-lahri' by Adi-Shankaracharya. This perception of cool breeze flowing from the palms and Sahasrara is due to actualization of Kundalini arousal on Limbic system in the brain and therefore it is consistent and verifiable¹¹. After the awakening of primordial energy (Kundalini), the cosmic energy flows throughout the body as cool vibrations which nourishes each and every cell of the body. As such various diseases get cured automatically when an individual practices Sahaja Yoga regularly. It is on record that by the practise of Sahaja Yoga many persons suffering from diseases like Migraine, Depression, Anxiety Neurosis, Essential Hypertension, Angina, Bronchial Asthma, Aplastic Anemia, Arthritis, Sciatica, Spondylitis etc. have been cured and relieved from their misery of bad health and are leading a normal life. It is possible to prevent even the occurrence of cancer if one practices Sahaja Yoga regularly and some suffering from cancer have also been cured.^{12,13}

Further, several profound personal experiences with Sahaja Yoga and clinical observations of the effects in some of the Psychosomatic diseases attracted my attention to the remarkable transformative and healing potential of this system. In order to verify some of the claims of Sahaja Yoga, a systemic research study was organised. Three Doctoral research projects, one on the 'Physiological Effects of Kundalini Awakening by Sahaja

Yoga'¹⁴, second on the 'Effects of Sahaja Yoga practice on the patients of Psychosomatic diseases'¹⁵ and the third on the 'Role of Sahaja Yoga in the management of Epilepsy'¹⁶ were taken up jointly by the Physiology and Medicine Departments, Lady Hardinge Medical College and Associated Sucheta Kriplani Hospital, New Delhi.

For the research project on Epilepsy there was a Joint Collaboration with the Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Sciences, New Delhi. The Doctoral Thesis on the first two research projects have been duly approved by Delhi University whereas the third one on Epilepsy is still under the process of evaluation. The data collected during research studies over the last six years on Sahaja Yoga are of such far reaching relevance that they could revolutionise our understanding of human psyche, of psycho-pathology and of therapeutic processes. They have actually enlightened Medical Science in the understanding of Autonomic Nervous System and particularly of Para sympathetic Nervous system. Some observations are highly significant for the discipline of Psychiatry and represent a challenge to the current Newtonian-Cartesian paradigm of Western Science. By the practice of Sahaja Yoga one develops the capability to modulate the activity of Autonomic Nervous System. Moreover research work has further clearly shown its value as an adjuvant therapy for the treatment of Psychosomatic disorders¹⁵. Our own research experience with the approach of Healing through Sahaja Yoga is based on the above research observations and is limited to Sahaja Yoga training sessions lasting from 12 to 16 weeks. Each subject acted as his own control. Most of the participants in this research project found this technique very useful for mental and physical relaxation with a unique potential for varying meditative experiences along with a feeling of subtle cool breeze from the palms and top of the head. They also described many dramatic improvements in their social and financial condition. For the last 10 years healing with Sahaja Yoga has also been tried at different Sahaja Yoga centres in different parts of Europe, erstwhile USSR, Australia, USA and Asia and have been found effective.

In October, 1989, Department of Non-traditional Medicine in Moscow (USSR) organised an International Conference on 'Yoga & Self Regulation' at Yalta in Crimea (USSR). This was most probably the first conference of its kind because Russia felt that the answer for the prevention and treatment of Psychosomatic diseases lies in the 'Yogic System'. Thus the central theme of the Conference was to evaluate the effect of different Yogic Systems/mysticism in relation to the regulation of the 'Self' of an individual. The work done on 'Sahaja - Yoga' was presented in the above conference and its scope for being the non-traditional system of medicine was thoroughly discussed¹⁷⁻¹⁹. As a result five Sahaja Yoga centres have

been opened at Moscow, Leningrad, Keiv, Sochi and Togliatte.

These days modern physics has shown that scientific thinking does not necessarily have to be mechanistic and reductionist as thought earlier; the holistic and ecological views are also scientifically sound. It is felt that the time has come when physicians will have to widen their horizons, shifting their focus from disease to health, seeing the human organism as a whole which shows inter-related physical and psychological aspects⁷. Another aspect which is of global concern is that today our planet faces, on a unprecedented scale in human history, the threat of extinction of species due to huge build-up of toxic and radio-active waste leading to imbalance in global ecology. We know that the arms-race and particularly nuclear arms race is due to tremendous scientific advancements in the field of physics. The application of these scientific researches have already been tried earlier in Hiroshima and we all know what price humanity had to pay for it. Today there are big questions for us to consider. Why there is arms race in most countries of the world? Why there is unsatiable demand for the new nuclear weapons? How long it will go on like this? Are we not moving in the direction of total annihilation? One thing is clear that this arms race is the inevitable outcome of the most sophisticated hi-tech advancement which has been made in this century. This cannot be curbed unless and until human beings of the world are transformed. This transformation means uplifting from within which is most important. If this uplifting is not there, one will have conflicts, one will not have the consideration and goodwill which is so essential for us to live together like good human beings. On being transformed one is lifted to a higher level of awareness and a new level of human relationship based on love and affection is established.

With this happening, it won't be difficult for an individual to appreciate that human beings should live together, whether they belong to one country or to another. All are members of one great universal family. We should not forget that the whole universe which we know today has only one planet on which there is life, such as we have and that we are the most fortunate to be created by Almighty. The least that we should do is to live together like brothers and sisters genuinely, not merely through lips but through heart. The world is now ready for a new Revolution. For human beings material prosperity is no doubt important but it is not the ultimate aim. There is much more in a human being than a mere desire for a material well-being and that is the spiritual part. It is only through spiritual attainment and spiritual satisfaction that genuine happiness is possible. There has to be some spark which has to light it and the source of this is Shri Mata Ji Nirmala Devi who is the founder of the science of Sahaja Yoga for Kundalini awakening and Self-Realisation.

It is high time when medical scientists should not be reluctant to adopt a holistic framework incorporating Yoga and other alternative systems of medicine for fear of being unscientific. Modern physics has shown now that such a holistic frame-work would not only be scientific but it would also be consistent with the most advanced theories of physical reality²⁰. In view of this it is strongly felt that the spiritual awakening in the form of Self-Realisation by Sahaja-Yoga could bring about the desired change in the Social awareness all over the world that we badly and urgently need in this age to save the humanity from destruction.

This book is in response to repeated requests for a manual presenting the research findings on Sahaja Yoga and insight into Vibratory Awareness for total health care, along with the basic fundamentals which are essential for the Self- Realisation and the practice of Healing with this system. The book is in a simple and easily understandable form that could be used by general public and medical practitioners. In this book what is proposed is really a kind of awakening of our ancient culture on 'Yoga' particularly Sahaja Yoga for knowing the 'Unknown Power' hidden in every individual for regaining the lost sense of spritual connectedness to the Universe. Further, a holistic approach incorporating 'Sahaja Yoga' as an alternative system to prevent and cure disease has also been suggested.

The ultimate proof lies in having the personal experience of 'Cool Breeze' by the readers as they practice Sahaja Yoga. Without it, much of what has been said in this book will probably remain unconvincing, even when supported by research data. The purpose of this book would be served if at least some readers would like to have the experience of "Self-Realisation" and thereby good health which has been described since ages by the philosophers and sages as the noblest goal of human life.

Umesh C Rai

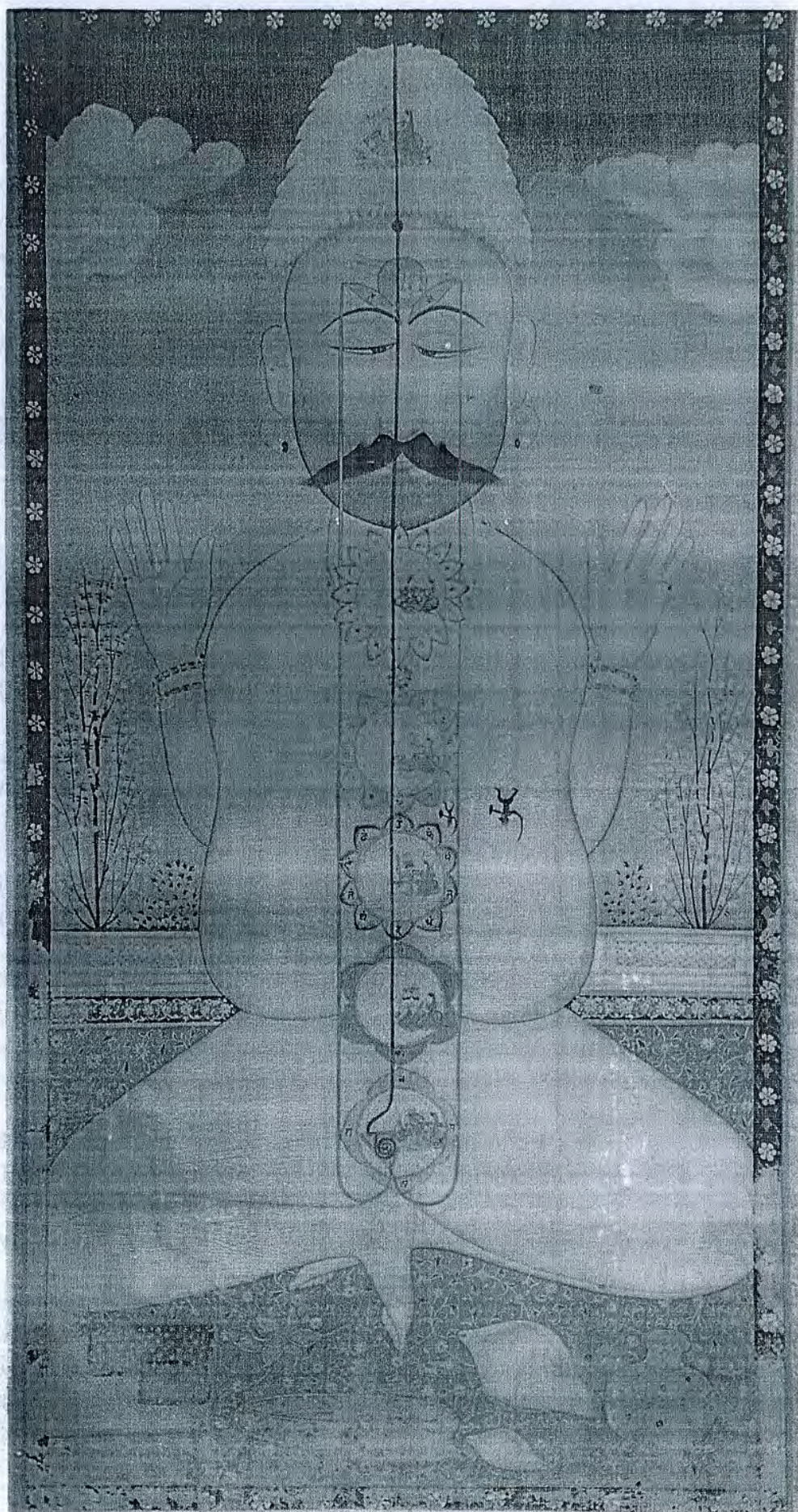
Yoga in Ancient India - A Brief Review

The first piece of evidence available to anyone examining Yoga historically is the famous representation of 'Proto Shiva' sitting cross legged amidst a number of animals and hieroglyphics. This representation occurs on an earthenware in the form of a seal that dates back from the 3rd millennium B.C. and belongs to Indus Valley (Mohen-Jo-Daro & Harappa) civilisation¹.

Since Indus Valley civilisation precedes the arrival of Aryans into India it is concluded that Yoga is non-Aryan. It is a discipline that constitutes one of the essential dimensions of traditional Hinduism. The word 'Yoga' is derived from the Sanskrit root 'Yuj' (to harness) or to join or to unite. It means union of 'Atma'(soul) with Parmatama (All pervading power). In Shiva-Samhita² it is mentioned that there are four important Yogas. They are Mantra - Yoga, Hatha - Yoga, Laya-Yoga and Raja - Yoga. Through these one transcends all duality. In Bhagavad Gita³ the emphasis has been on Karma Yoga. Further it has been mentioned that "an individual who with devotion (Bhakti) succeeds in knowing my true nature, enters with his prayer into me"⁴. Here a combination of Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga has been advocated to achieve salvation.

Some of the important ancient literature which forms the basis of Yoga doctrine are Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Upanishads: Yoga Darshan Upanishad, Amritanada Upanishad, Yoga Kundalini Upanishad, Hatha Yoga Pradipka, Gherandra - Samhita, Shiva Samhita and Saundariya Lahri of Adi Shankaracharya. The various significant 'Yogas' are:

Jnana Yoga : Union by knowledge. In this Yoga, intellectually acquired knowledge is used to attain the salvation. In Bhagavad Gita³ and other texts a combination of Jnana Yoga and Bhakti Yoga (devotion) has been advocated to achieve the salvation. The man who succeeds in attaining the supreme knowledge enters into the kingdom of God to be one with him, thus realizing the unity of knower and known.⁴



The chakras of subtle human body
Kangra (India), Pahari Circa A.D. 1825
Copyright : National Museum, New Delhi



Patanjali (2nd century B.C.), the author of the Yoga-Sutra. From Shiva temple, Vadapadimangalam, 12th century.

Copyright : Institut Francais D' Indologie, Pondicherry



The Sahasrara and Ajna chakra of the subtle human body shown seperatly for details from a painting Nepal 17th century
Copyright : National Museum, New Delhi

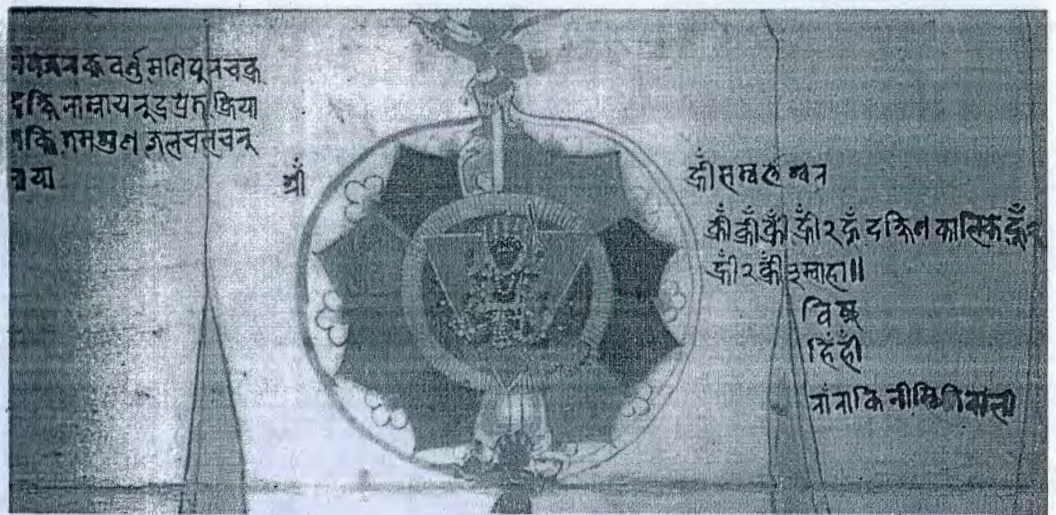


Vishuddhi chakra

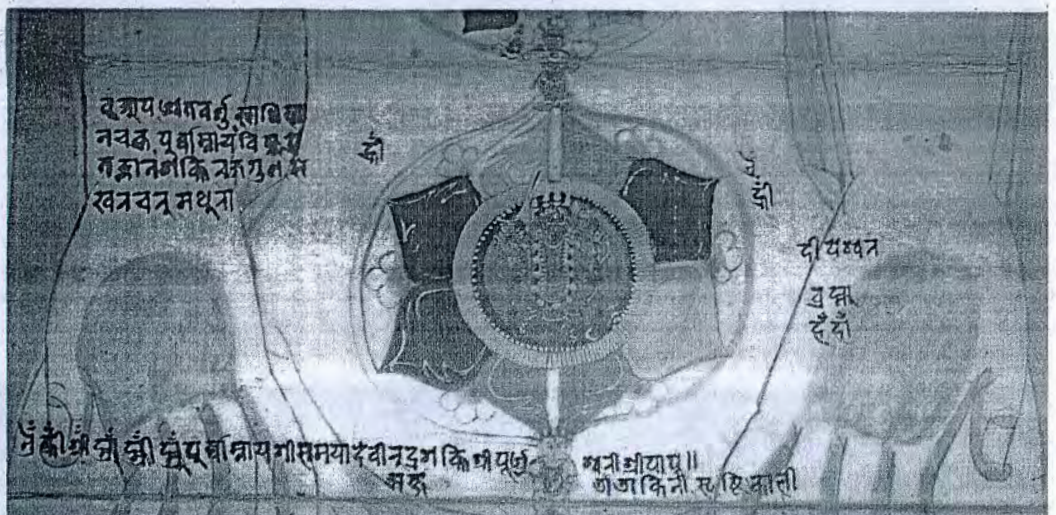


Anahata chakra

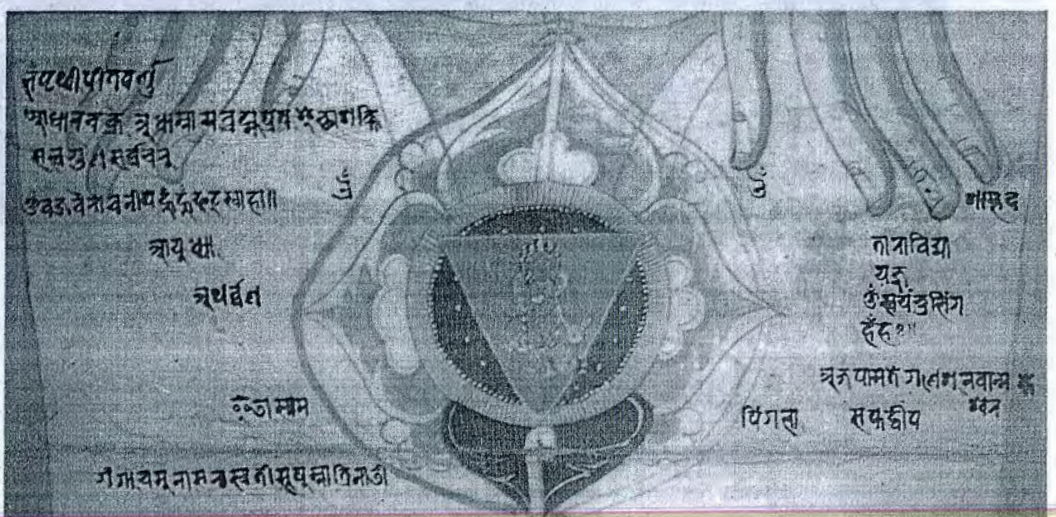
The chakras of subtle human body shown seperatly for details.
 From a Nepal painting 17th century.
 Copyright :Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi



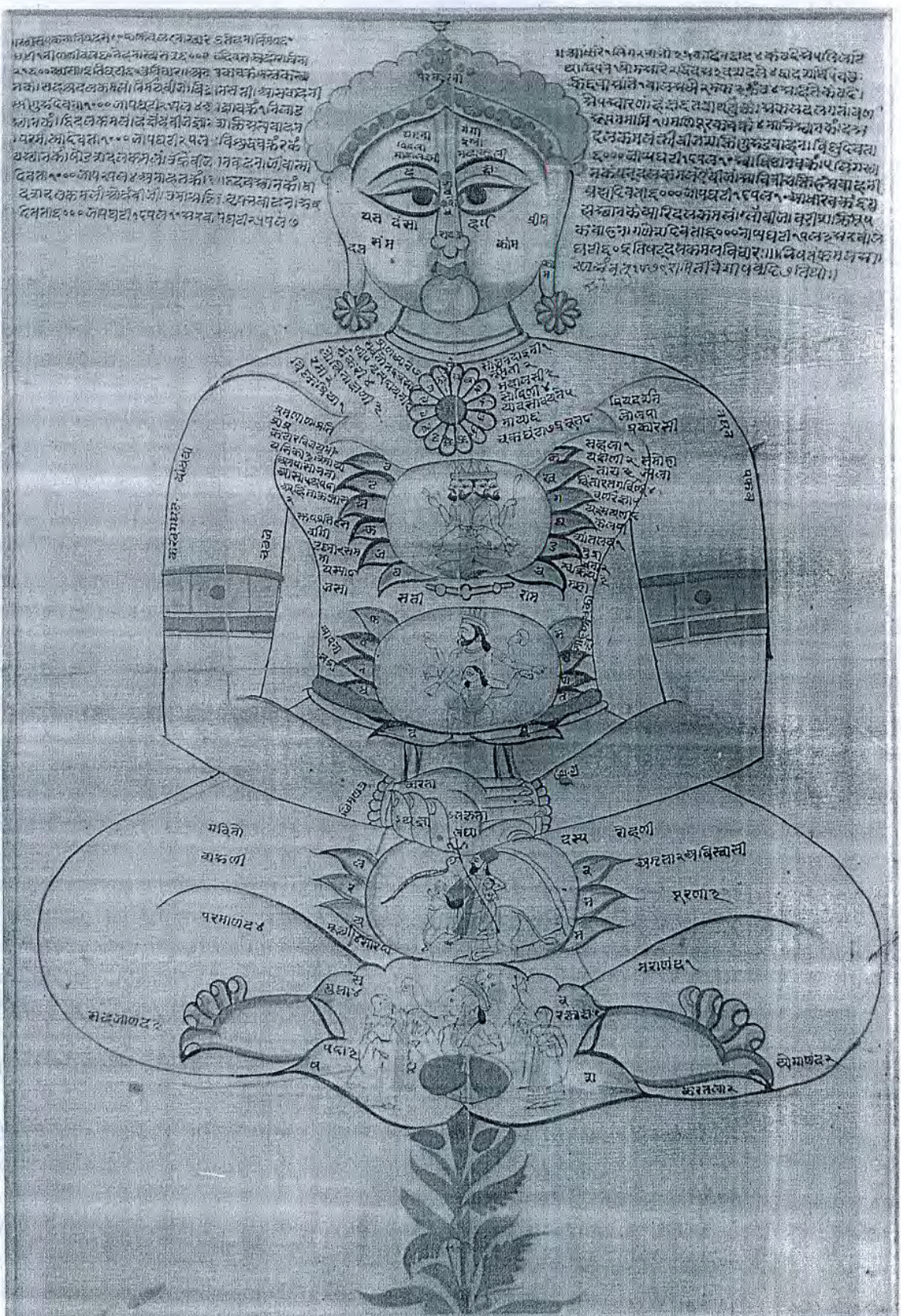
Manipura chakra



Svadhithana chakra



Muladhara chakra



The chakras of subtle human body
 From Sirohi, Rajasthan (India) A.D. 1822
 Copyright : National Museum, New Delhi

Karma Yoga : As the name indicates in this method one has to do Karma (Duties) without the desire for the fruits of actions. In practice Karma Yoga is usually combined with Bhakti Yoga (Devotion) since it is known that the practice of disinterested action is more or less impossible to achieve without the grace of Lord. According to Bhagavad Gita, it is the Prasad (gift) of the Lord and not one's personal effort that makes possible the attainment of eternal world.

Bhakti Yoga : Union by love and devotion. This method indicates that in extreme devotion one forgets one's own identity and becomes one with the eternal truth. Usually in texts³ its practice has been advocated along with Jnana Yoga or Karma Yoga.

Mantra Yoga : Union by the continuous recitation of mantras. By doing this continuously and with deep devotion one dissolves one's identity and attains salvation.

Tantric Yoga : Earliest evidence of this Yoga dates back to tenth century after Christ. In this union is attained by harnessing sexual energy. Here potentiality of sex energy through Tantra Asans is transformed and raised to the plane of cosmic consciousness. Sex is seen as divine in itself and is source of vital energy. Tantrik procedure prescribes physical union of man and woman into a creative union of Shiva-Shakti. There are two methods (1) Dakshin Marg (Right hand path) (2) Vam Marg (Left hand path). Followers of Vam Marg take wine, meat and indulge in sex. The ritual of collective sexual union performed in a circle is known as Chakra Puja. The fundamental principle of left hand path is that spiritual progress is not to be achieved by shunning or avoiding our natural sex desire but by transforming those very elements which make us fall, as a means of salvation. It is said that Tantric sexual union is falling in love with whole cosmos; it is a total surrender to whole cosmos. From tantrik point of view the consummated human being is man and woman fused into a single unit. With this idea that the two are inseparable, emerges the state of Anand, of infinite joy and bliss. The inner life force is aroused to its full potential through this mystic process⁵. Here it is necessary to mention that this method has done a great harm. People lost their faith in Kundalini and totally discarded this method except a few schools.

Raja Yoga: In this union is brought about by the practice of Ashtanga Yoga (eight limbs of Yoga) as prescribed in Patanjali's **Yoga Sutras** and **Yoga Darshana Upanishad**.

Yoganganusthanat Ashudhi - Ksaya Jnana Deeptira Vivek - Khyateh (Yoga Sutra Patanjali II - 28)

"It is by the practice of the Limbs of Yoga that one attains the true knowledge of Prakarti (matter) and one's essential nature"⁶

As such Raja Yoga is synthesis of the eight Limbs of Yoga. These are ; (1) Yam : ethical restraint, (2) Niyam : discipline, (3) Asana : posture, (4) Pranayama : breath control, (5) Pratayahara : control over senses, (6) Dharna : mental concentration, (7) Dhyana : meditation, (8) Samadhi : higher consciousness.

Further Pantajali⁷ specifies that Yams (ethical restraints) are five in number,

(1) Ahimsa : non-violence in thought, word and deed (2) Satya: truthfulness (3) Asatye : not to tell a lie, (4) Brahmcharya : abstain from sex (5) Aparigraha : non-covetousness.

Niyams to be followed are :

(1) Saucha : cleanliness, (2) Santosh : contentment, (3) Tapas : austerity, (4) Swadhyaya : study sacred scriptures, (5) Ishwara Pranidhana : complete surrender to God Almighty.

By the practice of all the eight limbs one is able to go into Samadhi (higher consciousness) and attain self-realisation.

Hatha Yoga: In this union is brought about by the practice of Kriyas (cleaning exercises) asans, Bandhas and Mudras. The cleansing exercises are: (1) Neti (cleansing the nasal passages), (2) Dhauti (cleansing the stomach), (3) Kapala Bhati (cleansing the nasopharynx and nasal sinuses; literally means shining the head and involves incessant forced brief exhalations through nasal passages), (4) Tratak (cleansing the eyes by fixing the gaze on an object without blinking), (5) Vajroli (cleansing urinary passage by drawing water through penis by means of nauli an exercise in which rhythmic contractions of rectus abdominus muscles are produced keeping the diaphragm fixed) and (6) Vasti (cleansing the rectum and colon).

After the practice of these cleansing exercises under the guidance of an expert, one tries to practise various important asans, though hundreds have been described in Yoga treatises. These postures according to Yoga Sutras are not an end in themselves but intended to improve body functions. Then one has to master important Bandhas e.g. Uddiyana Bandha (raising of diaphragm), Jalandhara Bandha (Chin lock), Moola Bandha (Vigrous contraction of sphincters & pelvic diaphragm) etc. In these inhalation, exhalation and retention of breath play an important role and with each Bandha they are precisely followed as per guidance of the expert. For details of various asans, Bandhas and Mudras one could refer to Hatha Yog Pradipka⁸.

Concepts About Kundalini

“Muladhare Kundalini Bhujagar Rupni,
Tatra Tishathathi Jeevatama Pradip Kalikakriti,

Dhyaye Tejomaye Brahm - tejo Dhyanam Paratparam''.

(Gherandra Samhita)⁹.

In the Muladhara, Kundalini lies in the form of a coiled serpent. The innate self dwells there like the flame of lamp. Contemplation on this radiant light leads one to God Realisation⁹.

The word Kundalini is derived from a sanskrit word which means 'coiled up'. The coiled Kundalini is the dormant energy existing in latent form in every human being. The object of the practice of Kundalini Yoga is to awaken this cosmic energy and to unite it with 'Shiva', the pure consciousness pervading the whole universe. The Kundalini Shakti is the vast potential of psychic energy, the body's most powerful thermal current. The arousal of Kundalini is not unique to tantric practices but forms the basis of all yogic disciplines and every genuine spiritual experience may be considered a result of the awakening of this physio- nuclear energy. The Sat-Chakra Nirupana describes Kundalini as extremely subtle, embodiment of bliss and whose true nature is pure consciousness. It shines in the minds of sages and awakens pure knowledge.

Maha Nirvana Tantra - also describes Kundalini as pure consciousness and further states that Kundalini is primal - Prakriti or Nature, which is none other than Chit-shakti or pure consciousness.

The Sarada Tilaka - describes Kundalini as Sabda Brahmayi (the female counterpart of 'Shiva' as 'Sabda-Brahman' the source of cosmic - sound) in the form of mantra, or nuclear sound syllable, the proximate cause of manifestation. According to "Kamdhenu-Tantra" the left side of the Sanskrit letter 'Ka' forms a triangle whose upper left line symbolizes Brahma, right vertical line Vishnu and lower left line Rudra, while in the coiled extension in front, Kundalini lies latent. When this Kundalini Shakti moves up to manifest itself, it becomes dynamic and unites with the 'Shiva' to become one with the cosmic consciousness. Kundalini Yoga is the resolution of this duality into unity.

Yoga Kundalini Upanishad : In this the static Kundalini is symbolized by a serpent coiled into 3-1/2 circles, with its tail in the mouth and spiralling around the central axis at the base of the spine. When the Kundalini Shakti ascends up to unite with 'Shiva' (pure consciousness), above the crown of the head, self-realisation occurs⁵.

Brahmo Upanishad : It mentions about the presence of Nabhi, Heart, Throat, and Head as places where four quarters of Brahman shines. The commentator Narayana says that according to Brahmopanisad, these four places are the centres from which the Brahman may be attained¹⁰ (according to the method prescribed therein). Reference has been made of the lotuses/chakras at these four places.

The Ksurika Upanishad - speaks of the 72,000 Nadis and of Ida, Pingla and Sushumna. All these with the exception of Sushumna can be served by "Dhyana Yoga". Verse VIII directs the Sadhaka "to get into the white and very subtle Nada (Nadi) and to drive Prana Vayu through it"; and Puraka, Rechaka, Kumbhaka and Hatha processes are referred to. The commentator Narayana remarks that Kundalini should be heated by the internal fire and then placed inside the Brahama Nadi, for which purpose the Jalandhara-Bandha should be employed¹⁰.

The Narsimha-Purvata Paniya Upanishad - speaks of the Sudrsana (which is apparently here the Muladhara) changing into lotuses/chakras of six, eight, twelve, sixteen, and thirty-two petals respectively. This corresponds with the number of petals as mentioned in the literature except as to the second. For, taking first to be the Svadhisthana the second Lotus/Chakra should be one of ten petals. Apparently this divergence, is due to the fact that this is the number of letters in the Mantra assigned to this chakra. For the six-petalled chakra is the six-lettered Mantra of Sudarsana; in the eight-petalled chakra the eight-lettered Mantra of Narayana; and in the twelve-petalled lotus the twelve-lettered mantra of Vasudeva. As is the case ordinarily, in the sixteen petalled lotus are the sixteen Kalas (here Vowels) sounded with Bindu or Anusvara. The thirty-two petalled chakra (Ajna) is really two-petalled because there are two Mantras here each of sixteen letters of Narashimha and his shakti.¹⁰

Both the Yoga-Tattva Upanishad and Yoga-Sikha-Upanishad refer to Hatha-Yoga, and the latter speaks of closing of the "Inner door", the opening of the gateway of Sushumna, that is, by Kundalini entering the Brahma-dvara, and the piercing of the sun. The Rama-Tapaniya-Upanishad refers to various Yoga and Tantrik processes, such as Asana, Dvarapuja, Pitha-puja and expressly mentions Bhuta Suddhi, which as above explained is the purification of elements in the chakras, either as an imaginative or real process by the aid of Kundalini¹⁰.

Amritanada Upanishad¹¹ (1.19) mentions that yogi has to take prana drawn into the Muladhara. The pran thus drawn in awakens the fire (Divine energy) which is dormant. Yogi by meditating on the Brahman, concentrates his thoughts and thereby he causes the breath to rise with fire (divine energy) up to the naval and beyond within the subtle body. The other point brought about in this stanza of the Upanishad is that the first subtle centre of the body is Muladhara. The centres are also referred to as Lotuses with variable number of petals.

The Upanishad Taittiriya Brahmananda Valli mentions that human body comprises of a gross physical body (Sthula Sarira), a subtle body (Sukshma Sarira) and a 'causal' body (Karana Sarira). Further each body

comprises of sheaths. The physical or gross body is enveloped by two cosmic sheaths. One is Annamaya Kosa (Food formed sheath) and the other is Pranamaya Kosh (Sheath of vital - air). The subtle body (Sukshma Sarira) is enclosed in Manomaya Kosh and Vigyanmaya Kosh, whereas the causal body (Karan-Sarira) is enclosed in Anandmaya Kosh, the most subtle of all the sheaths⁶.

Annamaya Kosh is connected with earth, water and fire which are represented in Muladhara, Svadisthana and Manipura Chakra. Pranamaya Kosh expresses through the Air and Ether element and is represented in the Anahata and Vishuddhi- Chakra respectively. Manomaya and Vigyanmaya Kosh have the Ajna Chakra as its centre. It is the activation of Ajna Chakra that gives the inner vision, a simultaneous knowledge of things as they really are and is also called the third eye, cosmic consciousness which opens at this centre (Mookerjee⁵). The Anandmaya Kosh has Sahasrara Chakra as its centre. Activation of this Chakra brings about the union of Atma with Parmatama (Vyasdev⁶). These subtle envelops are related to physical body at several psychic points, and these points are interlinked by numerous subtle channels known as 'Nadis' (from the sanskrit root 'Nad' meaning motion or vibration). Attempts have been made to identify the subtle channel with the Anatomy of physical body but they are practically untraceable by direct observation. The most important Nadis are the central channel, Sushumna (spinal cord), and its two flanking channels-Ida on the left side of the body (left sympathetic) and Pingla on the right of side of the body (right sympathetic). Within the Sushumna nadi there are three more subtle channels. These are Vajra, Chitrini and Brahma nadi. The Brahma nadi is the innermost Nadi through which Kundalini moves up. Two currents of psychic energy flow through Ida and Pingla Nadi from the base of the spine spiralling in opposite directions around the Sushumna, which meets them between the eyebrows. Sushumna remains closed as long as Kundalini is not awakened (Mookerjee⁵).

Kundalini As in Rajayoga: It is correct to say that when contact is established between Apana Vayu (Vital Air) seated in Muladhara and Brahmarandhra in the crown of the head through mind principle, there arises a light. When this light manifests fully it illuminates the different parts of the body and irradiates the Chakras as it passes through them. Finally entering into Brahmarandhra (the crown of the head). However, the view that Kundalini is the primal Brahmic energy appears to be a late concept and not quite correct. The early scriptures do not discuss Kundalini in describing the evolution of the world, and even the Yoga Darshan of Patanjali does not mention Kundalini as primal energy. It is true that later commentators have mentioned Kundalini and the Chakras in their books.

These Chakras are a network of neural tissues in the gross body and are the bunches of subtle sensory nerves in the subtle body which are illuminated by radiance of Vigyanmaya Kosh (Vyasdev⁶).

The Yogadarshan of Patanjali states in Yog. Pat. (2.Su.52) which, when translated in English language, means; "When the Veil of 'Tamas' (inertia) that obstructs light is destroyed, the entire internal vision becomes apparent. Then the Chakras are seen as Lotuses by the force of feeling (Bhavana) and shine by the radiance of Vigyanmaya Kosha, the intellect sheath"⁶.

The Pranas (Vital Air) are pervaded by a positive electrical charge which combines with the negative charges of the body by an effort of will; then arises a divine light which enables one to have inner experiences. This divine light is Kundalini. Some workers feel that Kundalini arises as a divine light in Muladhara Chakra, when Apana (Vital Air of the lower part of body) is joined to Prana by mental force.

Kundalini is considered the 'Nachiketagni' as described in Kathopanishad. Having received this light a Sadhak becomes a hero like Nachiketa. According to Shvetashvatara - Upanishad then that yogi crosses the ocean of birth and death. (Having attained the body purified in the fire of yoga, there is no disease, old age or death for him).

According to Gyaneshwari¹², a well-known illuminating commentary in Marathi on Bhagavad Gita, it is mentioned that on account of the heat created in the body by yogic postures, the power known as 'Kundalini' gets awakened. Kundalini abides in sleeping condition with her face downwards in 3-1/2 coils like a female Cobra. When it gets awakened it uncoils herself, shakes off her lethargy and stands erect. After completely consuming the elements, it gets fully satisfied and rises up. Pierces the Chakras and it vomits out water rising in her mouth, but that very water turns itself into nectar (Amrit) and saves the life (Prana). The life wind emerges out of fire of vomit and creates a cooling sensation in the body internally as well as externally.

Despite various views on Kundalini it nevertheless is an irrefutable fact that this is the unique divine energy with the help of which one can see directly the mysterious inner contents of the body and also the subtle contents of the Astral-world (Vyasdev⁶).

In the west also many religious traditions have talked about Kundalini. Christians call it the Holy Spirit. Jesus says unequivocally in gnostic gospel of Thomas and elsewhere that "Holy Spirit is my mother". Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). The spiritual instrument within us can be described as a microcosm which links us with the macrocosm.

In North-America the Hopi Indians also believed in the existence of the Kundalini which is present at the base of spine. Frank Waters¹³ in his "Book of the Hopi" has described that according to "Hopi Indians" a number of subtle Chakras are present along the spinal column. First one is at the top of the head, second one is just below it in the thinking organ called brain, third centre is present in the throat and fourth in the heart. The other subtle centres are present below the naval. There are persons who are expert in this art and they are able to feel the vibrations from each centre and could detect the fault by putting their hand on each centre and thereby they could also cure the diseases¹³.

In the Kalahari desert of Africa, John Marshall discovered that the people of that area, called 'Kung', could dance for many hours so that their n/um (Kundalini) gets heated up to produce the 'kia' state. (Transcendental state to be one with the God). The n/um¹⁴ is supposed to be present at the base of spine from where it ascends upto head. They believe that n/um is a super-natural energy and its awakening paves the way for curing¹⁴.

In Mexico Kundalini was worshipped as the serpent God Quetzalcoat¹⁵. In Jewish mystical tradition The Cabala also mentions about Kundalini. In this the evolution of Universe has taken place in ten stages. Each stage is known as "Sephiroth". So these ten 'Sephiroths' exist in man and have their connection with subtle centres. People believed that the consciousness of individuals is usually trapped in the lower-most centre with matter. To raise this consciousness from centre to centre so that it finally reaches the 'Sephiroth' called 'Kether' in the crown of the head, one has to do meditation and chanting of sacred syllables (Swami Kripananda¹⁵). Once consciousness reaches this place the seeker attains eternal bliss¹⁵.

Chakras - The Energy Centres :

Chakras/padmas are present in the astral body. These cannot be seen by naked eyes and have been described by the Yogis on the basis of their divine vision. These chakras have been illustrated according to traditional Tantrik literature. The description and interpretation of these chakras varies in different texts but the underlying reality is constant in spite of some variations. These variations are because true knowledge of chakras lies in experience itself which occurs during meditative visions to a Yogi.

The important holistically organized centres (Chakras) are (1) Muladhara (2) Svadisthana (3) Manipura or Nabhi (4) Anahata (5) Vishuddhi (6) Ajna, and (7) Sahasrara.

Tantras commonly mention that each chakra has a particular number of petals with the sanskrit alphabet on each petal. The vibrations produced at

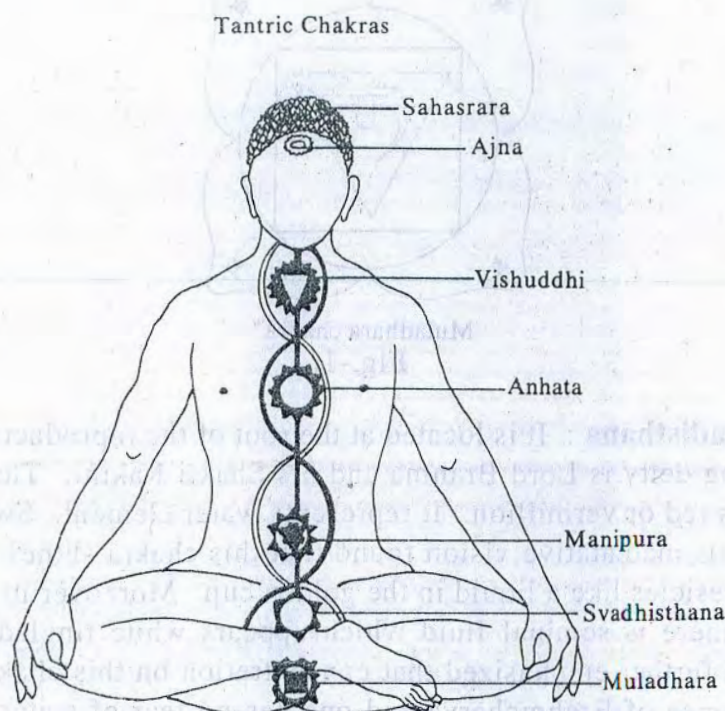


Illustration showing Tantric chakras
in the body of a yogi

each petal is represented by the Sanskrit alphabet. Every letter denotes the mantra. The letters exist in the petals in all latent forms; these can be manifested and vibrations of Nadis felt during meditation. The number of petals on chakra varies. Muladhara, Svadisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddhi, Ajna have four, six, ten, twelve, sixteen and two petals respectively.

It is really surprising that all the fifty alphabets of Sanskrit are on these 50 petals. The number of petals in each chakra is determined by number and position of yoga - nadis around the Chakra (Sivananda¹⁷).

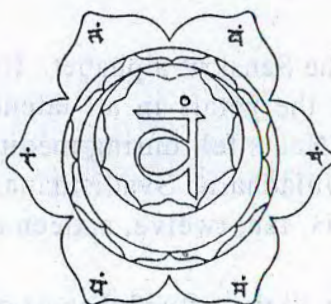
1. Muladhara chakra : It is located at the base of spinal cord and it lies between the origin of reproductive organs and the anus. It is two fingers above the anus and is two fingers below the genitals and is four fingers in width. Shri Ganesh is the Devata (male god) and presiding deity is Kakini Shakti. The geometrical representation is a circle and a square with a down pointing triangle. It has four petals and represents earth element. The related mantra is the syllable 'lam'¹⁶. (Fig.1)

Yogis who can have full control on this centre are said to get Darduri Siddhi, i.e. the power to rise from the ground.



Muladhara chakra
Fig.-1

2. **Svadisthana** : It is located at the root of the reproductive organs. The presiding deity is Lord Brahma and his Shakti Rakini. The colour of the chakra is red or vermillion. It represents water element. Swami Vyasa-dev during his meditative vision found that this chakra shines in the area of seminal vesicles like a liquid in the golden cup. Moreover in the area of the chakra there is seminal fluid which appears white tingled with blue colour. He further emphasized that concentration on this chakra helps in the maintenance of Brahmacharya and one has no fear of water. It has six petals. The geometrical figure is a circle containing a crescent. Its mantra is the syllable 'Vam'¹⁶. (Fig.2)

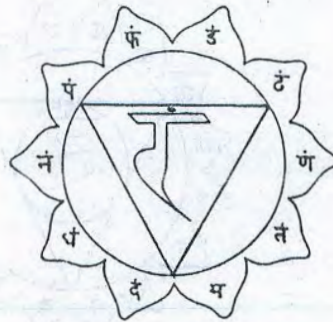


Svadhishthana chakra

Fig.-2

3. **Manipura** : It is situated at the Nabhi (Umbilical region). The presiding deity is Vishnu and his Consort Lakshmi. The geometrical figure is a circle containing a downward pointing triangle. The mantra syllable is 'Ram'. It has 10 petals and represents fire elements¹⁶. According to Patanjali Maharishi, Nabhi Chakra Keiya Vayuh Gyanam (Yoga 3.29 Sutra).

It means that by meditating on the naval disc one attains knowledge of the whole body.(Fig.3)



Manipura chakra

Fig.-3

4. **Anahata** : Heart Chakra : This is situated in the region of heart. The chakra is deep red in colour. The presiding deity is Lord Shiva and his Consort Parvati. Abode of Atman (Soul) is in this region. The geometrical figure is a circle containing two triangles one pointing downwards and other upwards. The mantra syllable is 'Yam'. It has 12 petals and represents air element¹⁶. It emits a mysterious sound i.e. an-hata. He who meditates on this chakra has full control over vayu tatava and attains Bhuchari Siddhi, Khechhari Siddhi and Kaya Siddhi (flying in the air, entering the body of another person and conquers old age)¹⁷. (Fig.4)



Anahata chakra

Fig.-4

5. **Vishuddhi Chakra** : It is situated at the level of the throat. It represents Ether (Akasha) element. The geometrical figure comprises of a circle, having a downward inverted triangle and a circle inside it. The mantra syllable is 'Ham'. It has 16 petals¹⁶. The presiding deity is Sada-Shiva and Goddess Sakini. It has pure blue colour. A Yogi who attains full control over this centre gets full knowledge of the four Vedas. He becomes a Trikal Jnani (who knows past, present and future). (Fig.5)



Vishuddhi chakra

Fig.-5

6. **Ajna Chakra** : It is situated in the forehead between two eyebrows. Represents 'manas' element. The presiding deity is param Shiva and Goddess Hakini. The geographical figure is a circle which contains a downward pointing triangle. The mantra syllable is 'Om'¹⁶. It has two petals. The Chakra is of pure white colour. By concentrating on this chakra a yogi acquires divine powers. Whatever Sankalpa (desired wilfully) is made in the form of a command passes through this centre and becomes so powerful that it materialises. The most famous example of the function of this centre is often quoted as the 'Third Eye' of Lord Shiva which destroyed a very powerful demon Bhasmasur (Vyasdev⁶). (Fig.6)



Ajna chakra

Fig.-6

7. **Sahasrara Chakra** : It is the abode of Lord Shiva and is situated in the crown of the head. This Chakra has 1000 petals and present in the cerebrum of the brain. Some people feel that it is situated four fingers above the crown of the head⁵. This is also called as Brahmarandha. It is the meeting point of Kundalini with Shiva. This Chakra is the centre of super or cosmic consciousness, where integration of all polarities is experienced. To attain the Sahasrara is to attain the world of Brahman (Brahma-Loka).

The best graphic representation of this chakra is in the form of an inverted Lotus (stem upward), corolla opening downward) emitting a radiance that bathes the subtle body in its entirety. (Jean Varenne¹⁶). (Fig.7)



Sahasrara chakra

Fig.-7

By attaining control over Sahasrara Chakra which is very very difficult a yogi is said to acquire various psychic powers. These are: Anima : Power to become light; Garima, Power to become heavy; Prakamya : Power to realize all the wishes, Ishatva : Power to create, Vashitava : Power to command all, Prapti : Power of reaching anywhere, Mahima : Power to enlarge, Laghima : Power to become small.

These eight siddhis are very well known and Hanuman possessed all these siddhis¹⁸ (Ramayana). If a yogi can free himself from the attachment to such powers only then he becomes the knower of the supreme.

Awakening of Kundalini

According to Vedic literature on the Tamas (inertia), in the gross physical body of mankind, luminous rays of Manomaya Kosh and Vigyanmaya Kosh are functioning just as they do in the bodies of great yogis filled with purity. But most people cannot see these luminous rays. After the practice of meditation on the Shat-chakras, seekers may acquire some knowledge of sheaths and may receive the Kundalini shakti by the grace of God. As this divine power starts working, it rises by piercing the various chakras and ultimately unites with the absolute, giving self-realisation⁶.

Forms of Awakening : There are two main methods of Kundalini awakening.

1. Ascent of Pranas (Pranotthana)
2. Origination of Luminous State

Pranotthana - In this by mental force the pranas start functioning in the chakras without the inner light arising. Apana - Prana, the vital air of

lower part of the body becomes excited by constant meditation and activates the nerves and plexuses in Muladhara, generating a vibratory movement of Prana from the base to head of the spinal cord. Sometime this gives an experience of something moving up the spinal cord, this is called as Pranot-thana.

This ascent of Prana can be brought about by special Pranayam exercises and 'Shat-Karma' i.e. body cleansing act of Hatha- Yoga. By constant practice, obstructions are removed at various chakras and Pranic current passes freely along Sushumna and enters the areas of the brain (Sahasrara) and one attains Samadhi. But a Sadhak does not acquire proper realisation by such inert Samadhi (Tamsik Samadhi).

In this way full knowledge remains inaccessible and sadhaks do not get self realization until the next luminous condition i.e. conscious samadhi becomes manifest. (Vyasdev⁶).

Luminous Awakening of Kundalini :

In this the devotion of Sadhak (seeker) and grace of 'Guru' is responsible for the generation of divine light which occurs inside the body and vital air moves up. By this vital electricity through the wires of Sushumna, the entire inner body with all its subtleties as well as the objects of the gross body become illuminated. The divine light passes through sushumna and illuminates it causing the various chakras in the body to blossom; removing obstructions, and thereby the current enters into Sahasrara, the thousand-petal chakra at the crown of head. In this state there are continuous light streams from the chakras. This current of light may be directed to any inner part of the body or any part of the world by which one may have direct knowledge of those objects. This is a higher state of Samprajnata Samaddhi (Samadhi with consciousness). Swami Yoganand¹⁹ discovered the secret of the link between the cosmic consciousness and Pranayama. He writes that "The Kriya Yogi" mentally directs his life energy around the six spinal centres which correspond to symbolic cosmic man. One-half minute revolution of energy around the sensitive spinal cord of man affects subtle progress in his evolution: that 1/2 minute of Kriya equals one year of natural spiritual unfoldment. Pranayama is reinforced by Yogic practices e.g. Asanas (sustained posture), Mudras (gestures), Mantras (seed sound syllables) and Bandhas (internal lock of muscular contraction). The first step in Pranayama is to regulate the breathing. The ideal breathing or inhalation means (Puraka), retention (Khumbhak) and exhalation (Rechak) is 1:4:2. In the practice of Pranayama these pathways of Ida and Pingla are purified to allow the free flow of psychic forces. During this yogic discipline the

primal sound 'Om' is uttered repeatedly to provide a sound vibration which has connection with subtle channels and chakras. Each chakra has corresponding colour and a sound vibrating at different frequencies. Starting with root chakra and going to the head, these vibrations rates are given by tantrik literature as 4, 6, 10, 12, 16, 2 and 1000 and the number of 'rays' of subtle elements has been mentioned as 56 for Muladhara, 62 for Svadisthana, 52 for Manipura, 54 for Anahata, 72 for Vishuddhi and 64 for Ajna (Mookerjee⁵).

Arousal of Kundalini by Mantra Recitation :

Mantra recitation is done to invoke a Mantra which then activates vibration channels and produces certain super conscious feeling states, which aid the disciple in his Sadhna. The very sound of a Mantra has a capacity to arouse the divine forms or their energies. Each divinity possesses a Bija Mantra. Thus the Bija Mantra 'Hum' is the root vibration of sound representing the essential nature of Kundalini shakti which encompasses the Mantra sounds (Lalita- Sahasranama). By means of concentrating on the letter Hum (Bij Mantra) Sadhak arouses the Kundalini, pierces the centre of the Svayambhu linga the mouth of which is closed, and therefore invisible, and by means of air and fire places her within the Brahmarandhra (Sat Chakra - Nirupana). As to the working of Mantra Shakti (power) in the arousal of Kundalini, the Bij Mantra is repeated according to the rules which support the aspirant auditory perception by its very repetition. In this way it intensifies the field of awareness to a single point, under pressure of which Kundalini is stirred towards awakening. It is important to remember, however, that the Mantra is not merely a technique of awakening, it is actually in itself indicative of the presence of divinity (Mookerjee⁵).

An American researcher Bernbaum²⁰ writes : the Mantra bestows no magic power from outside, rather it releases the latent forces within each person which are normally suppressed by ego. Proper use of the Mantra enables one to control and direct these forces to dissolve the ego, opening oneself to the universe. In Tantric rituals the Yoni Mudra represents Shakti Yantra. It is performed with the object of invoking the divinity to infuse the seeker with her energy. Mudras such as Vajroli, Asvani, Sahajoli, Khechari and Maha-Mudras and Shakti - Chalana (energy movers), are combined with postures, pranayam and Mantra to awaken Kundalini (Mookerjee⁵).

Tantriks, however, realised the immense potentiality of sex energy and through Tantra Asans, transformed the energy of sex and freed it to the plane of cosmic awareness. Sex is seen as divine in itself and is the source

of vital energy. Tantra prescribed the discipline which sublimates physical union of a man and woman into a creative union of Shiva- Shakti. The most important Tantrik practices to awaken Kundalini are (a) Dakshin Marg, the "right hand path" and left hand path, (b) the Vama Marg, the followers of Vama Marg practise the panch makar rights, comprising the taking of wine, meat, fish, parched cereals and sexual union. The ritual of collective sexual union performed in a circle is known as chakra pooja. The fundamental principal of the left hand path is that spiritual progress is not to be achieved by shunning or avoiding our desires and passions, but only by transforming those very elements which make us fall, as a means of liberation. Tantriks stress the need to perform these acts in a secluded atmosphere. Sexuality and spirituality become two ends of one energy.

It is claimed by the Tantrik school that sexual union is falling in love with the whole cosmos; it is a total surrender to whole cosmos. In surrendering we become feminine, the feminine depths of our psyche then dissolve. One transcends and gets energy and the experience of the flow of oneness. From the Tantrik point of view, the consummated human being is man and woman fused into a single unit. With this idea that the two are inseparable, emerges the state of Anand, of infinite joy and perpetual bliss is reached. This state of bliss is aroused to its full potential through this mystic process of awakening the Kundalini Shakti (Mookerjee⁵). Here it is necessary to mention that this method has done a great harm to the growth of the science of Kundalini. People lost their faith in Kundalini and rightly discarded this method except a few schools.



Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi
Founder of the Science of Sahaja Yoga

Founder of the Science of Sahaja Yoga Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi

The founder of the Science of Sahaja Yoga, Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, belongs to the State of Maharashtra in India, which is the land of great saints such as Tukaram, Eknath, Gyaneshwara and Sai Baba of Shirdi. It was here, in this state of India, blessed by so many saints, that 'She' who is world-wide known as Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi or simply Holy Mother was born. Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi took birth on 21st March, 1923, in a small hill station town 'Chindwara' near Nagpur (India). Her father Late Shri Prasad Rao Krishna Rao Salve was a Lawyer and remained in forefront of India's freedom struggle. He was a colleague of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Azad in the freedom struggle under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. He was the only Christian member who was elected to Legislative Assembly prior to India's independence. He was a great scholar and knew many languages. He sacrificed everything at the altar of the freedom struggle. Shri Mataji's mother was one of the first ladies of the country to graduate in Mathematics.

As a young girl, Nirmala Salve had her schooling at Nagpur and during vacation she was sent to spend her time at the 'Ashram' of Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha. Her work at the Ashram attracted the attention of Mahatma Gandhi who could foresee something extraordinary in this girl. As such Mahatma Gandhi started liking her immensely and inspired young Nirmala for the freedom movement and spirituality. After her schooling Nirmala decided to study medicine and so she was sent to Science College in 1942. In the same year Quit India Movement was started by Mahatma Gandhi and Nirmala Salve stood up against the British Regiment in front of her college gate. She was tortured and arrested but was freed after some days along with other college students. Afterwards, she got admission in Balakram Medical College, Lahore (now in Pakistan), and spent two years but due to

her active involvement in Independence Movement, she had to leave her medical studies.

In 1948, she married Mr. C.P. Srivastava, I.A.S. Mr. Srivastava rose rapidly in his career becoming Private Secretary to the Late Prime Minister Mr. Lal Bahadur Shastri. Afterwards he became the Head of the Shipping Corporation of India. He retired recently from the post of Secretary General and Chairman of the United Nations International Maritime Organisation.

He has been decorated with many prestigious awards. In India he was honoured by Padma Bhushan which is awarded to extraordinary citizens of India. University of Wales conferred on him the Honorary Degree of the Doctorate of Law at a special convocation which was presided over by Prince Charles. Recently in July, 1990, the British Government conferred Knighthood on Dr. C.P. Srivastava, an honour which in the last ten years has gone to luminaries like President Ronald Reagan and King Martin Luther. He has two daughters who got married in 1970 and 72. Since then Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi has devoted all her time to the cause of Sahaja Yoga¹⁻³.

The Great Discovery

On 5th May, 1970, a great event took place. After three days of continuous meditation in the village of Nargol near Bordi on Western Coast under beachside Palm trees, the last work of Divine i.e. opening the Sahasrara in human beings was attained by Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi. This could bring about en masse awakening of the primordial energy (Kundalini) within the human body. It was the greatest event of all the spiritual happenings of the Universe. According to Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi without this happening it was not possible for her to give en masse realisation to people. In Sahasrara, there are seven Pithas of the Seven centres (Chakras). There are one thousand Nadis or as they call in ancient literature as flames and each nadi has about 16,000 powers. Every nadi deals with a particular type of person; and with permutation and combinations of all these nadis, human beings are looked after¹.

As soon as Sahasrara was opened by her, the whole atmosphere got filled with tremendous chaitanya and there was tremendous light and the whole of it came as a torrential rain of light with such a force that Shri Mataji felt stupefied and stunned⁴. She felt a total silence in grandeur. After that she observed primordial Kundalini opening like a telescope one after another, rising like a big furnace but it was cool and silent. The appearance of Kundalini was similar to a heated up metal in a tunnel and it had many colours. As the whole head, like a big dome was lifted, the

torrential rain of vibrations completely drenched Shri Mataji and she saw all that Divine vision and got lost in the joy. It was like an artist seeing his own creation. She felt the joy of great fulfilment. After coming out of this beautiful experience she looked around and saw human beings so blind (i.e. ignorant of spiritual happening). She became absolutely silent and then desired that she should get cups to fill the nectar which was created by her in such an abundance⁴.

Sahasrara is the most beautiful part of human beings. To see it pouring torrential rain of light was like the flames becoming a fountain, a fountain of colours and a fountain of fragrance. Just imagine a huge thousand petalled Lotus and one is sitting inside on the corona and looking at all those petals so beautifully coloured and fragrant, pulsating with the bliss of Joy¹⁻⁵. This is the ideal position but then after the silence she got filled with tremendous compassion and love and felt that this power has to be channelled through human beings. She did now know how to communicate with other human beings. First she got hold of one lady who was very wise but she could not get her realisation. Then came another lady who got her realisation. Afterwards a few more got Self-Realisation. That was the greatest moment. Then many got it and now thousands are getting en masse realisation.

About 2000 years back Acharya Kaka Bhujnander Tatwachary⁶, a great astrologer of ancient India, wrote in his famous book "Nadi-Grantha" that a great Yogi will come on this earth in Pisces Lagna and a New Age will start from 1970. This Yogi will possess all the powers of Adi-Shakti. Imagine how correct it is! Shri Mataji's birth chart has Pisces sign and she opened the Sahasrara of the 'Virat' on 5th May, 1970, and since then she is giving Self-Realisation to thousands of people all over the world.

As regards the prediction of advent of New Age, it is really surprising to find as to how the people of the west, and that too of USA which is supposed to be the Mecca of Scientific Advancement, have started this concept of New Age to denote a shift of consciousness. Mary Oslen Kelly⁷ in her book "The Fireside Treasury of Light" compiled the views of more than ninety most renowned New Age thinkers who belonged to the field of science, philosophy, medicine and psychology.

William Blake⁶ has very clearly said in his writings that 'The day will come when men of God will become prophets and these prophets will have special spiritual power to transform other people as prophets'. William Blake could see hundred years back the working of Sahaja Yoga and today one can see its actualisation⁶.

Gyaneshwara⁸, one of the renowned saints of Maharashtra (India), has beautifully described Kundalini and made the following prophesy :

“Baher Yuktichi Mudra Pade - Tava ata ata Sukhavadhe
Tethe Sahajechi Yogu Ghade - Babhya Sita”

It means that as a balanced state shows its effect externally, the inner happiness grows. In that person yoga takes place spontaneously (Sahaja) for which no efforts from the seeker are required.

Note the words ‘Yoga’ becoming ‘Sahaja’. How true it is in relation to Sahaja Yoga. It became possible only after the advent of Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. Since 1970 Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi has been working for spiritual salvation of mankind. Her work started initially in India but as her husband was elected to United Nations and was posted in London, she did her work in England. As a result of this a small nucleus of Sahaja Yoga grew up and from there it spread to European countries, United States, Canada and Australia and the erstwhile USSR. She travelled widely from one corner of the world to the other keeping a busy schedule of public lecture programmes, practical sessions and curing many diseases of people who came to meet her. She denounced publicly many false Gurus who propagated pseudo - spiritual techniques in the West. The reforms of President Mikhail Gorbachev with the formation of Perestroika and Glasnost having new dimensions on openness, truth, freedom of expression and religion were necessary for the Sahaja Yoga to make a breakthrough in Soviet Union. Thousands of people came in Leningrad, Moscow, Kiev and later in Togliatti to attend the public programmes of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. As such the growth of Sahaja Yoga in Soviet Union had been phenomenal. Now Sahaja Yoga is practised actively in 55 countries of the world. For Shri Mataji the whole world is one and Self-Realisation is granted to anyone who desires it, regardless of race, caste, creed or financial status. She does not accept any money for this work. On the contrary she denounces it in very strong language. She herself has donated money for Sahaja Yoga work.

Shri Mataji in one of her most eloquent speeches in Delhi emphasized that “India is Yoga-Bhumi”, it must send forth from herself the future religion of the entire world, the Universal Pure (Nirmal) religion which is Eternal. It integrates all religions, science and philosophies. Thus it will take the mankind towards attainment of super consciousness, which happens spontaneously with the actualisation of Kundalini awakening in the Limbic area of the brain (Sahasrara). Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi’s cosmic optimism embraces the whole evolution from past to remote future and she has proved that becoming a super man is not difficult at all. The progress from mind to super mind would be as revolutionary as the progress from Cro-Magnon man to human beings in the evolutionary process.

In the past spiritual quest to transcendental state was limited to the

liberation of the "Self" of an individual. Such liberated souls were not understood by the multitude, hence they could do little for the public in general and the time was most probably not opportune for the same. But now through Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi it is going to be deflected towards 'Socialisation' of spiritual achievement and its extension to mankind at large, so that through re-shaping the life style a new spiritualized way of life could prevail on this earth. It is already spreading very fast but once it reaches the people at the helm of affairs the present day threat of nuclear war, terrorist activity and violence in different countries, will melt away like butter under the sun and Universal peace will prevail on this planet.

Fundamentals of Sahaja Yoga and Its Instrument as Revealed by Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi

Man in search of joy and happiness is running away from his own self, which is the real source of joy. People generally seek joy in money, possessions, power, sex and ultimately in religion which is also outward. The problem is how to turn one's attention inward. The inner being which is our awareness is an energy. All the evolution and manifestation of material energy is guided by the supreme cosmic energy. One does not know how powerful and thoughtful this cosmic energy is. It is difficult to fix attention on something which has no form, and so our attention is wondering outside on different forms. In 1970, Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi rediscovered "Sahaja Yoga" to awaken primordial energy (Kundalini) which was originally described in **Markandeya Purana** ages ago.

The working of 'Sahaja Yoga' is very simple, although the operation within is quite complicated. For example, if one wants to watch a T.V. programme it is very easy but to explain in detail the engineering principle involved in it is very difficult and complicated. The word 'Sahaja' (Saha + Ja), means born with you (inborn). Whatever is inborn would manifest without any effort. Hence 'Sahaja Yoga' is spontaneous. In broader sense Sahaja Yoga implies that every human being is born with the potential to be united with the Divine energy (cosmic energy). Sahaja Yoga is the culminating step of our spiritual ascent into the cosmic consciousness¹.

As mentioned earlier Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi had the direct experience of the cosmic consciousness in which she visualized the mother Kundalini and various Shat-Chakras along with their ruling deities in the astral body. She further succeeded in arriving at clarifications for awakening of dormant Kundalini which is present in 3-1/2 coils in the triangular bone called sacrum at the base of the spine. Ancient literature mentions

Kundalini to be present in Muladhara Chakra, but according to Shri Mata Ji's observation it is not present in Muladhara Chakra but is situated in Muladhara², which is the abode of Mother Kundalini and is situated at the base of the spine in the triangular bone called sacrum (Fig.8). Another point which has been emphasized by Shri Mataji is that the Muladhara Chakra is not pierced by Kundalini, but it is the centre of information for Kundalini awakening². The harnessing of sexual energy for awakening of Kundalini as proposed in tantrik literature is the distortion of facts and has no reality. It flouted the moral codes of Hinduism and hence it was discarded by the Society at large. It has done a lot of harm to the people who indulged in such practices. Moreover people lost their faith in Kundalini awakening. Shri Mataji further discovered that each Chakra could further be divided in subtlety on the basis of their ruling deity and their qualities into right, left and central part. This again is a point which has not been emphasized in the ancient available literature on Shat Chakras³⁻⁴.

In the presence of Shri Mataji, Kundalini rises spontaneously, pierces the anterior fontanale area on the top of the head and unites with the Divine power to become cosmic consciousness or Super Consciousness. One becomes subtler and starts feeling all pervading power in the form of cool breeze from the palms of both the hands and top of the head. It is spontaneous and effortless. One has just to desire for the true knowledge and once one asks Shri Mataji; it is granted³⁻⁴.

Sahaja Yoga is a different type of Yoga once it bestows Self-Realisation on an individual, it starts transforming him, then it starts transforming others. These transformed people, start transforming the atmosphere and the subtler problems of negativity. It is like the fragrance of a blossoming tree which creates an aura around itself, which attracts so many bees around to gather the honey. In the same way, when a person is enlightened, the area spreads and one starts getting more people; they are attracted to do Sahaja-Yoga⁵.

In Sahaja Yoga, unlike other yogas, one receives the Light first. The second step is that one generates the Light. This is a unique feature. The first basic of Sahaja Yoga is that one has to become one's spirit, so that one's body emits the power of spirit alone, without knowing the spirit one cannot know God. But one should know that spirit is very sensitive. One's attention should be congenial to the spirit, only then it will shine, otherwise not. Therefore, one has to steady the attention. For this one has to balance his thoughts, eyes, desires, ego and super-ego. Only then attention becomes steady and it helps to shine the spirit. Another fundamental of Sahaja Yoga is the integration of one's attention. This comes when one does something whole-heartedly so that one enjoys it thoroughly⁵.

In view of this, awakening of Kundalini is not a hypothesis or supposition as thought earlier but it is an actualisation on Central Nervous System and therefore it is consistent and verifiable. This verification occurs in the form of cool breeze from the palms and top of the head. Persons having no educational background can also learn it successfully. It does not interfere with any religious belief, rather it integrates all the religions of the world into a Pure Universal Religion. The programme is safe (has no complications as described in some books) and effective and can be taught systematically. It gives quick results in two to three months of training. One becomes one's own Guru and after being an established Sahaja Yogi one can awaken the Kundalini of another person^{3,4}.

Further as a byproduct of Self-Realisation one gets physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. Shri Mataji has devoted her entire life in working out this evolutionary leap for humanity. Her teachings are for the individual and for Society as a whole. There are Sahaja Yoga centres in most countries of the world and a list has been provided in the Appendix for the use of those who want to obtain more practical knowledge in this connection.

Instrument of Sahaja Yoga : The human nervous system is divided into Central Nervous System and Autonomic Nervous System. The Autonomic Nervous System is divided into Sympathetic and Para-sympathetic Nervous System. Within the subtle body we have :

IDA - Nadi : This Ida Nadi is also known as moon channel. It runs on the left side and in gross body it is represented by left sympathetic chain. In the subtle body it is supposed to start from the Muladhara chakra and ascends up along the spinal axis up to Ajna Chakra. At this chakra it crosses to the right side forming a balloon-like structure called Super Ego (Fig.8). Ida Nadi represents the power of desire (Ichcha - Shakti) of an individual. It brings to consciousness the memories of the past. As long as this channel remains active there is a human desire to live. The left sympathetic nervous system (Ida Nadi) has the power to store all that is of the past and that is dead. It connects us with the subconscious mind and also with the collective subconscious (Bhoot Lok). The collective subconscious, according to Hindu Mythology, could be compared to "Hell" where spirits of all demonic personalities dwell. At the apex of this channel after it crosses Ajna Chakra and goes on the right side, it has got a balloon of super ego as mentioned above. It becomes affected due to conditioning of the mind through Libido. Hence one has to be cautious on this aspect and should avoid such happenings. The presiding deity of Ida Nadi is Shri Mahakali. The qualities assigned to this are tamoguna, past events and subconscious. It is represented on the whole left hand. The flow in this Nadi is blocked by

Position of Kundalini, Chakras and Nadis in a Human Being

(As Hypothesised in Sahaja Yoga)

Central Path of Evolution Present

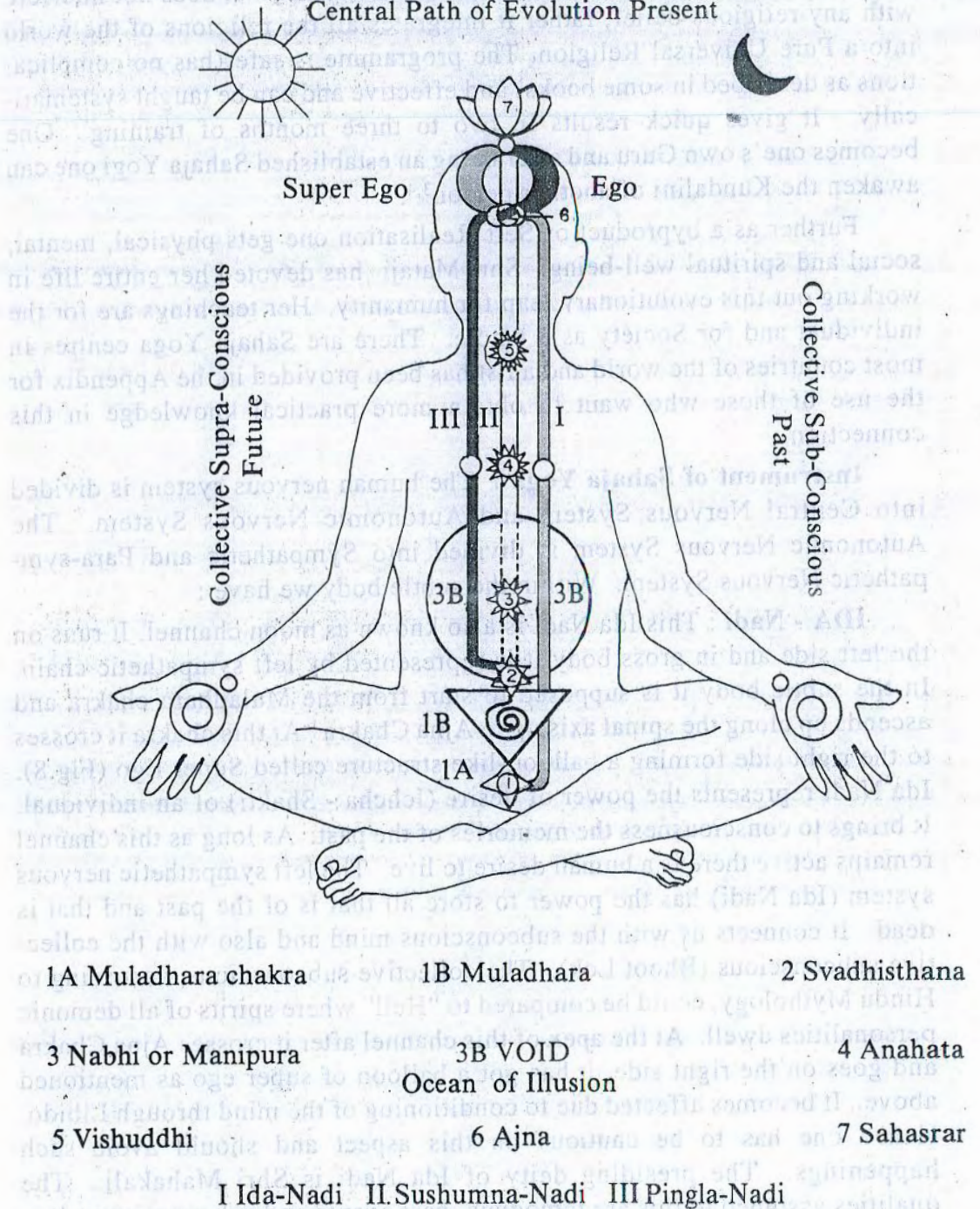


Fig.-8

conditioning, superstition, feeling of guilt, too much pity on one self, tantrism, sexual perversion and pornography.

The person who becomes left-sided are those people who keep on thinking of the past, are very emotional, prefer darkness, avoid meeting people and are introverts^{3,4}. Such persons should try to balance themselves by Sahaja Yoga practise and by doing this they could be saved from getting various types of diseases of the left side which will be discussed later in this book.

Pingala - Nadi : This nadi is present in the subtle body on the right side. It is also known as Sun channel. In the gross body it is represented by right sympathetic chain. The presiding deity is Maha-Saraswati and it has qualities of Rajo-guna. In the subtle body it starts from Svadhisthana Chakra, ascends up along the spinal-axis up to Ajna Chakra where it crosses to the left side and forms a balloon of Ego on the left side of the forehead (Fig. 8). This Nadi represents our desire for action (Kriya Shakti); it makes us think, work, plan and organise for the future events.

The symptoms of right-sided persons are that they are very aggressive, over-ambitious and dominating type. Such people get diseases of the right side. As told earlier this channel terminates on left forehead and forms a balloon of ego. It connects one with the supra-conscious and collective supra-conscious. This collective supra-conscious, according to Hindu mythology, could be compared to "Heaven". Here dwell the people with achievements and egoistic personalities^{3,4}.

Sushumna-Nadi : As desires are realised, there should be a mechanism to sustain it, just as there is no sense making a house if one cannot maintain it. As this force is conscious, it uses its wisdom for sustenance and evolution. This third channel in the gross body is known as para-sympathetic and there is a gap at the naval region. Para-sympathetic comprises of cranio-sacral division i.e. from the cranial nuclei of the hind brain and sacral outflow of the spinal cord. In between there is a gap as mentioned above. This gap is known as 'Void' according to Zen-Philosophy and 'Bhava Sagar' according to Hindu Mythology. The presiding deity is Shri Mahalaxmi. The qualities of this Nadi are Satoguna, represents the present and unconscious. It is represented on both the hands. This central channel begins at Muladhara and passes up to Sahasrara (Fig 8). On first awakening, Kundalini ascends up the Sushumna Nadi to Ajna Chakra, then the Vital force of Kundalini melts down on Ida and Pingala and these two channels carry it down to Manipura. Then the three combined powers of Mahalaxmi, Mahasaraswati and Mahakali re-ascend the sushumna to open the Ajna Chakra. The Ajna Chakra crossing creates Thoughtless-awareness. At Sahasrara Kundalini's force accumulates. As Brahmarandhra opens there is

release of pressure and at this moment one feels sensations of cool breeze (Chaitanya-Lahri). Many people are able to attain this stage for a short time. It needs practice to get stabilized and to remain in thoughtless awareness for a longer time^{3,4}.

Subtle - Chakras

Human body has a complicated network of interdependent relationships through subtle 'Chakras'. According to Sahaja Yoga terminology, Chakras mean wheels. They are known as wheels because of the spin movement of energies for physical, mental and spiritual activities. The energy fields are whirling around in horizontal plane, rotating clockwise at a certain frequency, in their respective places in the body. They manifest in the gross body outside the spinal cord as neural plexuses and control the respective parts of the human body.

There are many chakras but out of them seven are the major important chakras. Each chakra adds a new dimension to our awareness. Every movement of the chakra emits vibrations. The understanding of what they attract and what aspects disturbs them is very important for our well-being. According to Sahaja Yoga philosophy every thought and action influences the sensitivity and performance of the chakras. When Chakras become insensitive due to catches, Kundalini cannot ascend to pierce them.

Muladhara Chakra⁶ : It is placed below Muladhara (which is the abode of Kundalini) slightly outside the spinal axis. It guards the Kundalini present in the Muladhara which is present in the triangular bone called Sacrum. This chakra is present in the subtle body. It has four petals and represents earth element (Fig.1). In gross physical body it is represented by Pelvic plexus. Its surface marking on the human body is between genitals and anal orifice. The presiding deity is Shri Ganesha⁶.

The Muladhara Chakra which looks after the genitals and sex activities is placed below the Kundalini as shown in Fig.(8). In ancient scriptures in Sanskrit language it is mentioned as 'Shat Chakra Bhedan' which means six centres (Chakras) are to be pierced through by the Kundalini and not seven as mentioned by Tantric cult.

Tantric cult advocated that Kundalini is present in the Muladhara Chakra and looks after the sex activities. According to Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi this is erroneous and could be due to some mistake somewhere because here resides the deity of Shri Ganesha who has got head of an elephant according to Hindu Mythology. It is just possible that the proponent of tantric cult might have seen in their vision a part of the trunk of the elephant which gave resemblance to the shape of Kundalini, being

coiled in 3-1/2 turns and accordingly they must have mistaken the trunk of the Lord Ganesha as Kundalini². This confusion has gone to the other parts of the world as well because of the erroneous description of Kundalini in Tantrik literature. Tantrik technique advocates harnessing of Sexual energy.

Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi, founder of the science of Sahaja Yoga has mentioned in very strong terms that sex has nothing to do with Kundalini awakening. "Is there no self esteem left in human beings to understand that we are much more than a sex point?" These tantric techniques have done a lot of harm to the mankind by flouting the normal codes of morality and were contrary to the orthodox tradition of Hindu Society. As such these techniques were barely tolerated and were highly condemned and disapproved by the Indian Society at large.

In the west Freud the renowned Psychologist of his time advocated the hypothesis of repressed sex as the root cause of most of the problems observed at the psychic level of human beings. However he carried it too far. It is true that sex suppression hinders healthy growth because it is a normal physiological desire of adulthood. But unholy over-indulgence is worse. The net result of such indiscriminate sex indulgence has resulted in the most dreaded disease of this era i.e. Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) which has no treatment as yet. Sex should not be suppressed. It is a normal desire. For the fulfilment of this desire a man should get married and should have sex with his wife only. Wisdom lies in a lifetime marriage with one lady because marriage is a collective sanction of the society and has inbuilt security system for the proper growth of the children⁴.

Muladhara Chakra⁶ is one of the most delicate and most powerful Chakra presided over by Lord Ganesha who informs mother Kundalini about the right time to awaken. He is worshipped as embodiment of Dharma, a source of absolute wisdom, knowledge and innocence. It has many dimensions. A sense of chastity is essential for the growth of this Chakra. Adultery, pornography, tantric practices, lustful attention spoil this chakra; throws the individual off balance and one's memory and wisdom starts showing signs of deterioration. One loses sense of right direction. It also causes mental disturbances. Diseases of the prostate gland and AIDS are also due to bad Muladhara Chakra. However, with a sensible married life and following the normal codes of morality i.e. leading a Dharmic way of life as described in sacred scriptures, the Muladhara Chakra becomes strong and gets awakened by Sahaja Yoga technique. The awakened Muladhara Chakra brings forth fearlessness, power of Dharma, mastery over temptations and excitement, victory over spirits possessing others, balance,

wisdom, harmony, knowledge, inner sense of right direction, innocence, confidence and purity. Its magnetic force starts working and in turn it directs Kundalini present in Muladhara to rise and ascend. Kundalini pierces the Shat Chakras' and unites with the all pervading cosmic consciousness giving self realisation to an individual⁶.

Muladhara : When the foetus (child in the womb) is 2½ to three months old in the mother's uterus, the column of rays of consciousness emitted through the all pervading divine energy pass through the brain to enlighten it. The set of rays that fall on the anterior fontanelle bone (apex of the head known as taloo) pierce in the centre and pass straight into the medulla oblongata and from there to spinal cord (Sushumna). This energy after leaving a very thread-like thin line in the medulla oblongata settles down in 3½ coils in the triangular bone called sacrum at the base of the spine. (Fig 8). This is known as Muladhara and it is the abode of Primordial energy which is also known as Serpent power (Kundalini)³⁻⁴. In human beings it is like many strands of energy twisted like a rope. The strands are 3 into 7 = 21 raised to the power of 108. The reason for three and a half coils is that it represents the nature of Shri Adi Shakti as Kundalini and represents both Her manifest nature in the three gunas of existence - and Her unmanifest nature as the Ardhmatra or 1/2 syllable.

Svadhithana-Chakra : This is also known as Chakra of creativity and aesthetics³⁻⁴. Like other chakras it is also present in the subtle body slightly outside the spinal axis (Fig.8). In the gross body it is represented by Aortic Plexus. Its surface marking on the human body could be made slightly above the genitals. It has got six petals and it represents water and fire element (Fig.2). This chakra is supposed to bestow an individual with the power of creativity and a sense of aesthetics. Through this human beings could develop their own life style. The presiding deity of this chakra is Shri Brahmadeo the Creator of this universe and His power Goddess Saraswati. The left part of this Chakra is specially developed and is responsible for the true knowledge i.e. knowledge of the Self. The main function of this center is to break abdominal fat particles to provide energy to the brain neurons which get fatigued due to over-planning which is a function of Svadhithana Chakra when it is over-active. Too much planning, too much thinking, alcohol, drugs, domination and Ego-oriented life exhaust the right Svadhithana Chakra and the Pingla Nadi (Sun-channel) or right sympathetic nervous system which further swells the ego, with the result that its connection is severed with the Sushumna Nadi (Central-Channel). Once the connection is broken these people become off balance and develop diseases. One of the most common diseases which occurs as a result of this is Diabetes-mellitus. Heart attack can also occur in such an

individual depending on the condition of other Chakras. When left Svadhisthana Chakra gets damaged one starts thinking of the past events, becomes very emotional, thinks too much about the relations who have died recently, or goes to tantrics. In doing so one has a tendency to go into the subconscious and collective sub-conscious. In this way one is liable to develop mental diseases. In physical body Svadhisthana Chakra controls the functions of kidney, adrenals, lower part of liver, pancreas, spleen and intestines. One should keep one's Svadhisthana clear and in balance, so that it could perform its function well and could bestow creativity, knowledge and a sense of aesthetics to an individual³⁻⁴.

Nabhi-Chakra/Manipura-Chakra : In ancient scriptures it is well established that for the sustenance of organised society or say a Nation, 'Dharma' i.e. code of conduct is essential. Man as we know has evolved from a single cell Amoeba to this stage through his 'Dharma' which is important code of the Laws of Evolution. This code nourishes our spiritual growth. The conscious adherence to these laws is fundamental to the survival and growth of man. This third Chakra Nabhi is also known as the centre of welfare (Kshme)³⁻⁴. With the creative force at the Svadhisthana Chakra man developed means to harness the nature's resources to his advantage and with this he became prosperous and wealthy. With prosperity the greed for money further increased. Money is important for the fulfilment of essential desires and needs. If one does not have the means for satiating the essential desires then they become a priority. One can work to raise funds to fulfil the desires. But in this process one gets lost in the materialism. There is nothing wrong in being wealthy but the problem lies in being obsessed with money. Miserliness and hoarding prevent the flow of money and is an expression of selfish, primitive mind which does not know the truth of the basis of life. Generosity is the main stream of this centre. This centre is present in the subtle body at the latitude of the Nabhi (Naval) and in gross body it is represented by coeliac plexus. It has 10 petals (Fig.3 & 8) and represents water element. The presiding deity is Vishnu and his power goddess Lakshmi. On the physical side this chakra looks after the organs supplied by coeliac plexus. They are stomach, intestines and liver. Attitude towards food and how you eat affects the digestive juices. If one is in a hurry, angry or worried while eating, then the digestion of food gets affected. People develop various disorders. Too much thinking about food also affects Nabhi Chakra.

The quality of the Right side of Nabhi Chakra is our action in the realm of material well-being, financial arrangements, business planning, finance for future and sense of logic. It is represented by Raj - Lakshmi deity. It is blocked or affected by bad food like alcohol and too much greasy food. As

a result of this there is inability to face future problems. Due to liver affliction the temperament becomes irritable and grumbling.

The left side of the Nabhi Chakra is affected by disrespect to wife, household worries, a problem with aggressive wife or constant panic in house. It is presided by Grah-Lakshmi. The load weakens the left side of the chakra and an individual becomes vulnerable to allergic disorders. Indiscriminate fasting also harms this chakra.

In a human being when there is a desire to rise higher, then the Lakshmi principle of the Nabhi Chakra becomes Mahalakshmi principle. When affluence is there, one wants to rise above the lakshmi principle. In awareness it affects the aesthetics i.e. people worry more about aesthetics rather than about possessions. At this stage Mahalakshmi principle starts operating. Mahalakshmi is the power of evolution and it is by Her power that we have risen to be human beings. She is the redeemer and She connects us to all pervading power³⁻⁴.

Void : This is an area of outside influence. It represents that vacuum which separates our level of awareness from the truth while we are still in the unenlightened state. When Kundalini ascends up and fills this space then our attention is let out of the sea of illusion into the awareness of reality. This area is present around the Nabhi Chakra and incorporates all the aspects of existence such as personality, effects of planets, gravitational forces in our being, our Dharma and our physical sustenance. Void is the abode of Guru principle who incarnated at different times and are Abraham, Moses, Raja Janak, Socrates, Lao Tse, Confucius, Zoraster, Mohammed Sahib, Guru Nanak and Sai Baba of Shiridi (Later 19th Century). These were the 10 Gurus who descended to assist in the ascent of human beings because in the spiritual quest the guidance of an enlightened master is very essential. These masters gave the principles for maintaining a balance in life and to avoid the extremes. When Kundalini enlightens the void area (Bhava Sagar) (Fig. 8) during ascent then one becomes his own Guru.

These days we find a mushroom growth of these pseudo-Gurus who are making a lot of money in the name of the God. It is very difficult to recognise a true master and hence this difficulty. Whosoever is able to show some miracles or could lecture on God, is taken for granted as a spiritual master and people become his slaves. The pseudo Gurus capitalize on the weaknesses of the seekers.

Christ described that the evil spirits possess one if one accepts to get lost in these mysterious areas. If one lacks inner strength i.e. will power, and is left-sided then there are chances of his landing with the persons who use these evil spirits. The spirits possession acts like a parasite and need a human body to habitate themselves. These spirits can filter their thoughts

through human mind to satisfy their desires. For example, an alcoholic spirit satisfies the desire of alcohol by possessing a man/woman who has a liking for alcohol. The spirit keeps on sending desire waves to the man/woman to have more drink and thereby satisfies the desire for alcohol. Hence in the Bible, Christ often talks about healing people by throwing out the evil spirit that possesses them³⁻⁴.

Anahata Chakra/Heart Chakra : The heart is the central point of the creation and hence all Chakras are subservient to it. It could be compared to a power house and from it energy flows to all the different parts of the body. Heart is the seat of spirit, the ultimate source of all power, manifested as Shiva. A block of any Chakra of the body will put some pressure on the heart as well. This chakra is present in subtle body and could be located at the back of the sternum bone in the spinal axis. In the gross body it is represented by cardiac-plexus. It has got 12 petals and represents air element (Fig.4 & 8). The name of the chakra as Anahata means that it emits a mysterious sound which would be produced by an unstruck drum. This means an inner sound. This Chakra like others can be divided into central heart, right heart and left heart. The presiding deity of central heart is Ma-Jagdamba. It's main function is to form antibodies in the childhood and also in adulthood. These antibodies protect the individual from various diseases. They have all the messages built in themselves. When Central Heart is not properly developed or is blocked then one suffers from a feeling of tremendous insecurity, throughout one's life. They are afraid of darkness. To clear this centre one has to say the mantra of Ma-Jagdamba, and Kundalini starts rising, thereby confirming that the Chakra has been cleared.

Left Heart : This centre catches if there is a problem of motherhood i.e. if the mother of an individual died in childhood or mother has not properly reared the child or there has been all the time quarrels between husband and wife. All these events can lead to a catch in the left heart due to which one is liable to suffer from left heart problems. In order to correct it one has to say the mantra of Shiva and Parvati and the Chakra gets cleared. The other method is by correcting the relationships; for this one should start feeling the Almighty God as father and mother. This perception clears the Chakra and then the left heart trouble disappears.

Right Heart : It is controlled by Shri Ram who incarnated as Maryada-Purshottam. He gave the norms by which people should be governed. Lord Ram emphasized the concept of duty: child to parents, parents to children, husband to wife and vice versa. In his kingdom spiritual saints were consulted for guidance. This was thought necessary for the integration and preservation of society. Lord Ram was the Father of the Nation. This Chakra represents one's fatherhood. If father died in childhood or father

has been very hard or too fond of the children then the Right Heart gets blocked and one suffers from a disease called Bronchial - Asthma³⁻⁴.

Therefore a strong Heart Chakra is the basis of a healthy and dynamic personality. Besides this going further in subtlety of the Heart Chakra, Shri Mataji⁷ has said that Shiva as a spirit is reflected in our heart. This heart has got four very subtle nadis. First one goes to Muladhara Chakra and if one crosses the limit of maryada at this level he goes for his destruction. The quality of Shiva is innocence. He is innocence personified. If one could dissolve his impure desires into the ocean of innocence, then he is rewarded with the grace of Shiva and is saved from destruction.

The second Nadi is the one through which we desire things. These desires may be material desires or emotional desires. Whenever these desires go beyond limitations, it leads to destruction. In order to be saved from destruction the directions of material and emotional desires should be turned towards aesthetics. One should divert the attention towards beautiful things of nature and should enjoy them. They will give joy to an individual. One should convert mundane desires into pure desires which bestow Chaitanya⁷.

The third Nadi from the heart is that by which one feels attachment. That is attachment with family members, relations, attachment with property and so on. This again when crosses its limits goes beyond the threshold and leads to one's destruction. So to avoid this destruction one should dissolve this attachment by becoming a witness. One should become benevolent and should look after the welfare of others. By doing this the whole pattern changes. The outlook changes and worldly attachments dissolve⁷.

The fourth Nadi is very important. It starts from the heart, goes up, passes through the Left Vishuddhi and from there to Ajna Chakra and Sahasrara. It has four petals. When these four petals open in the Limbic area of the brain one goes into Turiya state in which one is in thoughtless awareness. It is this state in which one receives the real knowledge to understand God Almighty. Unless and until four petals open completely one may fall back. Hence in the path of Sahaja Yoga one has to be very careful. Indifference at any stage in leading a dharmic way of life could lead one to come down the ladder of ascent⁷.

Vishuddhi - Chakra⁸ : This chakra was formed to express the joy of spirit. Thus humanity composed music and poetry in the glory of the Divine. Gradually ego started developing and it absorbed all human attention. As a matter of fact all the vowels that are being used in the language originate from the Vishuddhi Chakra. In Devnagiri language it is 'ang' - 'aha'. It means it is impossible to complete a word without a vowel. A

consonant is weak without any vowel. As such strength of a person comes from the Vishuddhi Chakra in his speech but there should be no ego. This chakra is present in the subtle body at the level of throat in the spinal axis. In the gross body it is represented by cervical plexus. It has sixteen petals and represents Ether element (Fig. 5&8). This centre in subtlety is further divided into right Vishuddhi, left Vishuddhi and central Vishuddhi. The presiding deity of central Vishuddhi is Lord Krishna and his power goddess Radha. Shri Krishna is also known as Yogeshwara which means lord of the Yoga. He had a special power called 'Samhar-Shakti; by which he could destroy all those people who tried to harm the Divine manifestation. The 'Samhar Shakti' manifested in his famous 'Sudarshan Chakra'. Besides this another unique quality was that of being a witness (Sakshi). It means that he is not at all involved into any action, being detached completely i.e. if he eats his food, he does not eat it, if he speaks, he does not speak. If he hears, he does not hear. It has no action on him. He is not involved into anything. He is completely detached. He controls Ether element, where negativity cannot enter. In Gita he said "You give up all your Dharmas and surrender to me". He was meaning that all other things about which you are worried "you give up and become one with me, so I look after you". This boils down to that if one gives up the responsibility to Shri Krishna, then the complete integrated Divinity will start expressing through an individual and this is how Vishuddhi chakra gets opened up for the ascent of the Kundalini. To summarize, the qualities of Vishuddhi are self-respect, detached outlook, love towards humanity, Non-possessive relationship with family members, relations and friends. As said earlier, speech and communication commence at this level. Being the source for chanting mantras, it is through Vishuddhi that one could communicate with all the deities. The best way to keep Vishuddhi in proper order is, that one should not feel guilty and should avoid being 'egoistic'⁸. This could be easily achieved if one observes humility and makes it a part and parcel of his total personality.

Left Vishuddhi : The deity controlling the left Vishuddhi is Shri Vishnu maya. She is also known as Yoga Maya. She gave her life in childhood, enabling Lord Krishna to survive failing which king Kansa would have killed Krishna soon after birth in the prison. The qualities she embodies are self respect, correct relationships with women and respect for one's mother and self-sacrifice. Left Vishuddhi creates all kinds of social problems. Left Vishuddhi people speak sarcastically, say something nasty. They are the sly people, non aggressive but screwing type. Now when an individual involves himself or herself in adharmic activities, one usually knows inside that he is somehow wrong, and thereby a feeling of guilt arises and he loses his self-respect. This further gives rise to emotional im-

balance. With this left Vishuddhi catches badly. The only way to clear it is to surrender to Lord Krishna and ask for forgiveness⁸. In the present time it has been observed that simply surrendering to Shri Mataji clears this Chakra. Another point which must be kept in mind is that chanting of mantras given by pseudo Gurus is one of the commonest cause of a problem at left Vishuddhi level. Further this chakra acts as a filter. Inhalation of smoke particularly cigarette smoke chokes this centre. One has to be mindful to do his utmost in keeping the ecosphere pure. Healthy atmosphere must be on top priority of any Government over the so called economic progress. What is the use of economic progress if its by-products are injurious to health of the mankind. Left Vishuddhi catch is also responsible for cervical spondylitis and Ischaemic coronary disease. This will be discussed in greater detail in latter chapters⁸.

Right Vishuddhi : The presiding deity of this Chakra is Shri Vitthala-Rukmani. From the healthy state of this side of the chakra one gets correct appreciation of inter relationships and respect for humanity. With divine diplomacy Lord Krishna helped Arjuna to win the great war of Kurukshetra as described in the Mahabharat. This quality of divine diplomacy gets manifested in an individual when this chakra gets opened. The ingredients of divine diplomacy are sweet voice, tact to tackle persons with consideration, discrimination, compassion, generosity and love. It bestows personal charisma and makes one a magnet. Whatever one speaks it goes straight into the heart of an individual or even en masse. This is known as "Vak Shakti". Right Vishuddhi creates all kinds of political problems. Those who have right Vishuddhi problem are speakers. They say aggressive things and spoil the relationship between political parties. They cannot articulate. Thus shouting, anger, domination and use of foul language full of ego, is responsible for the blockage of Right Vishuddhi.

Due to damage of Right Vishuddhi one usually suffers from High Blood Pressure and in case damage is too much then one can get throat cancer. Therefore, it should be cleared. The best way to clear it is to become humble and sweet. Talk sweetly to people, avoid dominating people, give due respect to individuals, show love and compassion towards humanity and ask for forgiveness. By doing this Right Vishuddhi clears and voice of an individual becomes sweet and divine power starts flowing in his speech⁸.

Ajna Chakra⁹ : Three great incarnations came at the time of the evolution of Ajna Chakra. They were Buddha, Mahavira and Christ. Buddha spread the message of compassion and non-violence. He preached eight-fold path. He introduced the science of self-balance, called the middle path. He revealed the art of piercing the ego for the ascent of the Kundalini.

Lord Mahavira preached non-violence to the self. His message was very subtle in a sense that one should not have violent thoughts and through the serene mind super ego should be sublimated/dissolved. Christ came to help man to resolve his own ego by allowing himself to be crucified; great repentance was aroused in man, thus enabling him to see the viciousness of his own ego, and this could help in bringing about humility in oneself. Lord Christ forgave even those who crucified him. He has established within this Chakra the potential for human beings to forgive and be forgiven, to clear themselves from their sins and past karmas. Hence incarnation of Lord Christ was a major breakthrough in human ascent⁴.

The Ajna Chakra⁹ is present in the forehead in between two eyebrows at a point known as 'Trikuti'. This point is also known as the third eye of Shiva. In the gross body it is represented by crossing of the optic nerves i.e. Optic Chiasma. It represents fire element, and has only two petals (Fig. 6). On its left we have got a balloon of Ego and on right there is a balloon of Super-ego (Fig. 8). This subtle centre on one side acts through the eyes and also from the back of the head (Occipital lobe). Sometimes we call it as back Ajna³⁻⁴. This centre has a very narrow passage where Ida (Left Sympathetic) and Pingla (Right Sympathetic) nadi cross over to the other side to form a balloon of super ego and Ego respectively; As such there is no gap for Kundalini to ascend up. Ego and Super Ego balloons when bloated, sometime go down up to the level of Vishuddhi Chakra. Ajna Chakra⁹ is a gateway to Sahasrara Chakra (Limbic area) which is the kingdom of God. Anybody who tries to push the door without knowing the correct method either goes to left (sub-conscious) or to the right (Supra conscious) and starts getting hallucinations etc. Ajna Chakra is controlled by Lord Christ. He resides in the centre and He is the principle of creation. Ganesha resides in the Muladhara Chakra and gradually evolved to be the Christ at this stage. Christ is known as the essence of first sound 'Om' which supports the whole cosmos. This is the reason why 'Om' is the mantra of this chakra. This centre is extremely subtle and it creates two sounds 'Hum' and 'Kshum'. Hum is produced on the right side where we have a balloon of Super ego and 'Kshum' is produced on the left side where we have the balloon of 'ego'. 'Hum' sound produces Vibrations meaning 'Lam'. This sound comes from the power of existence, that is we have to live in this world and we are not going to die⁹⁻¹⁰. The Ego is a colossal problem. Its solution is just forgiving everybody. One should learn to forgive others and ask for forgiveness. One should awaken Christ to crucify the ego. As soon as Kundalini crosses Ajna Chakra one becomes thoughtless. This is the stage of thoughtless awareness. Ajna Chakra has been further divided in subtlety into central Ajna, left Ajna and right Ajna

Peetha of various Chakras as located on head. Right heart chakra is present on right side of Sahasrara. Left Svadhisthana is present on left side of muladhara.

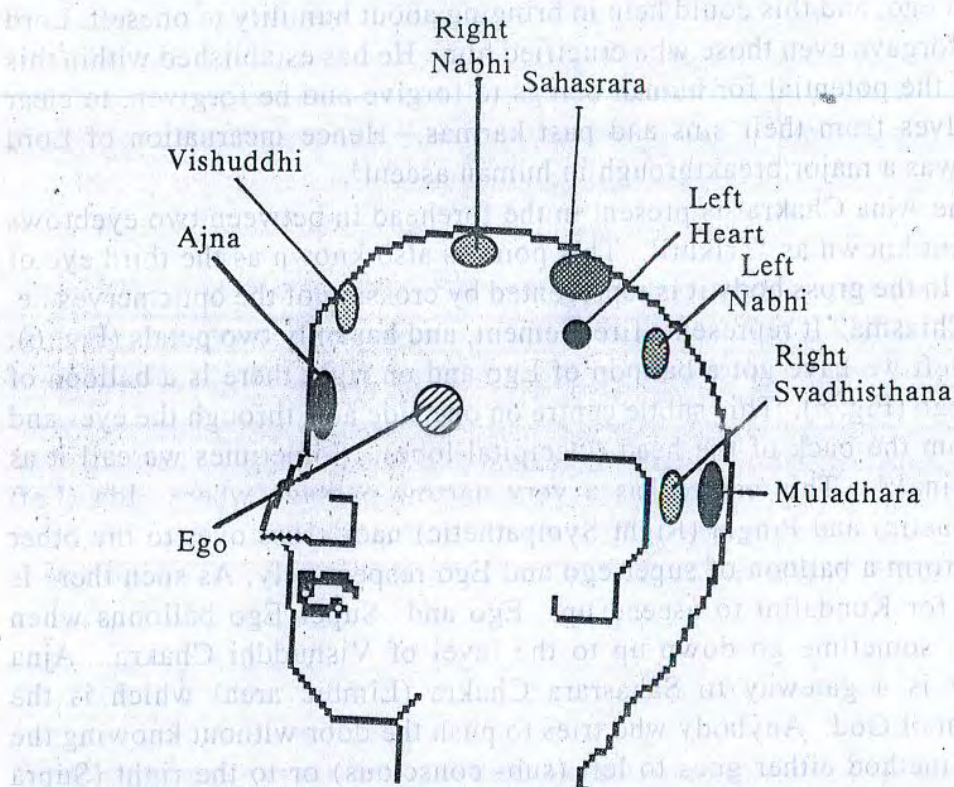


Fig.-9

Chakra. Left Ajna is represented on left temple of the forehead and it is controlled by Lord Mahavira. Right Ajna is represented on right temple and is controlled by Lord Buddha. Central Ajna is present at 'Trikuti' and is controlled by Lord Christ.

It has been mentioned that if one has wobbling eyes then the Ajna Chakra gets blocked. That was the reason why Christ talked about the adulterous eyes. They spoil the Ajna Chakra badly and could lead to many problems. All the bad thoughts gathered at 'Ajna' Chakra spoil it and so one has to clear the Ajna-Chakra to clear the eyes. We have to ask for forgiveness. If one's Ajna Chakra is alright, then the eyes remain alright. They emit love wherever they glance. Only with a glance of one's eyes one can raise the Kundalini and with the glance of the eye one can even cure people⁹⁻¹⁰. People who are unable to forgive their enemies catch on this Ajna Chakra. By forgiveness one rises above and the chakra gets cleared. The views of William Jhonston (Director Institute of Oriental Religions) are

similar to Sahaja Yoga teaching. "One of the most damaging traumas that can exist in the memories is suppressed anger and refusal to forgive".

Meditation on Ajna Chakra is full of complications as it overloads this Chakra. A strong back Ajna is essential for good sleep whereas over active Ajna hinders sleep. When Ajna chakra gets cleared it opens for Kundalini to pass through. Lord Christ has said that only those who are innocent as children will be allowed to pass through its gates. Wrong notions about God, inflated ego, following wrong persons also blocks this Chakra. The Kundalini is the potential force through which one has the ability to be in the present and to sustain oneself there, thus not to be pulled up by the past or the future. The past is like a magnetic current which sucks one's attention and thus an individual becomes its medium. However, when Kundalini rises it becomes a greater magnetic force and sucks all your attention in the centre, which represents present. Therefore, human endeavour should be to become spirit, to remain in the present where one is joyful and responds to collective consciousness⁹⁻¹⁰.

Sahasrara Chakra¹¹ : Sahasrara Chakra is present at the top of the head. Its gross expression in the physical body corresponds to the Limbic area of Brain. It has one thousand petals. The Presiding deity is Shri Kalki. When Kundalini gets awakened it rises and penetrates through the six different Chakras and enters into the Limbic area of the brain and enlightens the seven-Peethas (i.e. seats of these seven Chakras) which are placed along the mid line of the Limbic area (Fig.7 & 8). Just above the Ajna Chakra, we have 'Peetha' of Vishuddhi Chakra. A little up from there is the Peetha of Right Nabhi, then the Sahasrara with the Peetha of right and left heart on either side of it, then the Peetha of Left Nabhi. Further back, at each side of the back Ajna is the Peetha of Muladhara Chakra and on either side are Peethas of Right and Left Svadhisthana but reversed : Left on right side and Right on left side (Fig.9). So all these six centres are combining to make the seventh centre. This is very important point which one should know¹¹.

Sahasrara Chakra is usually the assembly of the six chakras and is a hollow space, on the sides of which there are 1000 nadis (nerves). When light penetrates into the Limbic area, then enlightenment of these nadis takes place and one can see them as flames having seven colours. But the last one ultimately gets integrated and therefore there is a crystal clear flame. So we have Sahasrara with one thousand petals. According to Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi if one cuts the brain in transverse section then one can see all these nerves along the limbic lobe. All of them look like petals. In case the section is cut vertically, then one finds many nerves in every bundle of nerves. On being enlightened one sees Sahasrara as a burning bundle of flames¹¹.

Kundalini Awakening and Sahaja Yoga

Kundalini :

The word Kundalini is derived from a Sanskrit word "Kundal" meaning coiled up. It is the primordial dormant energy present in 3-1/2 coils at the base of the spine in a triangular bone called sacrum. The latin name 'OS Sacrum' suggests that it is a holy or sacred part of the body. The ancient Greeks were aware of this and therefore they called it the 'hieron Osteon' noting that it was the last bone to be destroyed when the body is burnt, and attributed natural powers to it. Egyptians also held this bone to be very valuable and considered it as the seat of special power. In the West Sacrum is symbolized by the sign of Aquarius and by the Holy Grail, container of the water of life. The Kundalini, which is to nourish the tree of life within us is coiled up like a serpent and therefore it has been called as Serpent power¹⁻⁵. It has been described in great details in the Upanishads. Kundalini Yoga is supposed to be supreme in all the yogas. Guru Vashistha asserted that Kundalini is the seat of absolute knowledge (Yoga Vashistha op. cit p.144)⁶. The awareness of the presence of this primordial energy Kundalini within the human body was considered by the sages and saints to be the highest knowledge; it was revered with sacred respect and was known only to great sages. The most probable reason of this could be that in those days knowledge was imparted from Guru to disciple. Ancient Gurus used to have very few disciples and that too after testing them thoroughly. The Kundalini and chakras have been vividly described in Vedic and Tantric texts as mentioned earlier in the Brief Review on Yoga. They are Arunopanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, Bhavari Chopanishad of Rig Veda, Upanishads of Atharveda, Yogapanishad, Yoga Shikhopanishad, Kathopanishad, Yoga Kundalini Upanishad etc. In Puranas, one can consult

Devi Bhagvatpurana and Markandeya Purana. In Samhitas : Laya Yoga samhita, Raja yoga samhita, Hatha yoga Samhita and Shiva Samhita. Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi while talking about Kundalini quoted the work of **Adi Sankaracharya**⁷. He lived in 7-8th century AD and wrote: "Having filled the path way of the nadis with the streaming shower of nectar flowing from the Lotus feet, having resumed Thine own position from out of the resplendent Lunar regions and Thyself assuming the form of a serpent of three-and-a-half coils, sleepest, thou, in the hollow of Kula Kunda (Kula Kunda means the hollow of Muladhara Sacrum bone)" 'Saundarya Lahri'⁷. "Thou art residing in secrecy with Thy Lord (The spirit) in the thousand petalled Lotus, having pierced through the Earth situated in 'Muladhara', the Water in Manipura, the Fire abiding in the Svadhisthana, the Air in the Heart ('Anahata'), the Ether above (Vishuddhi) and 'Manas' between the eyebrows ('Ajna') and thus broken through the entire 'Kula Path'" (Saundarya Lahri)⁷. **Gyaneshwara** another famous saint of Maharashtra born around 1275 AD described Kundalini in the VI chapter of his famous book Gyaneshwari⁸. He wrote, "Kundalini is one of the greatest energy. The whole body of the seeker starts glowing because of the rising of the Kundalini. Because of that, unwanted impurities in the body disappear. The body of the seeker suddenly looks very proportionate and attractive. The eyes look bright and attractive and eye balls glow." (Gyaneshwari, Chapter VI)⁸. Sant Kabir around 1398 AD has also talked vividly about Kundalini in his poems. Guru Nanak Dev⁹ (born in 1496 AD) has made references to Kundalini awakening as mentioned below: "A pure heart is the golden vessel to fill the Divine Nectar which is to be sucked from the 'Dasham Dwar' through the two channels 'Ida' and 'Pingla' (Sri Guru Granth Saheb)⁹. Dasam Dwar means Brahmarandhra.

"God has made this human body as a house with six chakras and has established the light of spirit in it. Cross the ocean of Maya and meet the eternal God who does not come, who does not go, who neither takes birth nor dies. When your six chakras meet in line, Surati (Kundalini) takes you beyond distortions." (Sri Guru Granth Saheb)⁹.

In the Holy Koran, Prophet Mohammed Saheb¹⁰ talked of the day of resurrection when he says that the "hands will speak". "That day, we set a seal on their mouths, but their hands will speak to us, and their hands bear witness to all that they did." When Kundalini awakening occurs a flow of energy in the form of cool vibrations from the hands is experienced.

Christians called it as a reflection of the Holy Ghost and worship its manifestations as tongues of flames over the head of apostles during the Pentecost reunion. Moses saw it in the burning bush. Priests of ancient Egypt and South America could have obtained Siddhis (magical power) by

Kundalini but it is doubtful. Her Holiness Shri Mataji in one of her lectures said that Kundalini is the residual energy of the feminine aspect of God, the 'Adi Shakti' or Holy Spirit, which is stored within each of us since our creation. Jesus says unequivocally in the gnostic gospel of Thomas, and elsewhere, that "The Holy spirit is My Mother". In the Tao Te Ching the primordial power is described as that of a mother. Lao Tze described Kundalini as the spirit of the Valley (in which flows the Nadi of Sushumna). The spirit of the valley never dies. Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). The spiritual instrument within us can be described as microcosm (miniature form of creation) which links us with the Divine.

The great Buddhist masters considered that the existence of the path of Liberation within a human being was the greatest secret. They transmitted it to few deserving disciples. One also finds symbols of Kundalini in many different cultural legacies such as Mercury's serpent which is an alchemical symbol for the process of psychic metamorphosis. The gnostics understood the serpent to represent the spinal cord³.

According to Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi Kundalini is also known as Divine Power. This divine cosmic energy enters in the foetus when it is only two and a half months old. The columns of rays of cosmic consciousness pass through the rudimentary brain of the foetus and get refracted into four diverse channels corresponding to four aspects of the Nervous System. They are (1) Parasympathetic nervous system, (2) Sympathetic nervous system (left), (3) Sympathetic nervous system (right) and (4) Central nervous system. The set of cosmic rays that fall on the anterior fontanale bone of the foetus pierce in the centre and pass straight into the medulla oblongata and then to Shushumna (spinal cord). This divine energy power leaves a very thin thread like line in the medulla oblongata and settles down in 3-1/2 coils in the triangular bone called sacrum at the base of spine (Muladhara). Here this divine power is known as 'Kundalini'. This divine energy after entering through the anterior fontanale area (Brahmarandhra) precipitates on its way in the Shat Chakras as well. Due to this these Shat Chakra get filled up by the divine energy and thereby get enlightened¹⁻⁵. Such enlightened Chakras are responsible for the precise, proper differentiation and growth of tissues into different vital organs which are further organized into different systems according to their function. Such a marvellous feat is only possible through the divine power.

When the child is born and the umbilical cord is cut a gap is created in the 'Sushumna' and also outside. One can see this gap between solar plexus and vagus nerve. This gap is known as void in the Zen system and Bhava Sagar in Indian Philosophy. Later on when ego and super ego

develop and bloat like balloons' as told earlier (Fig.8) the fontanale bone gets calcified and the child is cut off from the all pervading divine power of cosmic energy. The human being identifies himself as a separate entity and consciousness of 'I' (Aham) presides.

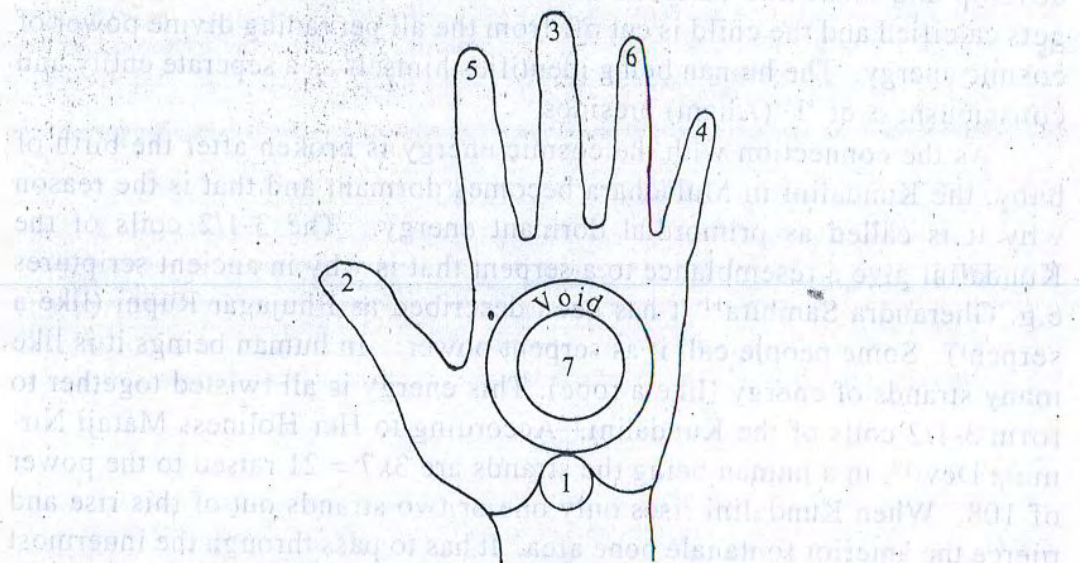
As the connection with the cosmic energy is broken after the birth of baby, the Kundalini in Muladhara becomes dormant and that is the reason why it is called as primordial dormant energy. The 3-1/2 coils of the Kundalini give a resemblance to a serpent that is why in ancient scriptures e.g. Gherandra Samhita¹¹ it has been described as Bhujagar Rupni (like a serpent). Some people call it as serpent power. In human beings it is like many strands of energy (like a rope). This energy is all twisted together to form 3-1/2 coils of the Kundalini. According to Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi¹², in a human being the strands are $3 \times 7 = 21$ raised to the power of 108. When Kundalini rises only one or two strands out of this rise and pierce the anterior fontanale bone area. It has to pass through the innermost nadi (Brahm Nadi). It is a spiral movement throughout. The Kundalini is there to nourish, to look after and to give an individual a higher and deeper personality. The power of Kundalini is absolute purity, auspiciousness, chastity, self-respect, pure love, detachment, concern and enlightened attention to give infinite joy and peace to an individual. The subject of Kundalini awakening is now no more a book knowledge.

Awakening of the Kundalini

According to Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi bridging the gap in the para sympathetic system (Sushumna Nadi) was the greatest hurdle. Therefore people tried other methods. However with the advent of Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, it has become very easy. She fills the gap with her vibratory power (energy) and the sleeping Kundalini in the Muladhara gets activated, ascends up, clears the Shat Chakras and breaks open the apex of skull (Brahmarandhra) without giving slightest trouble to the seeker. One attains his Self-Realisation. Subtle cool vibrations start flowing from the palm and top of the head. It happens in a split of a second, in a short spell between two successive thoughts. Of course if the aspirant is not well or is suffering from some disease or his subtle chakras are blocked or constricted due to adharmic life style, the Kundalini does not rise unless and until all the subtle chakras are cleared. There are many descriptions about the complications of Kundalini awakening and as such people usually do not venture to go in for this system.

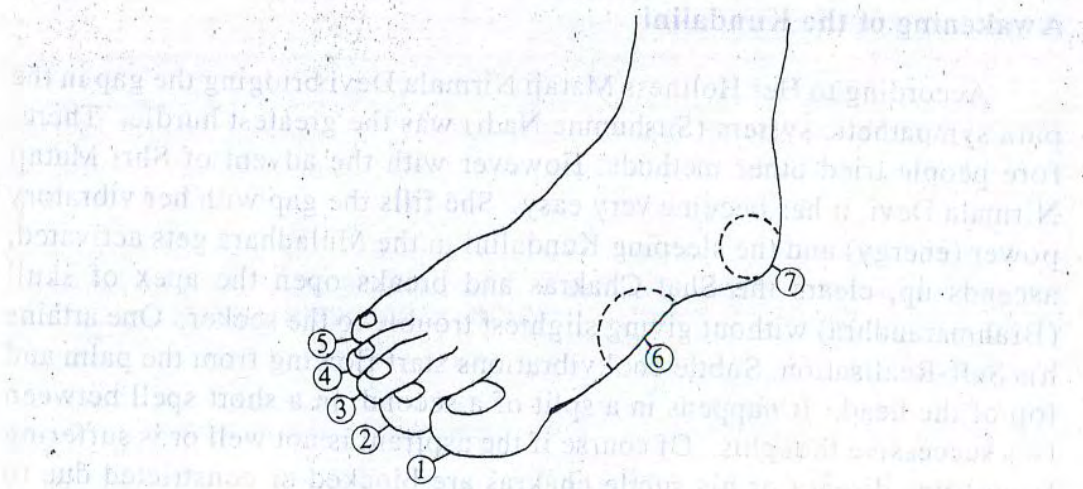
Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi told that complication occurs only when Kundalini is awakened by a person who himself is not self-realised or when

The Representation of Chakras on different areas of hand



1. Muladhara Chakra
2. Svadhisthana Chakra
3. Manipura Chakra
4. Anahata Chakra
5. Vishuddhi Chakra
6. Ajna Chakra
7. Sahasrara Chakra

I



1. Nabhi/Manipura Chakra
2. Vishuddhi Chakra
3. Svadhisthana Chakra
4. Ajna Chakra
5. Anahata Chakra
6. Muladhara Chakra
7. Sahasrara

II

Fig.-10

Kundalini is awakened by controlling sympathetic nervous system activity by Hatha Yoga and the seeker is not able to do the Asanas etc. precisely as described in ancient scriptures or Tantrik procedures where harnessing of sexual energy has been advocated. This system actually has done a lot of harm to mankind, by diverting their attention to sex. They flouted the normal codes of morality and were contrary to the concept of orthodox Hindu tradition of the society. As such these techniques were disapproved and forgotten by the society at large.

Sahaja Yoga works through a subtle force. Kundalini awakening could be accomplished by any established Sahaja Yogi as well. Usually there are two methods for awakening this divine energy. One is Sambhavo-Upaya and the other is Shakto-Upaya. In Sambhavo-Upaya, they take few disciples and cleanse them by various techniques of Raja Yoga or Hatha Yoga so that their attention (Chita) is completely cleansed, all the five elements are purified and then the Kundalini is raised for self-realisation.

In Shakto-Upaya: There is shakti (energy) which makes the Kundalini active; it rises, ascends up and cleanses Shat Chakras automatically. In Sahaja Yoga the technique used is that of Shakto-Upaya. In this vibrational energy is allowed to pass in an individual or directed on the Muladhara which is the abode of Kundalini. At this point, a question may arise in the mind of some readers and they may like to argue as to how it is possible to pass energy through an individual, which quite rightly, at the first instance, does not satisfy the common sense of an individual. In view of this, the recent work done in the field of Neurology and Neurophysiology is worth mentioning where brain waves of a 'Yogi' having predominant alpha waves were stored in a Module (Specially designed by I.I.T. Madras) and then from there they were fed by photic stimulation or auditory stimulation in the patients suffering from Grand Mal Epilepsy. It was observed that as a result of this procedure the alpha index in the EEG of Epileptics patients increased significantly and the frequency of epileptic attacks decreased significantly. As soon as these vibrations enter in the body of an individual it activates the Kundalini. When Kundalini rises it clears the Svadhisthana, Nabhi, Anahata and Vishuddhi Chakras and then enters the Ajna Chakra. From here it further ascends up and pierces the Sahasrara (Limbic area of the brain). At this point the Kundalini is said to be awakened.

In most of the people Kundalini shoots upto Limbic area (Sahasrara) without any difficulty in the presence of Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi. But in some people it takes time. It is either lost in Svadhisthana, the Nabhi, Anahata, Vishuddhi or Ajna Chakra. In case it crosses Ajna Chakra then one gets into the stage of 'Thoughtless awareness'. With this one is liable to attain certain powers. If the Kundalini moves to supra conscious

one gets the Siddhi of predicting the future. If the Kundalini has moved to the collective subconscious then one can reveal things of the past. One can also cure people at this stage by clearing the blocked Nadis/Chakras. In the next stage Kundalini comes out of the Brahmrandhra (Anterior Fontanale). Here one starts getting the cool vibrations from the top of the head and from both the palms. One becomes aware of the collective consciousness. In this stage one can feel the Kundalini of another person and could know the condition of an individual on one's finger tips (Fig. 10) and Brain decodes it. This has been described as Turiya State.

After this there is another stage where one becomes 'Nirvikalpa'. At this point one's attention gets enlightened. As such, simply by putting the attention one knows what is the problem of an individual or one can also know the problem of collectivity. It is the stage of Nirvana, joy and joy alone with profound peace.

Actually Sahasrara Chakra as mentioned earlier has seven subtle peethas (seats) as told by Shri Mataji. The spirit residing in the heart has its seat at the top of the head in the middle. This is the place which is pierced by Kundalini and one enters into an integrated collective consciousness and becomes a Universal being with a unique sixth sense of vibratory awareness. One could effortlessly tune into the subject's level of communication through these vibrations. When human consciousness tunes into the infinite, it become infinite and one gets enlightened. One gets the real knowledge, the knowledge of God. Buddha called it Nirvana, Vedas called it Moksha and Lord Christ referred to it as Kingdom of God¹⁻¹¹.

Sahaja Yoga Procedure to Awaken Kundalini

In Sahaja Yoga one gets his Self-Realisation directly from Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi or through any experienced Sahaja Yogi. A session on Kundalini Awakening comprises of the procedure as mentioned below :

The subject is asked to sit in a relaxed and comfortable posture on a mattress in front of Shri Mataji or her photograph. In case there is some difficulty to sit on the ground then one is asked to sit on a chair or a sofa. However back, neck and head should be erect. Subjects are asked to remove shoes and other articles like belts, ties, specs, rings or necklaces in the neck. All this is essential to ensure relaxation.

Thereafter, the subject with eyes closed, is instructed to extend the left hand with palm upward towards Shri Mataji or her photograph. The left hand denotes Iccha Shakti (Desire) and that is the reason why left hand is extended towards the photograph. The right hand is kept on the left side of

the body at the level of Anahata Chakra (Heart) and the subject is required to ask a question, 'Mother, Am I the spirit?' This question is asked three times. Thereafter, right hand is placed in upper quadrant of left Abdomen, which represents void and the subject asks another question "Mother, Am I my own Guru (Master)?" This question again is to be asked silently and should be repeated three times. Afterwards the right hand is moved a bit lower on the left side at the junction of body with the left thigh (Svadhishthana Chakra) and the subject requests Shri Mataji six times in one's heart 'Mother, please give me pure (divine) knowledge'. Next the right hand is moved to upper quadrant of left abdomen (void) and here an individual affirms strongly 'Mother, I am my own Guru (Master)'. This affirmation is done silently 10 times as Nabhi Chakra has got 10 petals. Afterwards the hand is shifted upwards on left side and it is placed on the heart (Anahata Chakra). Here one affirms strongly "Mother, I am the spirit". This again is said silently 12 times as Anahata Chakra has got 12 petals¹³.

After this right hand is placed behind the neck (this is facilitated by turning the head to the right) and here one affirms, "Mother, I am not guilty". This is said 16 times as Vishuddhi Chakra has got 16 petals. Then the right hand is brought to the forehead and is placed horizontally slightly pressing both the sides of the forehead one has to affirm with his heart that "Mother, I have forgiven everybody including myself". This is to be repeated twice as Ajna Chakra has two petals.

Thereafter, right hand is placed behind the head in the occipital area (Back Ajna) and raising the head slightly upwards one affirms "Mother, if I have done anything wrong, knowingly or unknowingly I should be forgiven". This is also said twice, silently as Ajna Chakra has two petals.

Then the right hand is stretched with fingers parted and the palm of the hand is kept in the anterior fontanale area (Sahasrara Chakra). With a little pressure the palm of the hand is rotated seven times in a clockwise manner. Each time on the completion of one rotation one has to request sincerely in his heart, "Mother, please give me my Self-Realisation". This is said seven times¹³.

After this one has to bring both the hands down and the subject is asked to open the eyes and subjective experiences if any in the form of cool vibrations/heat from the palms and the top of the head are noted. (Photo 1 to 10)

Then one has to raise both his hands upwards with palms towards the Mother or her photograph and a question is to be asked: "Mother, Is this the Divine power which controls the universe". This is said three times and then both the hands are brought down. The subject is asked to sit quietly for five minutes. During this period the attention is to be kept at Sahasrara.

Most of the subjects experience cool breeze flowing from the top of the head and from both palms of the hand. During this period the subjects go into the stage of Thoughtless Awareness.

After sometime subjects open their eyes and end the meditation session by symbolically raising the Kundalini from 'Muladhara' to 'Sahasrara' Chakra. In this left hand is placed horizontally near the Muladhara (not Muladhara Chakra) and right hand is moved in a circular manner around the left hand. In this way the procedure is repeated at Svadhisthana, Nabhi, Anahata, Vishuddhi, Ajna and Sahasrara Chakra. On reaching the top of the head a symbolic knot is tied by the right hand. This is done three times. It symbolises keeping the Kundalini raised (Photo 11 to 13). After this one has to give 'Bandhan' to himself. This symbolizes protection of the subtle Chakra in an individual. For giving bandhan the left hand is placed towards the photograph and the right hand is rotated from left to right side in a semi circle starting from the left hand position, then taken above the head and towards the ground on the right side and then taken back to the left side as shown in the diagram (Photo 14). This makes one rotation. In this way seven rotations are made.

It should be noted that meditations in Sahaja Yoga becomes more powerful when one does it in a collective manner with other Sahaja Yogis. The collective vibrations are stronger and thereby help an individual in the 'awakening of Kundalini'.

Sahaja Yoga Meditation

One should sit comfortably on the ground or on a straight back chair with feet flat on the floor. The hands are to be rested on laps, with palms upwards and fingers pointing to the photograph of Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi. The photograph should be placed in front of the individual on a table and a lighted candle should be placed before it. A photograph is essential because Shri Mataji is the founder of the Science of Sahaja Yoga and one requests her photograph and thereby her to give this divine knowledge. Besides this the photograph is said to have a divine coefficient and thereby it facilitates the Kundalini Awakening in an individual. The candle flame has the property of neutralizing the negativity which is released from the human body. Before sitting for Meditation, the first step is that an individual has to clear his left side. For this he has to stretch his left hand towards the photograph of Shri Mataji and right hand with palms pointing flat downwards should be placed on the side of the Chair or on the ground (Photo 15) and one should pray from one's heart that all the negativity of the left side may be absorbed in the earth element. This is

done for five minutes. Afterwards right hand is stretched towards the photograph and left hand is raised and bent at elbow with palms facing inwards (Photo 16). One prays that all the negativity of the right side of the body is absorbed in the air element⁴. This is done for five minutes and then with both hands towards the photograph, one is asked to keep one's attention at the Sahasrara Chakra on the top of the head and is required to meditate with eyes closed for 10 to 15 minutes (Photo 17).

One starts feeling the cool vibrations flowing into the hands and also from top of the head. This could be verified by keeping left hand towards Shri Mataji and right hand slightly above the top of the head. Similarly, right hand is stretched towards Shri Mataji and with left hand one can check the flow of subtle cool breeze (vibrations) from top of the head. If one's system is in a healthy state then one feels subtle coolness in both the hands otherwise warmth/tingling sensations or numbness is an indication of some blockage in the subtle chakras or Nadis of the body. These problems could be easily removed at any Sahaja Yoga centre by an experienced Sahaja Yogi. This meditation should be done preferably in morning otherwise at any time suitable to the seeker. Soon after the Meditation one has to symbolically raise the Kundalini from its abode in Muladhara and not in Muladhara Chakra as mentioned in ancient Tantrik texts.

For raising the Kundalini one has to place his left hand horizontally at the level of Muladhara in the gross body as shown in the (Photo 11-12) and the right hand is to be rotated three times around the left hand, then the left is moved up at the Svadhisthana, Nabhi, Anahata, Vishuddhi, Ajna and Sahasrara Chakra and at each of the Chakras, right hand is to be rotated like making a circle. At Sahasrara Chakra the Kundalini is symbolically tied up by the right hand. This process is done three times. First time one knot is tied, then two knots and lastly three knots are tied. This represents symbolic protection of Kundalini from evil effects¹⁻⁴.

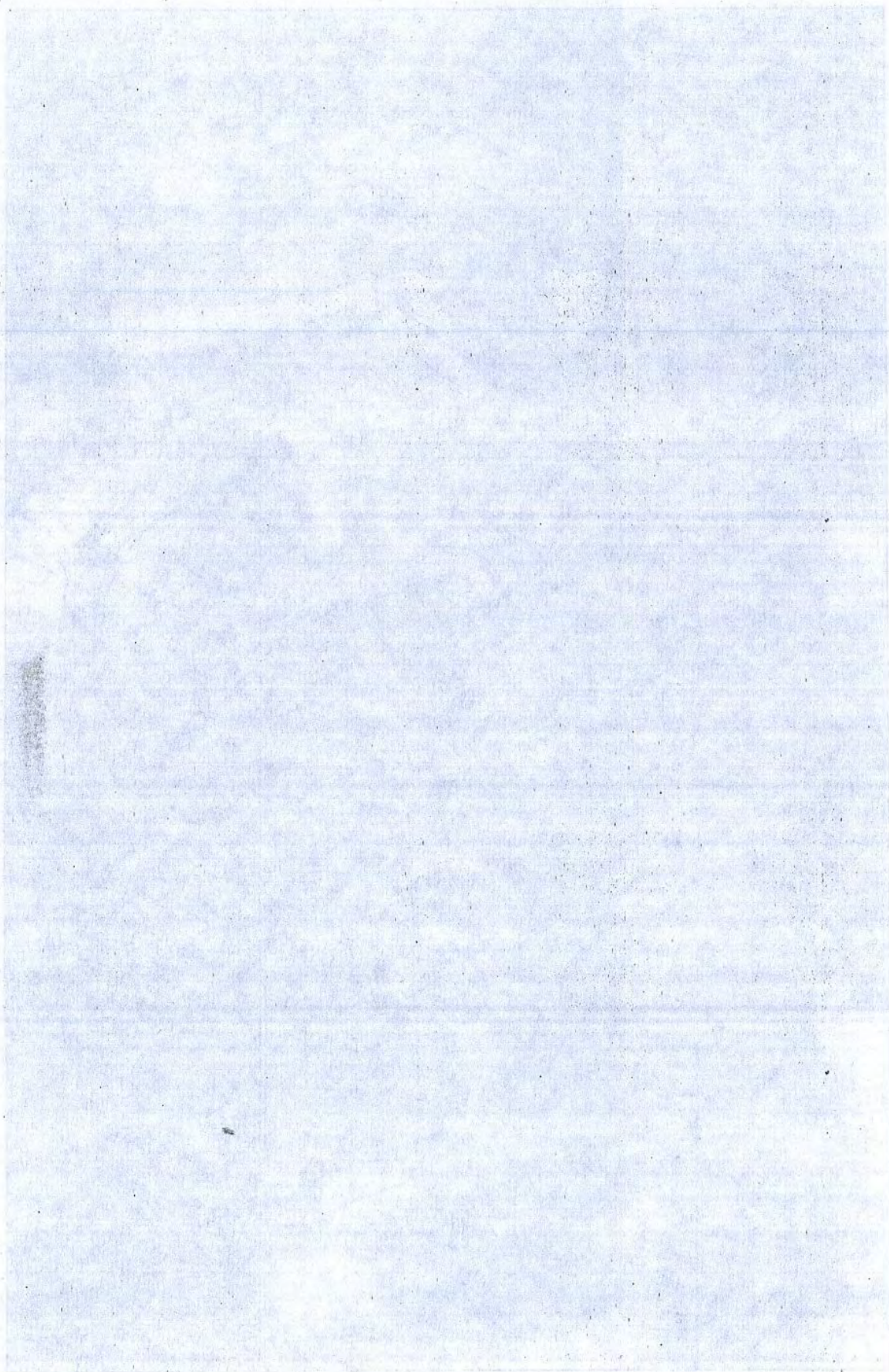
After raising the Kundalini, one should take a Bandhan. This is routine protection from evil effects. One should do it from right hand. To start, one has to make a movement of the right hand from the left to right side of the body and then back to left as shown in the diagram (Photo 14). This is counted as one. Such seven movements are to be made as there are seven subtle chakras in our body. After this one offers his due regards to Shri Mataji before leaving the place of meditation.

Practical Difficulties Usually Encountered

During Meditation usually, the past events of life, desires and problems of the future start replaying themselves because one is consciously

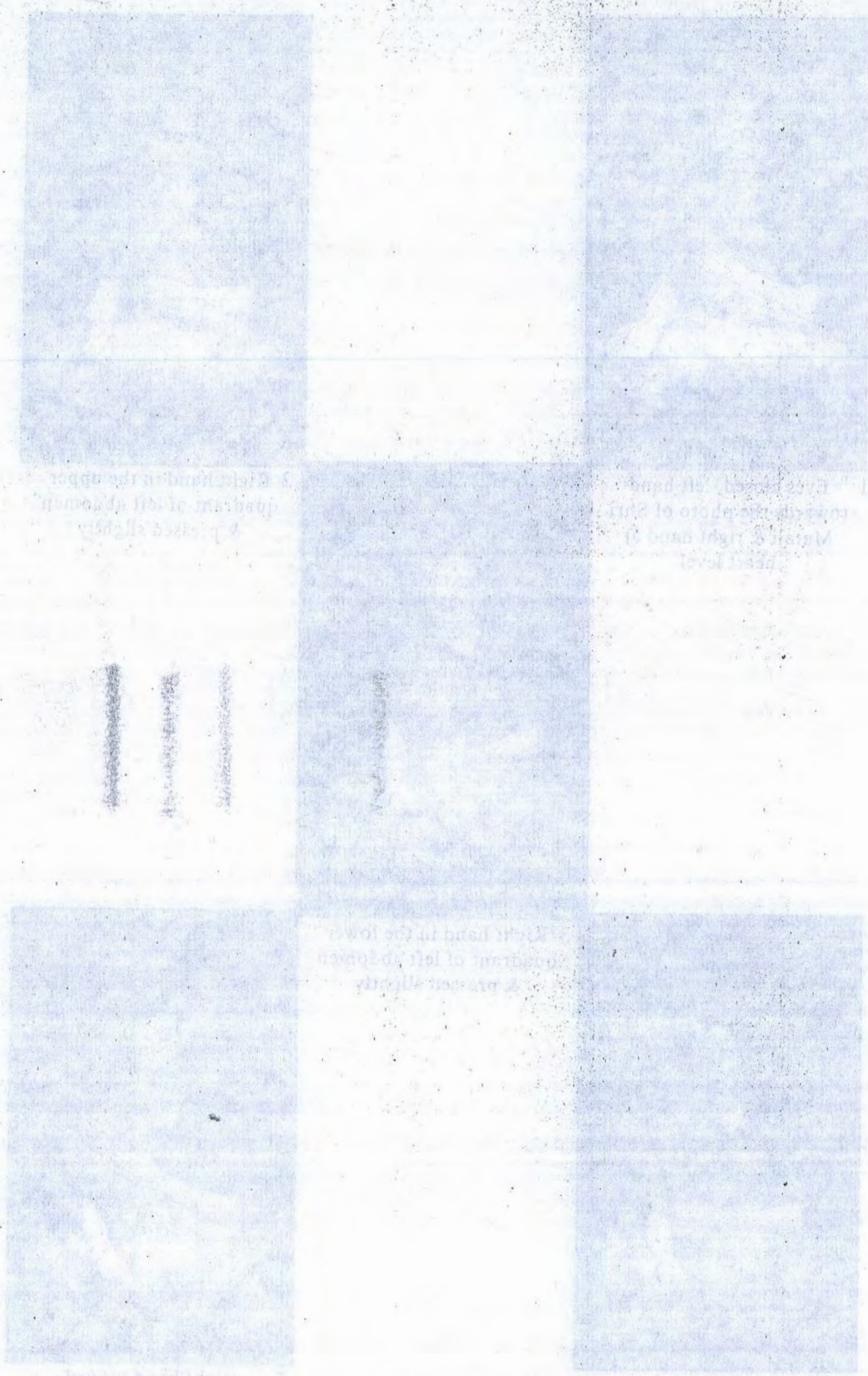


Ganapati (Lord Ganesha), Embodiment of Dharma, Wisdom, Innocence and Knowledge. From : Hoysaleswara Temple, Halebidu, 11th century.
Copyright : Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi





Rishi Markandeya in the presence of Goddess Chandi.
From Mughal paintings, 16th century.
Copyright : Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi



3. Left hand in the upper quadrant of left of image, 4. Pressed slightly

1. Right hand in the upper quadrant of right of image, 2. Pressed slightly

5. Right hand in the lower quadrant of left of image, 6. Pressed slightly

4. Right hand in the upper quadrant of right of image, 5. Pressed slightly

7. Left hand in the lower quadrant of left of image, 8. Pressed slightly



1 Eyes closed, left hand towards the photo of Shri Mataji & right hand at heart level



2 Right hand in the upper quadrant of left abdomen & pressed slightly



3 Right hand in the lower quadrant of left abdomen & pressed slightly



4 Right hand brought back in the upper quadrant of left abdomen & pressed slightly



5 Right hand moved up & placed at heart level



6 Right hand placed behind the neck & pressed (turning the head right side)



7 Right hand on forehead pressing both the sides



8 Right hand placed on back of head (occipital area) & head raised slightly



9 Right hand with parted fingers kept on top of head (anterior fontanale area)



10 Both hands extended towards the photo of Shri Mataji with attention on top of head (Sahasana)



11 Kundalini raising



12 Kundalini raising



13 Tying up Kundalini



14 Bandhan technique



15 Clearing the left side



16 Clearing the right side



17 Meditational posture



18 Foot soaking



19 Balancing over active right side



20 Balancing over active left side

thinking of the past or the future and therefore the Kundalini does not ascend up. If one's attention moves to the left, then one goes into the subconscious and collective subconscious and gets glimpses of the past happenings. So in individuals whose attention remains on the left side on Ida Nadi, may initially suffer from the hangover of the past, but by meditation this gradually diminishes. For example if one has met a tragedy in life which has left a deep bruise on one's mind, then the more one dwells on this, the more that tragedy persists. By thinking of the tragedy one starts going into sadness and slowly it is engraved so much in one's attention that it becomes a habit and a second nature.

Whenever one dwells on the sufferings of the childhood, suppressed desires, suppressed anger and the pain caused by them comes on the surface in our actions. Its habituation moulds one into a characteristic left sided personality which is very dangerous. It has been seen that the people who have left-side characteristics are prone to develop psychiatric disorders, migraine, epilepsy and even cancer etc. In these circumstances it is very essential that one should correct this situation first by clearing the left side and then by doing meditation. In this way gradually the left side gets cleared. Similarly if one is over ambitious, keeps on planning and organising for the future then one develops right-sided characteristics. One becomes aggressive, dominating, cruel, selfish, mean, over ambitious, futuristic and develops egoistic personality. These people usually suffer from diabetes, high blood pressure, paralysis, heart attacks and renal failure etc. In these circumstances one should clear the right side Pingla Nadi by prescribed methods and then meditation should be started. Gradually, things start improving and one comes into balance. Meditation progresses well and one does not get entangled in the chain of thoughts. One starts living in the present without any carry forwards of the past. This is the reason why it is advocated that let the thoughts pass off as they are, without getting involved into it. In between two successive thoughts there is a gap and it is in this gap of thoughtlessness that Kundalini spontaneously ascends up and enlightens an individual, cool vibrations start flowing from the palms and the top of the head.

The vibrational awareness works like an antenna. Whenever there is any outside factor disturbing one's vibrations, then hot sensations appear on the finger tips and palms of the hand to enable one to take necessary precautionary measures. By clearing the chakra with the help of the prescribed techniques, candling or Bandhan or by transmitting vibrations the block is cleared and usually subtle cool vibrations reappear.

Therefore, it is important to learn the technique of doing Sahaja Yoga properly to get the subtle vibrations, to develop the sensitivity, and to

decode them. With practice eventually a stage comes when one is constantly in vibrations. On attaining equanimity in meditation, it is essential to lead a balanced life. One realizes after Kundalini Awakening that meditation is a state of being. One has not to exert for it. It is not a mental exercise. It happens spontaneously and one can remain in this state while doing other works like a witness. Further in Sahaja Yoga, collective meditations are more effective, as the vibrations generated are very strong, they clear the chakras of individual quickly and effectively. Hence one must participate in such collective meditations⁴.

Methods for Clearance :

Foot Soaking : This is done usually before going to bed. Take luke warm water in a bowl, add one tablespoon common salt and sit as before (in meditation) but with feet in the bowl of water (Photo 18). This is very effective method for removing the negativity via the water element because in meditation a lot of negativity is released through the feet. This foot soaking treatment is done for 10 to 15 minutes. After foot soaking, one should throw the water in the W.C. This is important because the water gets the negativity and if poured over plants etc could burn them or damage their growth. For the same reason one should not use foot soaking bowl for other purposes. Then wash the feet with fresh water and dry them with a clean towel. By observing these simple practices, the morning meditation to stabilize and the evening foot soaking to cleanse the subtle system-one's progress gets accelerated. The subtle chakras and the Nadis get cleared and one remains in balance⁴.

Clearing the Chakras : There are many methods to clear the Nadis and chakras but only a few techniques are discussed here. At this place it would be necessary to say that according to philosophy of Sahaja Yoga every subtle centre has a central part, left part and right part. The method of clearing of the left part of the subtle chakra and right part and central part are altogether different.

However, there are some simple techniques by which one can remove catches. Generally candling clears the chakras on the left side, right side chakras are cleared by water treatment i.e. foot soaking in slightly cold water. Sitting on the mother earth sucks the negativity of the Muladhara Chakra, foot soaking in river or sea water clears Svadhisthana and Nabhi Chakra, looking at Mataji's photograph through candle clears Ajna Chakra. Looking at the sky and saying "Allah O Akbar" or saying "I am not guilty" makes easier to clear Vishuddhi Chakra. Then there are other techniques like three candle treatment which is very useful in cases where the chakras

are too much blocked on the left side.

For these one should go to a Sahaja Yoga centre, where all the methods and facilities for clearance of the chakras are provided. A list of the important centres of the world has been provided in the Appendix.

Then there is a general technique of Balancing⁴. In this if a person is right sided then the energy of Ida Nadi is raised by making ascending movements of the right hand along the left side and brought to the right side of the person's spine (Photo 19). In case an individual is left sided, i.e. apathetic and depressed, the healer raises the energy of the Pingla-Nadi by making ascending movements of the right hand along right side of the patient and pushes the raised energy to the left side of the individual along the left side of the person's spine as shown in Photo 20.

A chakra could also be cleared by simulating its clockwise rotation with the fingers of the right hand and by asking the person to extend his left hand towards the photograph of Shri Mataji and right hand is kept at the afflicted chakra. In this technique there are minor variations depending whether the left side of the chakra is afflicted or right side or both left and right sides are caught.

Another method is to clear the chakra by taking the mantra of the deity of that particular chakra. For example knowing that Vishnu Maya is the controlling deity of Left Vishuddhi then for clearing Left Vishuddhi the mantra of Vishnu Maya is taken to clear the chakra. The same is true for other chakras also.

Another technique of clearing the chakra is by strengthening their qualities and avoiding the psychosocial behaviour which upsets them. It has been observed that chakras begin pouring their respective virtues into the human being when they get energized by Kundalini rising through the central channel. The chakras which are catching or blocked are responsible for psychic and physical problems. Keeping this principle in mind certain cardinal assertions are used and an individual is asked to repeat them. For example if left Vishuddhi is catching then one is asked to stretch the left hand towards mother (because left denotes desire (Iccha Shakti) and right hand is kept on Vishuddhi Chakra, and one says in his heart silently "Mother I am not guilty" and it is said 16 times as Vishuddhi chakra has 16 petals. In case of Ajna chakra, one has to say "Mother I have forgiven everybody" This is said two times as Ajna Chakra has two petals and is ruled by Jesus Christ who forgave even those who crucified him. By saying this chakra Ajna Chakra clears very quickly.

At Anahata Chakra one has to say "Mother I am my own spirit". This clears Heart Chakra and so on. Once the channels are cleansed and the subtle chakras are freed from the 'catches' and the attention no longer

fluctuates like a pendulum to left or to right side but is centred (Balanced) in the Sushumna, then the stage is set for the Kundalini to ascend up and by this para sympathetic nervous system activity could be activated and mobilised for one's use. As the Kundalini rises, she fulfils the need of each and every chakra on her way, curing the diseases caused by the constriction of chakras and subsequent withdrawal of the virtues/grace of the controlling deity.

A Sahaja Yogi by paying attention to the sensation of tingling, burning or numbness on the finger tips (each finger corresponds to a specific chakra) or in his own chakra, can determine as to which chakra of the patient is afflicted. For example if a Sahaja Yogi finds that there is tingling sensation in his left middle finger, it indicates that the left Nabhi is affected due to some problems from his wife's side. (Fig.10).

In conclusion, the overactivity of left side creates mental tension, gives rise to psycho-pathological conditions and may connect one to the realm of dead souls. Clogging of left Svadhisthana is also the root cause of left side problems comprising of both somatic and mental diseases. Over activity of the right side may connect one to supra conscious and collective supra conscious where lies the dead souls of lesser gods. Clogging of Right Svadhisthana is the root cause of the diseases like hypertension, diabetes, heart attacks, renal failure and so on.

If the chakras are not linked together then the personality is not 'integrated' while a 'catch' in a chakra prevents its presiding deity from imparting virtues and grace into the body-mind system. Accordingly balancing, clearing the channels and removal of constriction from the afflicted chakras are the preliminary steps in the curing process.

Vibratory Awareness for Total Health Care

Modern age is becoming more and more health conscious. In West they are running centres which are using newer types of healing practises like visualization, myths, auto suggestions, hypnosis, biofeed back techniques, acupuncture, magneto-therapy, body work, quantum healing etc. This clearly shows that today men and women are definitely feeling more handicapped due to illnesses and that is the reason why they are taking refuge in all types of health clubs and healing practices. The basic reason for this today is that all spheres of life are dominated by mechanistic approach. We are still guided by the philosophy of Descartes, not only at the individual level but also at social or collective level. Descartes¹ said, "I consider the human body as a machine". Today body and mind are supposed to be separate parts with watertight compartments. This prevented doctors from understanding many major illnesses of this era, particularly psychosomatic diseases.

Recently in the light of Heisenberg's Principle of uncertainty, modern science today is engaged in revising its concepts. Today the concept of duality between mind and body is being challenged by modern physical science itself (Rohit Mehta)². David Bohm³ an eminent scientist said, "The whole is mysteriously present in part, even in the tiniest part. The whole is in the part and not away from it." In all cases of ill health, the part has to be taken into account, but the part must be seen in the context as a whole³. Further all over the world there is a strong feeling that man should not be treated as machine. There is a growing awareness in most parts of the world to see the Universe as a Living System rather than a machine. It is felt that systems view of Living Organism can provide an ideal basis for a new approach to health care.

Therefore the essential need of the present age is to move away from

the fragmented approach to an integral understanding of man.

In the ancient literature the four Vedas, twelve Upanishads, various Puranas and Smritis are the principal source for the knowledge of microcosm and macrocosm. Subsequently Yoga Sutra of Patanjali³ (2nd century B.C) mentioned Yoga as the most essential technique to build the body healthy for higher states of mental activity and consciousness. This is true even today but there is a need for integration that is not merely inner but covers the external life as well. The potentialities of man have to be developed in all directions. Therefore, for Yoga to be relevant to our times, it has to touch all the aspects of life at all levels. It should embrace life comprehensively. The physical and mental health of the body, the refining of emotions and behaviour, flowering of intellect, economics and spirituality of life should also receive proper attention⁴. To achieve this, Yoga of the past remained the domain of a few. Today there is need of a Yoga which could look after all the aspects of human life in totality⁴.

Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi's Sahaja Yoga⁵ embraces all the above mentioned aspects of human life and is an ideal Yoga for the present age. After the actualization of Kundalini awakening on Limbic System one becomes subtler and starts feeling this all pervading power on the finger tips as vibrations. This vibratory awareness is unique in the history of mankind. These vibrations are the outward expression of our connection with the cosmic energy force that holds the universe together⁵.

After self-realisation one feels these vibrations as subtle cool breeze flowing, from the palms of hand and top of the head. It is also a healing power. In this Vibratory Awareness, on one side one can feel what chakras are blocked and on the other side one can work out the correction of these subtle chakras (Fig. 10) to cure the different parts of the body affected by them⁵⁻⁷.

According to a Radio Physicist⁸ these vibrations could be compared to Electro-magnetic waves and they keep on pulsating out from our subtle Chakras. One can measure these electro-magnetic waves. These waves move away from the source like the movements of a ripple when a stone is thrown into a pool of water and they rebound after encountering an obstacle in exactly the same way as ripples rebound from the edge of a pool. It is the reception of these rebounding waves which is the principle of 'radar' because they indicate the presence and position of the object. The real nature of Electro-magnetic waves is not known fully. All that can be said is that they are stresses produced by Electric charges, their effect can be sensed but they themselves are indescribable. One can measure electro-magnetic energy from a distant source into the receiving antenna using a meter. This energy could be coupled out and constrained in flow through

wave guides. When we speak through the telephone we are using electro-magnetic waves. The same type of phenomenon happens here. An established Sahaja Yogi is like an antenna and he could feel the electro-magnetic waves from the various subtle chakras of the body on the finger tips which act like a meter⁸.

The Sahaja Yogi receiving this Vibratory Awareness (energy) could manoeuvre it to cure others. Once these vibrations start flowing we can balance the mental, emotional and physical aspects in our body to find an equilibrium i.e. Balance. The cause of all our troubles is that basically we are not in balance i.e. in the centre. We are either too emotional (left sided) or too materialistic (right sided). This sixth sense of Vibratory Awareness helps us to remain in the balance (Centre) and makes one free from all the diseases. The first essential condition for Total Health Care (Holistic Health Care)⁹ is that an individual should be treated as a whole. His physical, mental, emotional and psycho, social and environmental problems should also be kept in mind while treating the illness. This is followed in the doctrine of Sahaja Yoga in toto. There are laid down norms of Psycho social behaviour for the proper functioning of the Nadis and Chakras present in our body. As such thoughts, their perception, attitudes, inter family relations, social behaviour, culture and environment have been embraced to define their role in proper functioning of body and its cure during illness. Diseases mostly are reflection of the condition of Ida, Pingla and Sushumna Nadi and the seven subtle Chakras (Fig. 8) which are dynamically influenced by one's physical, mental, emotional and psycho-social behavior. There is an ideal Behavioural pattern (which has already been described earlier in this book) for optimal functioning of each of the seven subtle chakras. Whenever there is a departure from the ideal pattern specified for a certain Nadi or Chakras as per Dharmic-Code, Autonomic Nervous System imbalances occur. Activation of Sympathetic nervous system leads to Psychological stress which is the root cause of almost all Psychosomatic diseases in one or the other way. By Sahaja Yoga many psychosomatic diseases have been cured¹⁰. In a research project patients of Essential Hypertension, Bronchial Asthma and Epilepsy were treated by Sahaja Yoga¹⁰⁻¹⁴. A controlled study was done to evaluate the significance of Sahaja Yoga. The results have been discussed in detail in the Chapter on "Medical Researches". There it has been concluded that Sahaja Yoga has been found significantly effective in the above mentioned diseases¹⁰.

This has been mainly due to the fact that Sahaja Yoga looks after the imbalance and fragmentation which takes place in the Psyche of these patients. The root cause of which lies in the Psychological stress and difficult environment which one has to face in modern times, lack of

security, strained relationship with Father and Mother during childhood or marital problems after marriage etc.

Sahaja Yoga has tremendous power and it transforms an individual from within. We know that Kundalini awakening by Sahaja Yoga actualizes in the Limbic area of the brain. This area is wellknown for controlling our emotions, behaviour, sexual desire and anger. As such one is able to control these activities by Sahaja Yoga which otherwise is not possible. Thus one's attitudes and perceptions towards various events in one's life changes altogether. As explained earlier positive attitudes and correct perceptions are so very important for healing and good health. The possible mechanism of action of Sahaja Yoga still needs to be defined properly as it is not very clear. However in earlier studies it was postulated that Limbic area (Sahasrara) through its connections with Hypothalamus brings about inhibition of Sympathetic nervous system activity which has been confirmed by decreased production of Catecholamines (Rai)¹³.

Recently Miller¹⁵(1989) has shown that the Neuronal Circuits connect Limbic System with the Hypothalamus, Thalamus and Substantia Nigra which could influence their activity. Sahaja Yoga practioners have been found to have low urinary V.M.A. (Rai¹³ and Sethi¹⁴) and high levels of Endorphins (Misra¹⁶). Endorphins are known to activate immune system to increase the Natural Killer cell activity and their ability to replicate and to attack bacterias and even cancer cells. The level of Antibodies increases which is responsible for providing immunity against diseases. This is precisely the reason why Sahaja Yoga practitioners remain healthy.

Moreover, in Sahaja Yoga one's consciousness changes to a state of super consciousness which fulfils one with infinite bliss and peace. This itself plays an important role in looking after the total Health Care of an individual. Our observations are partly confirmed by the work of McClelland¹⁷. He demonstrated that on showing a film of Mother Teresa tending the sick, to a group of students, it was found that the students had enhanced immune function.

The influence of thoughts as hypothesized in Sahaja Yoga have been confirmed by Edmund Jacobson¹⁸ who demonstrated that when subjects imagined a particular body movement the motor nerves actually fired and produced micro movement. They were not visible by naked eye but could be recorded on EMG.

The newly discovered Vibratory Awareness throws light and thereby solves the perennial human problem of discriminating between right and wrong. Because after Kundalini awakening the integrated awareness of Dharma manifests itself on the physical level itself. In other words if something is 'wrong' one becomes spontaneously aware of it. For example,

if when one puts his finger on a candle flame, one withdraws it quickly because one's nervous systems informs that it will burn the finger. A Sahaja Yogi develops this kind of spontaneous reaction towards various problems because the central nervous system and the autonomic nervous system gets integrated by raising the Kundalini and one attains super-consciousness. It would be pertinent to mention here, that in the ancient Indian scheme the 'Centres-nerve energy' model is taken to be true because of its correctness and which have been perceived by the 'Inner Vision' or 'Divine Vision' of yogis since ages.

As long as Sushumna is closed at both ends the only Psychic energy available to human organism courses through Ida and Pingla. When Psychic energy as attention passes to the left side to super ego, one becomes absorbed in moods, in the whole realm of feelings and emotions and in recollection of the past. The overactivity of this side makes a person open to all kinds of psycho pathology ranging from relatively benign mood swings to instances of full blown spirit possession. Spirit possession takes place because the super ego of left side is open to collective subconscious. This is the home of various demonic spirits, our familiar Bhoot-pret. Any one paying too much attention on left side is therefore in the danger that one of these spirits may enter his psyche with the aid of the super ego.

When attention moves to right it uses the right side energy of Pingla Nadi. We are in the sphere of 'ego' involved in thinking, planning, organising etc. which seeks self glory. The ego is open to collective 'supra conscious' and here dwell the spirits of the 'monsters of egoism'. So the Psychic energy normally oscillates in an elliptical arc between the left and right side. To reduce this swing Balancing is very important and this is very easy with Sahaja Yoga as explained in earlier chapters.

In view of these it is quite clear that Vibratory Awareness after Sahaja Yoga is bound to produce very beneficial effects. One attains the Balance. One no longer reacts strongly to stress. One can avoid the surges of frustrated anger and a sense of helplessness and the effect of psychological stress. One's attitude towards the society also change's dramatically. A loveable feeling develops for the society at large. One feels completely secure and confident to face any challenge in life. Daily clearing of Nadis and Chakras (please see clearing methods) is very essential to keep oneself in Balance. Thus Vibratory Awareness which one gets after successful accomplishment of Sahaja Yoga Meditation can look after the physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual health of an individual.

Yoga and the Scientist

Background Concepts

What determines all types of existence on this planet has been questioned even in the times of Rig Veda (2500 BC). The two possible sources were thought to be Prakriti (Cosmic Energy) and Vishva Jyoti (Cosmic Light). Many believed Cosmic Light to be "the soul of all gods" and the "womb" of all creations. The cosmic law determined the orderliness of the universe according to Rig Veda. This along with the performance of Yajna (Sacrifice) was supposed to play an important part in preserving the cycle of cosmic events in harmony. Afterwards **ap** (Water) was believed to be the first element to be responsible for the creation.

Gradually the concept of Panchabhutas (five elements) i.e. Prithvi, ap, tejas, Vayu and akasha was postulated. According to Sankhya, Nyaya and Vaisheshika Schools of Hindu philosophy Panchbhutas are the constituents of the world whereas Jaina, Buddhist and Charvaka Schools thought the first four of these as basic elements (Singh & Chhina¹).

In ancient Indian literature the concept of Panchbhutas forms the basis of information relating to different aspects of knowledge about the universe and the living beings. The four Vedas, twelve Upanishadas, Puranas and Smritis (Cannons of Law) are the principal source with regard to the idea of microcosm and macrocosm¹.

Subsequently, yoga sutras of Patanjali² (2nd Century BC) which was most probably a compilation of information already existing for several centuries was passed from teacher (Guru) to his students (Shishya). Excavation of Mohen-Jo-Daro³ in Sindh and Harappa revealed a seal dating 3000 BC which depicts Proto Shiva seated in a yogic posture. This indicates that 'yoga' itself is much older than the Vedas and the Upanishads. The first commentator of Yoga Sutra of Patanjali was Vyasa; and afterwards Svatanmarama Suri wrote the Hatha Yoga Pradipka, the most authoritative

book on Hatha Yoga. The highest aim in yoga is to attain a state of Samadhi which means union of atma with the all pervading power. For this many forms of yoga have been mentioned like Raja Yoga, Laya Yoga, Mantra Yoga, Hatha Yoga and Kundalini Yoga.

Kundalini Yoga expresses the idea about the relationship of bodily function and mental activities with the cosmological phenomenon. Thus it was recognized that Yoga visualises the need for a controlled function of the body musculature, visceral organs and mental activity. It also relates the activities of an individual as a whole and to his immediate surroundings and universe as a whole.

Why Yoga Research is Needed?

Medical science has advanced tremendously during the last ten years but it has not paid much attention to the psychic aspect of man. However in recent years our ancient system of 'yoga' which deals with the physical as well as psychic aspect of human beings has gained tremendous momentum to become a world philosophy. Many scientists have recognised the usefulness of research studies to give a scientific basis to yoga and thus pulling it out from being called as empirical and unscientific.

For the last 300 years growth of scientific and technical knowledge has been only one-sided. The spiritual knowledge, social considerations and moral values have dissolved altogether with the passage of time. The main reason for this one-sided growth was the mechanised concept of Descartes about the universe. It dominated the thinking of western scientists.

Descartes⁴ further asserted that there is nothing in the concept of body that belongs to mind. This division between body and mind produced a lot of confusion in the mind of biologists and medical scientists. Afterwards Newton the top most physicist of the world also developed a complete mathematical formulation of nature. It was successfully demonstrated by putting a man on the Moon followed by placing satellites and manned space ships in the orbit. This mechanised concept is continuing till now and that is the reason why psychic and spiritual aspect of man could not be given due attention for exploration by the scientists. The Doctor of today practicing western medicine has entered into the stage of super speciality to a point that different organs of the body are treated by different doctors. This approach has reached its limit with the result that doctors today are no longer able to view diseases as a disturbance of the whole body. They hardly look into the psychological, social and environmental aspects of the patient's illness. the psychic aspect has been completely neglected. The

use of tranquilizers, antidepressants etc, for the psychological problems is not a permanent solution. Moreover tranquilizers etc. are habit-forming and produce side effects.

Recent developments in the concepts of Physics have brought about a profound change in the world view from mechanistic conception of Descartes⁴ and Newton to a holistic and ecological view which is likely to dominate the present decade.

As such our ancient culture of Yoga known even before 3000 BC, which deals with both the physical, psychic, spiritual and social aspects of human beings has gained a lot of importance. The time has come when physicians will have to widen their approach, shifting their attention from disease to health and seeing the human being as a whole. It is high time when medical scientists should do research on 'Yoga' for its use in the treatment of psychosomatic diseases.

Yoga Research - The Current Status

Yogis in India for centuries have claimed to perform phenomenal feats including voluntary stoppage of heart beat, or survival for long periods in the air tight pit box. In early 1935, a French Cardiologist Therese Brosse came to India and made physiological measurements on some yogis of the Himalayas. She claimed that it was possible for some yogis to voluntarily control the heart rate to a great extent, so much so that one yogi was able to stop his heart altogether for a few seconds. Afterwards Wenger et al⁵ (1961) worked on four yogis who claimed to stop the heart and pulse. He concluded that there was lowering of heart rate and pulse and suggested this to increased vagal tone of unknown origin. Anand et al⁶ (1961) studied Electro Encephalographic (EEG) records of yogis who went into Samadhi and reported that there is increased alpha activity which was not affected by sensory stimuli.

In another study Anand and Chhina⁷⁻⁸ (1961) found that yogis who claim to stop their heart-beats voluntarily, try to raise the Intra Thoracic pressure by forceful contraction of Thoracic and abdominal muscles, with closed glottis after deep inspiration and expiration. During the performance no heart sounds were heard or arterial pulse felt. However ECG recording indicated normal recording during the process. Hoening⁹ (1968) observed a significant decrease in heart rate during an air tight pit study on a yogi and claimed that this could be a by-product of realization of an extreme degree which may even lead to cessation of heart activity. He proposed the mechanism to be a "Valsalva Maneuver".

The effect of Savasan on 47 patients of hypertension was studied by

Datey et al¹⁰ (1969). He concluded that a significant response was observed in 52% of patients. Wallace¹¹⁻¹⁴ (1970) while working on Transcendental Meditation (T.M.) programme noted a significant decrease in cardiac output in 25% subjects and heart rate by 5 beats/min as compared to control group. He also studied the EEG pattern during Transcendental Meditation (T.M.) and noted predominance of alpha wave activity and also reported increase in intensity of slow alpha wave in frontal regions and suggested the state to be fourth major state of consciousness. However these claims were later contradicted by Fenwick¹⁵ (1977). He demonstrated that there was no support for the view that T.M. technique produces a fourth major state of consciousness or a hypometabolic state beyond that which is produced by muscle relaxation. The claims made by Wallace (1971) that during the T.M. mean lactate concentration decreased have also been refuted by Michaels et al¹⁶ (1976) who studied the effect of T.M. on plasma epinephrine, nor epinephrine and blood Lactate level and found that there was no difference in the results of the practitioners of T.M. as compared to Control Group. Udupa et al¹⁷⁻¹⁸ (1971 & 1975) reported a decreased excretion of urinary VMA in volunteers practising various yoga-asans.

Subramaniam¹⁹ et al (1978) reported increased excretion of catecholamines during distress and concluded that elevated levels of catecholamines in urine reflect a corresponding enhanced release of catecholamines from sympathoadreno medullary system. She also studied the effect of meditation, yoga and bio-feedback therapy on the biogenic amines and cortisol level in persons with behavioural disorders. A change in the level of biogenic amines and varying degree of improvement in behaviour was observed after bio-feedback therapy. VMA is one of the major metabolite of epinephrine and nor-epinephrine in urine. Its level in urine corresponds to blood catecholamine level.

Madan Mohan and Rai²⁰ (1983) while working on yoga at Jawaharlal Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education and Research, Pondicherry, observed decreased respiratory rate, heart rate and blood pressure in subjects practising Savitri Pranayam as compared to control values. Patel (1973) claimed that relaxation by yoga and bio-feedback techniques are useful in patients with hypertension and migraine. In another study on Yoga, Elson et al²¹ (1977) found that 50% of the meditators practising Anand Marg Yoga Meditation, remained in a relatively stable state of alpha activity while others fell asleep during the 40 minutes of meditation.

Cabral and Scot²² (1976) in an extensive study used relaxation techniques to decrease seizure frequency in patients of drug resistant epilepsy associated with anxiety and phobic symptoms. Thereafter relaxation techniques like progressive muscular relaxation, relaxation tapes and contingent

relaxation have been used for seizure reduction in the epileptics (Wells²³ et al 1978), Rosseau et al²⁴ (1985), Dhal²⁵ et al (1987), Tozzo et al²⁶ (1988). Recent studies of Tozzo et al (1988) and Lantz et al²⁷ reported positive findings in their epileptic patients. The bio-feedback technique is aimed at reducing the seizures of epileptics through modification of EEG. EEG information is conveyed to the patient through electronic detection and sensory feedback in the form of auditory, visual or less frequently somatic cues. Several investigators have reported substantial clinical improvement (Finlay²⁸ 1977) and (Lubar and Bahler 1976)²⁹.

Medical Researches on Sahaja Yoga

I

Physiological Effects of Sahaja Yoga on Human Body

Sahaja Yoga is supposed to give consistent results and its actualization on the Central Nervous System is verifiable with the flow of Chaitanya (Subtle Cool breeze) from palms and top of the head of an individual. The study on the physiological effects of Sahaja Yoga on human body was undertaken in the Department of Physiology, Lady Hardinge Medical College and Associated Hospitals, New Delhi, as a Doctoral research project for the degree of Doctor of Medicine. According to Sethi¹ the work was done on 20 human subjects.

Group I comprised of ten untrained male subjects (age group 35 to 50 years) who were randomly drawn from the staff of Physiology Department. They belonged to comparable socio-economic status and had no training in any form of Yoga or Meditation or Bio-Feedback technique. These subjects were trained in Sahaja Yoga practice by a trained Sahaja Yogi in the Department of Physiology. The Sahaja Yoga was practised by them for 12 weeks according to the technique described by Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi in her book on Sahaja Yoga².

The practice of this yoga was done once every day for 20 minutes in the afternoon. Each individual acted his own control. After control readings subsequent recordings were taken at 4, 8 and 12 weeks after practising Sahaja Yoga.

Group II comprised of ten male Sahaja Yogis. They were of age group 35-50 and were drawn randomly from the Sahaja Yoga centre, Delhi. They belonged to same socio economic strata and had been doing Sahaja Yoga for 2 - 6 years. Three readings of all the parameters of each subjects were recorded and analysed.

The initial readings of Group I untrained subjects were taken prior to their training and then after training in Sahaja Yoga at 4, 8 and 12 weeks time. The subjects were made to sit quietly in Electrophysiology Laboratory for 30 minutes and the following parameters were studied.

1. Electroencephalogram (EEG), 2. Electrocardiogram (ECG), 3. Galvanic Skin Resistance (G.S.R.), 4. Skin temperature from the palms of hand, 5. Blood Pressure (BP), 6. Respiratory Rate (RR), 7. Blood Lactic Acid, 8. Urinary - Vanillyl Mandelic Acid (V.M.A).

Parameter 1-4 were recorded for a period of 30 minutes at interval of five minutes on a Polywrite (Polygraph from Medicare Chandigarh). Blood Pressure (systolic and diastolic) was recorded by sphygmomanometer). E.C.G. (Lead II) was recorded and heart rate was computed from it. Respiratory rate was determined by routine bed side method. Blood Lactic Acid and Urinary V.M.A. were determined by standard methods of Barker and Summerson³ modified by Hukabee 1950 and Pisano et al⁴ 1962 respectively. The recordings of Group II trained subjects were taken without any training in the Department. EEG was recorded on a Polywrite with ultra A.C. amplifier (Model 202), Bipolar, Frontal and Occipital EEG was taken. Alpha index was calculated by seeing the time duration covered by alpha waves in 20 seconds graph.

ECG and Heart Rate : Lead II of the ECG was recorded for one minute and the number of R-Waves were counted to get heart rate/minute.

Procedure for Polygraphic Recordings: Each subject was made familiar with the equipment and protocol of the experiment. It was ensured that none of them had taken any drugs or alcohol in 24 hours prior to testing. After formal instructions subjects were seated comfortably in chair for ten minutes before recording. Electrodes for EEG, ECG, GSR and Skin temperature were placed and session was started. The protocol followed was that the subjects relaxed with eyes closed for five minutes (with eyes open for another five minutes and then again eyes closed and practised Sahaja Yoga for 20 minutes. During this period at 15 minutes a tapping sound was made so that the subject opened his eyes. This was done to see the blocking effect and then immediately after, the subject again practised Sahaja Yoga with eyes closed. After 20 minutes of Sahaja Yoga the subject relaxed for five minutes with eyes closed and eyes opened.

For each subject three sample recordings were taken and scored i.e. each 20 seconds sample was scored to determine percentage alpha activity (alpha index) present in frontal and occipital channels. Alpha waves were defined as regular synchronized activity between 8 -13 hzs.

As regards blood lactic acid and urinary VMA, the estimations were done before and after the Sahaja Yoga practice.

Results and Discussion

Galvanic Skin Resistance : The mean Galvanic resistance (GSR) of Group I subjects after eight weeks of training in Sahaja Yoga increases from the control value of 43.0 kohms to 79.69 kohms and after 12 weeks of training to 121.72 kohms, which is statistically highly significant (Fig.11). In Group II, where subjects had been practising Sahaja Yoga for a period of 2-6 years, the control mean value and Galvanic skin resistance was 130.4 kohms which increased at 20 minutes of Sahaja Yoga to 183.85 kohms and was found to be highly significant on statistical analysis (Fig.12). From this it is clear that G.S.R. readings during Sahaja Yoga are significantly higher than the Galvanic Skin resistance readings before Sahaja Yoga both in Group I and Group-II subjects. A possible explanation for this in terms of function of Central Nervous System is related to the Anatomy and Physiology of the Sweat glands in the skin, which are primarily responsible for changes in skin resistance. Changes in skin resistance are a measure of sweat gland activity and are related to the sympathetic nervous system. Change in skin resistance occurs soon after (1 sec.) sweat appears on the skin, and the extent of the change correlates significantly with the amount of sweat secreted. According to Woodsworth, it is the response of sweating that produces the change in skin resistance and not the sweat itself. It is worthwhile to note that each sweat gland offers a relatively low resistance pathway to the current passing through the electrodes. When the gland is inactive its membrane has a higher resistance than when excited. It is well known that sweat glands are connected with the hypothalamus, reticular formation and cerebral cortex and reflect the activity of different regions of the brain which are related to individuals arousal and awareness. The hypothalamus influences the intergration of autonomic and somatic activity⁵ (Mountcastle).

Gellhorn⁶ postulated that Ascending Reticular Activating System and Hypothalamus are the fundamental structures which determine the state of awareness of an individual. Therefore it is not surprising that the changes in the activity of sweat glands with their connections to Central Nervous System should be closely related to individual's awareness and his level of relaxation or tension. The changes found in this study as mentioned in the observations leads to the conclusion that Sahaja Yoga awakens the Kundalini of an individual and thereby produces a state of cosmic consciousness which bestows deep relaxation and is undoubtedly of great physiological benefit due to increased para-sympathetic activity and diminished sympathetic activity.

This is further responsible for increased skin resistance in Group II and

Galvanic skin resistance of group-I subjects

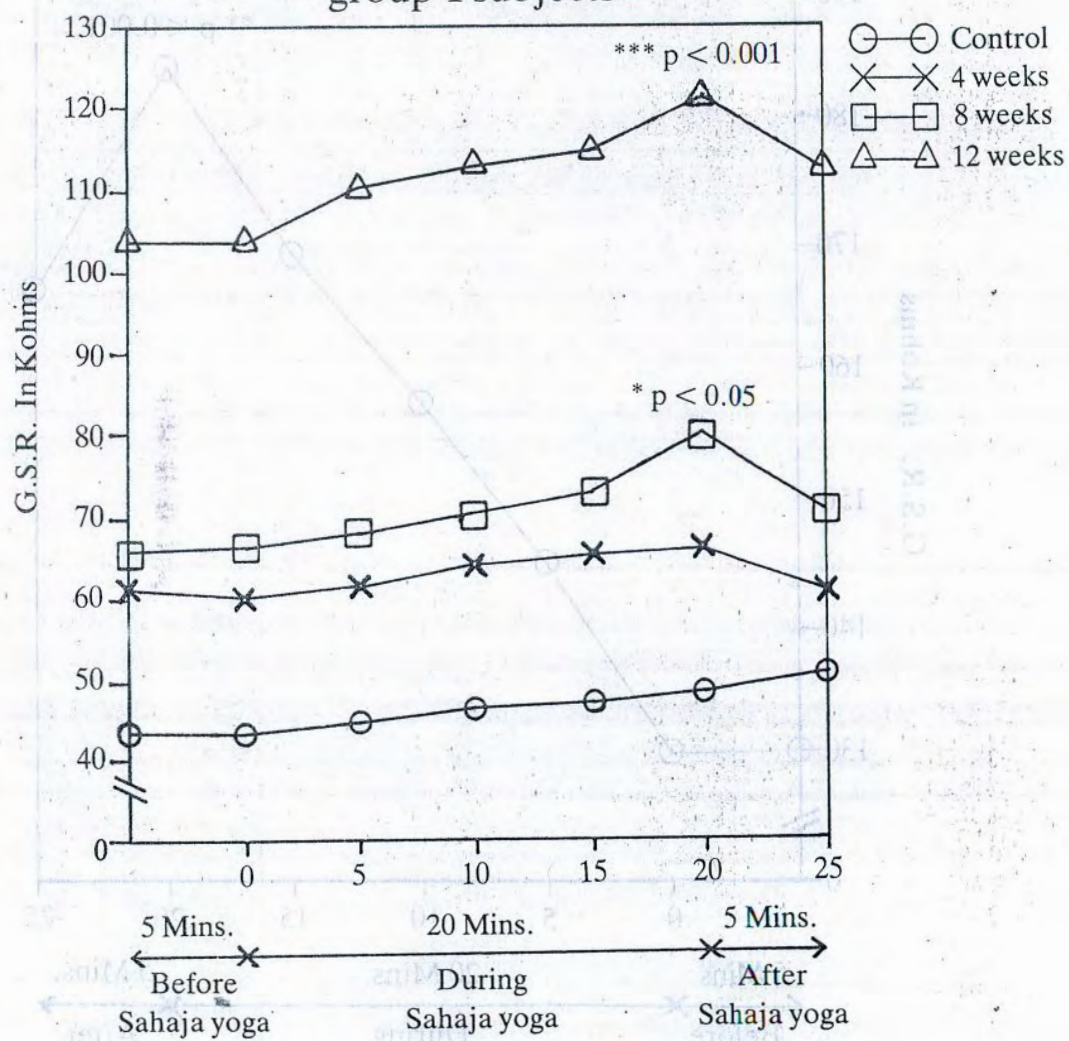


Fig.-11

Galvanic skin resistance of group-II subjects

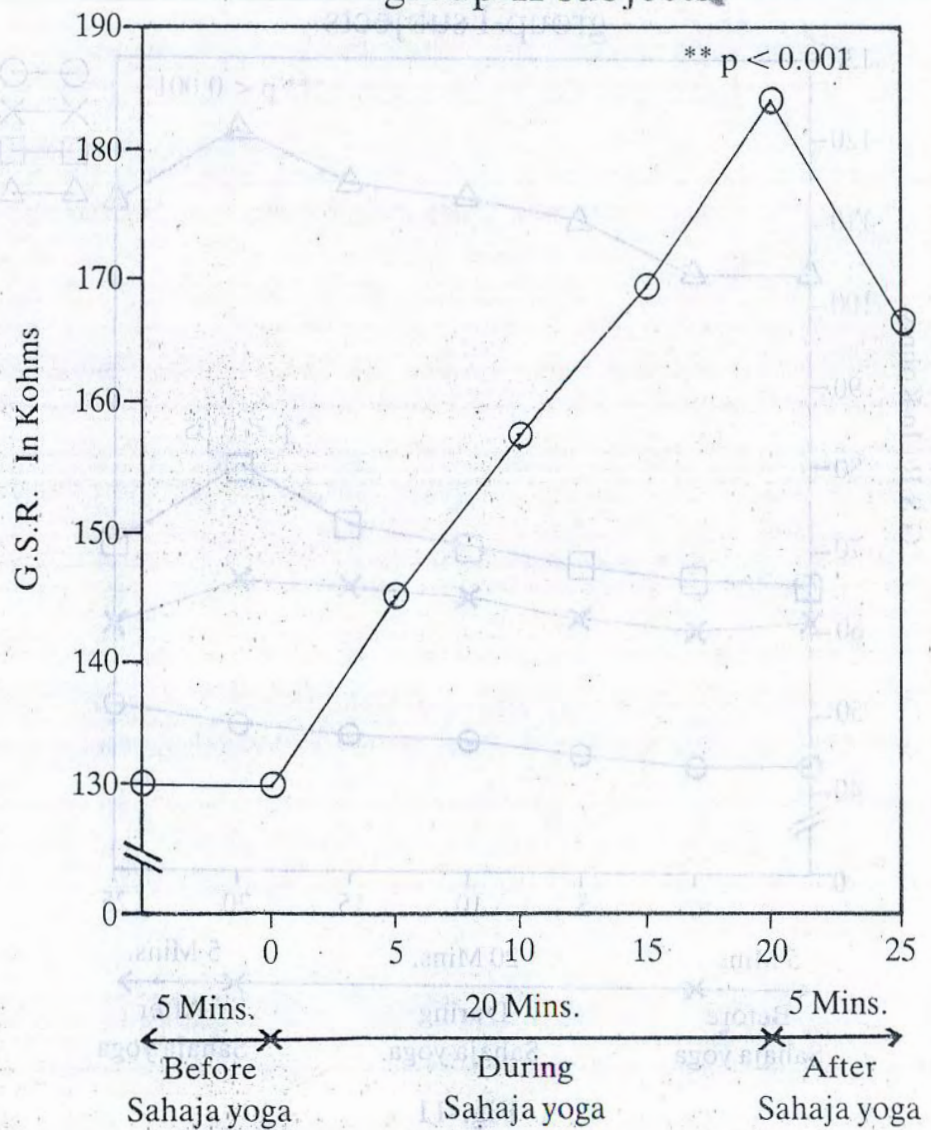


Fig.-12

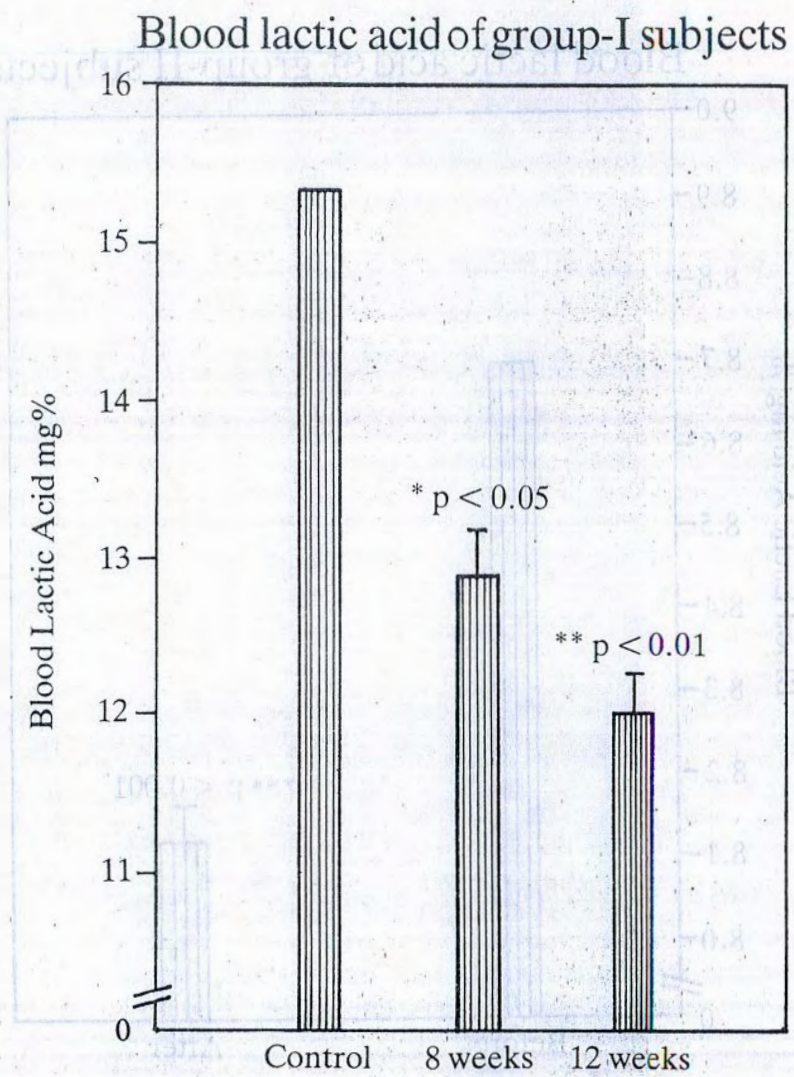


Fig.-13

Blood lactic acid of group-II subjects

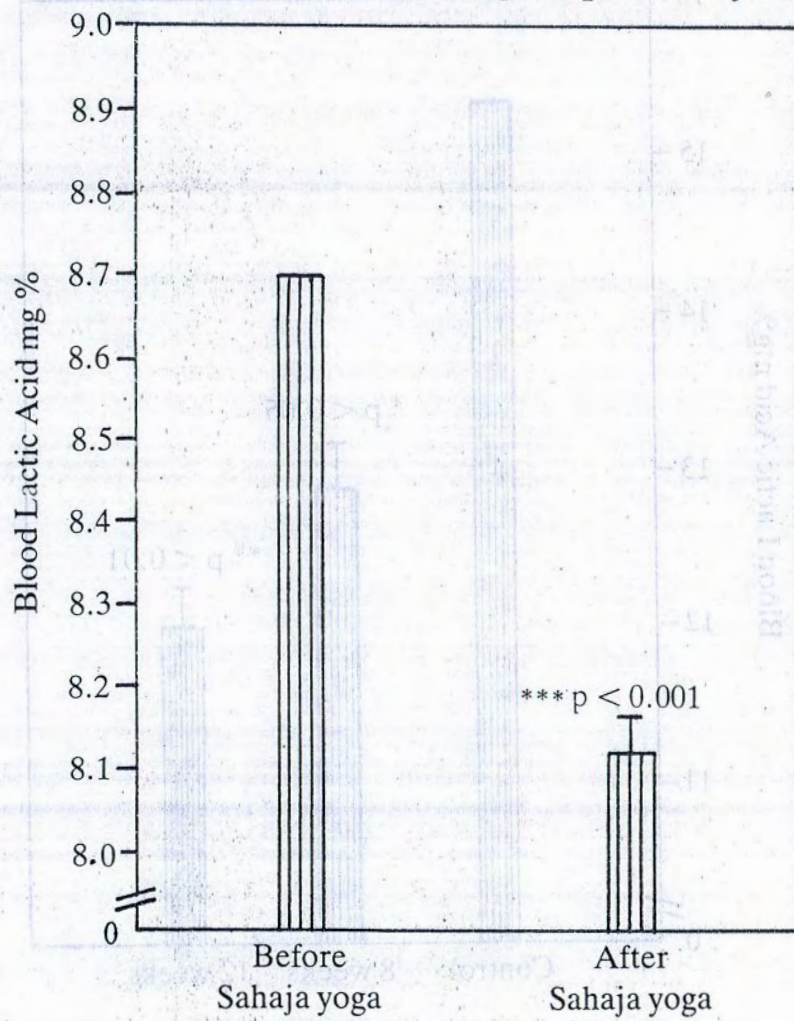


Fig.-14

also in Group I subjects who after eight and twelve weeks training in Sahaja Yoga showed statistically significant increase ($p < 0.001$) in skin resistance.

Blood Lactic Acid Concentration : Blood Lactic Acid concentration decreases significantly in Group II subjects (Fig. 14) whereas in Group I subjects the decrease is gradual. After eight weeks it decreased to 12.91 mg% and at 12 weeks to 11.96 mg% and in both the decrease becomes statistically significant (Fig.13). From this it is evident that the training in Sahaja Yoga has been responsible for bringing this significant change. Why in Sahaja Yoga the blood lactate decreases? In order to understand this one has to refer to the work of Pitts⁷ (1967) which suggests an interesting interpretation of the changes in Lactate Concentration. His studies have shown that patients with anxiety neurosis develop an excessive rise in blood lactate concentration with stress. Pitts infused Lactate ions in patients with anxiety neurosis and concluded that high concentration of lactate ion can produce anxiety symptoms and that it regularly produces anxiety attacks in patients with anxiety neurosis. Infusion of calcium ions with lactate prevented it in both patients and controls. As such Pitts hypothesized that symptoms are caused by excess of lactate which binds calcium ions near nerve endings and therefore interferes with normal functioning of calcium in the transmission of nerve impulse. According to Pitts theory stress in normal persons causes an increased production of epinephrine. Epinephrine is known to cause anxiety neurosis; therefore, could according to this theory be constantly affected by this mechanism due to overproduction of Adrenaline, and overactivity of the Central Nervous system. Hence it seems plausible that the decreased Lactate concentration and significant decrease in the temperature recorded from palms during Sahaja Yoga might be caused due to the actualization of Kundalini awakening on the Limbic system producing a feeling of subtle coolness from the palms (chaitanya) state of peace and a different state of awareness (Cosmic-consciousness) giving deep relaxation and decreased production of Adrenaline. This is further confirmed by the findings of this study that urinary V.M.A. in the urine of Group II subjects (who were practising Sahaja-Yoga) decreased significantly. Even Group I subjects after a training in Sahaja Yoga for a period of six and eight weeks showed decrease in blood Lactate concentrations and decreased urinary V.M.A. readings which were statistically significant. This is further supported by the fact that some trainees of Group I reported a significant decrease in anxiety symptoms during and after Sahaja Yoga.

Urinary V.M.A. : In Group I, the urinary VMA was analysed before starting the training of Sahaja Yoga. There was a significant fall ($p < 0.05$)

from the initial mean value of 5.72 mg/24 hrs to 5.13 mg/24 hrs at four weeks after the practice of Sahaja Yoga. This decline continued at eight and twelve weeks as well. The level declined to 4.35 mg and 4.15 mg/24 hrs at eight and twelve weeks respectively and these readings were highly significant statistically ($p > 0.001$) (Fig. 15).

In Group II initial mean value of urinary V.M.A. was lower than Group I. The mean value declined further during Sahaja Yoga from 3.74 to 3.17 mg/24 hrs which was statistically significant ($p > 0.01$) (Fig. 16).

Heart Rate and Blood Pressure:

During Sahaja Yoga there is significant decrease in heart rate. The mean heart rate was 72.9/min in Group II which tends to fall down to 65.4 during Sahaja Yoga. Diastolic blood pressure does not change significantly in both the groups but there was a significant decrease in systolic blood pressure in Group II subjects during Sahaja Yoga. The mean systolic blood pressure was 117 mm Hg before Sahaja Yoga and it falls down to 104.6 mm Hg during Sahaja Yoga at 20 (Table I).

In Group I subjects, statistically significant change was found after 12 weeks of training in Sahaja Yoga. The control mean heart rate was 73.2/min. It decreased to 66.3 at 20 minutes during Sahaja Yoga. There was also significant decrease in respiratory rate of Group I and Group II subjects (Table I).

It is well known that heart rate and respiratory rate is determined by a balance between the excitatory and inhibitory effects of sympathetic and parasympathetic branch of Autonomic Nervous System. During Sahaja Yoga, sympathetic activity relatively decreases which has been confirmed in this study by statistically significant decrease in urinary VMA and blood lactic acid concentration during Sahaja Yoga in both groups I and II subjects. Hence relatively decreased sympathetic activity could be one of the important factors for lowering the systolic blood pressure and heart rate as seen in this study. As such Sahaja Yoga could be of significant benefit in patients with moderate high blood pressure. Further the changes in heart rate and blood pressure during Sahaja Yoga suggest that Sahaja Yoga is capable of modulating the functioning of Autonomic Nervous System.

Electroencephlographic Study

The percentage alpha activity was calculated from the proportion of time during which alpha waves were present. The subjects kept their eyes closed during Sahaja Yoga practice. They were asked to open the eyes at

Urinary V.M.A. of group-I subjects

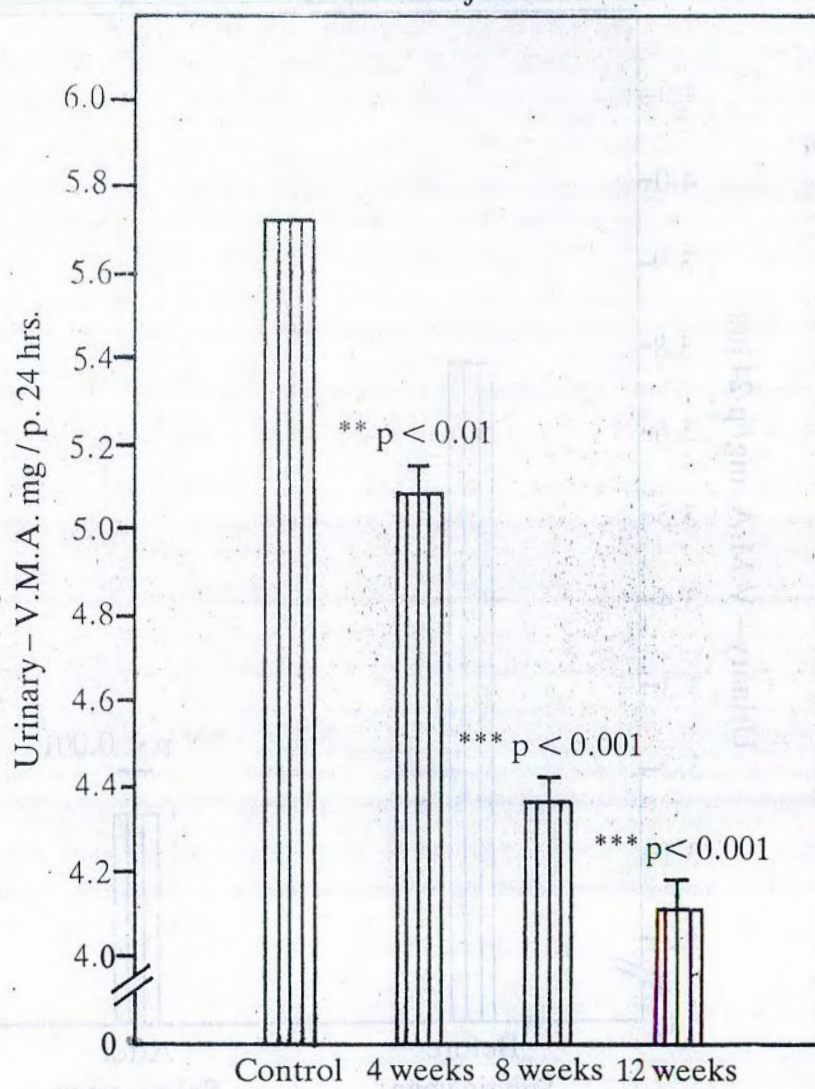


Fig.-15

Urinary V.M.A. of group-II subjects

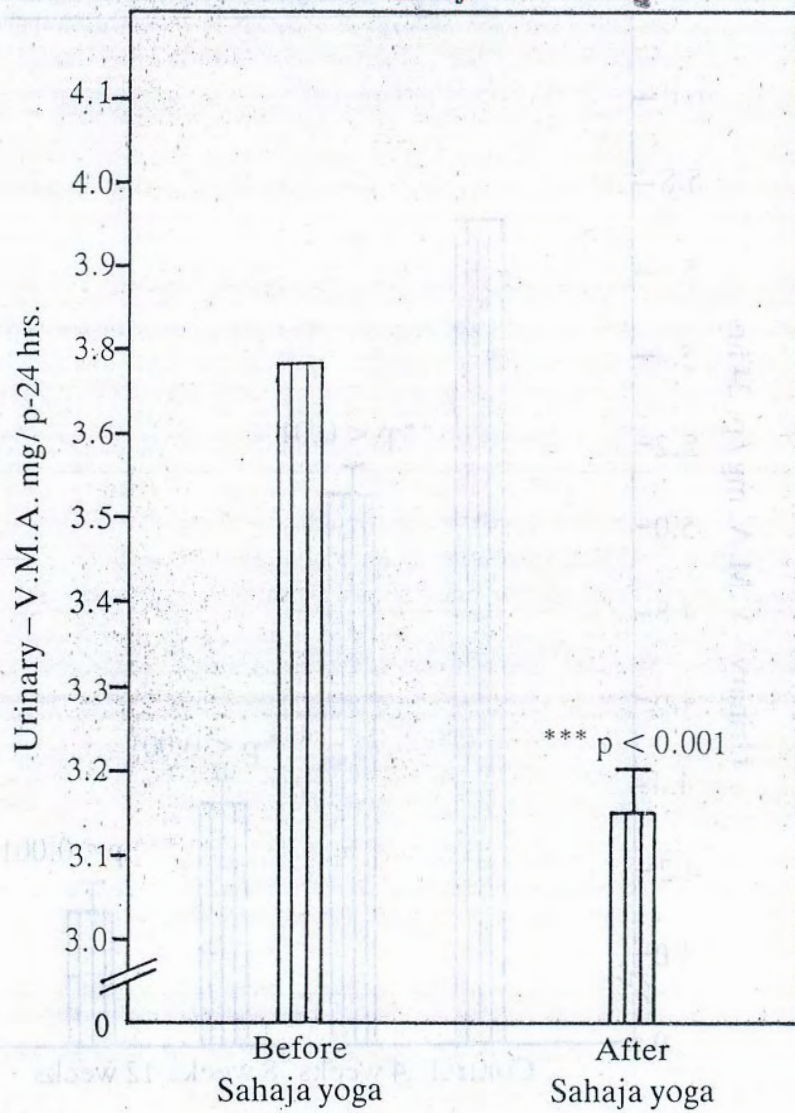


Fig.-16

Occipital alpha percentage of group-I subjects

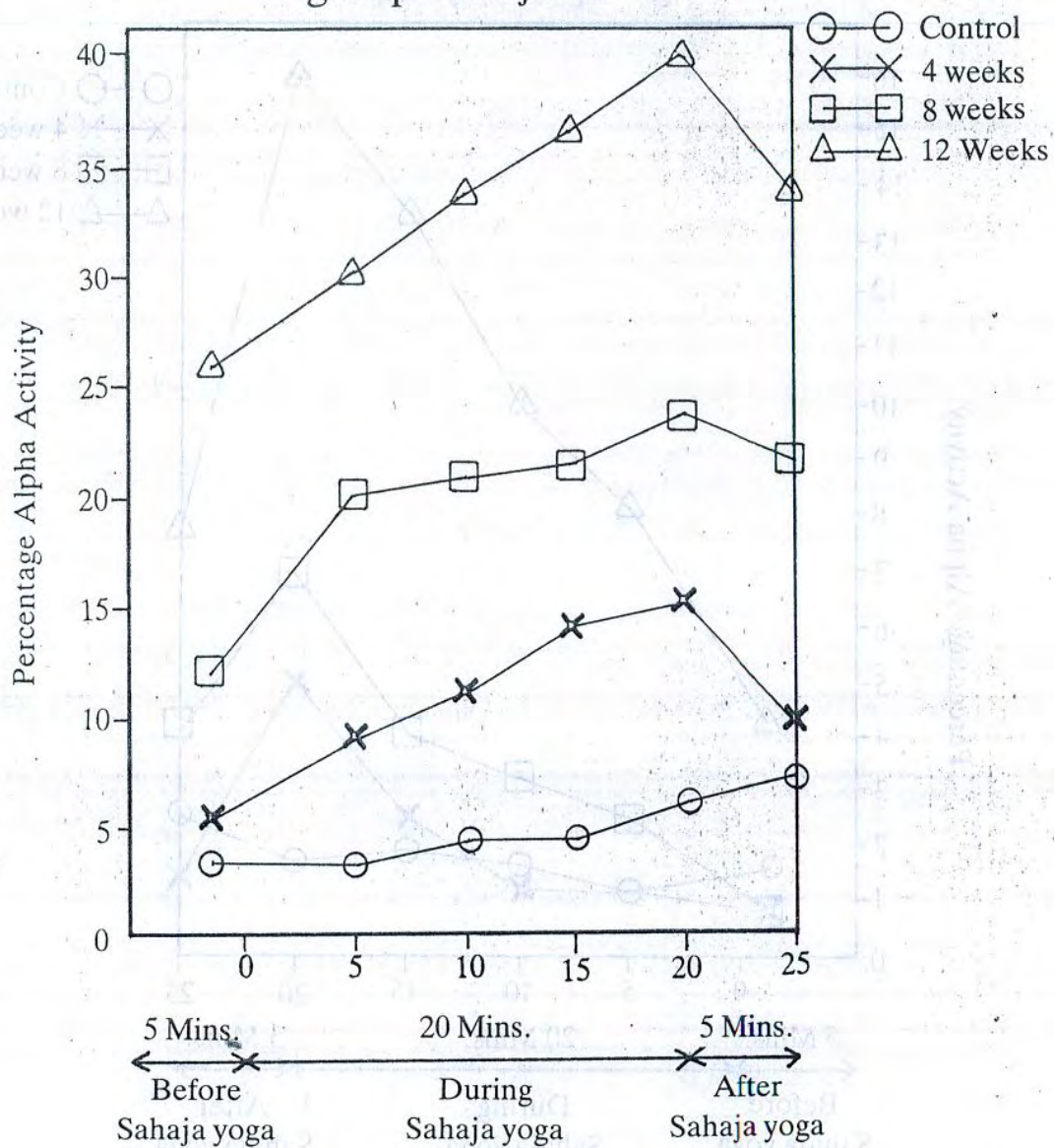


Fig.-17

Frontal alpha percentage of group-I subjects

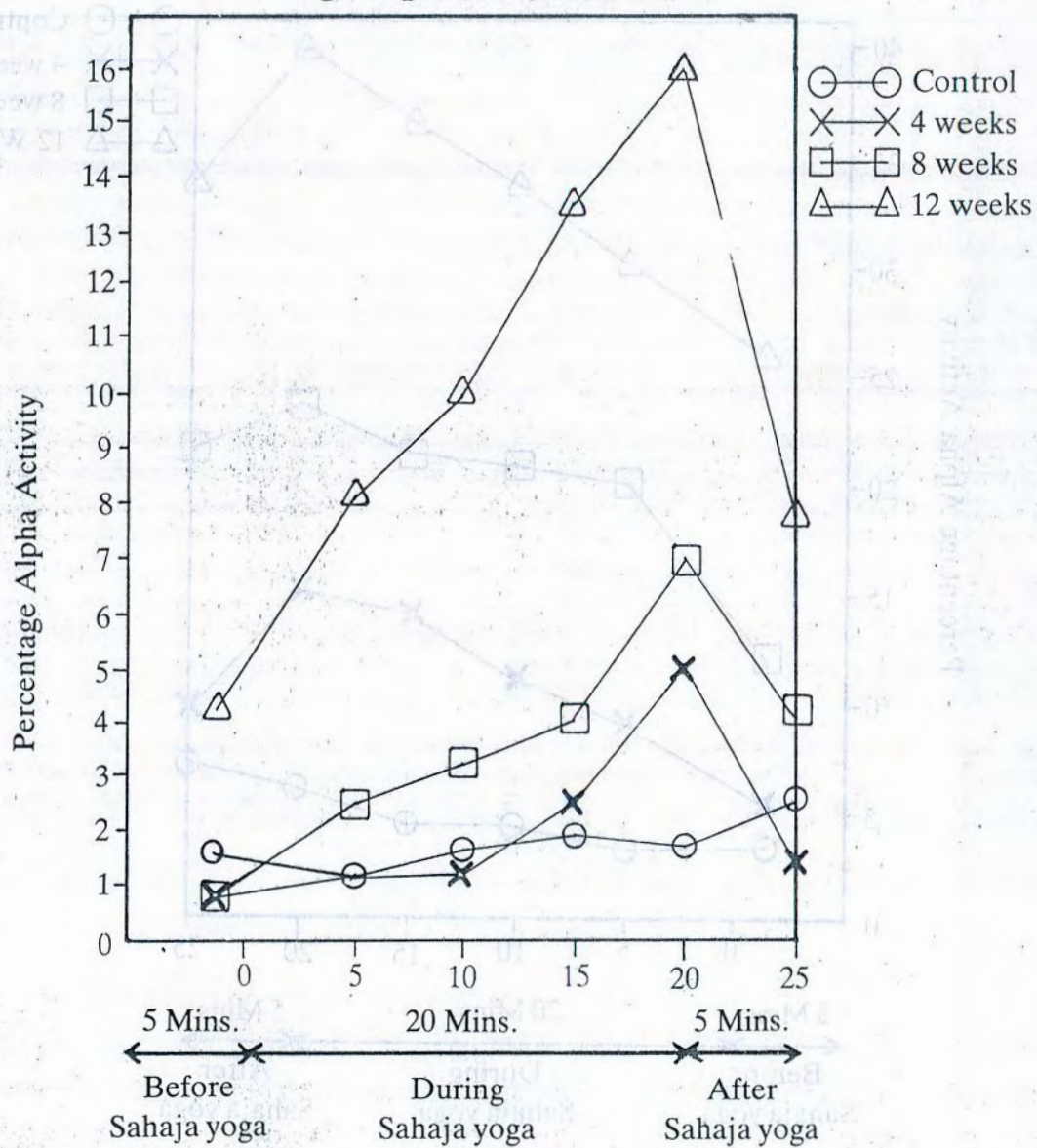


Fig.-18

Table 1

Respiratory rate, heart rate and blood pressure during Sahaja-yoga in Group I & Group II subjects

	Group I				Group II				
	Control		During Sahaja Yoga		During Sahaja Yoga				
	at 0 wks.		at 4 wks.		at 8 wks.				
	0 min.	20 min.	0 min.	20 min.	0 min.	20 min.			
Respiratory rate (per min.)	20.75	19.12 ^{NS}	19.87	16.62 ^{***}	18.62	17.5	12.25 ^{***}	13.3	10.3
	±1.58	±1.36	0.35	±2.13	2.066	±1.93	±1.23	±2.14	±2.05
Heart rate (per min.)	77.5	76.3 ^{NS}	76.8	74.2	75.6	73.2	66.3	72.9	65.4
	±2.3	±2.5	±2.4	±2.3	±2.8	±3.9	±5.9	±2.1	±2.6
Systolic BP (mm Hg)	121.7	119 ^{NS}	120.7	113 [*]	116.75	115.5	104	117	104.6
	±5.9	±6.04	±5.1	±5.0	±3.9	±3.6	±6.3	±4.5	±5.5
Distolic BP (mm Hg)	83.7	83	83.5	80.2	78.7	76.7	72.5 ^{NS}	75.3	72.3 ^{NS}
	±3.9	±3.2	±3.6	±3.7	±5.4	±6.4	±5.8	±3.5	±4.8

Values are Mean ± S.D.

NS = Not Significant *P<0.05, **P<0.01 and ***P<0.001, differences from corresponding 0 min. value

15 minutes during Sahaja Yoga to test for alpha blockage. EEG pattern during Sahaja Yoga has no Delta Waves, sleep spindles and REM activity and thereby clearly distinguishing it from sleep and dreaming.

(a) In Group I the percentage alpha activity from Frontal recording before training of Sahaja Yoga with eyes closed was between 0 and 1.87. The mean values were low even at four and eight weeks of Sahaja Yoga practice. However, after 12 weeks of Sahaja Yoga practice, the initial mean value was $4.25 (\pm 3.77)$. This increased gradually during Sahaja Yoga at 20 min to $15.87 (\pm 14.97)$. This increase as compared to initial mean value before training was significant ($p < 0.05$) (Fig.18). Five minutes after finishing Sahaja Yoga the mean value declined to $7.75 (\pm 4.83)$. In these subjects opening of the eyes during Sahaja Yoga at 15 minutes completely blocked the alpha percentage.

(b) In Group II frontal recording, the initial mean alpha percentage activity with eyes closed was $8.5 (\pm 8.5)$, which is higher than Group I subjects (Fig.19). The mean value gradually increased during Sahaja Yoga at 20 minutes to $31.1 (\pm 10.11)$ which is statistically highly significant. The effect persisted even five minutes after Sahaja Yoga, and the mean value was $16.7 (\pm 11.35)$. In these subjects opening of eyes during Sahaja Yoga at 15 minutes did not completely block the alpha activity. Alpha activity partially persisted. The dominant alpha frequency was $8-9 (\pm 3)$ in both the groups during Sahaja Yoga practice.

(c) In Group I mean occipital alpha value was 3.75. This value increased at four, eight and twelve weeks of training in Sahaja Yoga to 5.5, 12 and 25.75 respectively. At 20 min during Sahaja Yoga these values increased to 15, 23.25 and 40.12 respectively and were found statistically significant (Fig. 17).

(d) In Group II, occipital alpha percentage with eyes closed was $66.8 (\pm 21.21)$, which is much higher than that of Group I subjects. The mean value gradually increased during Sahaja Yoga and at 20 minutes it was 79.4 ± 20.68 . The effect persisted even after five minutes after Sahaja Yoga and mean value was 75.6 ± 20.02 . (Fig.20).

(e) The percentage increase in alpha activity both in frontal and occipital recordings occurs because of the actualization of Kundalini awakening which takes place in the Limbic area of the brain. We know that hypothalamus is a sub-station of limbic system and has anatomical connections with Thalamic Nuclei that project to occipital and frontal regions of the cerebral cortex. This explains the neural basis of increased percentage alpha activity in frontal and occipital cortex during Sahaja Yoga.

In Group II partial alpha blocking on opening the eyes could be attributed to a different state of consciousness called here as thoughtless

Frontal alpha percentage of group-I and group-II subjects at 12 weeks.

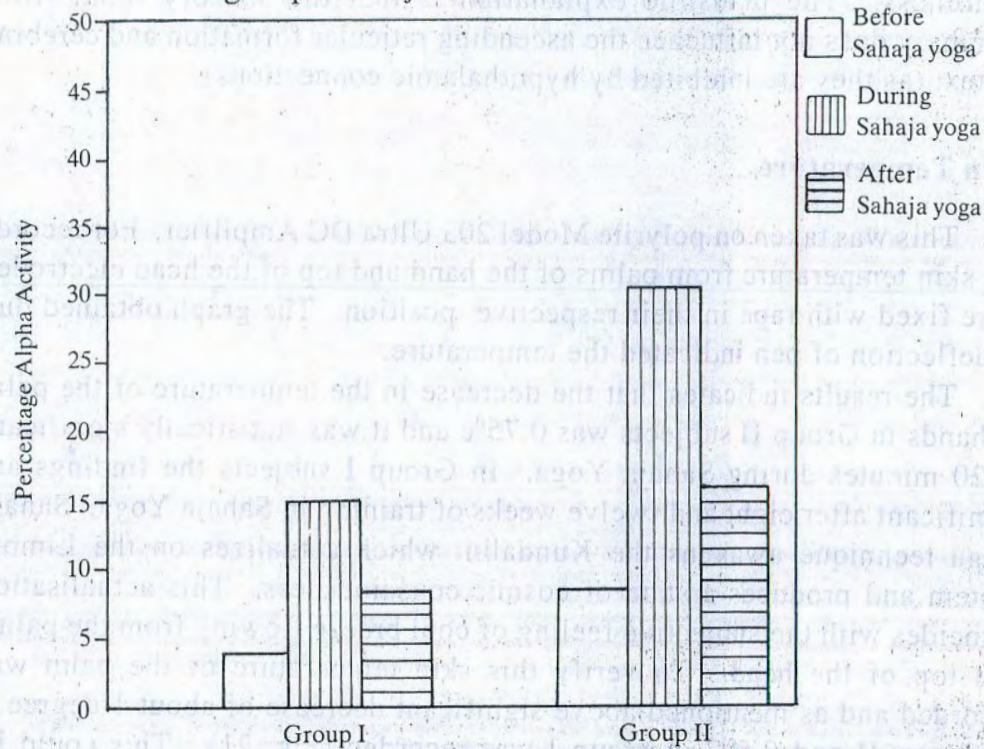


Fig.-19

Occipital alpha percentage of group-I and group-II subjects at 12 weeks

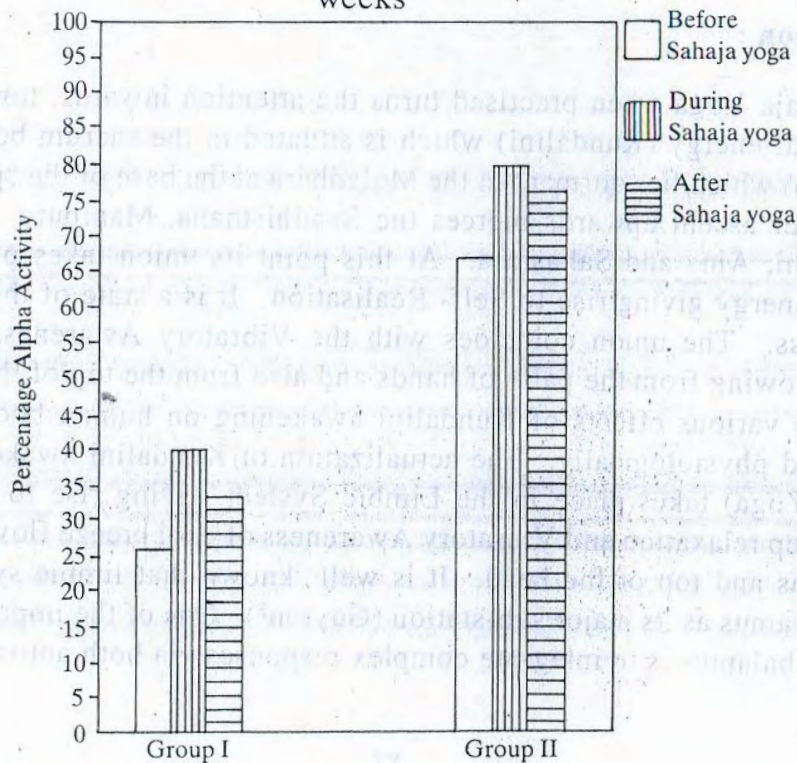


Fig.-20

awareness. The plausible explanation is that the sensory input from periphery does not influence the ascending reticular formation and cerebral cortex. (as they are inhibited by hypothalamic connections)

Skin Temperature

This was taken on polyrite Model 203 Ultra DC Amplifier. For recording skin temperature from palms of the hand and top of the head electrodes were fixed with tape in their respective position. The graph obtained due to deflection of pen indicated the temperature.

The results indicates that the decrease in the temperature of the palm of hands in Group II subjects was 0.75°C and it was statistically significant at 20 minutes during Sahaja Yoga. In Group I subjects the findings are significant after eight and twelve weeks of training in Sahaja Yoga. Sahaja Yoga technique awakens the Kundalini which actualizes on the Limbic system and produces a state of cosmic consciousness. This actualisation coincides with the subjective feeling of cool breeze flowing from the palms and top of the head. To verify this skin temperature of the palm was recorded and as mentioned above significant decrease of about 1°C in Group II and 0.5°C in group I was recorded (Fig. 21). This could be explained on the basis of changes brought about at the level of anterior hypothalamus which is well known for dissipating heat and thereby could lower the temperature of the skin as observed in these experiments.

Conclusion :

Sahaja Yoga when practised turns the attention inwards, towards the primordial energy (Kundalini) which is situated in the sacrum bone. The Kundalini which lies dormant in the Muladhara at the base of the spine rises and in her ascent upwards pierces the Svadhisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddhi, Ajna and Sahasrara. At this point its union takes place with cosmic energy giving rise to Self- Realisation. It is a state of thoughtless awareness. The union coincides with the Vibratory Awareness of cool breeze flowing from the palm of hands and also from the top of the head.

The various effects of Kundalini awakening on human body can be explained physiologically. The actualization of Kundalini awakening (by Sahaja Yoga) takes place in the Limbic System, giving rise to profound bliss, deep relaxation and Vibratory Awareness of cool breeze flowing from the palms and top of the head. It is well known that limbic system has hypothalamus as its major sub-station (Guyton⁸). One of the important role of hypothalamus is to integrate complex responses via both autonomic and

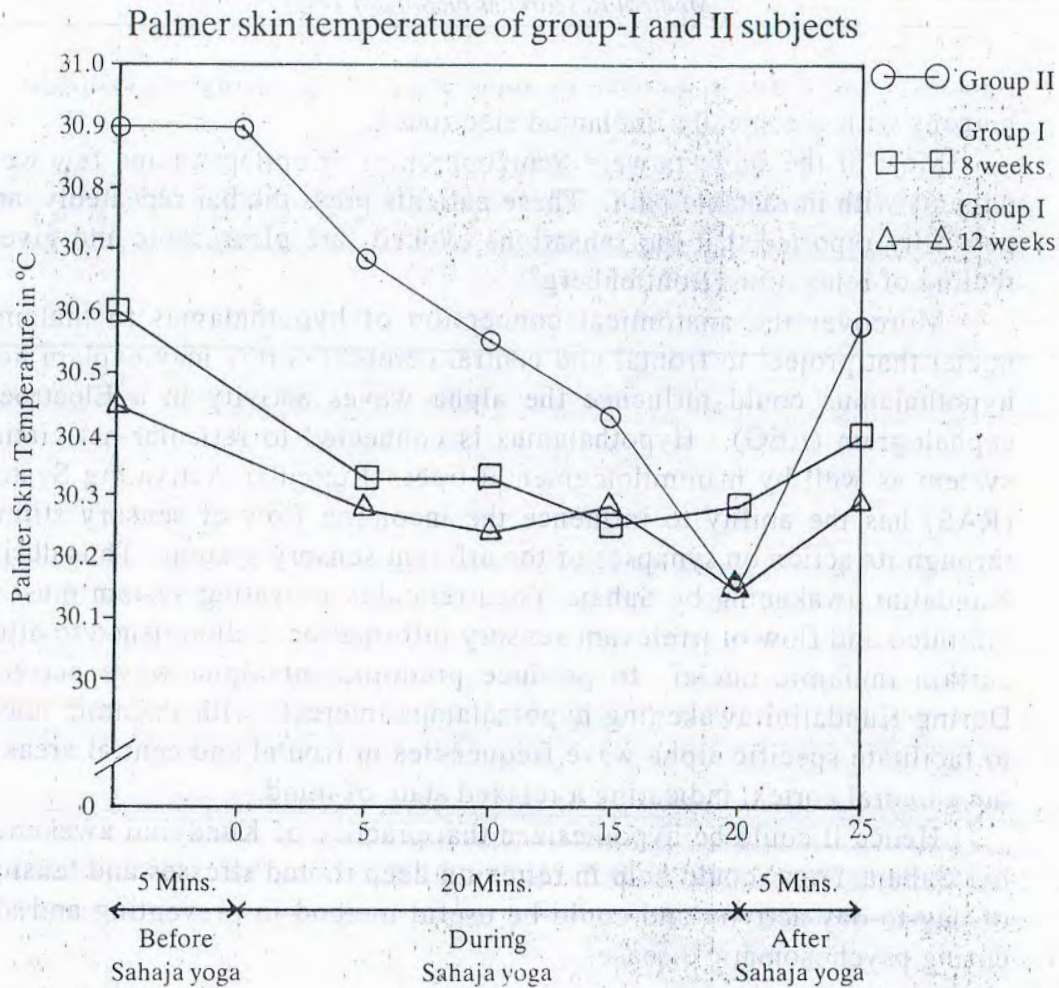


Fig.-21

somatic nervous system (Mountcastle⁵). Actualization of Kundalini awakening on limbic system inhibits the posterior hypothalamic area and thereby produces various effects like decreased respiratory rate, heart rate, blood pressure, skin temperature, decrease in blood lactate and urinary VMA and an increase in skin resistance. Another mechanism for the above effects could be that hypothalamus acts on the medullary centres through reticular activating system to influence the above mentioned changes. The decrease in blood lactate concentration may be due to decreased output of adrenaline which is caused by the influence of hypothalamus via sympathetic nervous system on Adrenal medulla. The decreased adrenaline results in decreased anxiety symptoms¹⁰. This coupled with deep relaxation reinforces the hypothalamus for bringing about tranquillity. Further actualisation of Kundalini awakening on limbic system also inhibits the area which produces rage, fear and aggressive behaviour and stimulates the rewarding centre in the medial fore-brain bundle leading to a state of bliss.

Recently, there are a number of reports of bar pressing experiments in humans with chronically implanted electrodes.

Most of the subjects were Schizophrenics or epileptics and few were patients with intractable pain. These patients press the bar repeatedly, and generally reported that the sensations evoked are pleasurable and give a feeling of relaxation (Routtenberg⁹).

Moreover the anatomical connection of hypothalamus to thalamic nuclei that project to frontal and central cerebral cortex may explain how hypothalamus could influence the alpha waves activity in a Electroencephalogram (EEG). Hypothalamus is connected to reticular activating system as well by mammilotegetmental tract. Reticular Activating System (RAS) has the ability to influence the incoming flow of sensory stimuli through its action on synapses of the afferent sensory system. Thus during Kundalini awakening by Sahaja Yoga reticular activating system must be inhibited and flow of irrelevant sensory information is diminished to allow certain thalamic nuclei to produce predominant alpha wave activity. During Kundalini awakening hypothalamus interacts with thalamic nuclei to facilitate specific alpha wave frequencies in frontal and central areas of the cerebral cortex, indicating a relaxed state of mind.

Hence it could be hypothesized that practice of Kundalini awakening by 'Sahaja Yoga' could help in relieving deep rooted stresses and tensions of day-to-day activity and could be useful method in preventing and also curing psychosomatic diseases.

II Role of Sahaja Yoga in the Treatment of Essential Hypertension

High Blood Pressure is one of the most important public health problems in developed and developing countries. It is a silent killer because symptoms do not develop in early stages. Circumstantial evidence on the role of psychological stress in cases of Essential Hypertension is a part of daily experience of every cardiologist¹. The progressive increase in the incidence of hypertension in cosmopolitan cities has been related to increased confrontation of an individual with increasingly difficult environment and consequently for a greater need for adaptative changes. As a result whenever an individual is not able to cope up with the situation there is adaptative break-down leading to various types of diseases. The role of psychological stress has been tested abroad on an experimental model and there is now sufficient evidence to suggest that stress plays an important role in the causation of High Blood Pressure. Further, long-sustained and chronically troubling life problems, dissatisfactions, interpersonal conflicts have been reported in Scientific Literature as precursors of Essential Hypertension and other heart diseases. Now it is well known that increase in cholesterol level is responsible for narrowing of the coronary arteries and as such it is an important factor for the causation of Hypertension. Recently it has been shown that when an individual faces psychological stress for a long time, then there is a substantial increase in blood cholesterol level. In view of this it is quite clear that progressive increase in the incidence of hypertension these days is due to increasingly difficult environment one has to face and consequently there are more chances of adaptative breakdown of human beings leading to above disorder. It is on the basis of above observations that the concept of life style related diseases is progressively gaining credit everyday. To control the psychological stress factor, clinicians all over the world have been widely using tranquilisers in spite of the fact that they are habit forming and have a number of side effects. However, clinicians have now realized that the use of tranquilisers is not a permanent solution and therefore they have started advocating relaxation

Systolic blood pressure in hypertensive patients

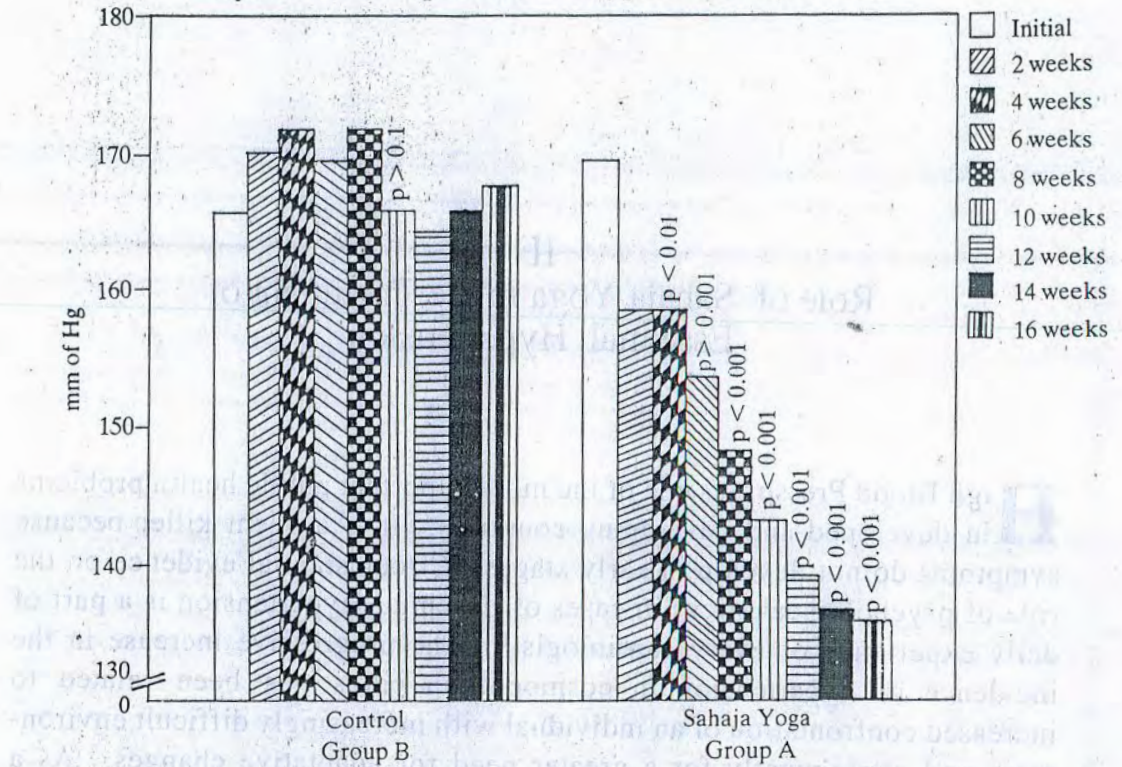


Fig.-22

Diastolic blood pressure in hypertensive patients

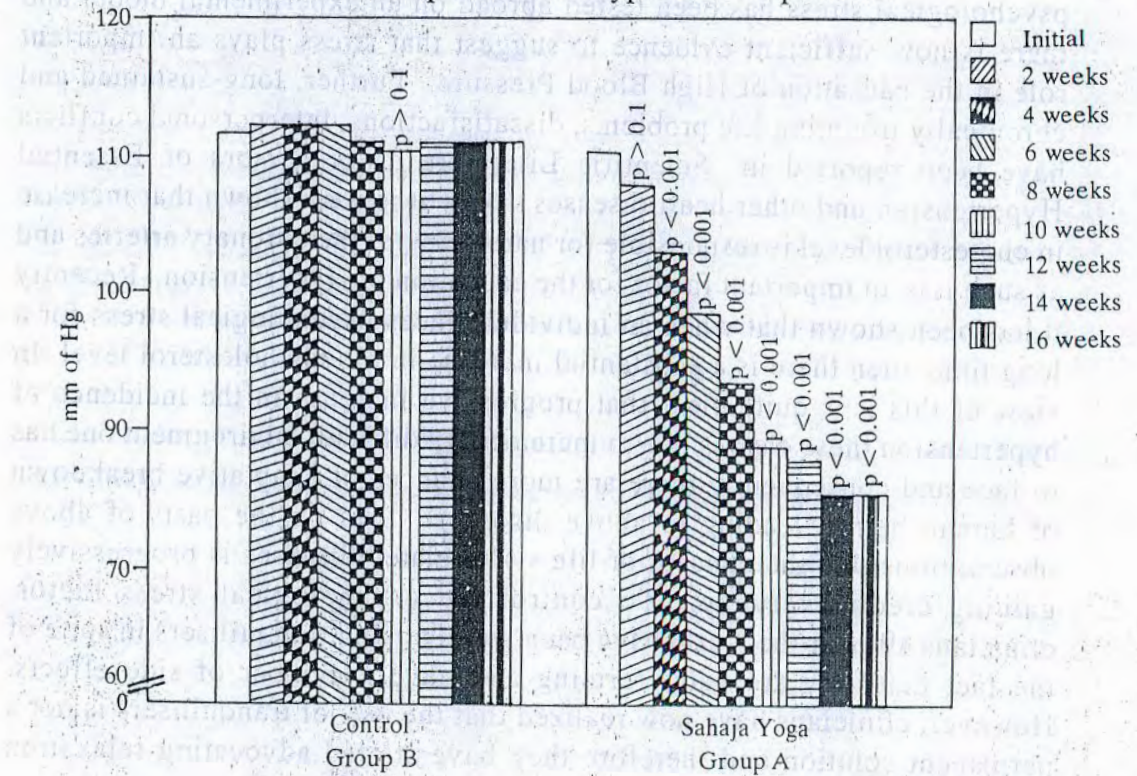


Fig.-23

techniques and bio-feedback techniques to reduce the effect of psychological stress on body.

In view of the encouraging results obtained in the study on the physiological effects of Sahaja Yoga another Doctoral Research Project on the Role of Sahaja Yoga in patients of Essential Hypertension was undertaken. This research project was undertaken jointly by the Department of Physiology and Department of Medicine, Lady Hardinge Medical College, and Smt. S.K. Hospital, New Delhi. Patients of Essential Hypertension were randomly selected from the Medical O.P.D. and hypertension clinic of the above Hospital. According to Chug² they were divided in two groups. Group A comprised of 15 females (35-45 years) suffering from Essential Hypertension. These patients were trained in Sahaja Yoga by trained Sahaja Yogis and after their control basal data like blood lactic acid, urinary V.M.A., Electro Encephalogram (EEG), Galvanic Skin Resistance (GSR), and skin temperature were recorded along with detailed history, clinical examination and relevant laboratory investigations. Group B comprised of 10 females (38-45 years) who were also suffering from Essential Hypertension. These served as controls and did not participate in Sahaja Yoga. They belonged to similar socio-economic strata of the society, and were essentially on similar type of medication. Parameters like blood lactic acid, urinary VMA, Electro Encephalography (EEG), GSR and skin temperature from palms of the hand were recorded initially and then at the end of four months.

In both the groups Blood Pressure was recorded bi-weekly by sphygmomanometer. On analysing the data at the conclusion of this study it was found that there was a statistically significant fall in blood pressure of group A patients who were on anti-hypertensive drugs plus Sahaja Yoga practice once every day for 20 minutes. The initial mean value of blood pressure in Group A was 169.1/109.5 mm / Hg. while at the end of four weeks it came down to 158.4/102.7 mm Hg. Patients also reported a feeling of well being. At the end of eight weeks, twelve weeks and sixteen weeks the mean value of blood pressure came down to 148.1/93.9, 139.1/86.1 and 135.7/83.1 mm Hg respectively (Fig. 22 & 23). The requirement of anti-hypertensive drugs kept on decreasing with time. In 16 weeks all the patients except one could be maintained on Sahaja Yoga practice for 20 minutes per day to keep the blood pressure within normal range. Here it is worthwhile to mention that many patients noticed that when they forgot to do Sahaja Yoga their blood pressure showed an increasing value. Hence it was found essential that there should be no break in the practice of Sahaja Yoga.

In group B patients who were only on anti-hypertensive drugs the initial mean value of blood pressure reading was 164.6/111.4 mm Hg

Levels of urinary vanillyl mandelic acid (VMA) in hypertensive patients

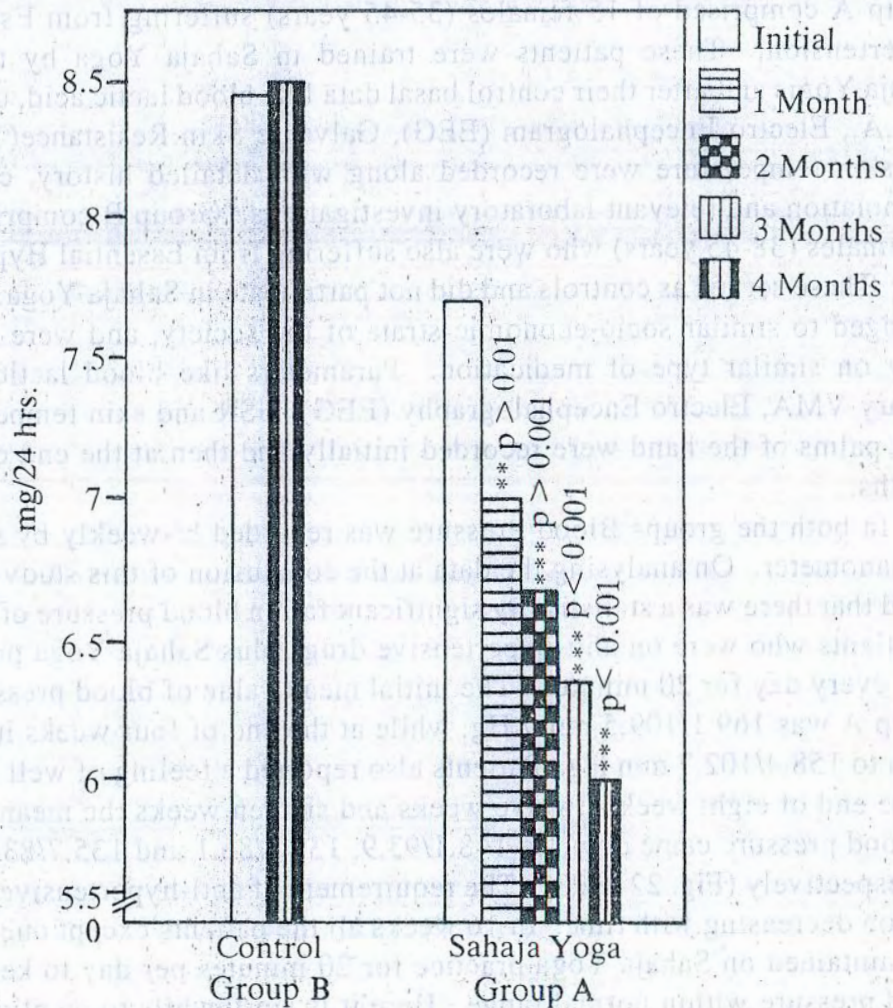


Fig.-24

Blood lactic acid level in hypertensive patients

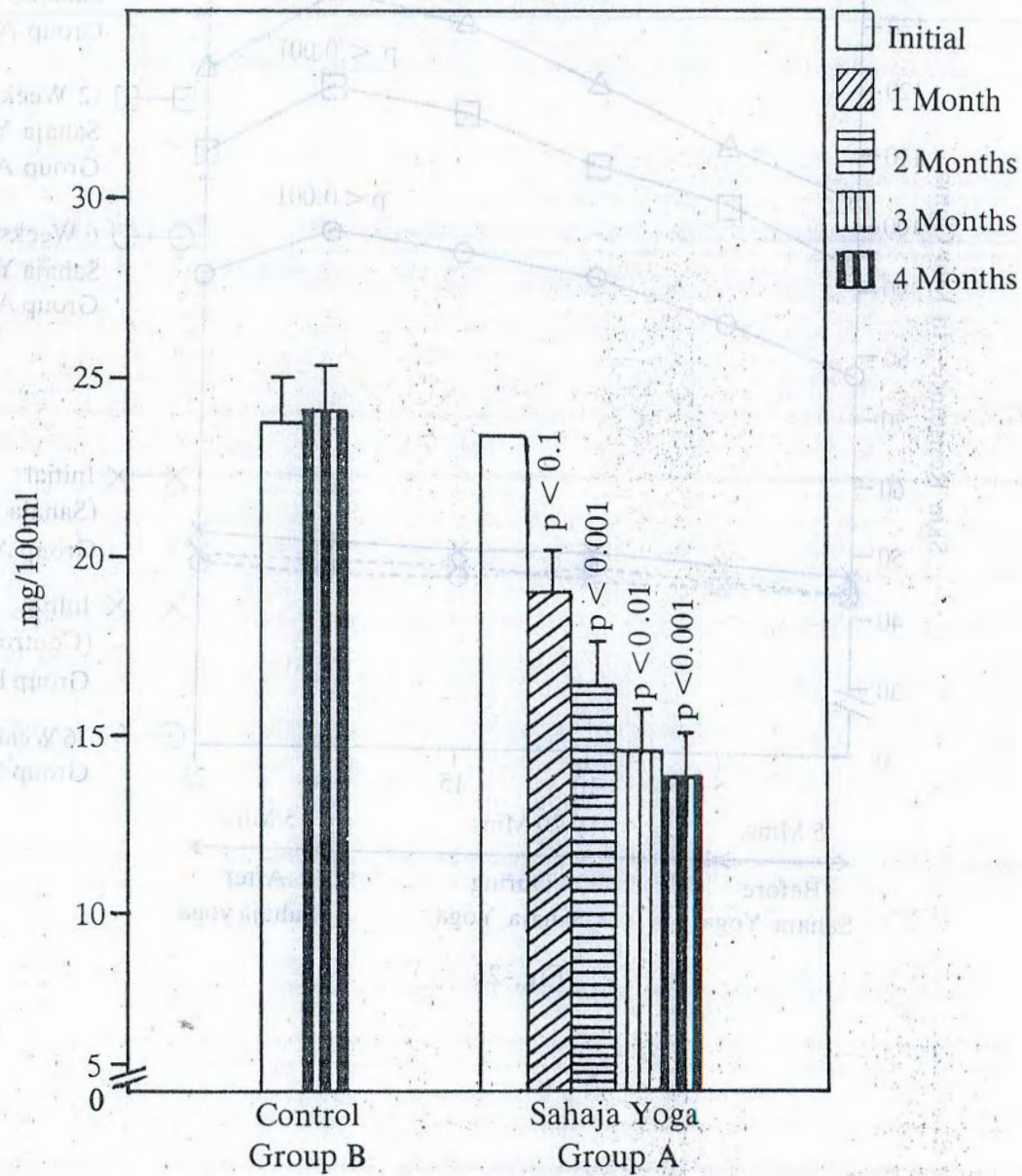


Fig.-25

Galvanic skin resistance in hypertensive patients

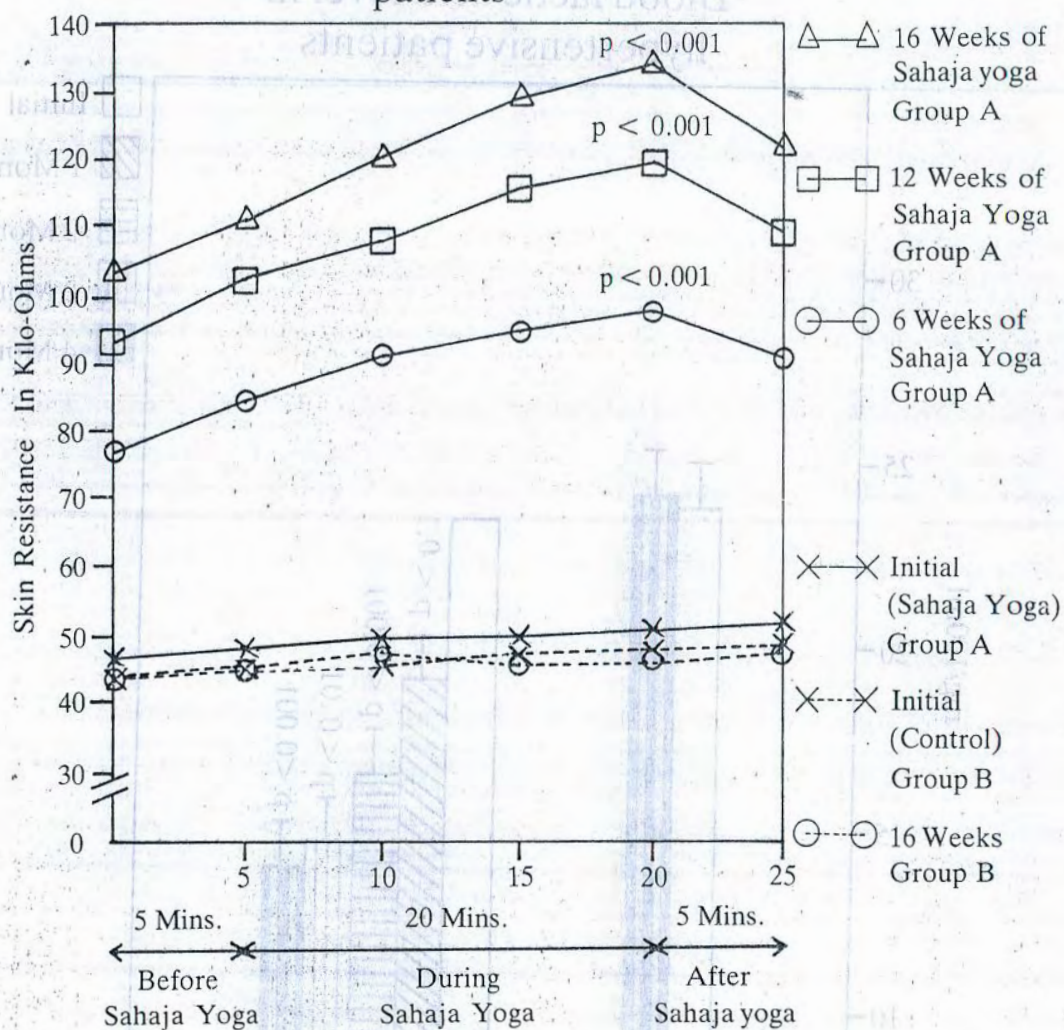


Fig.-26

Percentage occipital alpha activity in hypertensive patients

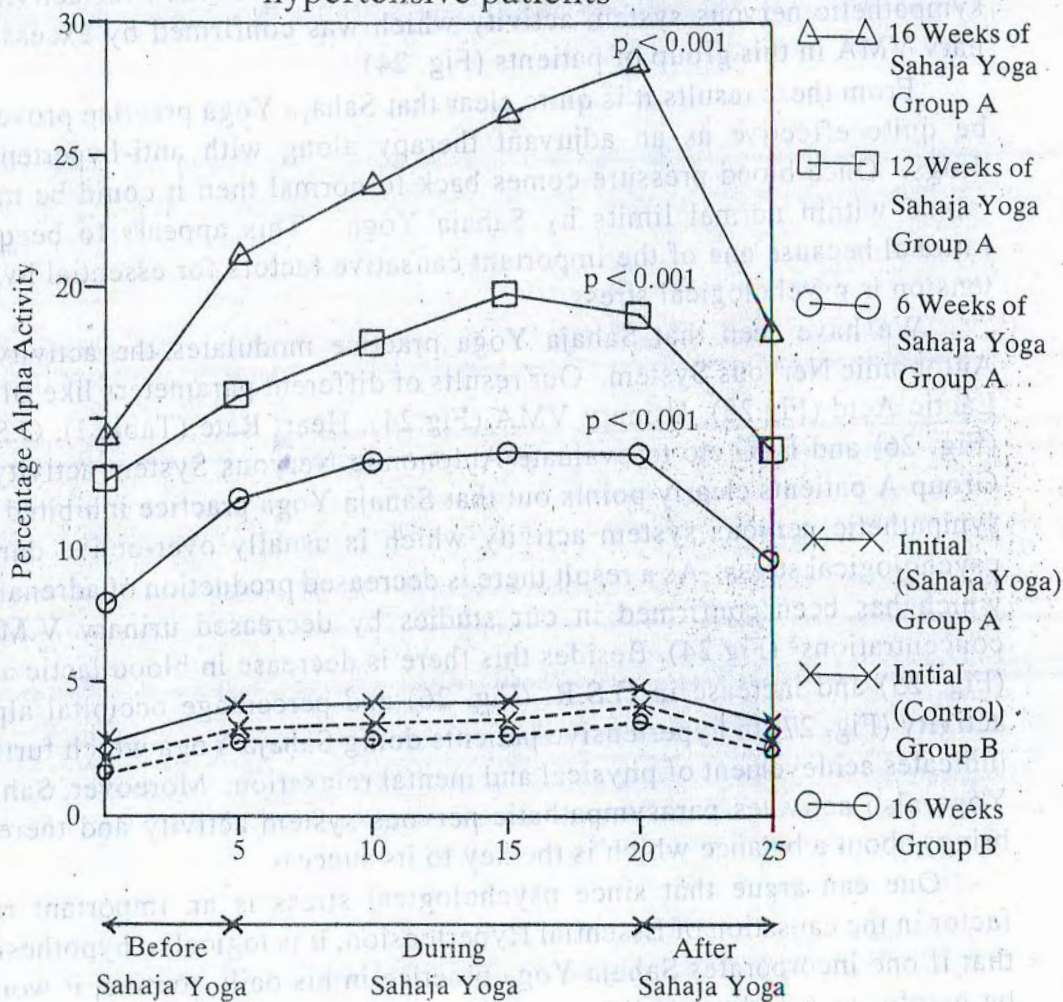


Fig.-27

(Fig. 22 & 23). This reading could not be brought down back to normal by the initial dose of the anti-hypertensive drugs. The dose of anti-hypertensive drugs was increased at times upto two times the initial dose to keep blood pressure under control. Whenever the dose of these drugs was reduced in a day or two the blood pressure used to shoot up. After 16 weeks the drugs were withdrawn for two days and it was found that the mean value of blood pressure in this group of patients again shot up to 167.8/111.2 mm Hg. The results of different parameters to evaluate the activity of Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) showed that there was over-activity of sympathetic nervous system activity which was confirmed by excess urinary VMA in this group of patients (Fig. 24).

From these results it is quite clear that Sahaja Yoga practice proved to be quite effective as an adjuvant therapy along with anti-hypertensive drugs. Once blood pressure comes back to normal then it could be maintained within normal limits by Sahaja Yoga. This appears to be quite rational because one of the important causative factors for essential hypertension is psychological stress.

We have seen that Sahaja Yoga practice modulates the activity of Autonomic Nervous System. Our results of different parameters like Blood Lactic Acid (Fig.25), Urinary VMA (Fig.24), Heart Rate (Table I), G.S.R. (Fig. 26) and EEG etc to evaluate Autonomic Nervous System activity in Group A patients clearly points out that Sahaja Yoga practice inhibited the sympathetic nervous system activity which is usually over-active during psychological stress. As a result there is decreased production of adrenaline which has been confirmed in our studies by decreased urinary V.M.A. concentrations³ (Fig.24). Besides this there is decrease in blood lactic acid (Fig. 25) and increase in G.S.R. (Fig. 26) and percentage occipital alpha activity (Fig. 27) in hypertensive patients doing Sahaja Yoga which further indicates achievement of physical and mental relaxation. Moreover, Sahaja Yoga also activates parasympathetic nervous system activity and thereby brings about a balance which is the key to its success.

One can argue that since psychological stress is an important risk factor in the causation of Essential Hypertension, it is logical to hypothesize that if one incorporates Sahaja Yoga practice in his daily routine, it would be helpful as an adjuvant therapy in the treatment of this disease^{4 to 7}. If practised by persons who are prone to develop Essential Hypertension then it could possibly prevent the evolution of this disease as well.

III

Role of Sahaja Yoga in the Treatment of Bronchial Asthma

Asthma, once considered a straight forward disease is proving to be more complex than was imagined. It has been estimated that nearly 5% of adults and 7 to 10% children in USA and Australia suffer from Asthma¹. New Zealand has the highest rate of death from Asthma as compared to any country in the world. Most strikingly, however, the death rate from Asthma, particularly among those under the age of 35, is increasing².

The symptoms of Asthma consist of a triad of dyspnoea (Breathlessness), cough and wheezing. In its most typical form Asthma is an Episodic disease and all three symptoms coexist. Attacks often occur in night, for reasons which are not clear but may relate to fluctuations in air way receptor thresholds that may result from circadian variations in the circulating levels of endogenous catecholamines and histamine. Attacks may also abruptly follow exposure to specific allergen, physical-exertion, respiratory infection or emotional excitement.

Role of Emotional Stress : Abundant objective data now exists which demonstrates that psychological factors can interact with the asthmatic diathesis to worsen or ameliorate the disease. The pathways and nature of interaction are complex. In almost half of the patients studied, change in air ways calibre seems to be mediated through modification of vagal efferent activity. The most frequently studied variable has been that of suggestions and it is strongly felt that it can be quite an important influence in selected Asthmatics. Appropriate suggestions can decrease or increase the effects of adrenergic or cholinergic stimuli on their air ways. However, it varies from patient to patient.

The increasing use of sedatives and tranquilizers in medical practice illustrates the extent to which the effect of stress has come to permeate our society. In U.K. by late 1970 over 4% of all prescriptions written were having one or other form of benzodiazepine. In another survey Petursson³ (1981) reported that 2% adult population were taking tranquilizers. These

FEV₁ /FEV percentage in brochial asthma patients

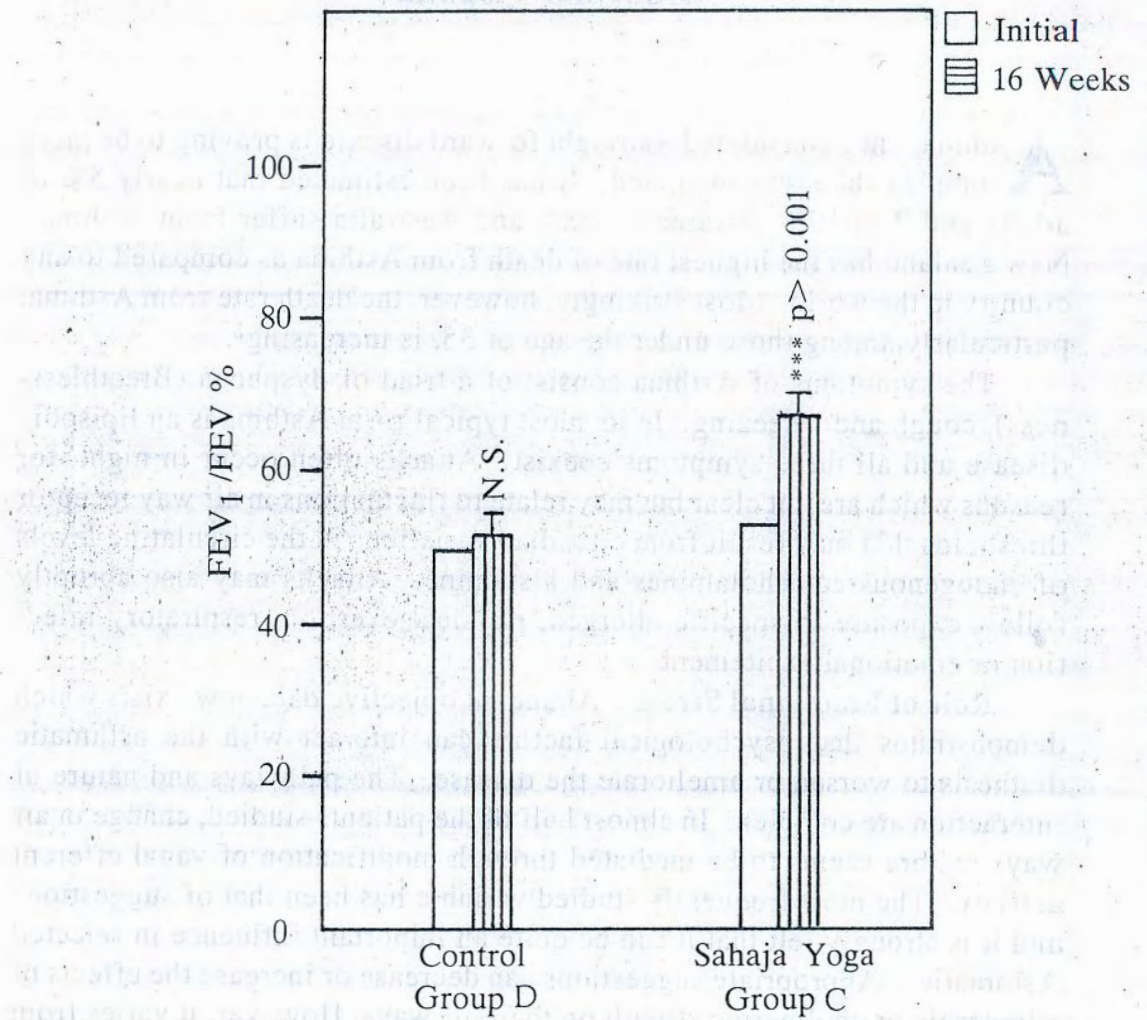


Fig.-28

Percentage difference between
liver and abdominal temperature in
bronchial asthma patients

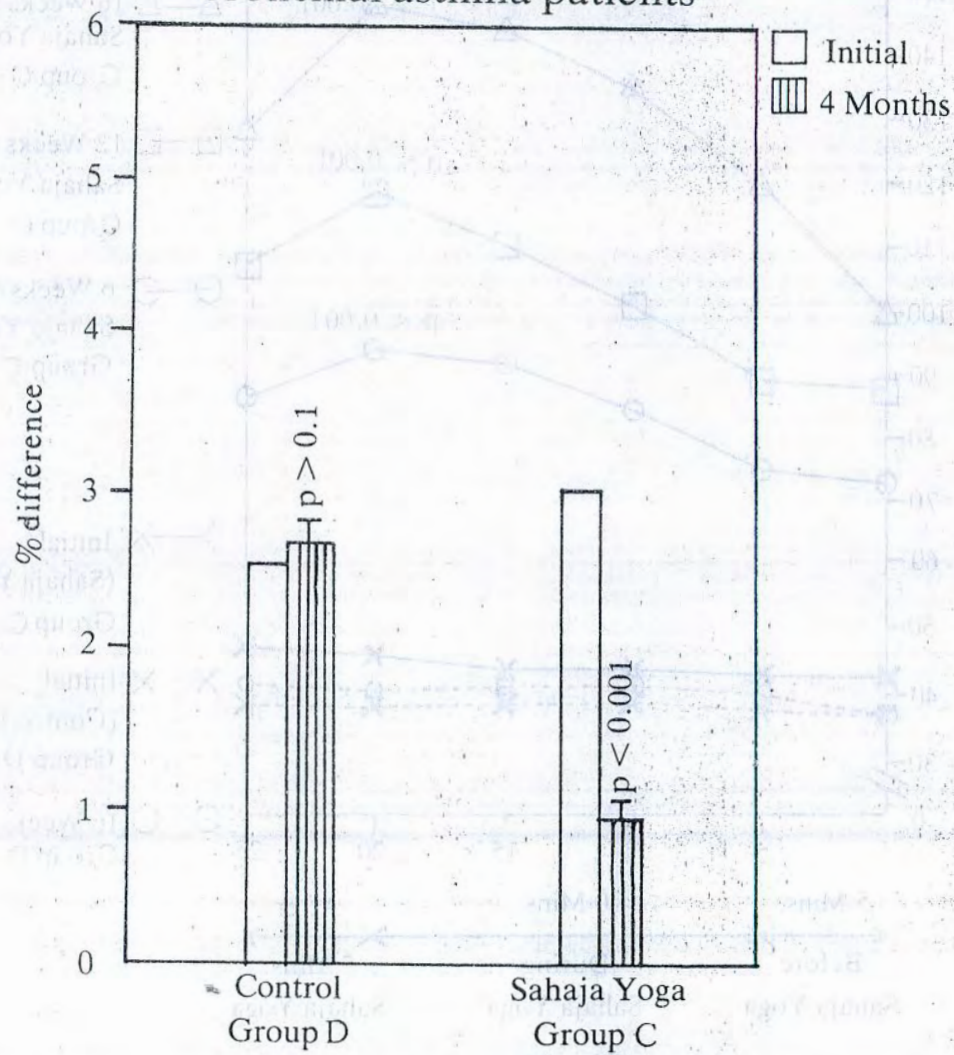


Fig.-29

Galvanic skin resistance in bronchial asthma patients

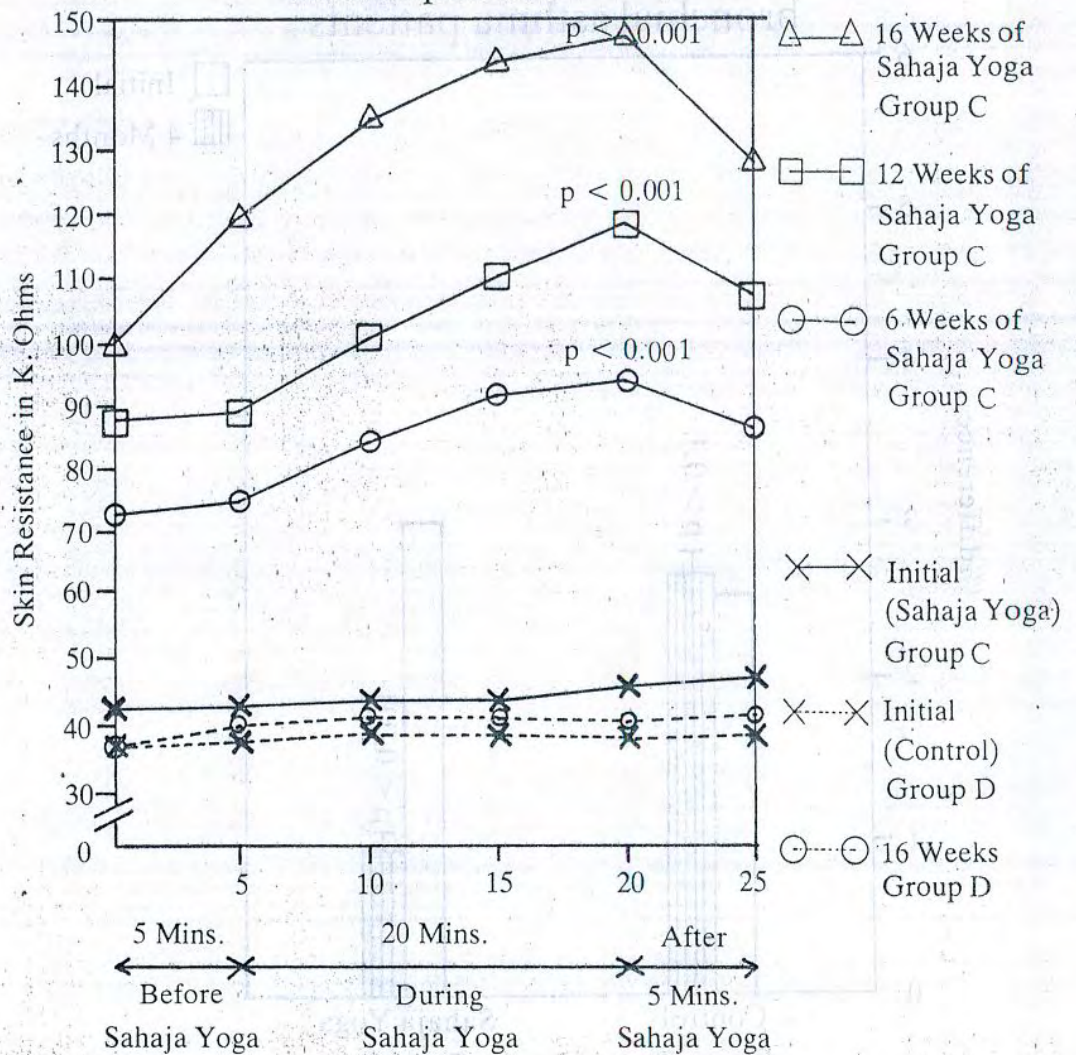


Fig.-30

Blood lactic acid levels in bronchial asthma patients

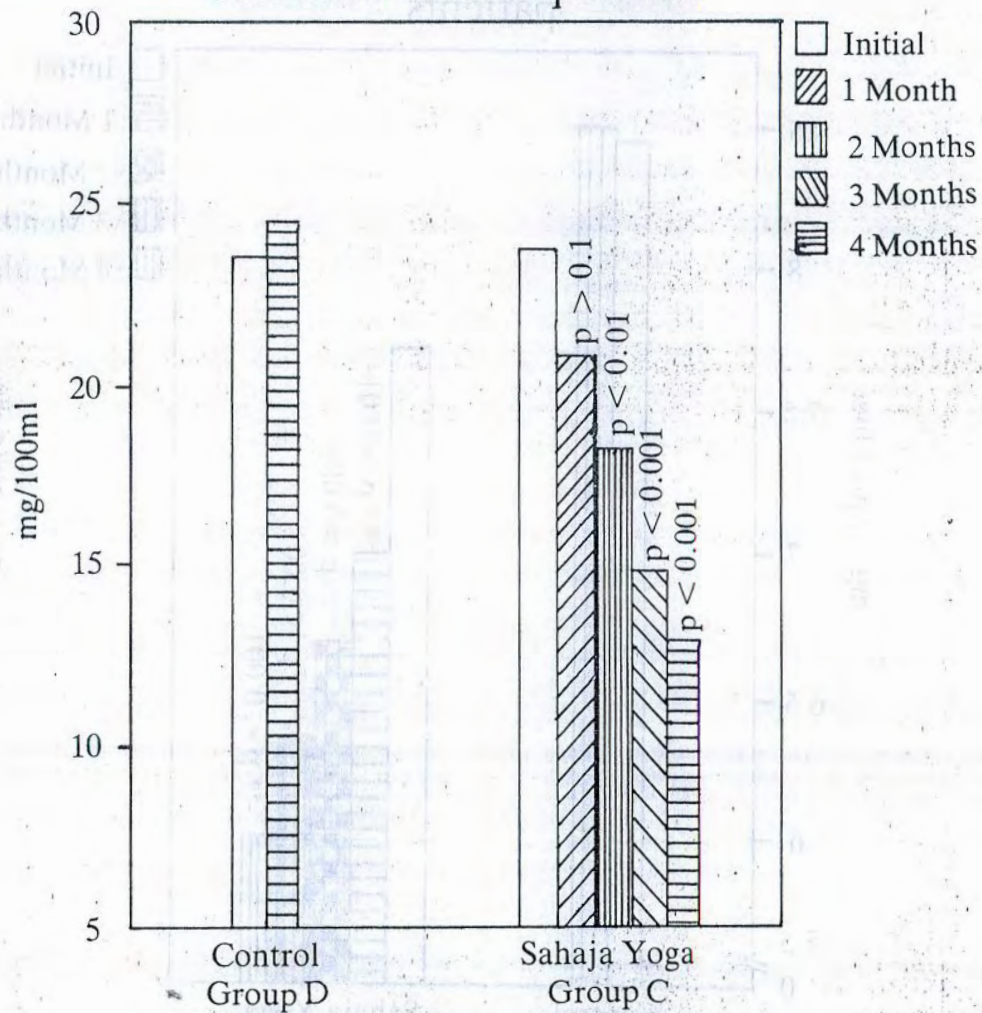


Fig.-31

Levels of urinary vinyl mandelic acid (VMA) in hypertensive patients

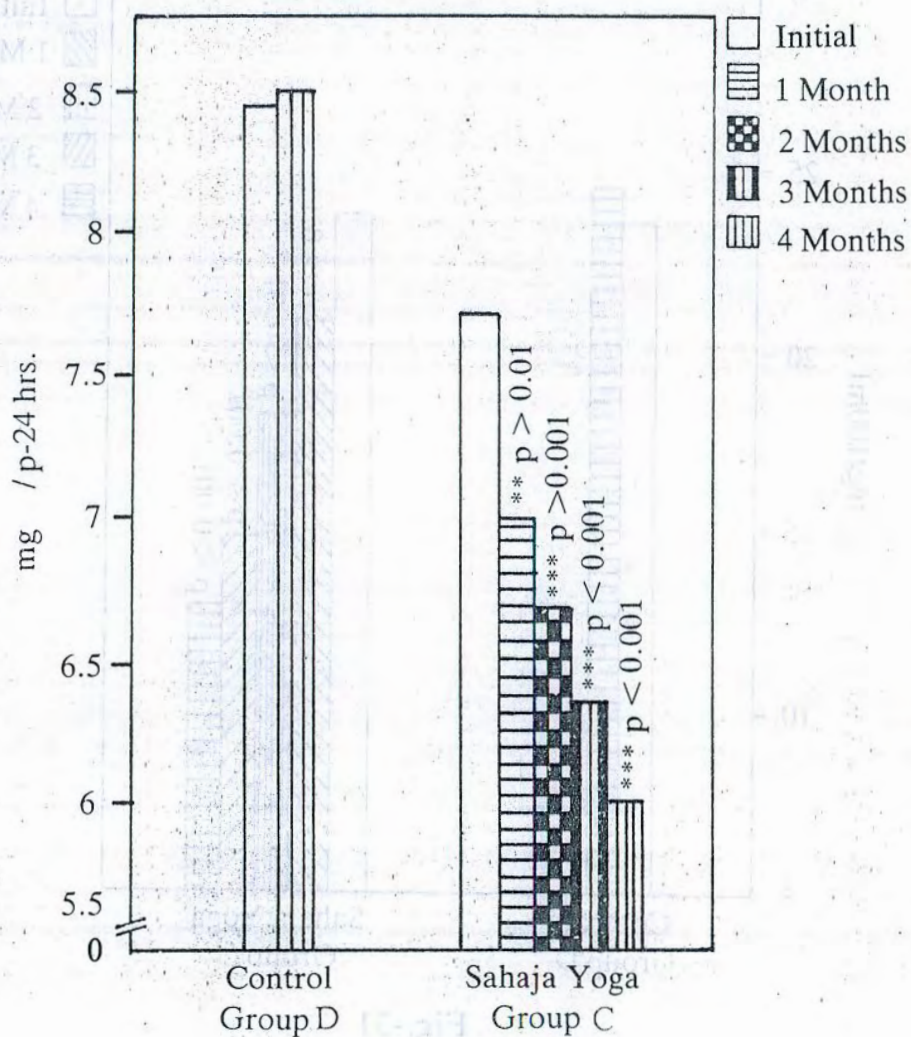


Fig.-32

Percentage occipital alpha activity in bronchial asthma patients

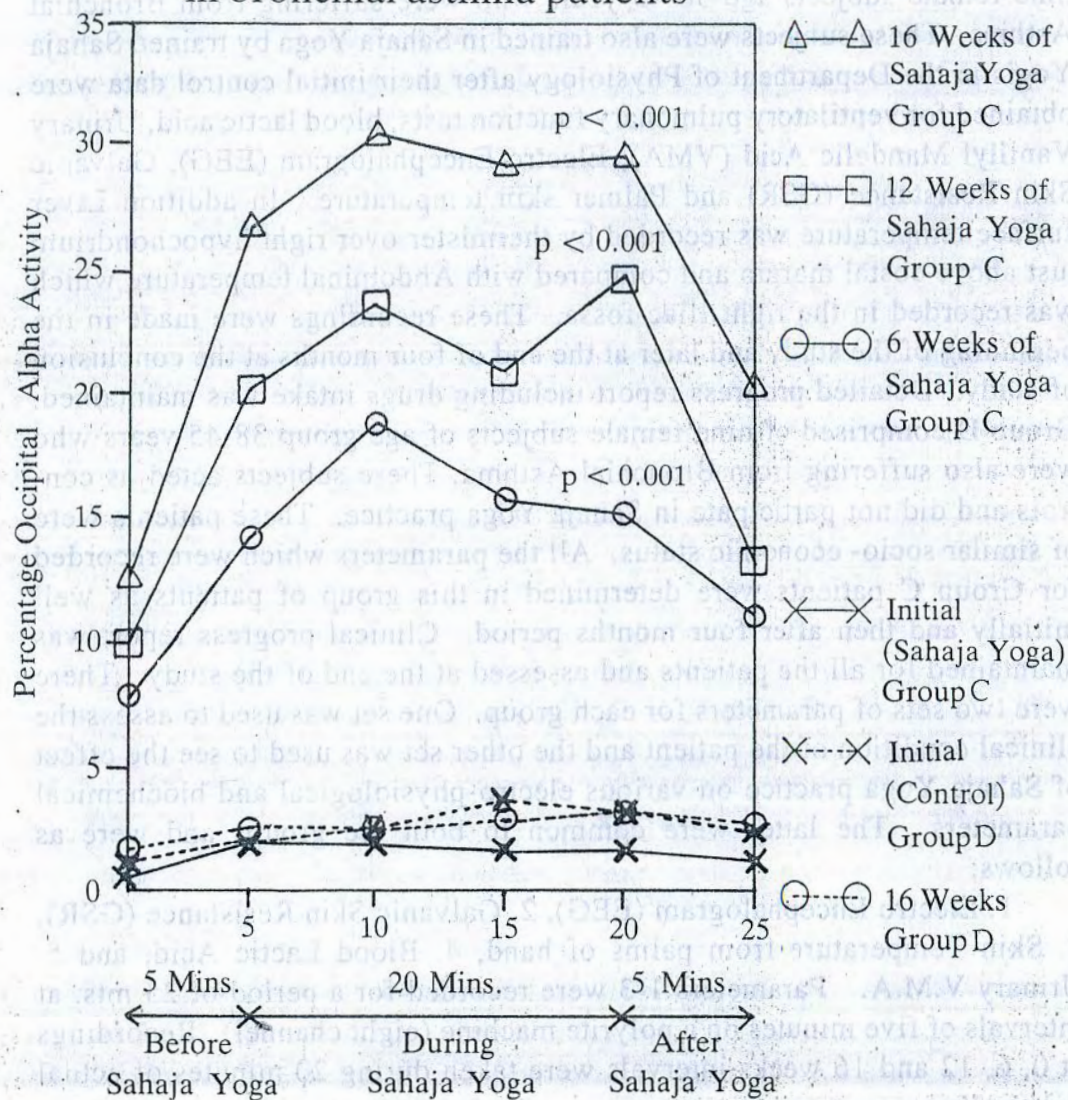


Fig.-33

have very toxic effects and are habit forming. In spite of this they are also prescribed to overcome the effect of psychological stress in Asthmatic patients.

To study this a research project was undertaken by the Department of Physiology and Medicine, Lady Hardinge Medical College and Associated Smt. S.K. Hospital, New Delhi. According to Chug⁴ 18 patients of Bronchial Asthma were randomly picked up from Medical OPD and Chest Clinic. They were divided into C and D Groups. Group C comprised of nine female subjects age 38-45 years who were suffering from Bronchial Asthma. These subjects were also trained in Sahaja Yoga by trained Sahaja Yogis in the Department of Physiology after their initial control data were obtained for ventilatory pulmonary function tests, blood lactic acid, Urinary Vanillyl Mandelic Acid (VMA), Electro Encephalogram (EEG), Galvanic Skin Resistance (GSR) and Palmer skin temperature. In addition Liver surface temperature was recorded by thermister over right hypochondrium just above costal margin and compared with Abdominal temperature which was recorded in the right Iliac-fossa. These recordings were made in the beginning of the study and later at the end of four months at the conclusion of study. Detailed progress report including drugs intake was maintained. Group D comprised of nine female subjects of age group 38-45 years who were also suffering from Bronchial Asthma. These subjects acted as controls and did not participate in Sahaja Yoga practice. These patients were of similar socio- economic status. All the parameters which were recorded for Group C patients were determined in this group of patients as well initially and then after four months period. Clinical progress report was maintained for all the patients and assessed at the end of the study. There were two sets of parameters for each group. One set was used to assess the clinical condition of the patient and the other set was used to see the effect of Sahaja Yoga practice on various electro-physiological and biochemical parameters. The latter were common to both the groups and were as follows:

1. Electro Encephalogram (EEG), 2. Galvanic Skin Resistance (GSR), 3. Skin Temperature from palms of hand, 4. Blood Lactic Acid, and 5. Urinary V.M.A. Parameters 1-3 were recorded for a period of 25 mts. at intervals of five minutes on a polyrite machine (eight channel). Recordings at 0, 6, 12 and 16 weeks intervals were taken during 20 minutes of actual Sahaja Yoga practice.

Blood Lactic Acid was determined by standard method of Barker and Summerson as modified by Huckabee⁵ 1950. Urinary VMA was determined by the method of Pisano⁶ et al. Both these parameters were recorded initially and then at 0, 6, 12 and 16 weeks respectively.

For Bronchial Asthma patients pulmonary function tests were recorded on a standard expirograph initially and then at the end of 16 weeks study period. A detailed record of medication and frequency of acute attacks was maintained (Table 2).

On the analysis of the research data at the conclusion of the study it was observed that the initial mean FEV1/FEV% was 48.2% in Group C patients who were on anti-Asthmatic drugs plus Sahaja Yoga practice for 20 minutes once per day. After 16 weeks FEV1/FEV% increased to a mean value of 66.18% ($P < 0.001$) (Fig. 28). Further it has been found that in two patients it returned to normal range and in five patients FEV1/FEV% reached a range of 64 to 70%. This in simple terms conveys that the pulmonary ventilation in the patients improved significantly after 16 weeks of treatment plus Sahaja Yoga. As regards the frequency of acute attacks, there was significant decrease in the number of attacks of Bronchial Asthma in 3rd and 4th month of Sahaja Yoga practice as compared to first two months of Sahaja Yoga practice. The decrease was found to be statistically significant (Table 2). Further another important observation recorded in this group was that by the end of third month of Sahaja Yoga practice, the drugs were stopped altogether because of good clinical response and patients did not feel the necessity of taking any oral drugs. The attacks could be avoided by the daily practice of Sahaja Yoga.

In Group D patients who were simply on anti-Asthmatic drugs there was an increase in FEV1/FEV% after 16 weeks but it was not statistically significant (Fig. 28). Moreover the frequency of attacks also does not decrease significantly (Table 3). In none of the patients drugs could be stopped even after 16 weeks of study. Further patients of Bronchial Asthma showed consistently elevated liver surface temperature as compared to lower abdominal temperature (measured in right Iliac Fossa). Further it has been seen that in Sahaja Yoga group (Group C) the percentage difference in both the temperatures (liver surface and lower abdominal) has declined to a mean value of 0.74°C and from an initial mean value of 3.11°C after four months of Sahaja Yoga practice. This decline in the temperature was statistically significant ($P < 0.001$) (Fig. 29). While in control Group D the percentage difference in both the temperatures (liver surface and lower abdominal) did not show any decline from the initial value (Fig. 29). The exact significance of this is not possible to explain in a limited study like this.

Pick⁷ (1970) Nobin et al⁸ (1977) and Tani Kewa⁹ (1968) have pointed out that the autonomic nervous system fibres (derived from Vagus nerve) are seen to penetrate the Hepatic lobuli, structures surrounding individual hepatocyte and at times these fibres penetrate the cytoplasm of hepatocytes

Table-2
Sahaja Yoga Group C

**Record Of Clinical Severity And Frequency Of Acute Attacks In Bronchial Asthma
Patients Practising Sahaja Yoga Along With Medication**

History Of Acute Attacks In Previous Two Months						Record Of Acute Attack During Practice Of Sahaja Yoga				Total Attacks In Four Months
						First Month	SecondMonth	ThirdMonth	Fourth Month	
No.	Name	Mild	Mod	Sev	Total	Mild Mod. Sev.	Mild Mod. Sev.	Mild Mod. Sev.	Mild Mod. Sev.	
1	Q	3	3	3	8	1 2 0	0 2 0	1 0 0	0 0 0	6
2	R	2	2	1	5	1 0 0	1 1 0	1 0 0	0 0 0	4
3	S	3	2	1	6	1 2 1	0 0 1	1 0 0	0 0 0	6
4	T	3	2	2	7	2 2 1	1 1 0	1 0 0	0 0 0	8
5	U	3	1	2	6	3 1 0	1 1 0	0 0 0	0 0 0	6
6	V	2	2	0	4	3 0 0	1 0 1	0 0 0	0 0 0	5
7	W	3	2	1	6	3 1 0	2 0 0	1 0 0	0 0 0	7
8	X	2	1	2	5	2 0 1	1 0 0	0 1 0	0 0 0	6
9	Y	3	2	1	5	2 1 0	1 0 1	0 0 0	0 0 0	5
Mean = 5.89										5.78
Std. Dev. = 1.17										1.20

1) Criteria For Clinical Assessment :-

Mild = Patient can speak short sentences during asthmatic attacks

Moderate = Patient cannot speak short sentences during asthmatic attack

Severe = Patient can speak only few mono-syllables during asthmatic attacks

2) Except the patient at no. 7 (w) all other patients were taken off the medication by end of third month following good clinical response.

Table-3
Sahaja Yoga Group D

Record Of Clinical Severity And Frequency Of Acute Attacks In Control Group
Of Bronchial Asthma Patients On Medication Only

No.	History Of Acute Attacks In Previous Two Months				Record Of Acute Attacks During Four Months				Total Attacks In Four Months
	Name	Mild	Mod	Sev Total	First Month	Second Month	Third Month	Fourth Month	
					Mild Mod. Sev.	Mild Mod. Sev.	Mild Mod. Sev.	Mild Mod. Sev.	
1	q	2	2	6	2	1	2	1	17
2	r	1	2	5	1	2	1	1	12
3	s	2	3	7	2	1	1	1	14
4	t	1	2	3	0	1	0	1	14
5	u	3	2	6	1	1	1	2	14
6	v	3	2	7	1	2	1	1	14
7	w	2	1	4	1	0	1	1	9
8	x	3	2	5	0	2	1	0	11
9	y	3	2	6	1	1	1	0	11
Mean = 5.78									12.89
Std. Dev. = 0.97									2.37

1) Criteria For Clinical Assessment :-

- Mean = Patient can speak short sentences during asthmatic attacks
 Moderate = Patient cannot speak short sentences during asthmatic attack
 Severe = Patient can speak only few mono-syllables during asthmatic attacks
- 2) All the patients were on continuous medication.

even extending upto nuclear membrane. Saw-chenko¹⁰ & Friedman (1979) have pointed out in a review article about the sensory functions of liver. There is evidence to suggest that in liver there are neural receptors which detect various physiological events. Adachi¹¹ (1984) conclusively showed that hepatic branch of vagus nerve has thermosensitive afferent fibres.

The above review of literature has revealed that there are thermo receptors in liver but it is to be defined by future research whether in Bronchial Asthma the persistently elevated Liver temperature (this needs to be substantiated further because the present study had a small sample for study) excites the liver thermo-receptive mechanism and thereby constitutes the afferent limb of the vagal reflex arc. The disturbance in thermo-regulation of liver may constitute what is called as Asthmatic-diathesis (leading to persistent bronchial hyper reactivity). In the Pathogenesis of Bronchial Asthma, there is a fundamental defect of bronchial hyper-reactivity as well as the presence of precipitating factors like infections, environmental causes and emotional stress¹². (MC Fadden 1984). From this it is very clear that Sahaja Yoga was responsible for the good response seen in these patients. We know and it is mostly accepted that anxiety can precipitate or exaggerate Asthma in some patients. Smith et al¹³ (1970) showed that mental relaxation can reduce air way resistance.

The fact that Sahaja Yoga results in a state of physical and mental relaxation is confirmed by high galvanic skin resistance (Fig. 30), decreased blood lactic acid (Fig. 31), decreased urinary VMA (Fig. 32), increased alpha index in the Frontal and occipital EEG recordings of group C patients in our study (Fig. 33). Similar results have been reported by Hawkins et al¹⁴ (1962) where he found higher Galvanic Skin Resistance (GSR) coinciding with relaxation.

The mechanism underlying beneficial effect of Sahaja Yoga in Bronchial Asthma involves reduction in Psychological stress as the subject experienced profound physical and mental relaxation during Sahaja Yoga. He gets a feeling of security as well and thereby anxiety factor is negated. Abundant objective data now exists which demonstrates that the psychological factors can interact with the Asthmatic diathesis to worsen or ameliorate the disease process, the pathways of interaction are complex but operational. Accordingly, Sahaja Yoga could be an important method of adjuvant therapy in the treatment of patients suffering from Bronchial Asthma.

The Sahaja Yoga practice modulates the activity of Autonomic nervous system in such a way that the patients could actually modify the effect of adrenergic and cholinergic stimulation on the air-ways to avoid the attack.

IV

Role of Sahaja Yoga in Stress Management

Stress is now recognized not only as one of the important causative factors in the etiology of psychosomatic diseases but also in behavioural and social dysfunctions. The most useful model of stress has been worked out by Dr. Hans Selye¹. In his book on "The stress of Life", he defines stress as the rate of the wear and tear of the body and showed that the body responds to stress through General Adaptation Syndrome (G.A.S) which has three stages: (1) Alarm Reaction, (2) Stage of Resistance, (3) Stage of Exhaustion.

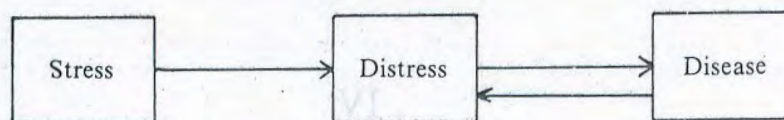
(1) **Alarm Reaction** : The stressor stimulates the sympathetic nervous system which in turn stimulates adrenal medulla to produce adrenaline. Simultaneously higher centres stimulate hypothalamus (a part of the brain) which in turn stimulates Pituitary gland to produce Adreno Cortico Tropic Hormone (A.C.T.H) and other corticoid hormones. These hormones play a very important role in bringing about appropriate and significant changes in the body, so that it could effectively tackle the stressful situation and body physiology remains normal.

(2) **Stage of Resistance** : In this stage body is able to resist the attack effectively with the help of the increased production of hormones and increased protein synthesis and normalcy is maintained.

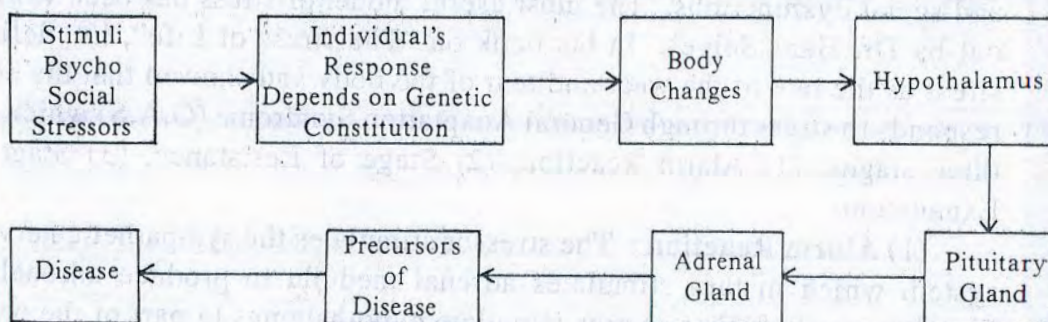
(3) **Stage of Exhaustion** : Here the body is not able to cope up with the effect of stress and gets exhausted and breaks down to develop a disease. The diseases which occur in such circumstances have been grouped together and are called as General Adaptation Syndrome.

The word stress has been taken from the discipline of Physics where this word is used as an external stimulus or force which is strain-producing. Anything may be considered as stress if it threatens the biological integrity of the organism. However, a certain degree of stress is supposed to be essential for optimal functioning of the human being. This is called as "Eustress". But when more, it becomes Distress and starts producing bad effects on the body which results in a disease (Fig. 34i). The sequence of

events which may occur in the mediation of the effects of stimuli or psycho social stressors are as shown in (Fig. 34ii). These stimuli give rise to bodily



(i)



(ii)

Fig.-34

changes involving Hypothalmo-pituitary Adrenal axis and thereby produces a variety of biochemical and physiological changes which are responsible for producing a disease. Whenever there is a threat to life one has greatest stress and as a result the whole body goes into action for vigorous activity. This Fight or Flight reaction has been demonstrated in experimental animals. However, in human beings things are different. In this age of civilisation, during a state of stress human beings do not show signs of Fight or Flight (run) but keep on gritting their teeth, keep brooding on the situation and get psychologically upset. Moreover, it varies from person to person. Some people thrive on stress. They are the type who get pleasure in climbing on the mountains, or enjoying surfing, enjoy skiing etc. Whereas others are those who are very sensitive, cannot undertake adventurous activities. They cannot face criticism, cannot face failures in business and profession or other problems of life and surrender to the situation. Generally when we use the terms stresses and strains of life it means something which distorts our comfortable way of living. In biological terminology stress means a life situation or problem which threatens the

Urinary vanyl mandelic acid
(VMA) of group-I subjects after
sahaja yoga training at
4, 8 and 12 weeks

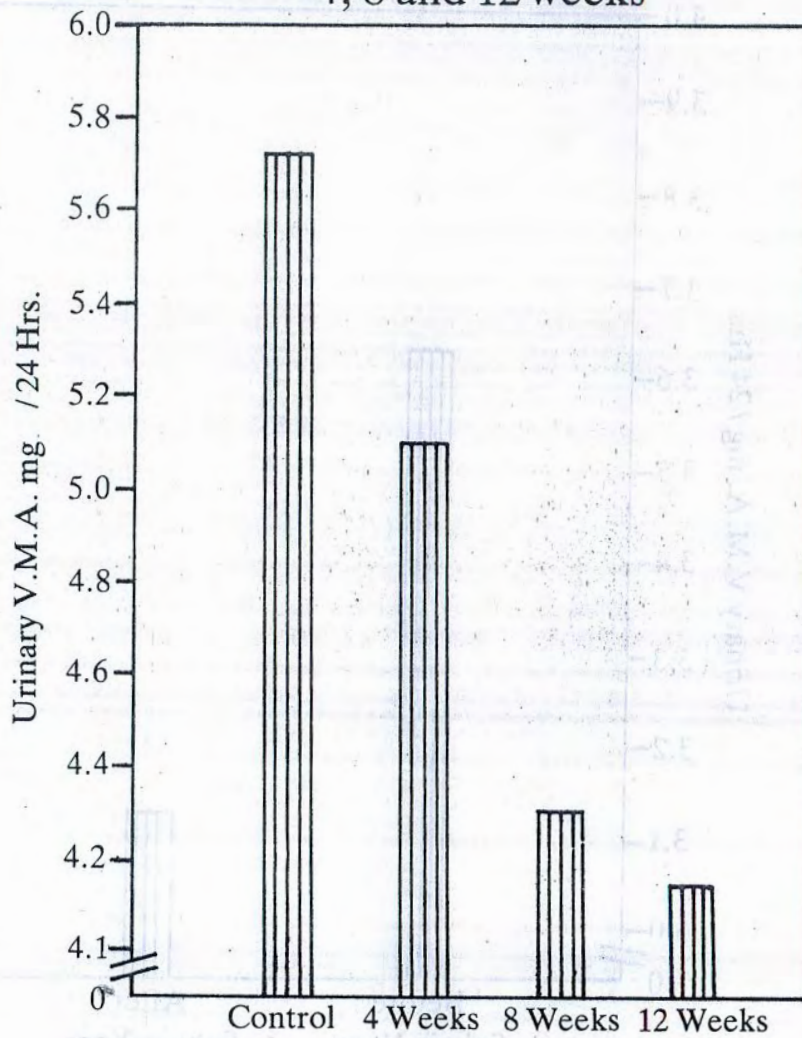


Fig.-35

Urinary vanil mandelic acid
(VMA) of group II subjects
before and after sahaja yoga

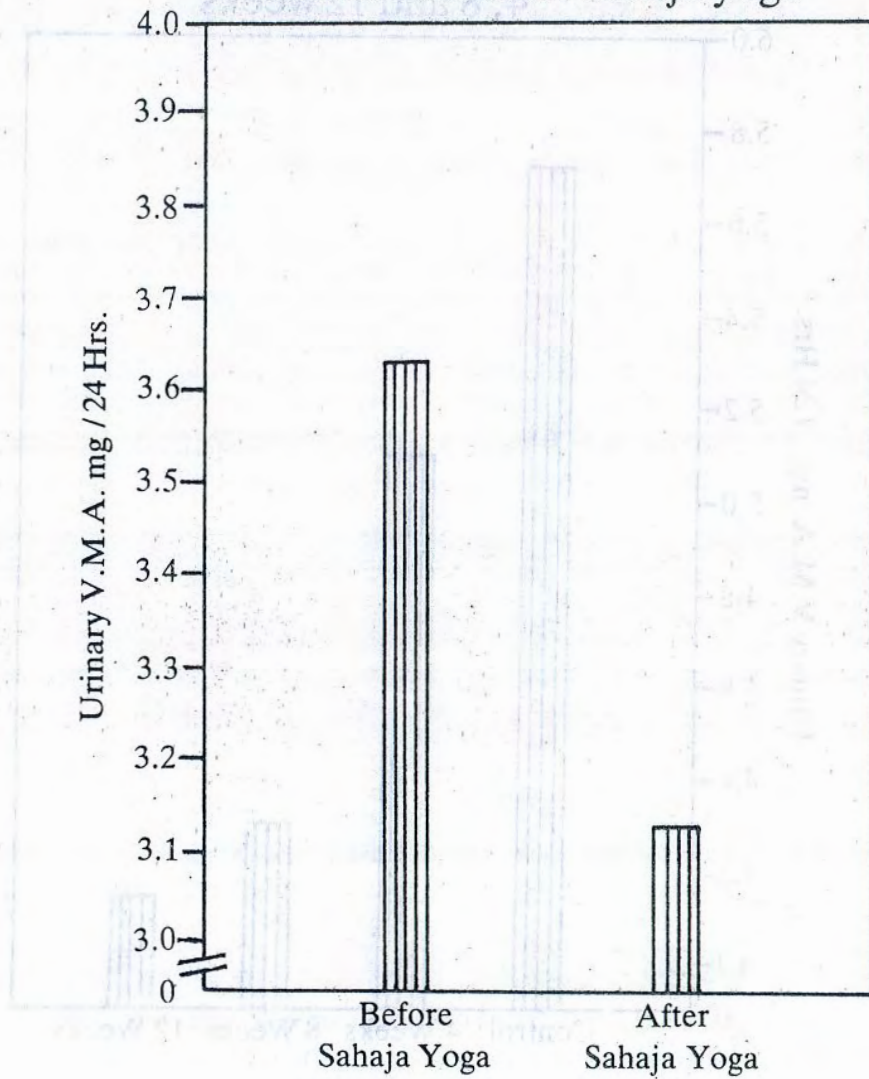


Fig.-36

Blood lactic acid of group-I subjects
after sahaja yoga training at
4, 8 and 12 weeks

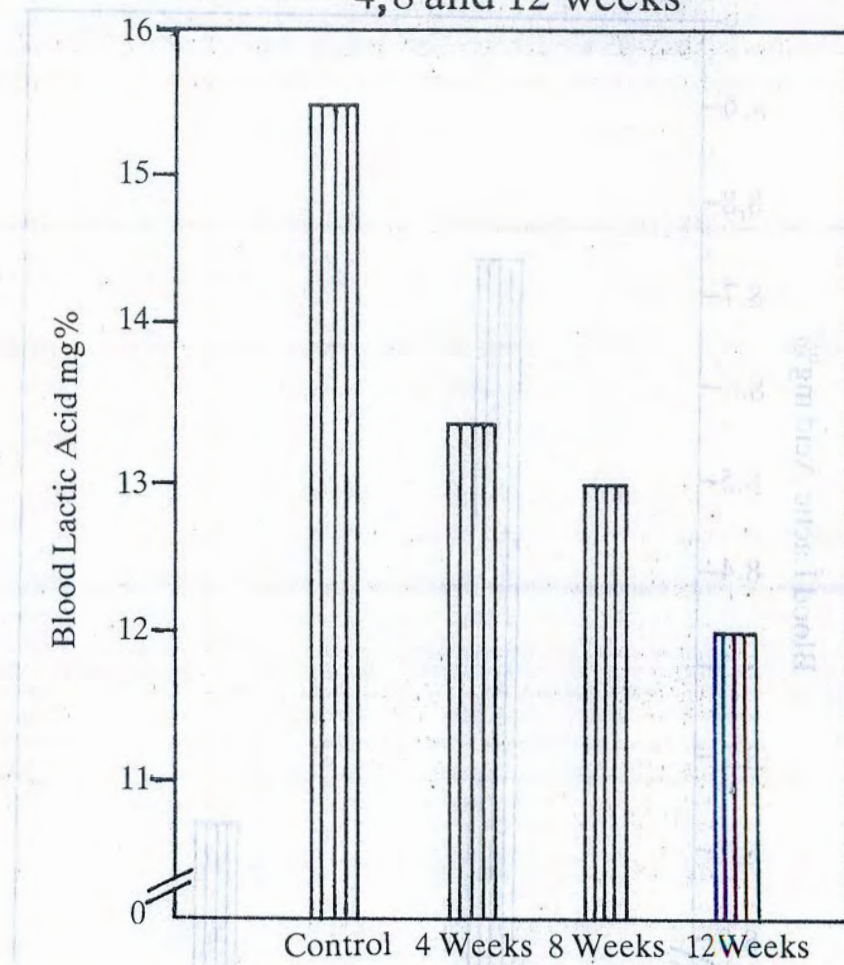


Fig.-37

Blood lactic acid of Group-II subjects before and after sahaja yoga

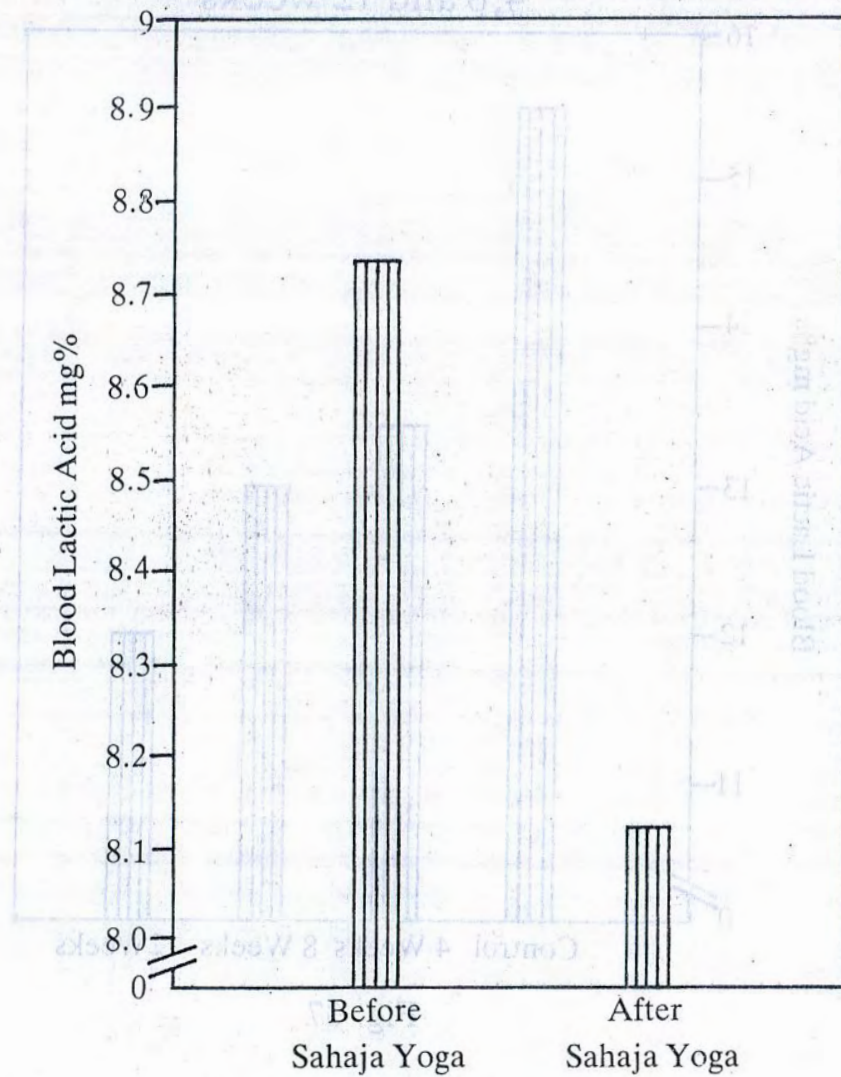


Fig.-38

Heart rate of group-I subjects after sahaja yoga training

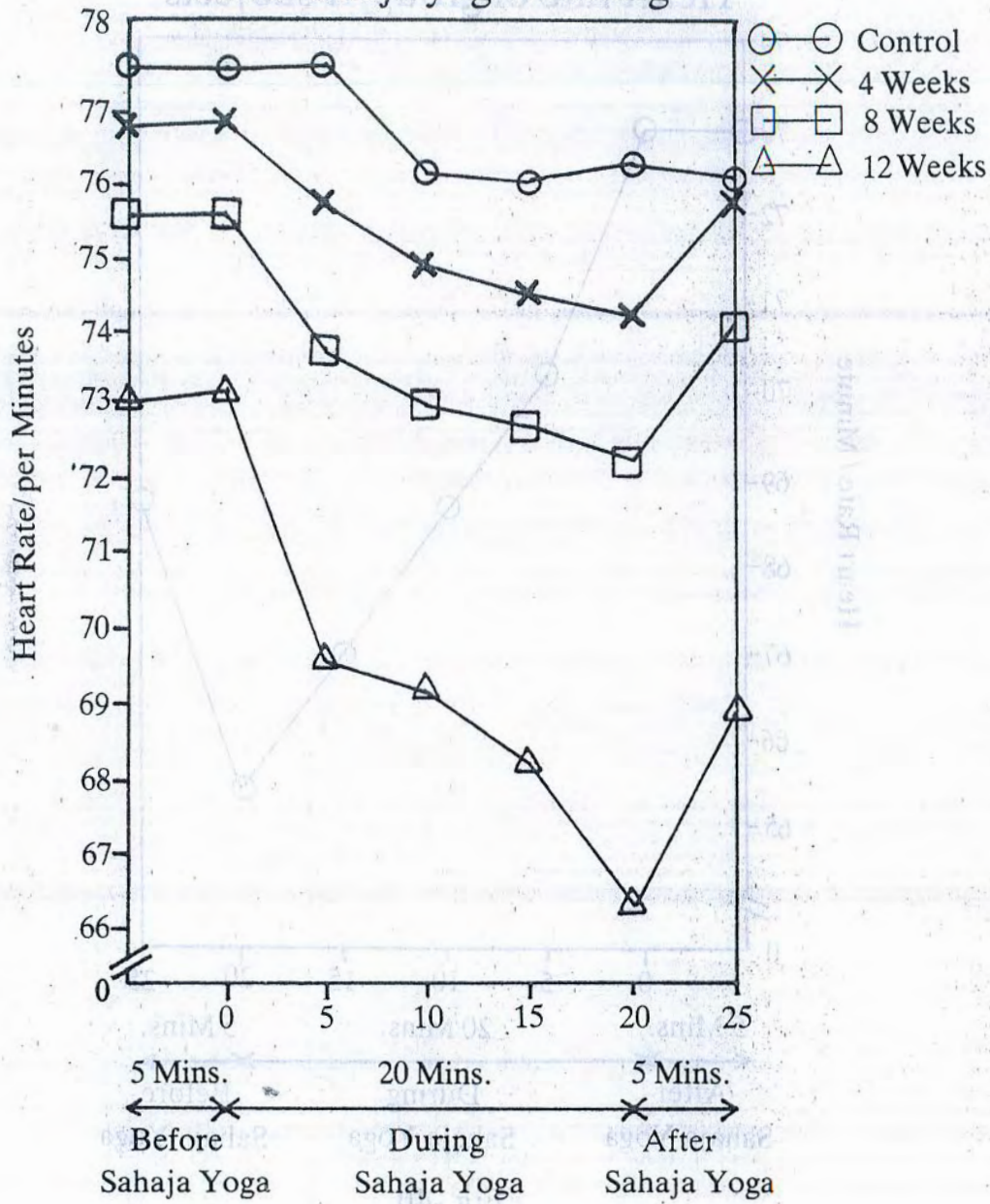


Fig.-39

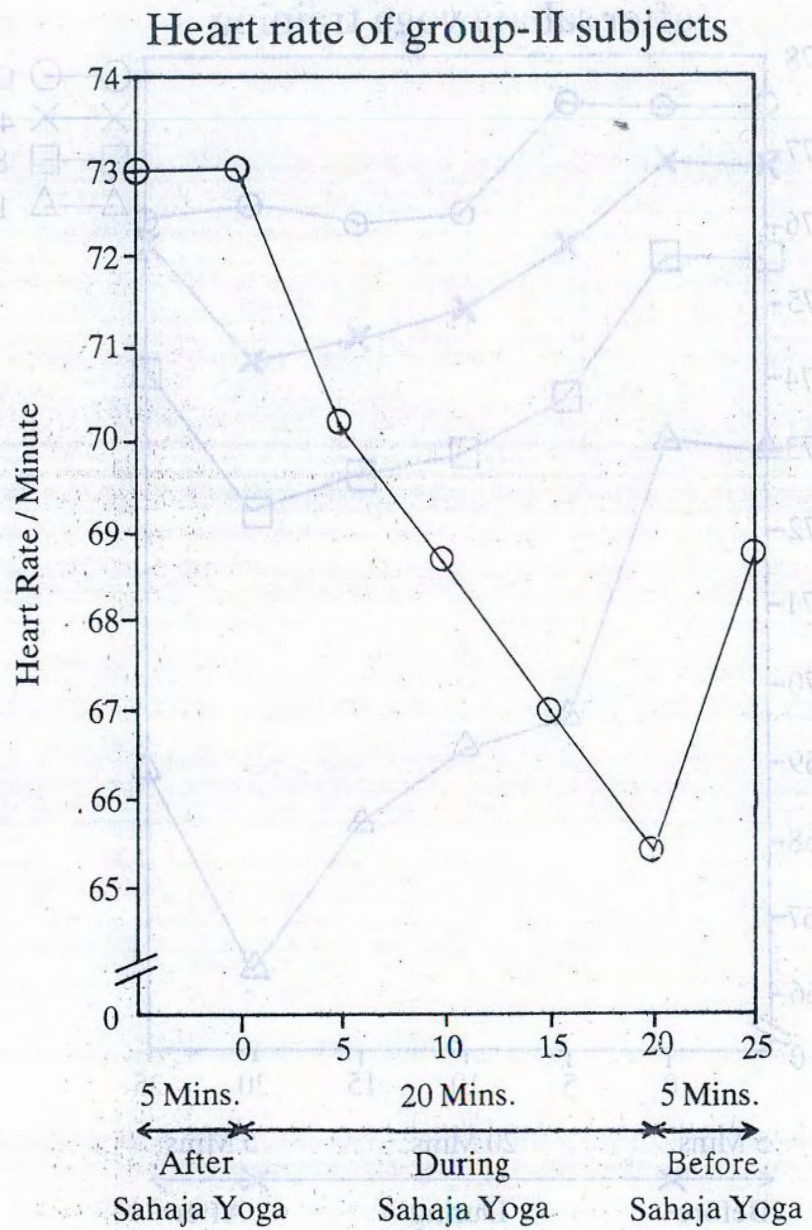


Fig.-40

normal functioning of the body and disturbs the milieu-interior i.e. internal environment.

The common stressful situations could be death of spouse, divorce, personal injury or illness, quarrel with the boss, retirement, sex difficulties, violation of law, taxation notice, marital discord, service termination and changing to different types of work. These stressful situations produce symptoms in human beings which in general could be: Biting of nails, clenching of fist while sitting, furrows over forehead, bad temper, grumbling all the time, irritation on small matters, inability to concentrate, insomnia, drinking and smoking may increase, tight hunched shoulders, hair twirling, ankle bending or tapping, coiled legs, a gripped thumb, arms folded tightly and abdomen drawn in and clenched teeth.

In case the above symptoms and signs are present then it means that the person is in stress. Acute external stress causes anxiety and leads to anxiety disorders in an individual. Earlier all the anxiety disorders were grouped together as Anxiety Neurosis but now with the advancement in medical science it is recognized that a number of distinct clinical syndromes exist under Anxiety Neurosis. They could be panic-disorders, general anxiety disorders, obsessive compulsive disorder or post traumatic stress disorder². The second group consists of phobic disorders. In Acrophobia one is afraid of travelling in an aeroplane or lift. In Social phobias, one is afraid of going to a public place and avoids social get-togethers. Further, now there is enough circumstantial evidence that psychological stress plays an important role in the causation of Essential Hypertension (High BP) which is one of the most important public health problems in developed and developing countries. Recently, it has been reported that emotional stress and anxiety can precipitate overt Ischaemic heart disease and cause sudden death (Harrison). Besides this, the role of stress has been emphasized in the genesis of cancer, migraine, Ischaemic heart disease, Myocardial Infarction, Duodenal Ulcer, Bronchial Asthma, Allergic Rhinitis, Anorexia nervosa, Achlasia Cardia, Neural Dermatitis and anxiety disorders. However, recent definition of stress explains the concept in terms of a person's perception of a particular happening. What is stressful to one person may not be stressful to another.

David Ornstein & David Sobel³ described that "the way we perceive and appraise the event, the availability and use of resources to cope with the challenge have more to do with the outcome than the raw event itself". Stress and its negative aspect on health emanate from a mis-match between perceived environmental demands and perceived resources to adapt.

Stress Researcher, Milton Kaplan⁴ states that stress "is the inability of the individual to obtain meaningful information that his actions are leading

to desired consequences". In other words stress results from the sense that one's action won't achieve the goals. Nowadays stress is being viewed as an inner phenomenon rather than an outer event.

Stress studies show that physiological changes brought about by stress are directly related to people's perception of their control over the situation. When people believe that their action will have effect on a situation they do not feel helpless as compared to people who believe their action will bring no results. The effect of the helplessness on health has been shown on rats. Two groups of mice were subjected to mild shocks. One of the groups had a device to stop the shock by pressing a lever in the cage, whereas the other group had no means of controlling the shock. Both the groups had equal number of shocks. Tumors introduced onto mice grew much rapidly in the group of mice which had no device to control the shocks, than the other group which had a device (support). Decreased immune function was found in rats with no device to control shocks whereas the other group had normal immune function.

In view of this by changing the perception of stressful events one is less likely to become ill and more likely to heal. NUCKOLLS⁵ study on pregnant women and complications of pregnancy found that among the two groups the one with support and intimacy had lower rates of complications. Actually, people perceive events, as either a challenge or a threat. If they see it as threatening they get stressed. Albert-Bandura⁶, Stanford University Psychologist proposed on the basis of his study that through education people can have a change of attitude that enables them to have a healthy physiological response, i.e. less catecholamines and normal immune-response.

Suzanne - Kobasa⁷ worked on Business Executives and found that Healthy group was hardy. This hardiness consisted of three components: 1. Controlling ability : This means that one could influence the events taking place around oneself. 2. Commitment to Job/Profession : Involves taking active role in life. A sense of purpose and recognition of one's own value. 3. Capability to face challenge : Viewing change as stimulating rather than threatening. The hardy group approached stressful tasks with a sense of purpose and a belief in their abilities and the importance of the task. When people have positive attitudes and feel support they are more likely to stay well or to heal an illness if they become sick⁸.

It is well known that medical system has no medicine to combat the dreadful effects of stress except tranquilizers, hypnotics and anxiolytic drugs which are quite toxic and are habit forming. Thousands of people all over the world are consuming these drugs which is not a satisfactory long term answer to this problem. Recently bio-feedback and other relaxation

Respiratory rate in group-I subjects sahaja yoga

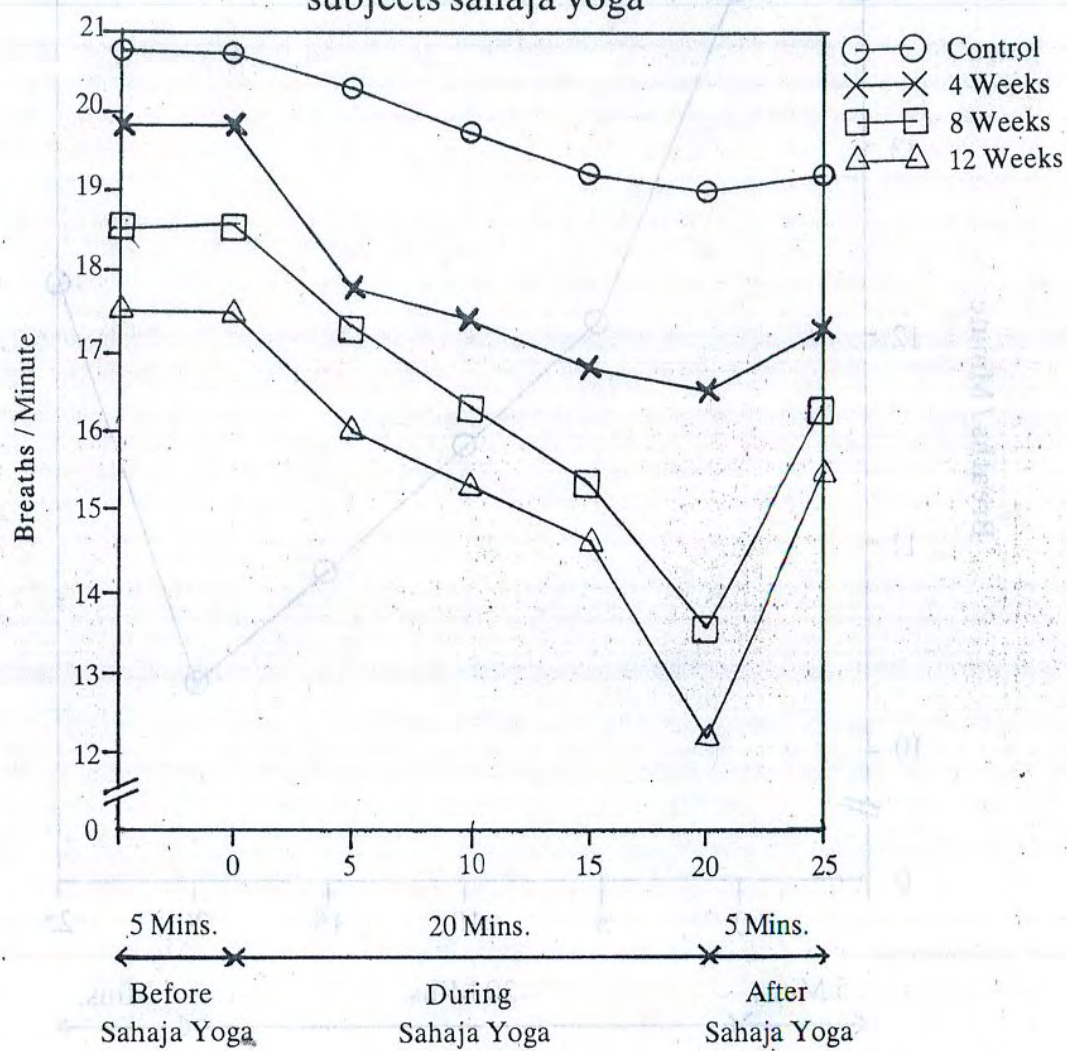


Fig.-41

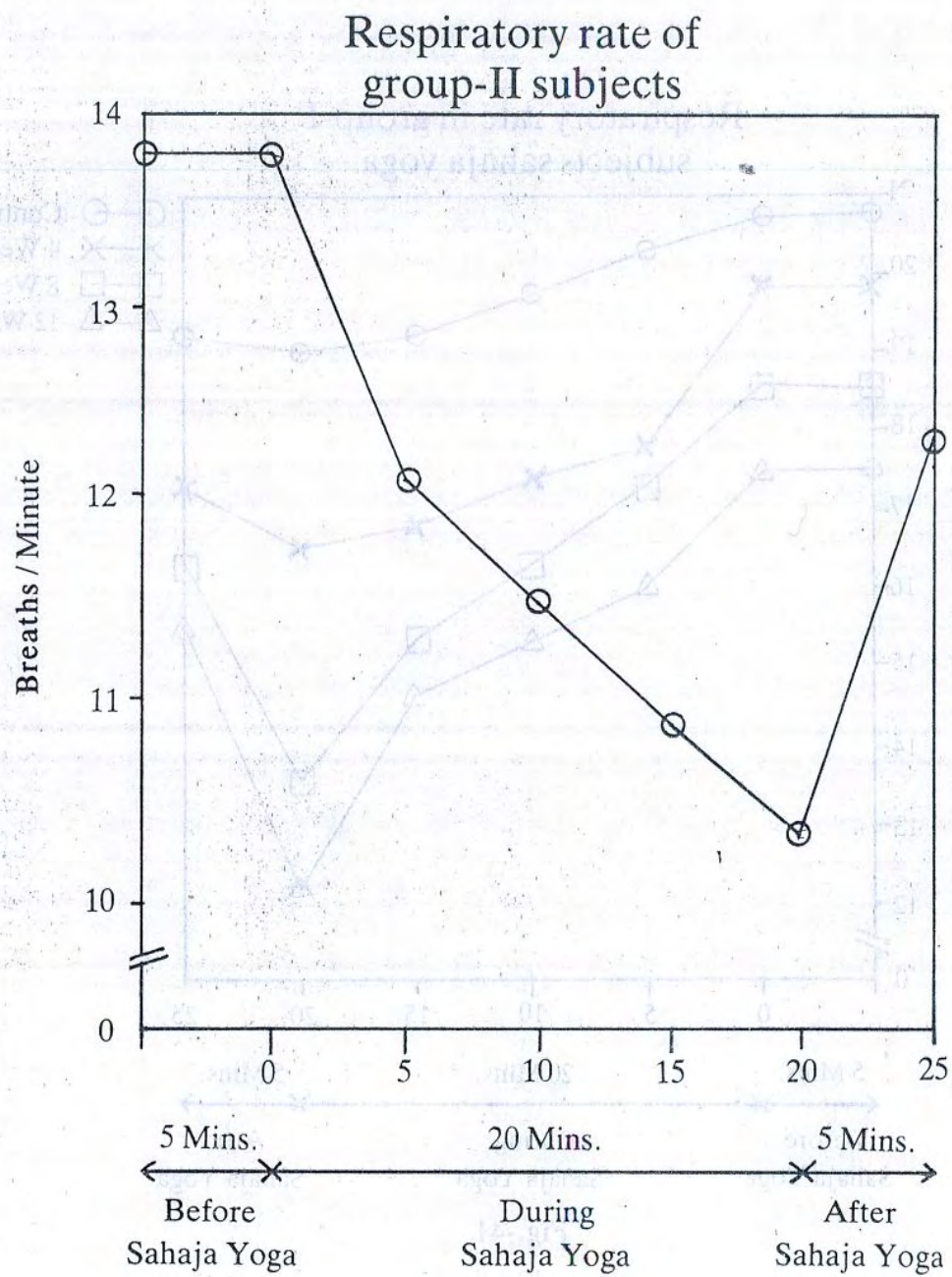


Fig.-42

Blood pressure of group-II subjects

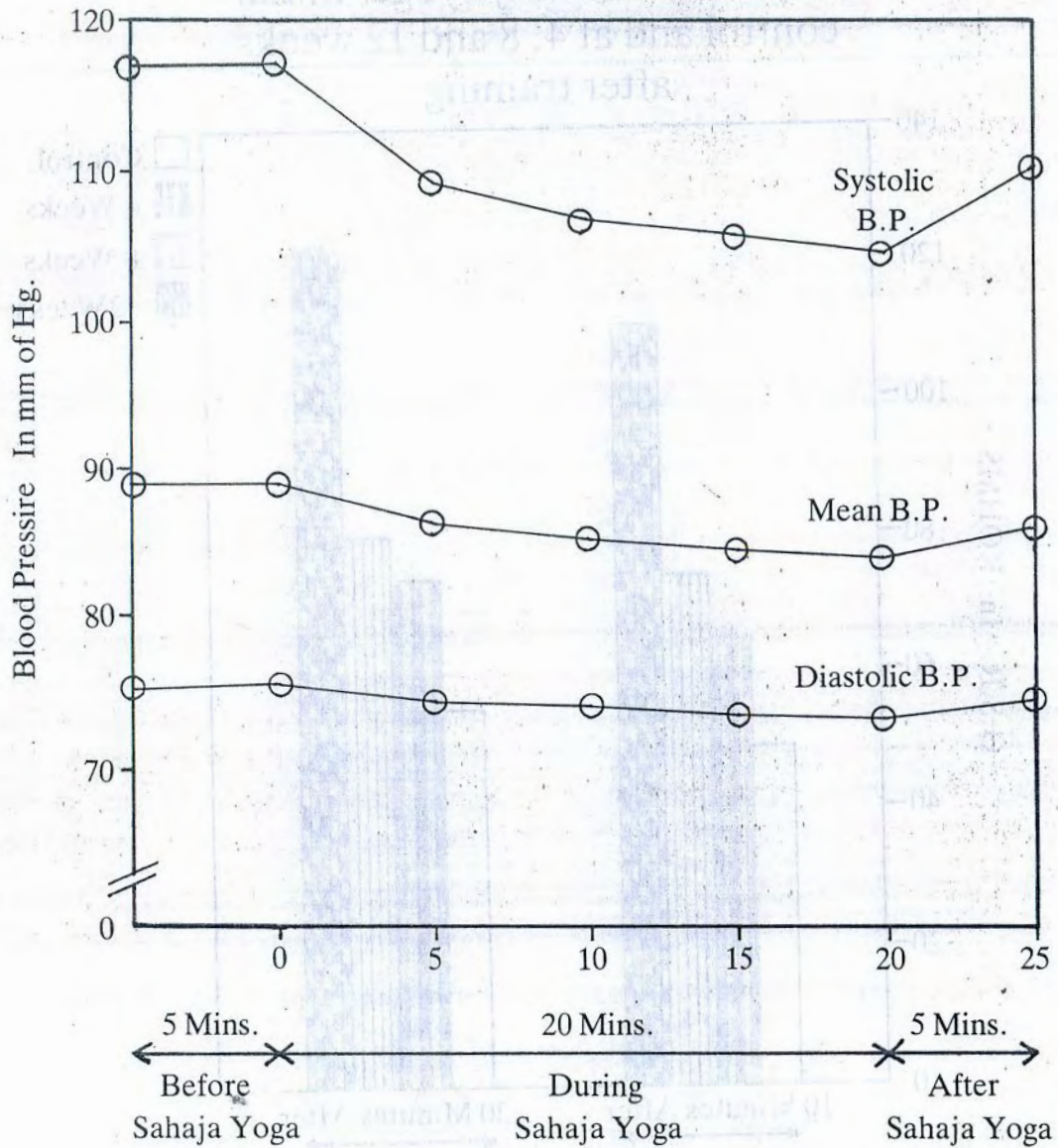


Fig.-45

Galvanic skin resistance of group-I subjects after sahaja yoga. Initial control and at 4, 8 and 12 weeks after training

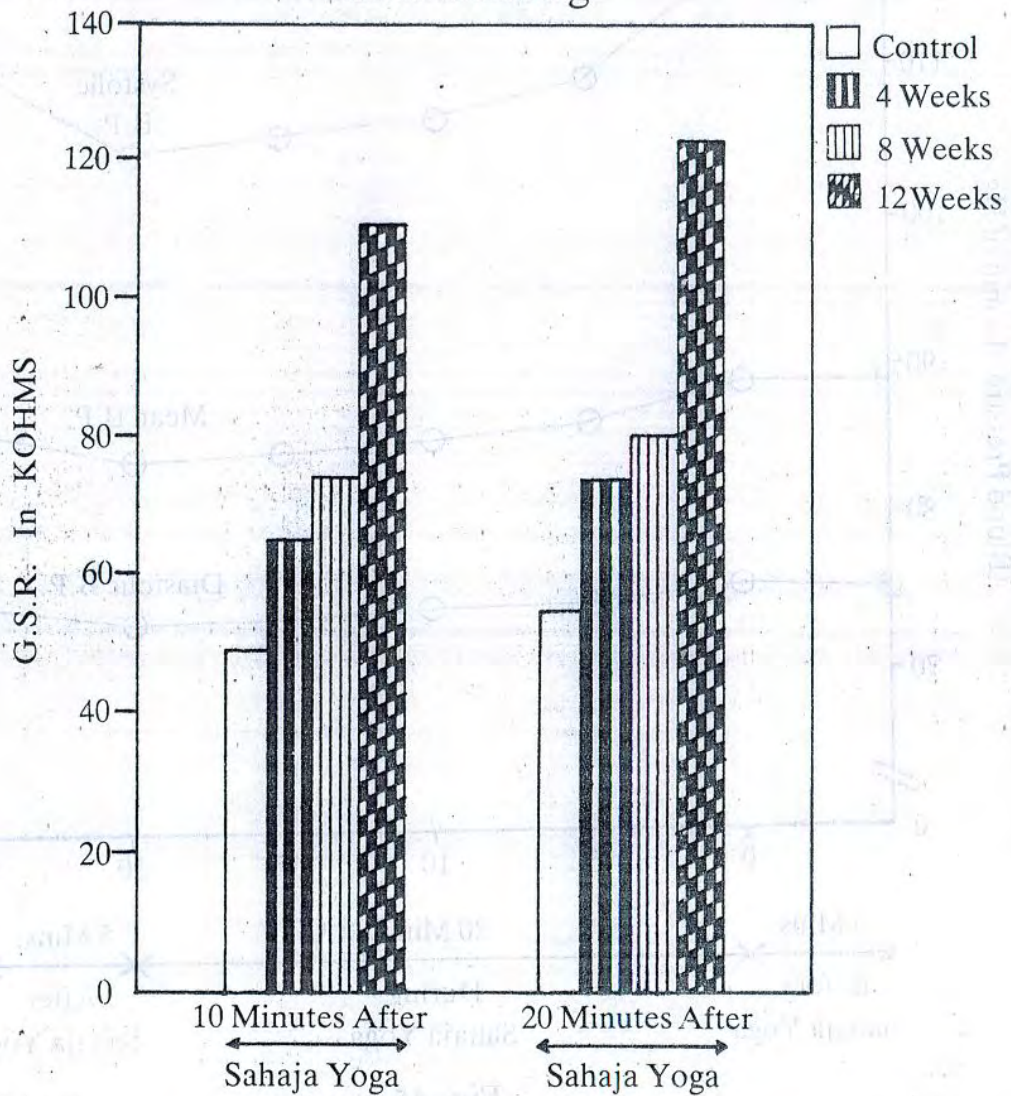


Fig.- 46

methods have been tried in the west.

The research work on the effects of Sahaja Yoga done in the Departments of Physiology and Medicine which has already been described in detail has conclusively proved its usefulness in modulating the activity of Autonomic Nervous System. On the basis of experiments on human beings it has been observed that if one practises Sahaja Yoga for 20 minutes daily for 16 weeks then change could be seen in the blood chemistry, urine examination, ECG, EEG (Electro-encephalography), respiratory rate and GSR (Galvanic Skin Resistance). All these parameters mentioned above are the ones by which one could get an idea about the activity of the Autonomic Nervous System (i.e. Sympathetic and Para sympathetic). We know that during psychological stress the Sympathetic nervous system gets over-activated and as a result greater production of adrenaline⁹ takes place in the body which is responsible for increase in Heart Rate (HR), high blood pressure, high respiratory Rate, i.e. dyspnoea and decreased galvanic skin resistance. EEG also shows a disturbed mind because of increase in Beta activity and decrease in Alpha waves. In the experiments done on human beings exposed to normal stress and strain of modern life (Group I), it has been found that after twelve weeks of Sahaja Yoga practice there is statistically significant decreased production of adrenaline as is evident from decrease in urinary V.M.A. (Fig. 35 & 36), decrease in heart rate (Fig. 39 & 40), decrease in blood pressure (Fig. 43 to 45), decrease in blood lactic acid (Fig. 37 & 38) and increase of galvanic skin resistance¹⁰ (Fig. 46 & 47). All this conclusively proves that by Sahaja Yoga practice in twelve weeks one is able to attain a stage of profound physical and mental relaxation.

In the second group of human beings who have been practising Sahaja Yoga for two to four years, and have been exposed to psychological stress and day-to-day strain of daily life in cosmopolitan cities, the above parameters were studied to find out if the effect of day-to-day stress has produced any effect on these subjects. On the analysis of the heart rate from the Electrocardiogram (ECG), urinary VMA, blood lactic acid and respiratory rate data it was found that the basal values of the above parameters of this group of subjects were lower as compared to the control values of the untrained group I of human beings (Fig. 36, 38, 40 & 42).

This shows clearly that the sensitivity to stress significantly decreases in the subjects who practised Sahaja Yoga for two to four years^{9 to 11}. They develop positive attitudes. As the control value of urinary VMA decreases significantly, blood lactic acid decreases, blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate remains at the optimum level of functioning, Alpha index increases in the EEG recordings. With this one could deduce that most probably the perception to stress also dramatically changes after Sahaja

Galvanic skin resistance in
group-II subjects (sahaja yogis).
Initial control and at 10 and 20 min.
After sahaja yoga meditation

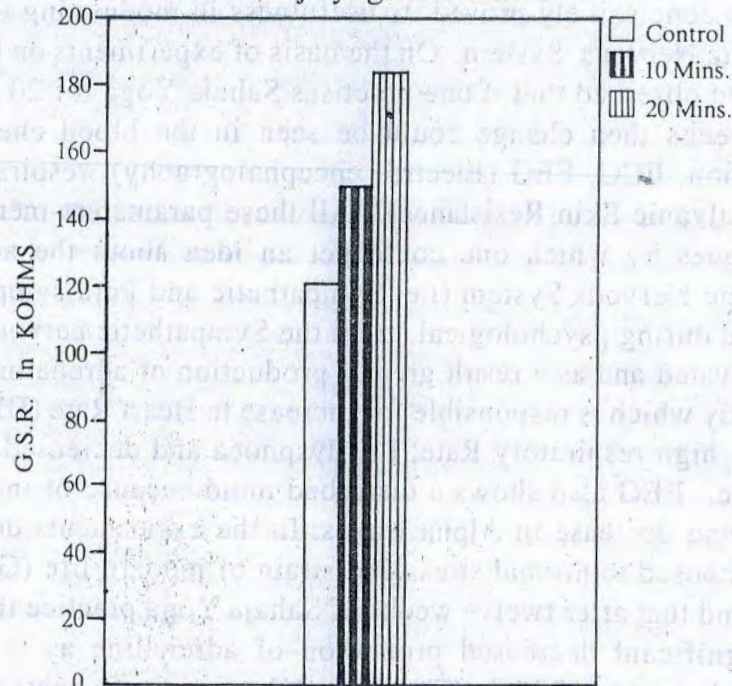


Fig.-47

Yoga because of Self Realisation. In other words the way of looking at things changes, one becomes a witness, completely detached and that is the reason why psychological stress or day-to-day stress of life did not produce any effect on these subjects.

Recently research study done on hypertensive patients¹¹ in a hospital showed conclusively that the patients who had anti hypertensive drugs and also practised Sahaja Yoga were cured within 12 to 16 weeks whereas the other group of hypertensives who had only drugs did not show significant improvement in their blood pressure. It has been argued that Sahaja Yoga practice decreases the production of Adrenaline and blood lactate concentration and that is the reason why blood pressure comes down to normal level in the group of patients who practised Sahaja Yoga as well. These results are corroborated by the studies of Kunovaska.

Kunovaska¹² et al published the data of their experimentation and have shown that the increased sympatho adrenal medullary activity was one of the main factors in the development of essential hypertension (High BP). In view of this, the decrease in sympathetic and increase in para-sympathetic activity in the study described above, could be one of the important factors

for lowering blood pressure and heart.

It is concluded that Sahaja Yoga practice produces significant physiological changes in both Group I and Group II by bringing about an equilibrium between sympathetic and para sympathetic responses⁹. It knocks down the over-active sympathetic dominance which is usually seen in situations of stress. It helps the individual to develop positive attitudes and the ability for correct perception. Thus Sahaja Yoga if practised every day for even 15 to 20 minutes a day would be ideal for the management of stress without any drugs¹⁰.

V Taming the Brain Storm : Role of Sahaja Yoga in the Treatment of Epilepsy

Brain storm usually occurs due to abnormalities in the electrical activity of the brain. They are common mental disorders known as Epilepsy and are estimated to affect 0.2 to 5% of the population even in the developed countries like USA. Each episode of neurological dysfunction is called a seizure. These may be convulsive. The patient usually falls and the muscles go into a tonic spasm. Hands are clenched, the back is rigid and legs are extended. After a minute, clonic movements involve the whole body and sometimes exhibit great violence, consisting of rapid extension and flexion of limbs. One gets the impression as if some storm in the brain has occurred which is responsible for this condition. The tongue or lower lip is often bitten. Such a condition is followed by flaccid coma and the reflexes get diminished or abolished. Soon after the reflexes become normal again. On waking the patient has no recollection of the attack. The primary generalized seizures Tonic and Clonic type have been called as Grand Mal Epilepsy. Epilepsy can be acquired as a result of brain injury and also occurs in an idiopathic form in an individual with no history of injury or any other neurologic dysfunction.

Electro-encephalography (EEG) shows low voltage fast activity (10 Hz. or more) during tonic phase which converts to slower, larger and sharp waves. Whereas during clonic phase one finds bursts of sharp waves associated with rhythmic muscular contraction and slow waves with pauses. Often muscular activity causes artifacts. EEG is usually abnormal with polyspike and wave or occasionally slow and sharp wave discharges. Treatment with anti-epileptic drugs is prolonged and has its own limitations. It has been estimated that approximately one-third of epileptic children on medication become seizure free, one third show a partial reduction in seizures and one third remain unchanged (Rodin 1972)¹. Prolonged medication is also known to produce several undesirable side effects (Engel 1989)².

Psychological stress is known to be an important factor in the precipitation of seizure. However, a moderate degree of anxiety may keep the patient alert. Stress disorders are common in Epileptics and more common than in general population (Gudmundson 1966)³. Epilepsy when started in early life impairs the learning of coping responses to stress. Secondly Anti-epileptic drugs also impair learning and interferes with normal responses. In the light of above considerations, behavioural methods are gaining importance as adjuncts to pharmacological treatment. Techniques of bio-feedback, relaxation and desensitization are being tried in order to control seizures in epileptics (Cott et al 1979)⁴ and Dhal et al (1988)⁵.

Experimental Epilepsy

One of the most common methods of the production of Epilepsy in experimental animals is to block the inhibitory neurotransmitters. It is well known to medical scientists that Gama Amino Butyric Acid (GABA) is an inhibitory Neurotransmitter; if it is blocked by some drugs or chemicals then convulsions occur in the experimental animal. In view of this it has been suggested that decreased production of GABA may be one of the reasons for imbalance between Excitatory and Inhibitory Neurons which results in Epilepsy. Another important aspect was highlighted by Dr. B. Rammurthy⁶ an eminent Neuro Surgeon of Madras (India) at the Neurophysiology Workshop held at Post Graduate Institute of Basic Medical Sciences, Taramani, Madras. He demonstrated that when Alpha waves of the brain stored in a module were feeded into the Epileptic patients, it had a beneficial effect.

In the light of these medical researches the basic question is to achieve a balance between two types of neurotransmitters or to increase the alpha activity in the brain. Sahaja Yoga practice awakens Kundalini Shakti to bring about Self-Realisation in an individual. In this situation alpha activity has been found to increase in an individual. In view of this it was postulated that Sahaja Yoga practice could be helpful in the treatment of Epilepsy.

With this idea in mind a research project on the role of Sahaja Yoga in the Management of Epilepsy was planned in the Department of Physiology and Medicine, Lady Hardinge Medical College, New Delhi, and Defence Institute of Physiology and Allied Sciences, Delhi. Usha Dudani et al^{7,7a} have communicated the effects of the above study which are as mentioned below.

The study was done on patients of Epilepsy who were attending the Neurology clinic of the Lady Hardinge Medical College and Associated Sucheta Kriplani Hospital.

Comparison of seizure frequency in group-I, II and III subjects

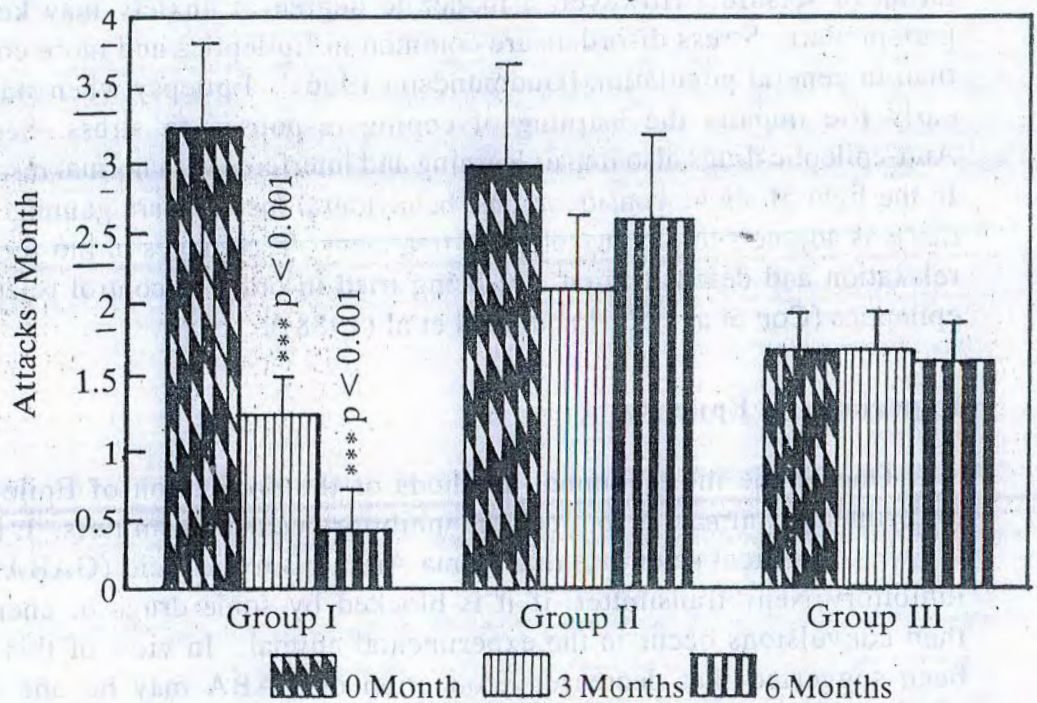


Fig.-48

Comparison of seizure duration in group-I, II and III subjects

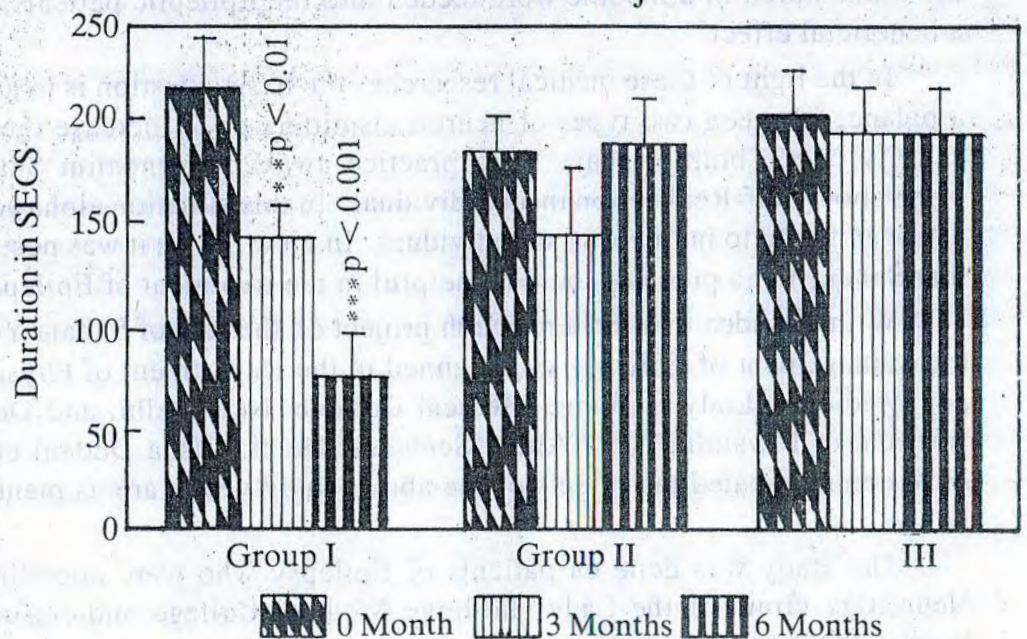


Fig.-49

Methodology

The subjects were divided into three groups:

Group I (n10) comprised of Epileptics who were on anti epileptic drugs and practised Sahaja Yoga for six months.

Group II (n10) comprised of Epileptics who were on anti epileptic drugs and practised postural exercises mimicking Sahaja Yoga for six months.

Group III (n12) comprised of Epileptics who were on anti epileptics but did not do Sahaja Yoga or mimicking exercises for six months.

The parameters recorded were the progress report of the patients which included recording of the frequency and duration of the seizure. The electrophysiological and biochemical parameters comprised of computerised Electro-encephalography (EEG), Brain Stem Auditory Evoked Potential (BAEP), Middle Latency Response (MLR), Visual Contrast Sensitivity (VCS), Galvanic Skin Resistance (GSR), Palmer Skin Temperature (PST), Urinary Vanillyl Mandelic Acid (U-VMA), Blood Lactic Acid (BLA) were also recorded initially, then at three months and six months.

Electro-encephalography is a record of the electrical activity of the brain. BAEP and MLR are the responses of the subject evoked by auditory stimulation. The built-in computer calculated the absolute peak latencies of waves. VCS is the visual response of the subject and a function of the eye-brain recorded at different levels of contrasts. GSR, PST, U-VMA and B-LA indicate the level of sympathetic activity and thereby the level of tension or relaxation of an individual.

Results

The Epileptics practising Sahaja Yoga as per standard technique showed a very remarkable improvement which was also found statistically significant. The seizure frequency and duration of the attack decreased significantly. (Fig.48 & 49) The changes in the electro-physiological and biochemical parameters following Sahaja Yoga practice further supported these observations. It is very well known that 'stress' precipitates seizures in the Epileptics. An epileptic is stressed due to illness he or she suffers from and also on account of its socio-psychological implications.

The medication given to epileptics has its own side effects which further impairs the capability of the patient in coping the daily life situations which for a normal individual does not pose any problem. The regular practice of Sahaja Yoga reduces the stress. This is supported by changes seen in the G.S.R., B-LA and U-VMA (Fig. 50, 51 & 52). The findings

Comparison of galvanic skin resistance (GSR) in group-I, II and III subjects

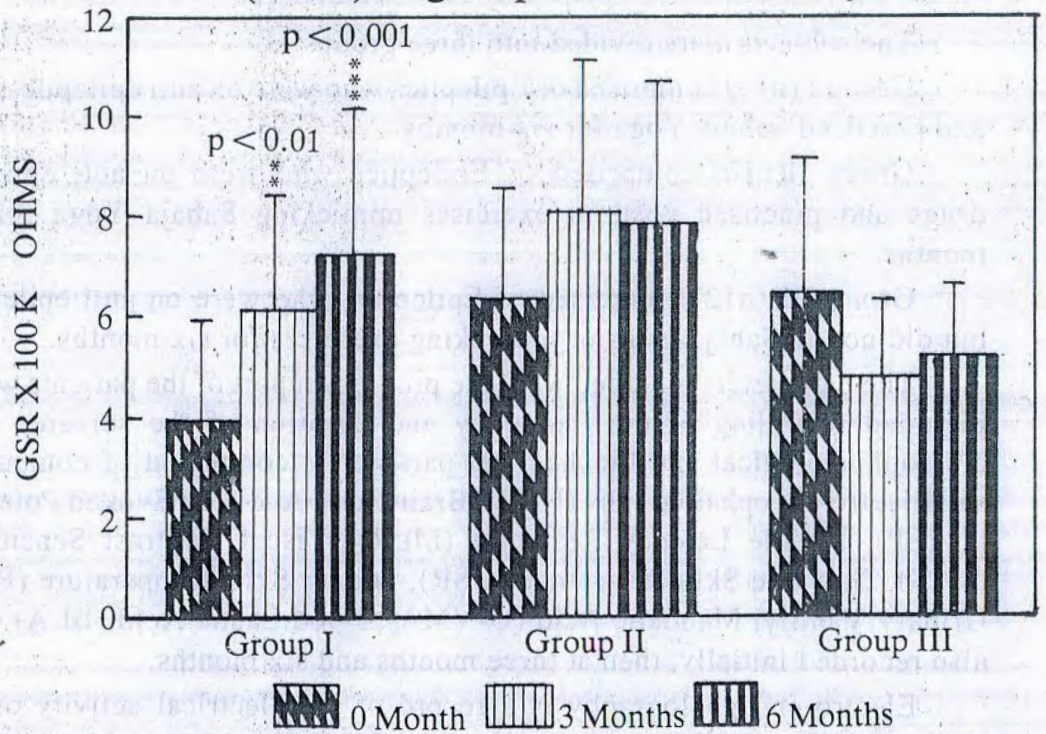


Fig.-50

Comparison of blood lactic acid (B-LA) levels in group-I, II and III subjects

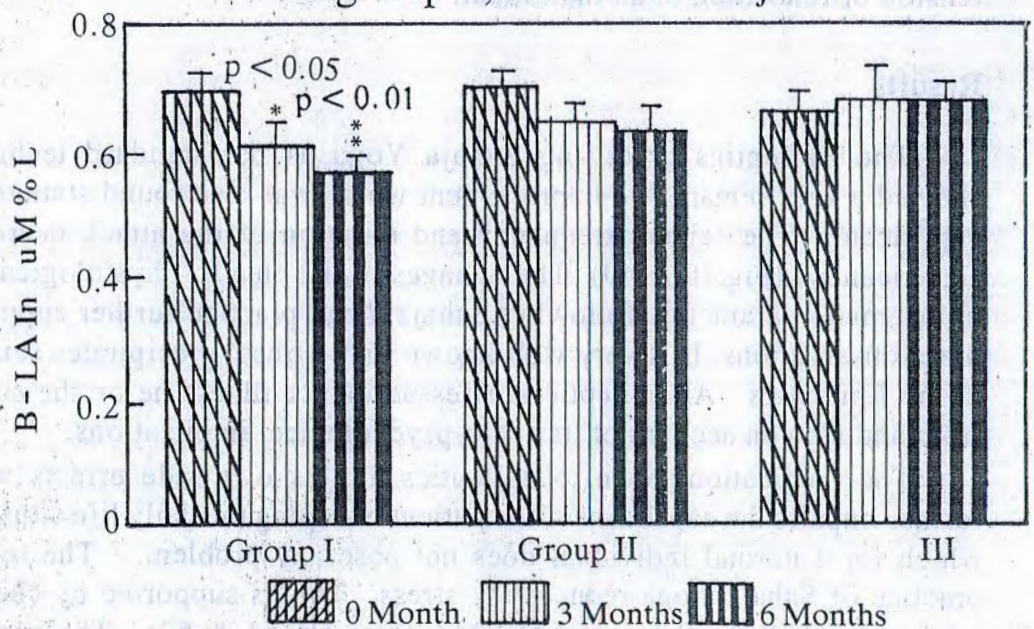


Fig.-51

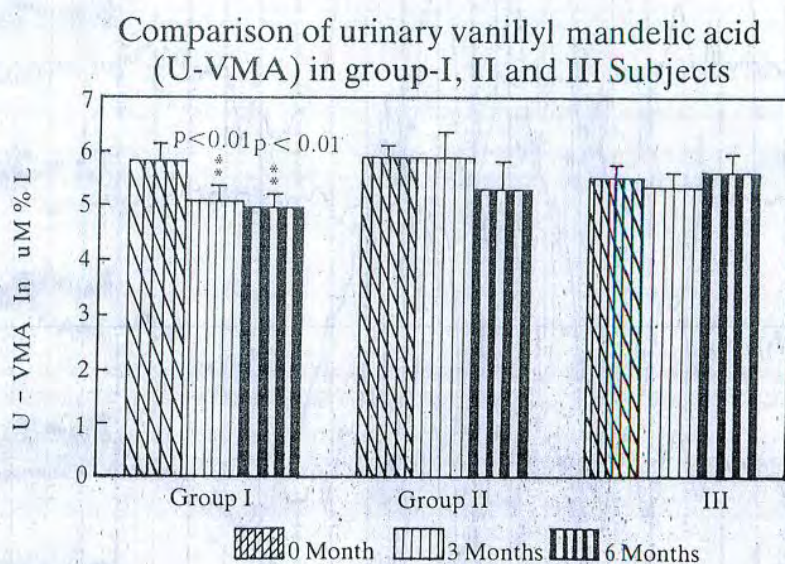
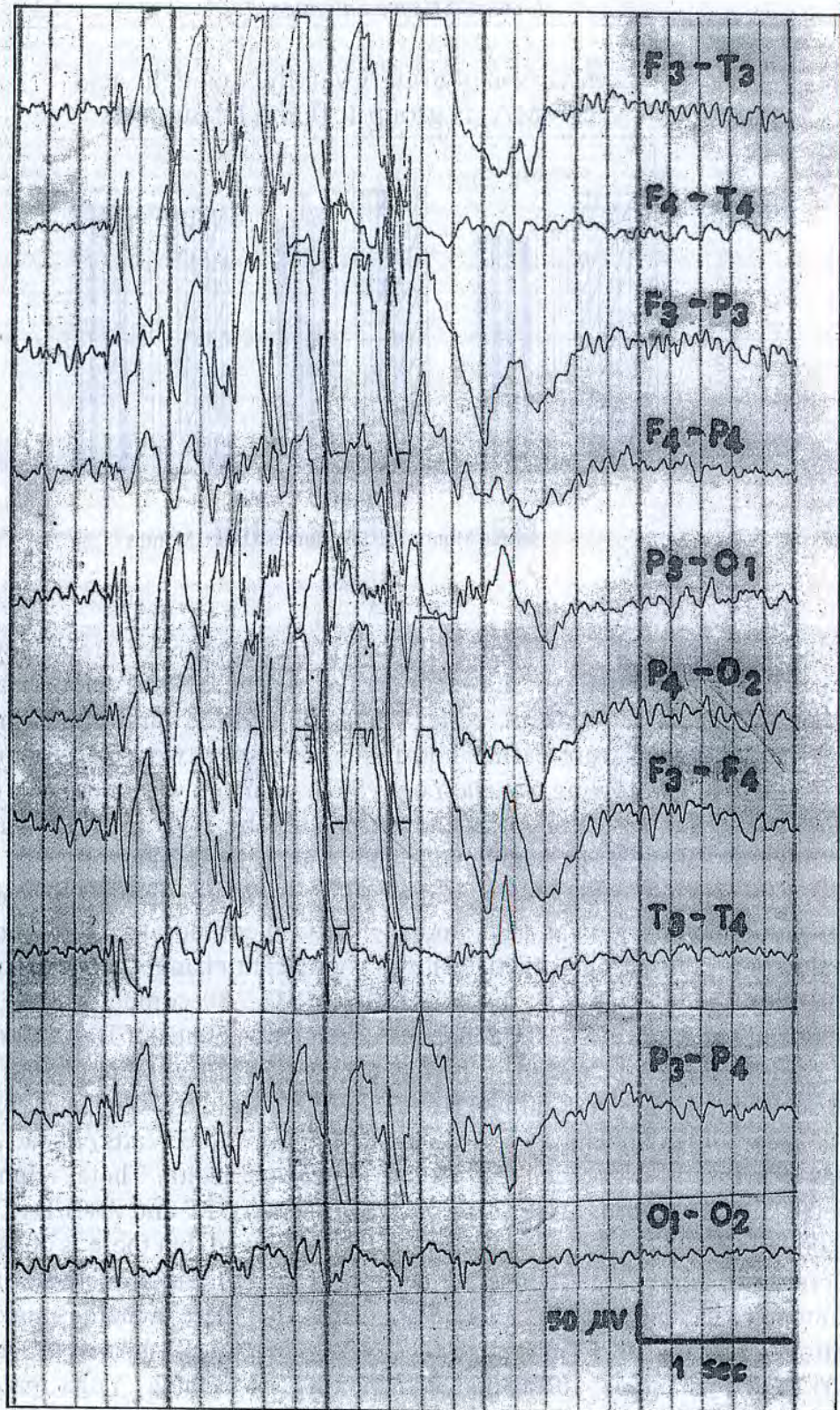


Fig.-52

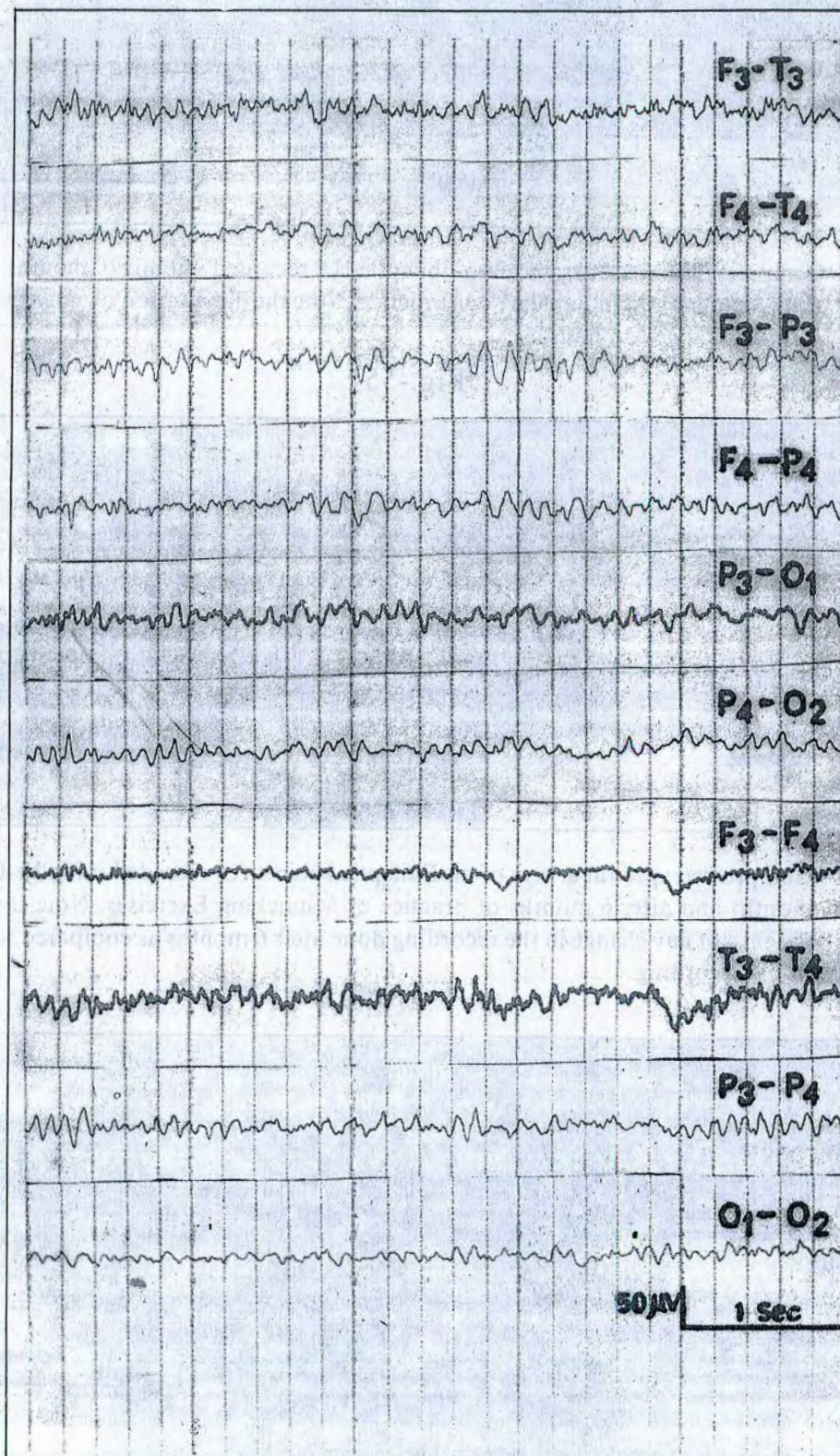
indicate that the patients not only had reduced seizures frequency and seizure duration but also showed positive responses, viz an increase in self-confidence, self-esteem, better adjustment in the family and society. Two patients who were earlier not doing any useful work were gainfully self-employed following Sahaja Yoga. Such changes were not seen in the other two groups of Epileptics indicating thereby that in fact it was the practice of Sahaja Yoga which led to the clinical improvement.

The effect of Sahaja Yoga on the EEG of the Epileptics who were on anti-epileptics drugs was also studied. EEG recorded at 0, three and six months of Sahaja Yoga practice shows significant changes (Fig. 53 to 57). On line analysis was done using Nicolet MED. 80 computer system for frequency and power spectral changes. Frequency bands of Delta (0-4 Hz), Theta (4-7 Hz), Alpha (8 to 13 Hz) and Beta (13-20 Hz) were quantified in 20 seconds epochs for dominant frequency and absolute power in each band. The mean of ten epochs was obtained. The power (pico Watts) in each band was expressed as a percentage of total power (% Delta, Theta, Alpha and Beta) (Fig. 58 to 61). The ratios of A/D, A/T, A/D+T and A+B/D+T were obtained (Fig. 62 to 65). On analysis it was observed that there is consistent increase in percentage Alpha (A) activity (Fig. 60) and a decrease in percentage of Delta (D) waves (Fig. 58). Besides this there is increase in all the ratios in Frontal (F3-F4), Temporal (T3-T4), Parietal (P3-P4), and Occipital (O1 - O2) channels following six months of Sahaja Yoga practice (Fig. 62 to 65). These changes further correlated with the clinical improvement in Group A epileptics.



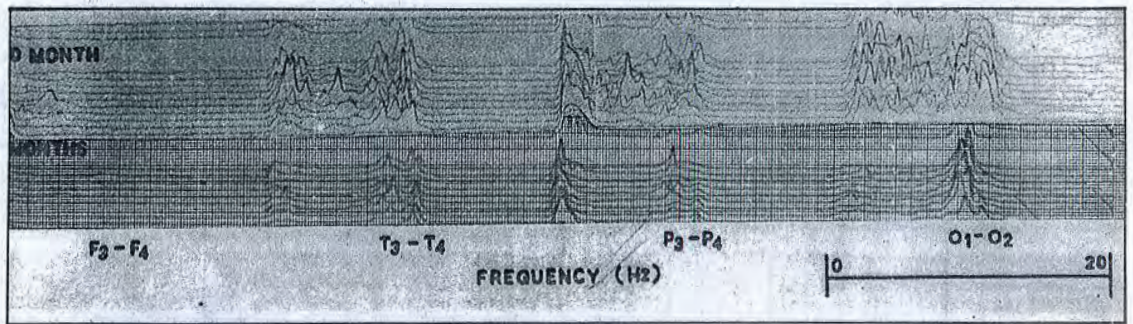
The EEG recording of a subject (Epileptic) RR₂ prior to enrolment into Sahaja Yoga practice. Note the presence of generalised epileptiform discharges.

Fig.-53



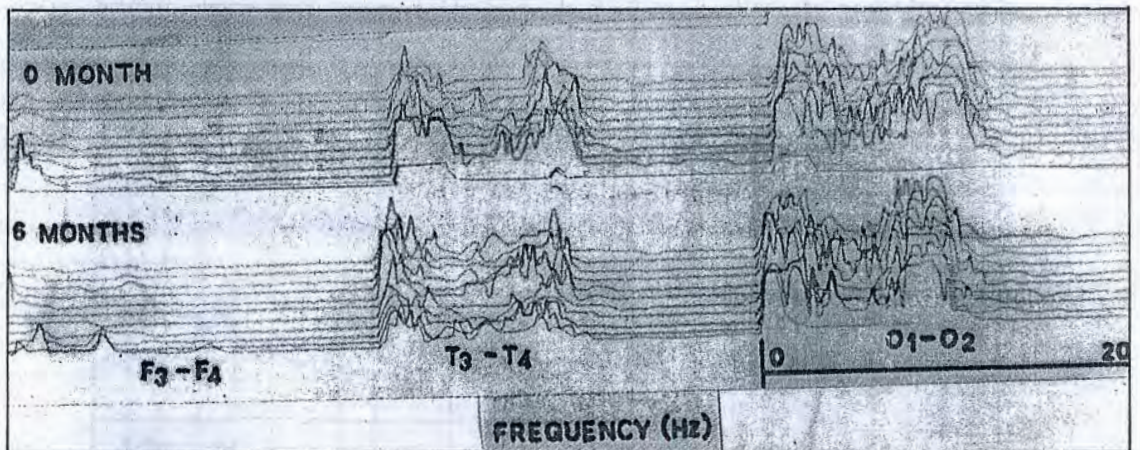
The EEG recording of the subject (Epileptic) RR₂ after six months of Sahaja Yoga practice. Note the absence of Epileptiform discharges.

Fig.-54



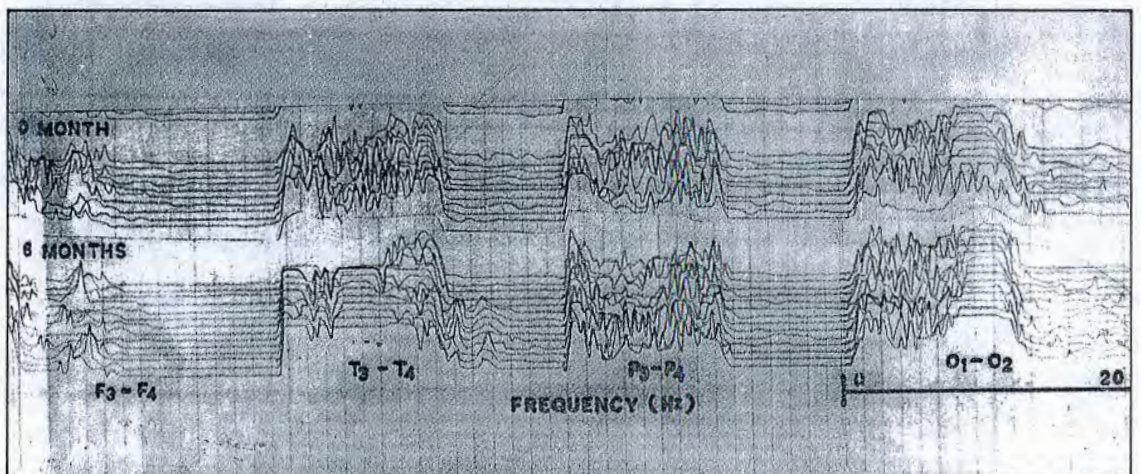
Compressed spectral arrays of an Epileptic HL recorded initially (0 month) and after 6 months of Sahaja Yoga practice. Note the diminution of activity in 0-8 Hz range at 6 months.

Fig.-55



Compressed spectral arrays of an Epileptic subject RJ recorded initially (0 month) and after 6 months of practice of Mimicking Exercises. Note the absence of any change in the recording done after 6 months as compared to initial recording.

Fig.-56



Compressed spectral arrays of a control Epileptic Subject PV recorded initially at (0 month) and 6 months. Note the absence of any change in the recording done after 6 months as compared to the initial recording.

Fig.-57

Comparison of percentage of total EEG power in group-I, II and III subjects

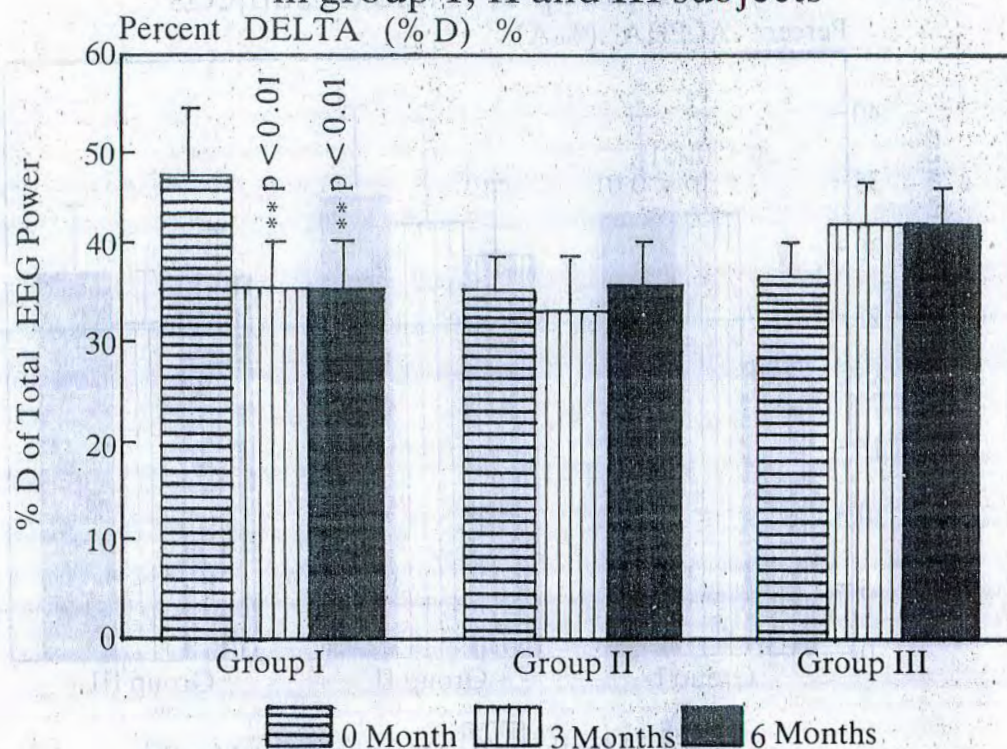


Fig.-58

Comparison of percentage of total EEG power in group-I, II and III subjects

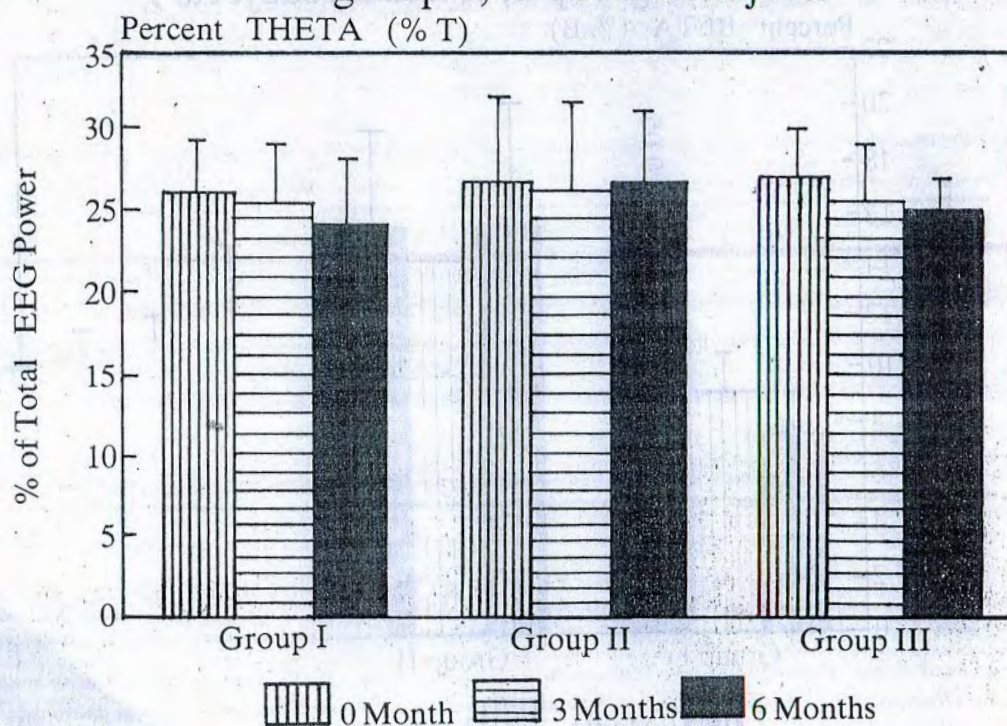


Fig.-59

Comparison of percentage of total EEG power in group-I, II and III subjects

Percent ALPHA (% A)

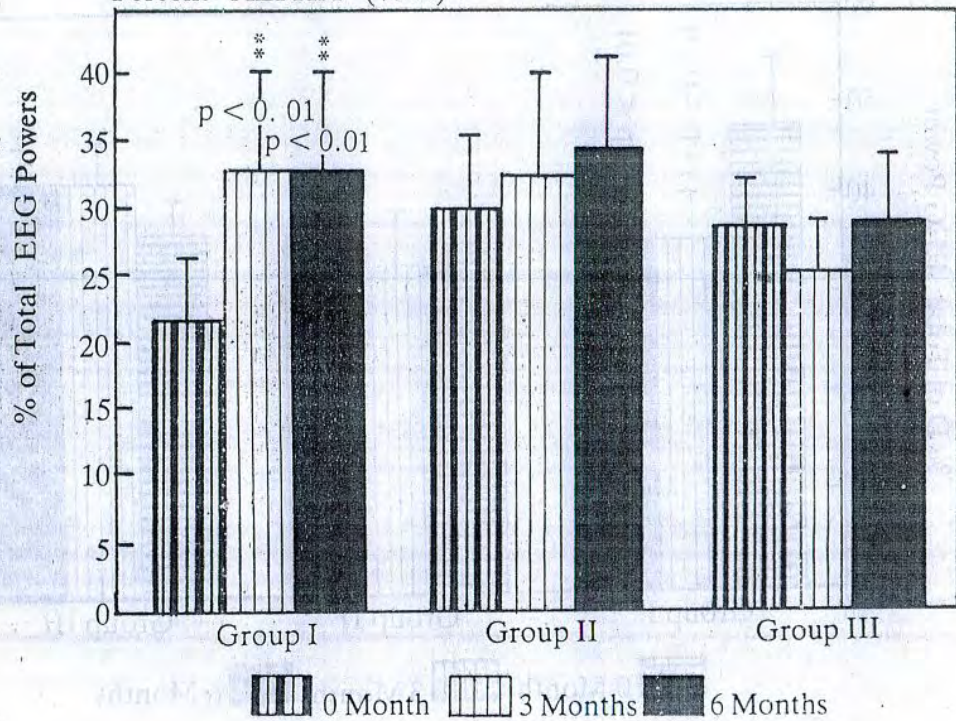


Fig.-60

Comparison of percentage of total EEG power in group-I, II and III subjects

Percent BETA (% B)

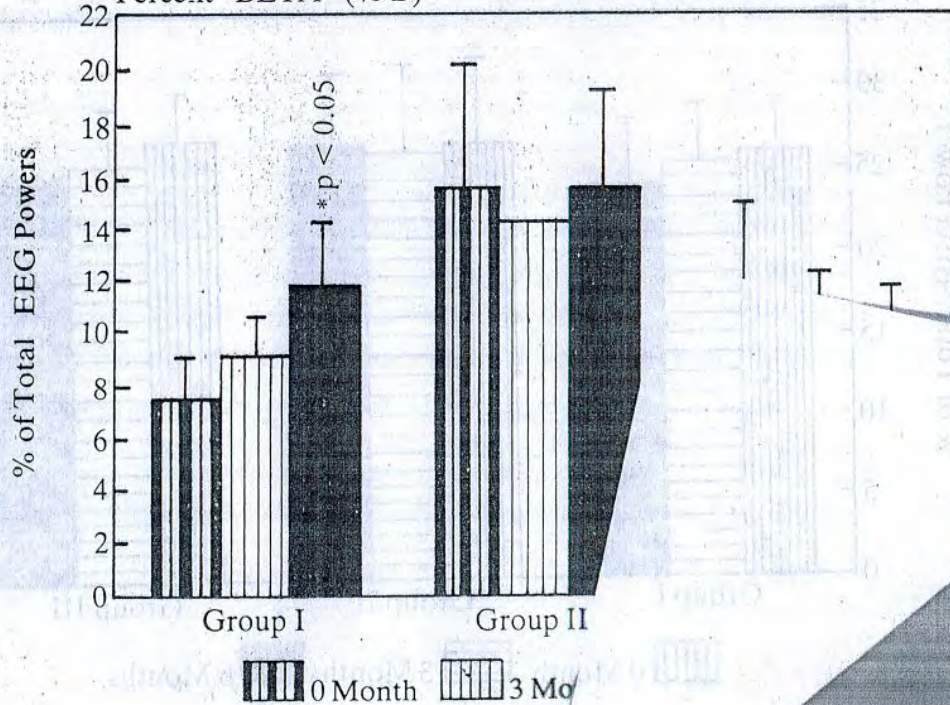


Fig.-6

Comparison of Ratio of absolute EEG powers in group-I, II and III subjects

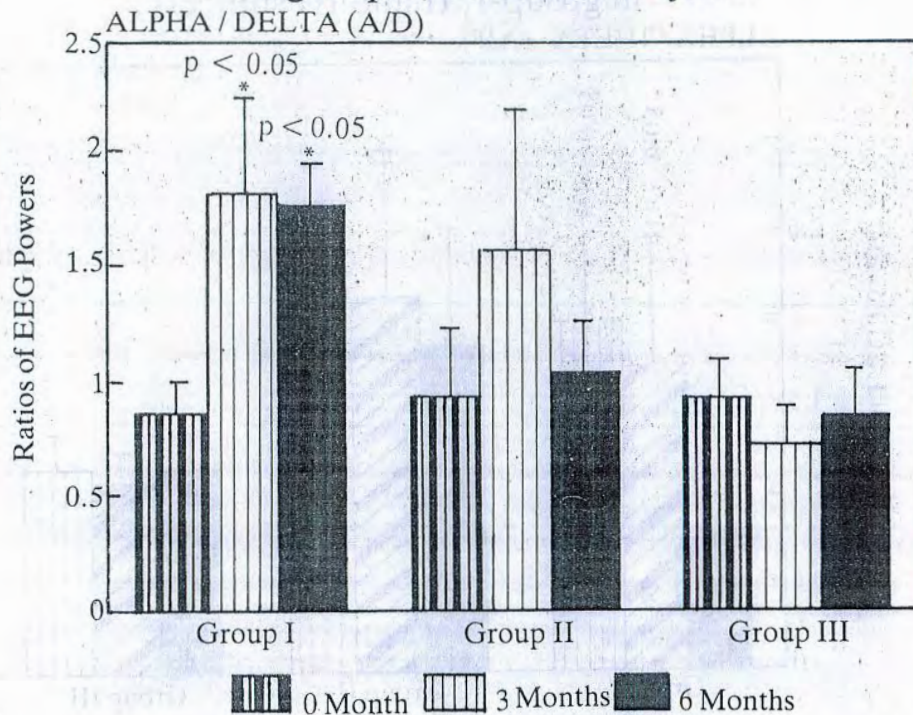


Fig.-62

Comparison of Ratio of absolute EEG powers in group-I, II and III subjects

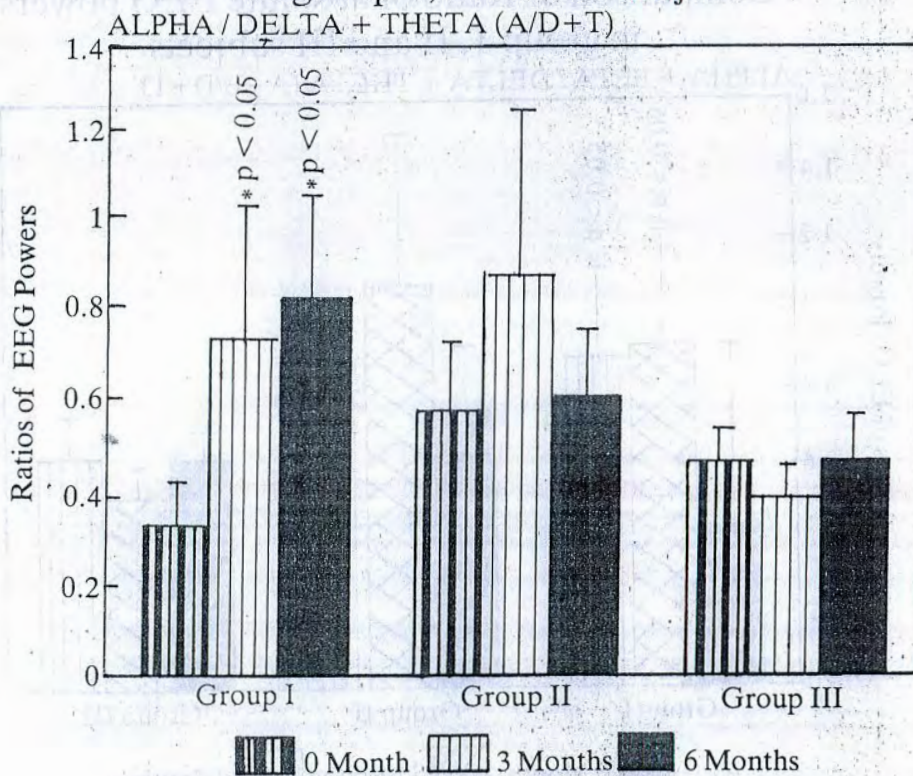


Fig.-63

Comparison of Ratio of absolute EEG powers in group-I, II and III subjects

ALPHA/THETA (A/T)

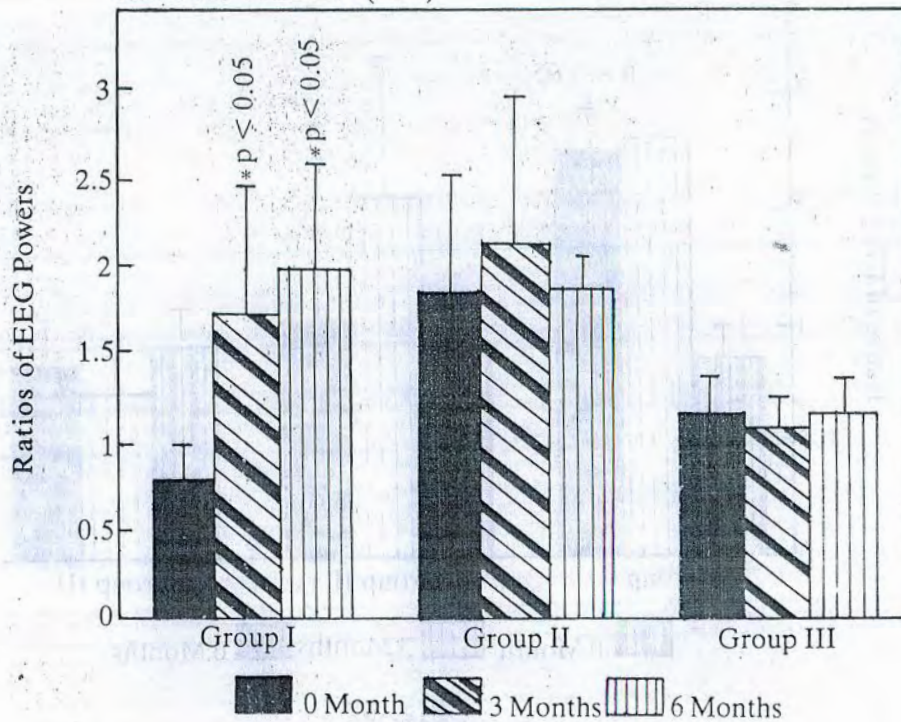


Fig.-64

Comparison of Ratio of absolute EEG powers in group-I, II and III subjects

ALPHA + BETA / DELTA + THETA (A+B/D+T)

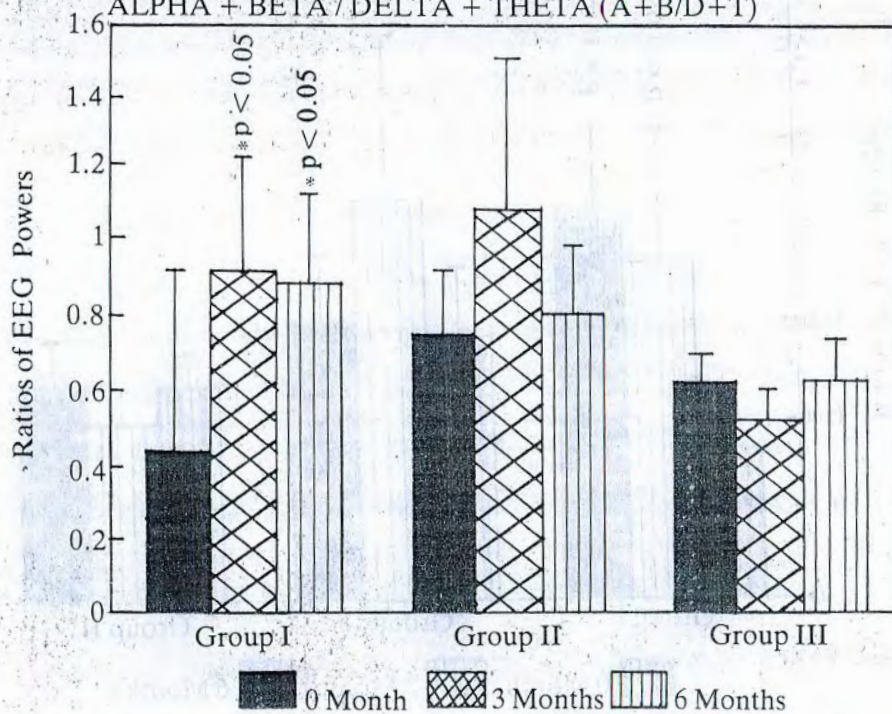


Fig.-65

Group II and Group III patients did not show any significant changes in the EEG at three, and six months as compared to 0 month control values (Fig. 56 & 57). As such on the basis of above results it was concluded that Sahaja Yoga practice has a definite beneficial effect on the Epileptics as shown by EEG and clinical improvement in the condition of the patients.

Discussion

The possible mechanism by which Sahaja Yoga benefits is not very clear at present. However, in earlier studies (Rai)⁸ it was postulated that actualisation of Kundalini awakening takes place in the Limbic area (Sahasrara Chakra) which through its connections to hypothalamus brings about an inhibition in the activities of Sympathetic nervous system and thereby negates the effects of stress which are supposed to precipitate seizures. Further it has been shown by Chug⁹ that Sahaja Yoga is helpful in the treatment of psychosomatic diseases. As such these factors provide sufficient evidence to justify as to why Sahaja Yoga practice shows beneficial effect in the management of Epileptics.

Secondly the role of Substantia Nigra (SN) and Area Tempesta (AT), parts of the brain has been studied in the control of experimental seizures. GABA-ergic transmission in Substantia Nigra and associated structures may serve as a gating function to limit seizure susceptibility. Inhibition of Area Tempesta (AT) selectively protects against seizures. GABA and opiates may work together in SN to suppress nigral outputs and thereby reducing seizure susceptibility (Gale 1988)¹⁰. Sahaja Yoga practitioners have a relatively higher opiod peptides (Misra)¹¹. In view of this it is just possible that increase in the levels of opiod peptides may lead to seizure suppression. Moreover, recently it has been shown by Miller¹², 1989 that Thalamus is also involved in seizure. As such Neuronal circuits involving Limbic System, Hypothalamus, Thalamus, and Substantia Nigra (SN) could influence the activity of seizure foci leading to seizure suppression following Sahaja Yoga practice.

Sahaja Yoga is also being tried at different Sahaja Yoga centres in Russia to treat persons suffering from Epilepsy. A case of Epilepsy cure through Sahaja Yoga has been recently submitted by Dr. A.V. Izmailovich, Head of the Department of Curatology and Physiotherapy at a hospital in Sochi (USSR), in March 1990 which is mentioned below for the perusal of readers:

A teenage girl suffering from Epilepsy was brought for an experiment with Sahaja Yoga. This child had a problem beyond the control of specialists and had been to some of the best institutions in Russia without

any positive results. The Divine mother Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi blessed the child with Self-Realisation and Sahaja Yoga started its effect on her body. Working on Ajna Chakra, helped to open her heart chakra as well and from a closed sick personality she spontaneously transformed into a fully blossomed flower. The little girl is now cured and her doctors are convinced about the possibilities of Sahaja Yoga in this direction. The Electro encephalogram (EEG) recording of the brain is now clear of the characteristic signals of epileptic activity.

Medical Science Enlightened

Some Answers to the Missing Links in the Knowledge of Autonomic Nervous System

It is well known that medicine has developed under the influence of Cartesian Philosophy. This gave rise to mechanistic approach to life, which is still persisting. Dr. Larry Dossey¹, in his book, "Space, Time & Medicine" writes, "The Cartesian formulation led to the view that the body reflected the machinelike characteristics of the Universe itself, machine-like bodies inhabiting a machinelike world. Disease thus arose as a disorder of mechanism". A mechanistic approach is based on the principle of breaking a part into smaller units and then to still smaller cellular level to understand its reality. Descartes and Newton's scientific formulations have dominated the thinking of the people for the last 300 years.

Descartes² introduced the concept that the body and mind are separate entity and this has been responsible for splitting the medical profession into two, (1) Physicians to look after the body, whereas (2) Psychiatrists and psychologists are to heal the mind. The gap between the two disciplines has been a great handicap in understanding the major diseases, because it prevented the physicians from studying the role of stress and emotions in the physical illness. As a result of this split, there are now two distinct disciplines. In psychological literatures the relevance of emotional state is mostly considered. This research is done by psychologists and is reported in their journals which are rarely consulted by the physicians. The connection between emotional states and cancer has been well known since late 19th Century and the evidence documented in psychology journals is quite substantial. But unfortunately very few physicians are aware of this work and physicians have not integrated this data into their research. A person's state of mind, of course, is not only relevant in the generation of illness but crucial to the process of healing as well. To induce faith and confidence in

the patient has always been a major purpose of the therapeutic encounter between doctor and patient and this is done by communication skill and has nothing to do with technical knowledge.

In practice psychological problems and behavioural problems are studied and treated by psychiatrists. But there is very little communication between mental health professionals and physical health professionals. This has isolated them and prevented any interaction between them. The mechanistic view of human body and the vast development in the field of physics and chemistry has led to an emphasis on medical technology. This technology has taken a central role. There are now CAT Scanners, whole Body Scanners, computerised blood analyzers, Heart Lung Machine, Renal Dialysis machine, Pace Makers, ultrasound machine, radiation therapy, Lithotripsy machine, MRI Machine and many others. These are highly sophisticated equipment but extremely costly. The practice of medicine today has mostly shifted to hospitals in big cities where it is getting depersonalised. The cost of medical care has increased at a frightening pace over the past two decades. In the process of reducing illness to biochemical and molecular level the physician has attempted to go to the specific organs of the body and has moved away from the patient as a whole. One forgets that illness is a condition of the total human being. Disease is a condition of a particular part of the body, and rather than treating patients as a whole, doctors have concentrated on treating their diseases.

Now this view is changing and all over the world there is a strong feeling that man should not be treated as a machine and the psyche of man should be given greater importance in the treatment of various diseases. In order to know what exactly one means by psyche, an insight in the evolution of nervous system in the animal kingdom should be briefly understood.

Evolutionary Steps in Animal Kingdom

We know that Amoeba is the first unicellular organism in the creation of life on this planet whose single cell shows all the main characteristics which differentiate a living organism from a non-living entity. Then came Hydra, Jellyfish and sea anemone which belong to aquatic coelenterates and are multicellular organisms, and in this we can see the first primitive neural mechanism to appear. The primitive neural mechanism comprised of a nerve cell and nerve fibres in its simplest form. In earthworm nerve cell developed to a head ganglion, a sub pharyngeal ganglion and two ventrally placed nerve cords together with a segmental ganglion for each segment of the body. This centralisation is seen as an advancement on the evolution of nervous system.

In Vertebrates cephalization of the nervous tissue occurs in greater amount to form the brain consisting of hind brain, mid brain and fore brain. In fish, frog and alligators, olfactory bulb is well developed for smell sensations which are essential for getting the food and also to protect them from enemies. In fishes and birds cerebellum is very much developed. One knows that cerebellum plays a significant role in the reflex regulations of muscle tone and muscular coordination, which is essential for fishes and birds for their versatile movement in water and air respectively. In evolution from fishes and birds to higher vertebrates one can observe some very characteristic changes. The size of cerebral hemisphere starts increasing and the size of cerebellum decreases. This change is seen at its maximum in human beings where 83% of the whole brain constitutes two cerebral hemispheres and only 17% constitutes cerebellum, Mid brain and hind brain structures (Ghosh). It is not only that the size of the cerebral cortex increased in human beings, but also it has attained tremendous achievements functionally. These are the higher functions which are not present in the early man.

First Man-like Creature

The first man-like creatures may have appeared as much as a million years ago. They were not apes, though the apes and the earliest human types may have descended from a common ancestor. They were not men. They were not fully erect, their cerebral cortex was much smaller than that of our own species. Over many thousand years, by stages, early types of men developed who had full-sized brain though their appearance and posture were still not entirely like ours.

In any case, the Cro-Magnon who appeared twenty five thousand years ago was unquestionably a human being of our own species. One should appreciate that during these 25,000 years, there has been continuous development in the structure of cerebral cortex in having more convolutions in the form of sulci and gyri. This procedure adapted by Nature is remarkable because in the same space, it could accommodate a larger surface area of cerebral cortex. The functional capability of cerebral cortex has been evolving during the course of evolution and at present it has reached its highest level. The human being of today is highly intellectual as compared to our ancestor Cro-Magnon man. So we find that human beings have got a very complicated nervous system. The human body consists of various systems whose activities are diverse yet they are coordinated and balanced. Each one of the trillion cells, of which the human body is made up of, is active and responds to stimuli of diverse nature, yet they work as a team

helping each other for the survival of the human being. These harmonious and coordinated activities of the human body are possible because of the nervous system.

Central Nervous System

The Central Nervous System in man is an endowment of evolutionary end product which has been perfected with quality and quantity as a result of evolutionary changes brought about through a continuous series of adaptations to changing environments. It is for the presence of this unique, most complicated neural structure of the world, the 'Brain', that human beings are reckoned as God's ultimate creation compared to their evolutionary ancestors.

Nervous System is a fast control device for human body. In order to have a command over this vast field of activities of human body Nature has integrated a dual system of control, fast and slow, so as to have balanced and coordinated responses. The integration of nervous system into the human body is a device for fast and rapid control over such activities, whereas the slower control is mediated through a system of endocrine glands. For more effective coordination a control from the higher centres of the brain has also been provided. This dual humoral and neural control of human body is an example of best ever conceived measure for perfect execution of varied activities in response to diversified needs.

Like other tissues of the body the nervous system is made up of discrete structural units known as nerve cells or neurons. The neurons are organized into a tissue system, the nervous tissue which is integrated into body in specialized structures occupying different territories of our body.

The Central Nervous System in our body comprises of the Brain and Spinal Cord whereas Peripheral Nervous System consists of 31 pairs of spinal and 12 pairs of cranial nerves which innervate somatic structures.

Autonomic Nervous System

It comprises of sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system. Sympathetic nervous system comprises of Thoraco Lumber outflow of nerves from spinal segments on either side of the body. Thus we have a right and a left sympathetic chain. Parasympathetic nervous system takes its origin from the Cranio-Sacral outflow. It includes a neural mechanism in which most of its functions are carried out without any voluntary control over them and hence called autonomic. The Sympathetic and Parasympathetic nerves are meant to innervate the different visceral organs

throughout the body. The beating of heart, our respiration, movements of intestines and other hollow viscera and glandular secretions are some of the activities which are controlled by Autonomic Nervous System.

It consists of bilaterally arranged cell groups or centres corresponding to cord segment from Thoracic one to Lumber two which give origin to pre-ganglionic fibres and sympathetic pathway consisting of pre-ganglionic fibres, ganglionated sympathetic trunk and peripheral cell stations and the post ganglionic fibres. The ganglionated sympathetic trunk forms two longitudinal cords of nervous tissue which lie on either side of the vertebral column and constitute Right and Left sympathetic trunk.

Answers to the Missing Links in the Knowledge of Autonomic Nervous System

• Julian Huxley³ an eminent scientist said in one of his articles, "We must switch more and more of our scientific efforts from the exploration of outer space to that of inner space, the realm of our own minds and the psychometabolic processes at work in it. It is here that the greatest discoveries will be made. It is here that the largest and most fruitful territories await our occupancy. All branches of science and learnings can join in this great venture of exploration." It is now increasingly appreciated by the Neuro-Scientists that human brain is much more subtle than what it had been understood. It is not merely an organ responding to various types of stimuli, controlling and coordinating the movements of different parts of body and the secretions of hormones for homeostatic purposes. An insight into the inner realms of human beings by spiritual scientists would be able to arrive at a more integrated concept of mind-brain relationship which will be able to project biophysical, biochemical and neurobiological data of brain mechanisms on the psyche of human beings.

Knowledge from Within :

The work of Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi⁴ is in the same direction. She worked out a direct experience with the Cosmic Consciousness where she visualized the intricacies of the subtle body. How it controls the gross physical body? What are the different subtle chakras? What are their qualities for optimal functioning? What are the deities controlling them and in what circumstances these chakras and Nadis get blocked? What are the different permutations and combinations which are responsible for various diseases? She fathomed deep into the realms of inner self and understood the psychopathology and psychometabolic processes involved in the genesis

of various diseases. In her several lectures in India and different parts of the world she told the medical scientists and doctors that modern medical science does not know much about the Autonomic Nervous System and that is the reason why there is no cure in modern allopathic system of medicine for the diseases caused by spirit possession and also for psychosomatic diseases. Medical scientists also do not know much about the psyche of the human beings which plays a very important role in the genesis of psychiatric and psychosomatic disorders which are increasing at an alarming rate in most developed countries of the world. In view of this she advised the medical professionals to explore the Sahaja Yoga hypothesis for diseases for the benefit of mankind. It enlightens medical science and provides answers to the missing links understanding the working of the Autonomic Nervous System.

Here it is worth mentioning that in some spheres what science has discovered so recently had been known in Indian tradition for thousands of years. For example, classical Indian yoga talks of two Nadis, Ida on left side of the body and it crosses to the other side (right) at the level of 'Trikuti' (i.e. between two eye brows) to reach the brain. Similary Pingla Nadi runs on right side of the body and crosses at Trikuti to reach the left brain (Fig. 8), thus corresponding to the physiological fact that left side activity of the body is controlled by right cerebral hemisphere and vice versa.

Western medical research proceeds mainly through the anatomy, physiology, pathology etc. in an objective way from outside by experimental techniques and models. This is an excellent method of making new discoveries. However, one should not forget that in the Indian tradition, human body was investigated by a more subjective way from 'within' by the spiritual scientists (Rishis) who could turn their attention inwards in meditation and could look inside the body to see as to what is there and how it functions. Aryans who are of the oldest order, though lacking in modern methods of instrumentation and facilities of proper documentation yet their metaphysical ideas were so potent and rational that we cannot refute them even today. Sushruta (600 BC) was the greatest surgeon of India and Charak was the greatest physician. Sushruta said, "head was the most important organ of human body. Unmada (Insanity) and apasmara (epilepsy) originate from Shiras (head). Bhela (6th century B.C.) stated that the seat of mind lay between the head and the palate. As such the neurologists and neuro physiologists of 20th century will be astounded at the precise fundamental knowledge that the Indian scientists had about the nervous system. All this knowledge was obtained from Within by the Spiritual Scientists of those days.

Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi made certain revelations based on her divine vision to a very renowned scientist of United States, Dr. Vinod Ram Rao Worlikar of Cerritos, Los Angeles, about the Carbon atom. The details of that are mentioned below in his own words.

Dr. Vinod Ram Rao Worlikar of Cerritos, Los Angeles (USA)¹⁴, in a communication said that "in 1987 Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi while on her visit to Houston revealed that Carbon Atom when viewed from bottom shows a cross (+) but when viewed from left and right side show ॐ (Om) and 卐 (Swastik) respectively. It was difficult to believe at the first instance. However, on my return to Los Angeles (Cerritos), I tried to verify it in my Laboratory and to my surprise it was absolutely the same as she told me. Carbon atom model had all the four valencies in dumbell shape, instead of three valencies in dumbell shape and one valency in spherical shape, (Sp^3 Hybridisation). While putting utmost concentration on this point⁹ I adjusted and then discovered one of the valency depiction to represent spherical orbital. To my surprise I was seeing ॐ (Om) in the C Atom model when I viewed it from left side elevation. When I viewed it from right side elevation, I was seeing 卐 (Swastik). So Swastika is two dimensional representation of three dimensional sign ॐ (Om). Lord Ganesha and Om represent the sound of creation and is represented in C Atom, three dimensionally with a symbol of ॐ (Om) which in a two dimensional representation appears as 卐 (Swastik)."

This type of divine knowledge or enlightened knowledge is only possible after Self-Realisation when an individual gets connected, with the unconscious (All pervading energy) and attains super consciousness.

Another instance has been provided by Dr. R.C. Misra of Toronto¹⁵ who has been working in the area of mental and neurological disorders for the last several years. He wrote a paper "Catecholamine, Indolamine and other amine cell surface receptors." Seven spanning loops and its organization in the cell membrane is reproduced below :

A Scientist's Curiosity! Why Seven Loops?

Cell surfaces of all living cells contain a specific set of proteins called receptors. Among a variety of receptors, the receptors for nor-adrenaline, adrenaline are found virtually in every cell of the human body. The receptors for dopamine, serotonin are found in brain cells and other tissues as well. The adrenergic receptors have been divided into two subclauses e.g. alpha-adrenergic and beta-adrenergic receptors. These are involved in several physiological functions. Some of the common disorders in which these receptors are involved include high blood pressure (hypertension),

heart disease, depression, liver problems, stress disorders and kidney dysfunctions. In fact beta blocker and alpha blocker drugs are frequently used as anti-hypertensive drugs. Disorder of dopamine receptors could lead to parkinsonism, schizophrenia etc. Receptors for serotonin are commonly involved in Depression Syndrome.

Common Features of these Receptors

All the receptors described above are found in the cell membrane and are made up of several hundred amino-acids. When the arrangements of these amino-acids were examined by scientists in USA, Canada, United Kingdom and other countries it became apparent that they have one feature in common and i.e. 'Seven Domains' or 'Seven Spanning Loops'. The receptors protein is folded in such a way that it forms seven loops. Each of the spanning loop has a specific function. These receptors are linked to a protein called 'G-Protein' (Guanyl-Nucleotide Binding Protein) which acts as a communicator between the receptor and inside of the cell. Having done so much research in drug receptor interaction it was not clear why these important receptors are folded in such a way that they always form seven loops in the membrane.

Dr. Misra¹⁵ further said that, "In Dec. 1988 I attended a Lecture of Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi on Sahaja Yoga and immediately the mysterious arrangement in the cell membrane began to make sense. The description of seven subtle chakras of human body in Sahaja Yoga not only explained the seven spanning domains of receptor proteins but many other aspects of pharmacological and physiological principles e.g. the communication between parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous system. Even today medical scientists do not know exactly as to how these two systems communicate with each other. It was only after Self-Realisation through Sahaja Yoga that I am able to feel the communication with these two systems and also I know the mechanisms of coordination between two systems".

Relationship of Seven Loops of Adrenergic Receptors to Sahaja Yoga

The seven spanning loops of adrenergic receptors share similarities with seven chakras of the body, which have been described ages ago in our Upanishads and Markendeya Puran. Perhaps it would be logical to say that receptor itself seems to be a mini representation of the seven subtle chakras in the form of seven spanning loops. The alteration or distortion of one of the seven loops could be responsible for the altered/abnormal function of

the cell which results into the development of mental, neurological or psychosomatic disorder.

Mental, Neurological and Psychosomatic Disorders

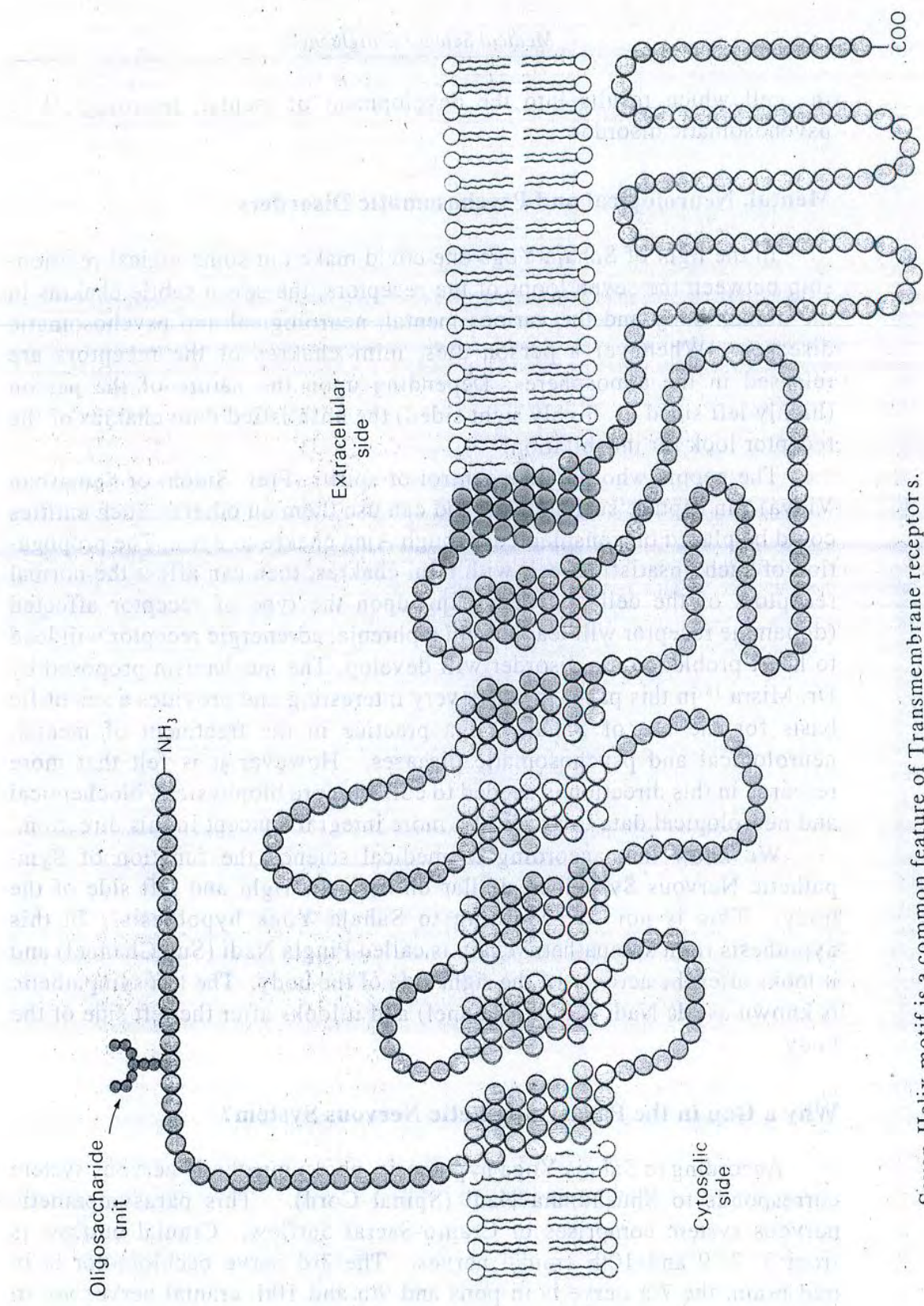
In the light of Sahaja Yoga one could make out some logical relationship between the seven loops of the receptors, the seven subtle chakras in the human body and the various mental, neurological and psychosomatic diseases. Whenever a person dies, mini chakras of the receptors are released in the atmosphere. Depending upon the nature of the person (highly left sided vs. highly right sided) the unsatisfied mini chakras of the receptor look for inhabitation.

The people who practise control of spirits (Pret Siddhi or Samashan Vidya) can capture such entities and can use them on others. Such entities could be placed or transplanted through Ajna chakra or eyes. The propagation of such unsatisfied cell with mini chakras, then can affect the normal receptors of the cell and depending upon the type of receptor affected (dopamine receptor will lead to schizophrenia, adrenergic receptor will lead to heart problems) the disorder will develop. The mechanism proposed by Dr. Misra ¹⁵ in this paper is really very interesting and provides a scientific basis for the use of Sahaja Yoga practice in the treatment of mental, neurological and psychosomatic diseases. However it is felt that more research in this direction is needed to collect more biophysical, biochemical and neurological data to arrive at a more integral concept in this direction.

We know that according to medical science the function of Sympathetic Nervous System is similar on both the right and left side of the body. This is not so according to Sahaja Yoga hypothesis. In this hypothesis right sympathetic chain is called Pingla Nadi (Sun Channel) and it looks after the activity of the right side of the body. The left sympathetic is known as Ida Nadi (Moon Channel) and it looks after the left side of the body.

Why a Gap in the Parasympathetic Nervous System?

According to Sahaja Yoga hypothesis, parasympathetic nervous system corresponds to Shushumna Nadi (Spinal Cord). This parasympathetic nervous system comprises of Cranio-Sacral outflow. Cranial outflow is from 3, 7, 9 and 10th cranial nerves. The 3rd nerve oculomotor is in mid-brain, the 7th nerve is in pons and 9th and 10th cranial nerves are in medulla oblongata. Sacral outflow is from S2 to S4 segments of the spinal cord. It is really strange as to why there is a gap in parasympathetic nervous



Seven-Helix motif is a common feature of Transmembrane receptors.

system. What is the secret about it? There is no explanation for this with the medical scientists. However, this gap has been called as Void in the Zen philosophy and Bhav Sagar in the Hindu philosophy. This gap in the parasympathetic nervous system (Shushumna Nadi) at the naval region has been the main hurdle that has rendered all the search and entry into parasympathetic so very difficult and fruitless.

The sympathetic chain on the left (Ida Nadi) and right (Pingla Nadi) are continuous and there is no gap. So according to Her Holiness Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi⁵ it is like three ladders, two of them touching the Muladhara Chakra and Svadhisthana Chakra respectively while the third, central one, is hanging in the air. As a result of this whenever we want to rise in our consciousness we move on to sympathetic system. If our attention turns towards right side, it uses the energy of Pingla Nadi (Right Sympathetic). Thus we get into the sphere of ego; involved in thinking, planning, organizing and all other activities that seek self praise and thereby it goes on bloating the balloon of ego and when it reaches beyond a certain limit one becomes aggressive, arrogant, over-ambitious and dominating, leading to imbalance. One remains in tension, is not able to sleep well and ultimately suffers from deadly diseases like heart disorders and strokes etc. In case one's awareness goes to the left side which has the power to store all that is dead in us, then it connects one with the store-house of the dead in sub-conscious mind and also with the collective subconscious (Bhoot Lok or Parlok). At the back side of the brain and at the apex of this channel the super ego exists like a balloon. It becomes heavy by too much thinking of the past and by storing the conditioning of the mind through libido. So if the tension becomes too much, it breaks the super ego into many fragments. If one still over exerts by conditioning, a partial vacuum is created and this sucks in a dead personality from the collective subconscious in one's super ego which is responsible for mental disorder due to spirit possession.

Parasympathetic nervous system according to Sahaja Yoga hypothesis is known to give vitality and relaxes the nerves, vessels and muscles. The activity of parasympathetic unlike sympathetic cannot be activated or inhibited normally. This is due to gap in the naval region (Void). The simple method to fill this gap is Sahaja Yoga.

Sahaja Yoga Hypothesis

By the practice of Sahaja Yoga as told earlier, one is able to activate his primordial energy 'Kundalini' present in 3-1/2 coils in the triangular bone called Sacrum. Once it is activated it rises up and pierces the Svadhisthana, Nabhi, Anahata, Vishuddhi and Ajna Chakra. At this stage one

becomes thoughtless but remains aware of his body. In the next step Kundalini pierces the Sahasrara Chakra, one's attention gets enlightened and becomes one with the super consciousness⁷⁻⁹. At this stage subtle cool breeze (Chaitanya) starts flowing from the palms and thus one develops a sixth sense of Vibratory Awareness⁷⁻⁹. By this one knows the condition of his own chakras on the finger tips and by putting the attention on another person one is able to know the condition of Kundalini and chakras of that person as well on the finger tips. This is possible because one's consciousness merges with collective consciousness. This is Turiya State as described in Mandikya Upanishad. In this stage one attains a control over the parasympathetic activity which is activated, and gives profound joy with physical and mental relaxation. Many critics have a feeling that how is it possible to get the Kundalini awakened spontaneously when in ancient times it took ages for the sages to attain Samadhi. This was quite true for that time but now in Krita Yuga things have changed. Moreover in Kena-Upanishad, the teacher says to the pupil who is keen to know the reality. "Brahman is unknown to the learned and known to the simple. Brahman is seen in Nature, in the wonder of a flash of lightening. He comes to the soul in the wonder of a flash of vision. The flash of vision is momentary and so Brahman. The reality can be experienced only in a moment, not in the duration of time". How true it is? In Sahaja Yoga also one experiences 'Self-Realisation' spontaneously; in between a moment of two thoughts⁷⁻⁹. Consciousness freed from the clutches of mind can only experience truth, reality and wholeness.

Second important aspect of Sahaja Yoga hypothesis which enlightens medical science is that chakras of the subtle body regulate the functions of the different parts of the body. These chakras or Nadis get constricted or blocked whenever the norms laid down for their proper functioning are not followed properly by an individual. Citing an example Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi says that if one's right heart chakra gets constricted or blocked then one may develop a disease called Bronchial Asthma. The right heart catch is usually due to fatherhood problems in childhood¹⁰. This means that father has not cared as to giving love to the child or the father has been overfond or father died in childhood, relations between father and child have remained strained or constant fight between father and mother are some of the aspects which very badly damage the right heart chakra and child develops Bronchial Asthma. Similarly all the subtle chakras have laid down norms of psycho-social behaviour and attitudes; whenever they are flouted it leads to a catch in the chakra, thereby affecting the organs of the body which are controlled by that chakra as described in earlier chapters.

Third important point of Sahaja Yoga hypothesis is that central heart

gives one a feeling of security and is responsible for regulating the activity of immune system, thereby helping in the formation of anti-bodies. It also regulates the bone marrow activity¹⁰. When this chakra gets afflicted one can get disorders related to immune system. Medical scientists when told about this in a conference were taken aback. Recently the work of Dr. Robert Ader¹¹ on the basis of his research studies confirms some aspects of the above hypothesis. He found that immune system reacts to life events.

Hypothesis of spirit possession due to over-activity of left sympathetic system and its treatment by Sahaja Yoga was advocated in 1970. Medical science does not recognise spirit possession. However, recently Dr. Stephen Larson¹², Professor of Psychology and Psychotherapist of USA has confirmed that some mental disorders are due to spirit possession. Dr. Larsen described how his study of Shamanism (an ancient method) has opened the door for its use in psychotherapy for the treatment of mental cases related to spirit possession.

Another hypothesis is that the subtle chakras are controlled by Gods and Goddesses. Whenever a particular chakra gets constricted or blocked diseases occur. In order to clear the blocked chakra Sahaja Yoga recommends propitiation of the deity controlling that particular chakra. Modern medicine does not recognise such a phenomenon. However, psychologists are working these days on the role of mythology in the treatment of diseases. Recently Prof. Stephen Larsen in his book¹² "In the Mythic Imagination" mentions about his vast studies in the field of mythology and psychology and therapeutic practice as to how our traditional mythology continues to inform our consciousness with its age-old wisdom. Learning to recognise our relationship to our inner Gods and Goddesses may enable us to reintegrate power, wisdom and wonder in the life. Joseph Campbell¹³ a renowned expert on myths has said that the most important effect of myth is "to awaken and give energies of life". Mythology can reach a deep level of our consciousness, which actually wakes up and fills one with tremendous energy. This was told by Shri Mataji as early as in 1970 that Chakras could be cleared and diseases cured by propitiating the particular God and Goddess. It fills one with subtle divine energy. It is evident that the practice of Sahaja Yoga awakens Kundalini and it offers new dimensions for the understanding of human psyche. This knowledge is unique and is one of the glorious aspects of the cultural heritage of India.

The clinical observations on the effects of Sahaja Yoga in some of the psychosomatic diseases reveal the remarkable healing potential of this system vis-a-vis modern medicine. The research data collected during the studies over the last six years are of such far-reaching relevance that they have enlightened medical science in understanding the psychic aspect of

human beings, role of spirit possession in the psychiatric diseases and understanding some aspects of the Autonomic Nervous System. By practising Sahaja Yoga one develops the capability to control/modulate the activity of Autonomic Nervous System.

It has been further shown by research studies that it is very helpful as an adjuvant therapy in the treatment of some of the psychosomatic diseases. Now the time has come when physicians will have to see things in a broader perspective, shifting their focus from disease to health, seeing the human being as a whole (not in parts) which shows interrelated physical and psychological aspects. In view of this medical scientists should be broad minded to adopt a holistic framework incorporating yoga and other alternative systems of medicine for the benefit of mankind. Modern physics has shown that such a holistic approach would not only be scientific but would also be consistent with the most advanced theories of physical reality. It is felt that more research studies are required to explore the various hypothesis of Sahaja Yoga. It would be a sad reflection on our medical scientists, and on the managers of our national health policy if India is not able to make a breakthrough in this area of research.

Role of Sahaja Yoga in Psychiatric Disorders

Psychoiatry is a branch of medicine which deals with the recognition, treatment and prevention of mental disorders. These mental disorders predominantly affect a person's mental behaviour, his thinking, his behaviour and his social relationships. It is reported that half of all the hospital beds in England and Wales are of mentally ill patients. From this one could easily gauge the seriousness of mental disorders which are increasing everyday in the developed and developing countries. Psychiatry is the oldest art in the field of medicine because mental disorder was the first type of illness recognized in Egyptian Medicine and they prescribed Green stone as a fumigation against Hysteria¹. Greek and Egyptian Medicine considered these diseases to be caused by evil spirits or demons and this concept continued throughout the middle ages. In India excavations of Mohen-Jo-daro² in Sind and Harappa and other related sites which were closely related to the civilisations of Elam and Sumer clearly establish that civilisations flourished in this region many centuries before the entry of Aryans into the Indus Valley. Archaeological findings reveal that the medicine in fourth millenium B.C. had been a combination of magical, religious and other empirical practices like the medicine of other civilisations. When Aryans came to Indus Valley they brought with them their medical knowledge and their Gods. However the chief source of Aryan culture and medicine are the four Vedas. These Vedas have been originally revealed by Lord Brahma(Creator of the universe) to the sages some six thousand years before the Christian era, the Rig-Veda is believed by many scholars to be the original source of Hindu Medicine. These comprised of hymns and prayers addressed to different gods and goddesses whose medical skills were also enumerated. The Sama-Veda and Yajur Veda contains hymns which are collections of sacrificial and ritual prayers for the treatment of diseases. Atharva-Veda, composed afterwards had prayers, spells, incantations, charms to protect people from all kinds of mental diseases and

natural disasters. Later on Vedic texts were organized into Samhitas and commentaries were written on them. In these religious texts one could even find a reflection of physio-anatomical, psychological and therapeutic views which shows the insight of authors in appreciating their significance in the science of medicine³.(Keswani).

Role of Ayurveda

The origin of this healing art could be traced back to the creator Brahma according to Hindu mythology. Brahma composed a voluminous text and then abridged it into eight parts with medicine (Kaya Chikitsa) and surgery (Shalya Tantra) as the main subjects. Afterwards this knowledge was propagated through Daksha Prajapati to Aswani Kumars, who were celestial physicians to gods. From Aswanis this knowledge came to Indra, from where it went to Rishi Bharadwaj, Atreya Punar Vasu, Agnivesh and finally to Charaka, who compiled the text popularly known as Charaka Samhita. According to Sushruta Samhita this knowledge was transmitted by Indra to Dhanvantri who later on passed it on to Charaka and Sushruta. Charak compiled Charak Samhita (Kaya-Chikitsa) and Sushruta compiled Sushruta Samhita (Shalya-Chikitsa). These were written about 1000 B.C. and are considered most authentic Ayurvedic text.

In Ayurveda there is a meeting of metaphysics and medicine. Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya⁴ in his study of Charaka Samhita describes that the religious and metaphysical views have been predominantly superimposed in the text on scientific content in relation to mental problems of an individual. In Charaka Samhita⁵⁻⁸ good health has been described as the only source to fulfil the four Purushartha (Duty), Dharma (Virtue), Artha (Finance or Material goods), Kama (Sensual Pleasures) and Moksha (Self-Realisation). This shows that Ayurveda was most sacred scripture as well because it does good to mankind not only during life but also beyond life.

Ayurveda⁵⁻⁸ recognizes the diseases primarily of mental origin with mental symptoms e.g. 'unmada' a general term meaning all mental disorders in which patient loses control over his behaviour and conduct to the prevalent norms of the society. It includes almost all the psychotic disorders including obsessions. Another group of diseases are where mental and somatic symptoms coexist as in epilepsy (apasmara), hysterical fits (apatantrika), nervous diarrhoea from fear (sokaja and bhagya atisara), insomnia (nidranasa) and certain delusional (attavabhinivesa) and alcohol or drug intoxication (mada). The Ayurvedic dream theory also seems to be quite unique in many ways. Ayurveda⁵⁻⁸ enumerates two kinds of dreams that are important and reflect the condition of the patient's mental status.

These are (1)Barthita dreams , which try to fulfil those wishes of an individual which could not be gratified during waking state. (2) The kalpita dreams which are the dramatization of the individual's fantasy . With the coming of Muslim conquerors to India from 10th century onwards the glories of Ayurveda declined rapidly due to lack of patronage from the rulers. Persian and Arabic influences produced an amalgam of the Greek or Unani medicine. Ayurveda⁵⁻⁸ mentions "Satavavajaya" therapy which deals with the methods to control the mind and restraining from unhealthy objects. The 'daivavy apsara' treatment consists of rituals, magical processes, chanting of mantras, use of precious stones, gems, charms and amulets, penances and visiting sacred complexes.

The Ayurvedic⁵⁻⁸ insight into the working of man's psyche and the causation of mental illness are remarkable achievements for any century. In India one sacred place even now visited by hundreds of mental patients is the temple of the lord of the spirits some fifty miles from Delhi near Bharatpur. This temple is famous and is popularly known as Balaji's temple. It promises quick relief from malignant spirits (Bhuta preta and pishacha),madness, epilepsy, barrenness and other diseases. It is reported that on comparing the effectiveness of temple healing vis-a-vis modern psychotherapy in cases of mental disorder it is underlined that they have radically different assumptions. Western psychotherapy has the highest values of modern individualism. They are epitomized in psycho-analysis. In the word of Kenneth Keniston⁹ "It is almost limitless respect for the individual faith that understanding is better than illusion, insistence that our psyches harbour darker secrets than we care to confess , refusal to promise too much and a sense of complexity , tragedy and wonder of human life".

Role of Unani System of Medicine

With the onset of the Muslim conquerors in India from 10th century onward the glories of Ayurveda declined rapidly due to lack of patronage from the rulers. Persian and Arabic influences produced an amalgam of the Greek and Unani medicine. Hakims of the traditional Islamic Unani system of medicine are still flourishing in India and many of them practise to treat mental diseases as well. In Delhi a famous old Hakim whose diagnostic feats were well known all over the city and its neighbourhood lived in the Patteshah's dargah. The wise old Hakim was known as 'Pir' because of his spiritual attainments. He treated thousands of patients and according to Islamic school of psychotherapy the role of demons in the causation of mental disorders is well established. This theory of demon possession could be traced back to Koran.

Islamic View

It recognises three categories of persons: 1) Farishta (Angels), (2) Shaitans (Satanic-beings), (3) Jins (Demons or Spirits). Accounts of the origin of Jins, their classifications, magical rites by which they can be enslaved is found in the Islamic Tafsirs, the commentaries on Koran¹⁰. This 'Jin' becomes a 'Bala' and are all around us. Nobody is safe. Another demon is 'Jaljogini' and Pichal-pari, Sirkata, Bhutana (seen in the form of fire) ilmi-ruhani' refers to white (ulwi-ruhmani) magic and the black arts (Shaitani Jadu). Baba 'reads' sugar or water. In case of possessions usually 'Water' is read and given to patients. Occasionally, he may also do 'Jhara' which involves a similar ritual except that instead of blowing water he blows his breath onto patient's face and then says a short prayer to God Almighty not to disappoint the soul. 'Water' washes the patients blood clean so that Bala cannot drink it and is forced to leave. Talismans also contain some of the saints essence and so demons etc. leave the patient (Kakkar)¹¹.

Tantrik Healing

Tantra has been described to possess a circumscribed healing system, a modest theory of the causes and relief of certain forms of mental illness. Tantra became a pan-Indian phenomenon by 6th century and remains one to this day. Tantra's relationship to dominant religious orthodoxy has never been easy and it was often disapproved because tantriks have flouted and rejected conventional morality. People like Shri Rajneesh offered his own brand of Tantrik technique despising the Hindu establishment. Tantric Siddhis are closely connected with tantric healing and healers. Many tantrik texts resemble the manuals of black magic (Jadu- tona) while they describe the rituals to obtain various miraculous powers. The occult powers are Vashi karana over women, men and kings (complete control), Immobilization (stambhana), pacification (Shanti Karna), causing death (marak), showing enmity (Dushmani) and hatred (Ucchatan). Each power is the field of a particular goddess whom the adept has to worship for attainment. One of the most commonly acquired Siddhi is that of Karan-pishachini (one who tells in the ear). In this the 'Pishachini' remains at the command of the Tantrik and whispers the answer in his ear. As the tantrik is believed to be endowed with super-natural powers, it is commonly believed that all he needs to know is the right mantra for a particular problem and there would be success. Such a belief is very important because it arouses faith in the patients' mind which is very vital in the healing of emotional disorders.

Invariably some sort of a mantra is given to be recited for a variable duration for 11 days to 21 days. In some possession cases sacrificial fire is lit and the healer touches various parts of the patient by the smoke. Often they involve the use of human bones in the middle of night in the graveyard or cremation ground which enhances the tantrik's relations with the powers who exist in realms other than the human one. This is one aspect of the Tantrik cult.

The other aspect is awakening the dormant primordial energy Kundalini which they claim to be present in the Muladhara Chakra at the base of spine in-between genitals and the anus. There are six centres (Chakra) which are said to be Svadhisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddhi, Ajna and Sahasrara. Fundamentally the goal of the mystic tantrik practice is to arouse this Kundalini so that it travels upwards, energises and pierces all the six centres turn by turn to unite with cosmic consciousness. The Tantrik technique described for awakening the Kundalini is variable. Various Tantrik practices have been identified in the texts¹². They are Vedachara, Vaishnavachara, Shaivachara, Dakshinachara, Vamachara and Kulachara. The more known tantrik practices are (1) Dakshinachara (i.e. the right hand path) and (2) Vamachara (left hand path). The followers of Vamachara practice panch-makar rites comprising of taking wine, meat, fish, parched cereals and sexual intercourse. They often engage in sexual intercourse in order to stop and then to reverse the flow of semen back into the body. The semen must not be emitted. The ritual of collective sexual union performed in a circle is known as Chakra - Puja. The principle is that spiritual progress is not to be achieved by shunning our sex desires but transforming those elements as a means of liberation. From the tantrik point of view the consummated human being is man and woman fused into a single unit. In the right hand path the female sits on the right side, either the ingredients like wine, meat, fish, cereals are meditated upon or innocuous substances are used. The actual sexual intercourse is also replaced by mental act¹³. According to Tantrik doctrine, a lack in the follow up of the procedure could sometimes create severe mental problems in an individual.

These tantrik techniques to awaken Kundalini have done a lot of harm to the mankind because they flouted the normal codes of morality and were contrary to the orthodox tradition of the Hindu society. As such these techniques were barely tolerated and were disapproved by the society at large. This was the reason why Kundalini Yoga was forgotten altogether with the passage of time. It went into oblivion.

Shaministic Treatment and Shamans

In the history of mankind the healers of mental affections have been known as Shaman. They have a lot of experience in dealing with the inner world. Shamans have utilized the knowledge of inner world for healing for thousands of years. The term Shaman originated in Siberia and Central Asia. It refers to priest/healer/magician. Shamans specialize in 'spirit illness' and one of the most outstanding characteristics of these people is that they could go in a trance at their will interacting with the evil spirits to leave the body of the patient¹¹. Claude Levi Strauss¹⁴ mentions that Shaman provided language to the sick person by means of which unexpressed psychic states could express. He further emphasised that the role of psychoanalyst and Shaman is to establish a direct relationship with the patients' conscious and indirect connection with the patients' unconscious. The difference is that Shaman does it by dramatizing the scene with his oratory and analyst through compassionate behaviour and intent listening.

In India we find Oraons Shamans in Chota Nagpur Plateau¹⁷. Oraons call their Shamans as 'Bhagat'. They distinguish two types of mental disorders (1) Endogenous madness (apropi) because of excessive worrying nature or secondary to some physical illness (2) Shaitani disorders which are the work of demonic spirits (Bhuta-preta). In Shaitani disorders 'Bhagat' intervenes after going into a trance and reads a mantra or do other routine prescribed rituals. The methods of inducing a dissociated state e.g. rhythmic music, dance, over-breathing, stimulation of semi-circular canals by rotation of head may vary. According to Prince Raymond¹⁵ there are quite a few characteristics of this state which could suggest a common neuro-physiological base. How dissociation helps in the mentally ill is still not well known. According to Sargent¹⁶ excessive sensory input during this state brings about a neuro-physiological change which disrupts the patient's former conditioning and increases the reception of new pattern suggested by the Shamanic healer. The therapeutic effects are similar to as seen after electro-convulsive therapy.

Role of Sahaja Yoga

The method of Sahaja Yoga has already been mentioned in great details in earlier chapters of this book. As mentioned the Ida Nadi on the left side in our subtle body denotes power of desire (Iccha Shakti). It is also known as Moon Channel (Chandra Nadi). This side represents our emotions and past life. When this side gets activated due to too much thinking of the past events or about our near and dear ones who have died recently, or getting

too much emotional on trivial matters of life, keeping oneself aloof from others, preferring darkness, avoiding people, pondering too much on past events, being afraid all the time about some untoward accident, remaining cautious all the time, one becomes left sided. Such people are prone to suffer from psychiatric disorders and may even go to madness. Shri Mataji¹⁸ has said very clearly in her lectures in India and abroad that the left sided people when think too much of the past, they go into collective subconscious which is the abode of spirits of dead demonic personalities. These spirits are sucked from collective sub-conscious into the super ego of an individual and they get possessed and start suffering from mental problems. The healers of such possessions belong to two groups. One is Mantrikas i.e. people, who read sugar, water or 'ash' etc. by mantra and give the same to be used by the patient. These people work from the collective subconscious level. By doing a particular ritual they obtain a control over spirits present in collective subconscious. One such example is that of 'Karan-Pischani Siddhi' as told earlier in detail. This 'spirit' is at the control of the healer and does whatever is desired by the master. Muslim tantriks usually gain control over Jins (demons or spirits) as mentioned in Islamic literature Tafsirs. Few Jins are benevolent but mostly they are destructive and highly immoral beings. They enter into the body of an individual and drink their blood. They are all around us, and try to find a mentally weak person i.e. a person who is left sided so that as soon as this person during periods of depression goes into the collective subconscious, they can enter his/her body. A demon possesses a person for two reasons: either because a sorcerer who has a control on some demons, lets them loose against his own enemy or against the enemy of someone who has paid him to do this type of job or a demon while roaming around in the atmosphere locates someone for whom he develops a special liking. Usually beautiful unmarried girls are the victims because demons prefer the virgin's fresh blood. These demons start sucking the blood and after it has drained off the blood, it will go on to bone-marrow, and meat, stopping only when the person dies.

The second way how these spirit work is through supraconscious and collective supra-conscious. Supraconscious spirits can cure temporarily the problems arising from the right side. When a person goes to right side we call him right sided person. This occurs because of too much planning, too much ego, domination over others, very ambitious to become great doctors, engineers, architects, scientists and lawyers etc. In such a situation the balloon of ego swells up, gets fragmented and a vacuum is created to suck in a supraconscious bhoot, and it enters into the body of the patient and starts working. After sometime the patient becomes alright. This effect lasts about a year or so and afterwards again some or the other problem arises.

According to Sahaja Yoga hypothesis when a person is of weak mind and has weakness for such things then these dead spirits can catch hold of the person¹⁸. If it has something to do with the physical side then the Tantrikas who control supra-conscious aspect can help but if it has to do with the mental problems then sub conscious people i.e. Mantrikas can help. One thing is to be remembered that they help you temporarily and then after sometime the same disease comes back with a vengeance.

According to Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi¹⁸, Sahaja Yoga cures one's mental (subconscious and collective subconscious) problems as well as one's other somatic problems which have occurred due to damage of the Chakras caused by the spirits. It makes one so powerful and so pure that impurities just fall out. It is a cleansing force. It is a very powerful yoga where one gets Self-Realisation and as a by-product one gets his/her mental and physical healing. Now many dynamic things are happening. In Australia a couple who were journalists could not have a child even after 15 years of happy married life. The wife was declared a barren. After coming into Sahaja Yoga they had a beautiful child. Their entire outlook of life has changed. All the bhoots of her body left after her coming to Sahaja Yoga and that was the reason of attaining a good health. There are innumerable examples of such cases where people have been cured of their possessions but it is not possible to narrate all of them here. Sahaja Yoga achieves miracles on the mental level, material level and emotional level and ultimately on the spiritual level. One is endowed with tremendous powers being a realized soul. However one should remember that the Satanic forces are working all the time to attack whenever they find one as mentally shattered. So one has to fight it out and for that one should be evolved. One has to sacrifice. And the greatest sacrifice is that of 'ego' and 'super ego' which makes one obstinate and hard-hearted. One has to have compassion, one has to have love and understanding for human beings.

As mentioned earlier many people have been cured automatically after getting Self-Realisation through Sahaja Yoga. To establish this scientifically, medical researchers have done exhaustive work during the last five years and a detailed account of that has already been presented in the chapter on Medical Researches on Sahaja Yoga in this book¹⁹. Recently, receptor scientists working in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom and other countries found that the arrangements of amino acids have one feature common to all receptors and that is seven-helix motif (Fig. 66) or seven domains/seven spanning loops. The receptor protein is folded in such a way that it always forms seven loops. Dr. Misra²⁰ who has been working on mental and neurological disorders for the last several years has suggested the significance of this mysterious arrangement. According to him seven

spanning loops represent seven subtle chakras present in an individual. Perhaps one could say that receptor itself is a mini system encompassing the seven major chakras of human body. The alteration or distortion of one of the spanning loops leads to an abnormal function of the cell and results in the development of mental, neurological and psychosomatic disorders. When a person dies the unsatisfied mini-chakras of the receptor look for inhabitation. The people who practise control of spirits (Pret-Siddhi) can capture such entities and use them for their own purpose. Such entities can be transplanted through eyes and Ajna Chakra. These can affect the normal receptors of the cell and depending on the type of receptor affected (dopamine receptor will lead to Schizophrenia, adrenergic receptor will lead to heart disorder). Somewhat similar results have been reported by Dudani et al²¹. They found that the practice of Sahaja Yoga had a beneficial effect in the treatment of Epileptics. While defining the mechanism of action they postulated that Gama Amino Butyric Acid and Endorphins may work together in Substantia Nigra to suppress Nigral outputs and thereby reducing seizure susceptibility. Sahaja Yoga practitioners have been reported to have a higher Endorphin levels (Misra²⁰).

Further, Rai et al²² have demonstrated that when an individual starts doing Sahaja Yoga there are changes in the neuro-transmitters at the level of brain which are responsible for decreasing the catecholamine production in the body. It further leads to decreased sympatho- adrenergic response, thereby decreasing the production of adrenaline. This brings about a balance of sympathetic and para-sympathetic activity in our body. Once this is balanced and when one is in the centre, diseases disappear automatically. Many cases of spirit possession have been cured by Sahaja Yoga. Dr. Brian Wells²³ an eminent psychiatrist consultant of London, while speaking at the conference on Preventive Medicine Through Sahaja Yoga at Pune (India) said that the characteristics of Sahaja Yoga are unique and very remarkable. He has used this method in some cases of drug abuse and found that it works sometimes remarkably well. The peculiarity of this system is that there is no recurrence if one keeps on doing Sahaja Yoga as a daily routine. The spirits cannot enter from the collective sub-conscious or collective supra conscious of such an individual. This is a point which makes Sahaja Yoga definitely superior to the other methods of treatment by Gurus, Babas, Pirs, Tantrikas, Mantrikas and Shamans. All these people as told earlier use 'Preta Siddhis' or 'mantras' which can repel 'spirits' but there is no guarantee that it won't possess them again. In view of the above, it is quite clear that Sahaja Yoga would be useful in the treatment of Patients who suffer from possessions and other psychiatric disorders.

Sahaja Yoga for the Treatment and Prevention of Cancer - A Hypothesis

Cancer is one of the most dreaded diseases throughout the world. In India about 200,000 persons are already afflicted by cancer and it is estimated that half a million new cases of cancer may be added every year. In USA, according to a recent report, about twenty-five percent death are due to lung, breast and colon cancers¹. Cancer is accompanied by abnormalities in immune function which can be demonstrated by skin testing against common antigens and by examination of Lymphocyte response to mitogenic stimulation in vitro. Moreover in general the extent of cancer correlates well with the degree of immune dysfunction. There are two very significant questions concerning immuno-suppression in cancer patients which continue to be unanswered: (1) What is the mechanism or mechanisms of inhibition? (2) Is the immuno-suppression merely secondary to malignant state or could it play a etiologic role¹? Experimental data have implicated defects in both T & B cell function as well as abnormalities of macrophages in etiology of cancer patients.

Psycho-Social Effects

The diagnosis of cancer immediately raises in the minds of patients and his relations a host of questions. Two important psycho-social problems are of (1) helplessness and (2) loss of control over the situation. This comprises of economic aspect and loss of personal control over one's activity and future life. Besides these there is a fear of pain, separation from beloved ones, void of loneliness and a fear of abandonment. All these act as stressors. Reactions which are commonly observed are of anger, denial, withdrawal and depression.

Further the response of the patient's family to illness and the patient's

own response to illness also plays an important role in the prognosis of the disease. Does the patient's psycho-social attitude have a role in the causation of disease and its treatment? It is a controversial and complex question. There is evidence, which is contested, that psychological stress can predispose to systemic illness by producing anxiety or depression¹. However, cancer still remains second only to cardiac disease as a cause of death in USA. This raises a very vital question as to what steps should be taken to decrease the incidence of cancer in the world. The important risk factors identified are cigarette smoking and tobacco chewing (in India), atmospheric pollution by smoke and nuclear fall-out, low fibre diet and psychological stress. Pollution of the atmosphere and cigarette smoking are being tackled at Government level by most of the countries of the world but it appears that more stringent methods would be required to decrease the level of pollutants in the atmosphere. Importance of high fibre diet in the prevention of colon cancer has also been highlighted through media in most countries of the world.

The second most important risk factor for cancer is psychological stress. At the Holistic Health Conference in Toronto in March 1977, Carl Simonton² outlined a psychosomatic model to describe Mind-Body interdependence for the development of cancer. He said that, "Cancer is to be understood as a systemic disease, it involves body and mind. This psychosomatic model is based on surveillance theory of cancer which means every organism occasionally produces cancer cells. In a healthy human being immune system recognizes it and destroys them. In case immune system is weak for some reasons or the other, then the cancerous cells will reproduce and tumor will form". So the important question as to what inhibits immune system still remains to be answered.

As early as in 1970 Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi³, founder of the science of Sahaja Yoga, enunciated a hypothesis for human sickness and its cure. According to her divine vision she found that central heart chakra (Anahata-Chakra) described in ancient oriental literature like Upanishads etc is responsible for controlling the activity of immune system in the human beings. It helps in the formation of anti-bodies³. Secondly she said that the left Svadhisthana is responsible for looking after the functions of spleen⁴. Whenever these chakras get affected, it leads to illness but when they get badly damaged one could suffer from a dreaded disease like cancer³. The genesis of the cancer of different parts of the body depends on the permutation and combination of the involvement of other subtle chakras as well. Sometimes when both left and right sides are used too much one builds up the forces of eleven Rudras (destructive powers) in the head. These are the eleven destructive powers. Cancer patients had been seen to

have Ekadasha-Rudra problem in very advanced cases⁴.

Further, Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi in her lectures abroad and in India emphasized that the central Anahata Chakra (Heart) plays a very important role during childhood, particularly in determining their future health prospects. Explaining it in detail she pointed out that fatherhood problems in childhood invariably results in the affliction of the right heart chakra which causes Asthma³. In case the central heart chakra gets afflicted then one suffers from a feeling of insecurity. This affliction occurs when children do not get love and security from the parents or if parents have been fighting amongst themselves and beating each other in the presence of children or children are beaten occasionally by the parents without their genuine fault, then their central heart chakra gets disturbed or blocked. A blocked central heart can give rise to blood cancer (Leukemia)³.

The second point which Her Holiness Mataji pointed out was that cancer is mostly a left sided disease³⁻⁴. As mentioned earlier on our left side we have Ida-Nadi. It represents one's emotions and past life. When this side becomes over-active due to too much thinking of the past events of life, or getting too emotional on small matters of life, we call such a person left sided. The main symptoms of such left sided person are that he prefers isolation, keeps on pondering over the past, is introvert, remains afraid, feels insecure, feels helpless, prefers darkness and remains depressed. In extreme situations such cases are largely prone to develop cancer⁵.

We know that emotional stress produces important changes in human body. It suppresses the immune system and also inhibits the production of hormones leading to hormonal imbalance. These factors are responsible for increased production of abnormal cells. Development of cancer involves a number of interdependent psychological and biological processes. So one has to identify (a) Major stressors in life (b) To develop a positive attitude. Once hope and anticipation are generated the organism translates them into biological processes that begin to restore balance and to revitalize the immune system. Once immune system becomes stronger the disease regresses.

Our observation that cancer patients invariably have a left sided personality configuration has been corroborated recently by the observations of Lawrence-Leshan⁶ and Milton Kaplan⁷. Lawrence Leshan⁶ studied more than 500 patients of cancer and identified the following significant components in their life histories: feelings of isolation and neglect, despair during youth, difficult interpersonal relationship, loss of important relationship which played a leading role in the life of an individual, leading to suppressed feeling of hurt, anger and despair. This basic pattern has been confirmed as typical of cancer patients.

Further, experiments of Milton Kaplan⁷ seem to be of great value in this connection. Two groups of mice were subjected to mild shocks. One group had a device to stop the shock by pressing a lever in the cage, whereas the other group had no means to control the shock. Both the groups had equal number of shocks. Tumors induced on to the mice grew much more rapidly and were not rejected in the group of mice which had no device to avoid the shock. The group which had a device to avoid shocks rejected the tumor. Further it was seen that immune function was much depressed in the group of mice which had no device to control shock. The other group of mice with a control device to avoid shocks had almost normal immune function.

These experiments provide sufficient evidence in favour of our observations that the people who are left sided and develop an attitude of helplessness have greater chances of suffering from cancer.

Another aspect of Sahaja Yoga hypothesis emphasises that there is an ideal behavioural pattern for optimal functioning of each of the seven subtle chakras. Whenever there is a departure from the ideal behavioural pattern it leads to disturbed function which results in a disease. For example if one's right heart gets afflicted during childhood due to fatherhood problem then it may give rise to Bronchial Asthma⁸ in childhood or in adulthood.

Fatherhood problem means strained relations with the father, or death of the father in childhood, or lack of security from father or that father had been too hard on the mother or they had been quarrelling in front of the child. All such events could be responsible for the catch in the right heart. This may cause Bronchial Asthma in childhood⁸ but if somehow one escapes then it occurs during adulthood. Doctors don't pay any importance to this in the etiology of Bronchial Asthma. However, recently our observations⁸ have been confirmed by the work of Carolin Thomas⁹, a psychiatrist of John Hopkins University. She did an extensive study on 1300 medical students and found that those students who had a positive relationship with their parents during childhood had self-esteem, lack of depression and ability to face stress with optimistic outlook. They tended to be healthy as adults, whereas those who had poor relationship/rapport and an attitude of personal avoidance tended to be less healthy as adults. These students were three to four times more cancer prone as compared to others.

In Sahaja Yoga after Self-Realisation one feels love for everyone without lust and greed. This is God's Love within us. It gives a unique comfort and regenerates the cells. As such it has a unique power of healing. Our observations in this connection gain further support and strength from the work of well known Harvard Researcher David McClelland¹⁰. He demonstrated that on showing a film of Mother Teresa tending the sick to a group of students, it was found that the students had an enhanced immune

function as evidenced by elevated levels of antibodies in their blood. It is argued that positive emotions reinforce our inborn need for inter-connectedness or oneness. Loving care reached the level of the sub-conscious mind of the students, thereby enhancing the response of their immune system (McClelland 1985).

Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi has been repeatedly and categorically emphasising several times since 1970 that practice of Sahaja Yoga could cure cancer patients³. Sahaja Yoga has enormous power and can change us profoundly. When actualization of Kundalini awakening takes place in the Limbic system of our brain one transcends into super-consciousness which fulfils one with joy and immense peace. One becomes fearless, gains tremendous confidence and radiates love and peace. It is responsible for healing. The enlightened mind plays an important part in protecting and healing the body. Now it is well known that mind actually sends out impulses which help in the release of neurotransmitters that control the functioning of immune system to surround and destroy viruses and cancer cells. This is an important part of our body's subtle and complex means of producing healing. People can heal themselves significantly by doing Sahaja Yoga¹¹.

In Sahaja Yoga literature it has been reported that two cases of cancer got cured completely¹². In other cases the quality of the life of patients got much improved and they survived for a longer time than predicted by the doctors. This strongly suggests that Sahaja Yoga affects the psyche of the patients and nullifies the effect of psychological stress as already confirmed by medical research, possibly by activating the immune system. That is why it has been responsible for the complete cure of two patients. The enlightened attitude and thoughts after Sahaja Yoga are supposed to activate the immune system which destroys cancer cells.

Results similar to those of ours have been reported by Dr. David Spiegel¹³ from the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences at Stanford who worked on 86 women with metastatic breast cancer in two groups. One group had drugs. The other group had drugs plus group therapy sessions. On an average the women who went to group therapy lived nearly twice as long after the study began as compared to the group which did not participate in group therapy. Dr. Spiegel¹³ reported that cancer growth disappeared completely in one patient.

In the past, the immune system was thought to be beyond our control but now medical researches have shown that our thoughts, attitudes and perceptions affect immune system to heal the body. There are intricate connections between central nervous system and immune system. However, one question remains to be answered. Why in other patients tumor

(cancer) did not disappear? The reason most probably could be that most of the cases who did not recover completely came in advanced stages of cancer. However further researches with a larger sample are required for more information in this connection.

Our hypothesis as mentioned above gains further strength on the basis of the work of Dr. Robert-Ader¹⁴ who demonstrated that immune system actually has the ability to learn and to be conditioned to react automatically to life events. In one study rats were given immuno-suppressive drugs and at the same time a sweetening agent. Afterwards just the sweetening agent inhibited the immune-function. Based on this it is postulated that when one experiences life events that have been associated with illness in the past, their immune system can learn to suppress itself. In 1980 doctors actually discovered nerve endings in the Thymus, Lymph nodes, spleen and bone-marrow. It demonstrated that mental state affects health. Recently it has been discovered that W.B.C. on their surface have got receptors and that they bind complex-molecules such as hormones, neurotransmitters and neuropeptides. Neuropeptide compounds are produced by brain and they are natural opiates or pain-killers and better known as Endorphins. These are found in high concentrations in the Limbic system and other areas known to be involved in pain transmission and processing of emotions. The endorphins have been credited with increased pain tolerance during child birth. It is postulated that endorphins might be produced in response to Self-Realisation because in our ancient literature there is a mention that realised sages could undergo major surgeries without anaesthesia and felt no pain at all.

These endorphins activate the immune system to increase the natural killer cell activity and also increase their ability to replicate and attack cancer cells¹⁴. From this it is concluded that prolonged psychological stress basically causes a decrease in the immune function, particularly decrease in Lymphocyte and helper T. cell activity¹⁴. Positive thoughts and reverie state has been shown to increase natural killer cell activity and increase in antibody levels (Michaels Samuel)¹⁵.

The influence of thoughts and imagery has been experimentally demonstrated by a renowned physiologist Edmund Jacobson¹⁶, who demonstrated that when people imagine body movement, the motor nerves actually fire, and produce micromovements which have been picked up by EMG. Based on imagery exercises, athletes can increase their performance. Imagery has been shown to have a communication between brain and immune system. Dr. Howard Hall¹⁷ a psychologist demonstrated that when people imagine their WBC increasing in number they were successful. Their WBC count increased.

Similar results as mentioned above have been reported by John Schenider¹⁸ who did an experiment in which subjects imagined a particular WBC, i.e. neutrophil left the blood stream to fight bacteria. Remarkably they found that the neutrophil blood levels dropped but not the levels of other WBC. In Sahaja Yoga the consciousness is changed to a state of super consciousness through which one could promote self-healing. Everyone is capable of doing this. The whole process is based on subtle technology. The results are consistent and verifiable. We have seen this in men and women from varying backgrounds, different races, from all parts of the world, different economic groups, different professions and ages. Depressed and anxious patients after Sahaja Yoga session leave with a feeling of confidence and positive attitude. Feeling of helplessness vanishes.

Sahaja Yoga practice can lead to wonderful experiences of cosmic consciousness. One gets enlightened. However, in the beginning the changes are slow and subtle to be perceived but with practice one attains thoughtless awareness and subtle cool breeze starts flowing from the palms. One attains a balance and one no longer reacts strongly to outside stresses. There is also greater production of endorphins (Misra¹⁹). One can avoid the surge of frustrated anger and a sense of helplessness. This avoids depression of the immune system and thereby could prevent the evolution of cancer in an individual who practises Sahaja Yoga regularly.

Many cases of cancer have been cured in Sahaja Yoga but their records have not been maintained as there was no need to do the same. According to Shri Mataji Sahaja Yoga basically is for Self-Realisation and not for simply curing diseases. As a by-product of Self-Realisation one gets one's healing. This is to be kept in mind. While writing this book an attempt was made to collect the data of the cases who have been cured of cancer. It is not possible to collect and mention about all the cases in a small book of this size. However the experience of cancer cure narrated by Mrs. K.O. Connel Canterbury, England, and of Linda Pearce of Cape Town, South Africa, are being mentioned in their own words.

(1) Mrs. Kay O' Connel born in 1959, a housewife living in Canterbury, England, tells of her experience of cancer cure through Sahaja Yoga. This is narrated below in her own words :

"I received Self-Realisation in 1979. After some months I became pregnant but had a miscarriage. Eventually it was discovered that there was a tumour in my womb. I went to Charing Cross Hospital in London in which they specialize in the type of cancer I had. They started chemotherapy treatment. By the third week of treatment I had severe side effects and unbearable pain. Enough was enough and to the horror of doctors I got myself discharged from the Hospital and started doing Sahaja Yoga regularly.

I wrote to Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi about this. Shortly afterwards I was invited to spend sometime at Shri Mataji's house at Brompton Square in London. Shri Mataji worked on me everyday for a few days. After two days the colour had come back into my cheeks and the darkness around the eyes disappeared. Shri Mataji told me that I have been cured. I felt transformed. However I returned to the Hospital for a check up and to show them the results. The doctors were surprised and attributed the cure to luck.

(2) Another interesting case of cancer cure has been reported from Linda Pearce of Cape Town, South Africa who was living with her mother in England at the time of this illness. The story is mentioned in words of Linda Pearce:

"I returned from India in June '86 after four years of absence to find my mother looking grey in face and very aged. She told me that her local G.P. and the specialist from Cheltenham Hospital strongly suspected Lung Cancer. Somebody told Shri Mataji that my mother had cancer and she worked on her.

I also gave vibrations to my mother. After sometime my mother went for Biopsy in Oxford very frightened but due to grace of Shri Mataji there was no trace of cancer. The specialist was amazed. He could not believe it. My mother threatened to sue both her G.P. and the local specialist from Cheltenham Hospital for telling that she had cancer. However, realising that she has been cured by Sahaja Yoga she dropped the idea to sue the doctors.

(3) Mrs. Barbara Ann Efstathiou born on the 27th of July, 1943, in Brisbane, Australia, describes her encounter with Metastatic cancer of the bones in her own words in a letter dated 25.6.92 as below :

"In July 1989 my left breast felt hard like a rock and arrangements were made in a hospital dealing with breast cancer at Athens. I was examined by a very prominent surgeon and on 20th Aug. 1989, I was operated upon and further treatment was indicated in the letter by Dr. Furnival, in April 1990. I experienced problems with my menses and in August, 1990, I experienced severe pains in my hip area after a walk. I also experienced difficulty in walking and felt pain in lower right rib cage and in the pelvic area. On 7th of September, 1990 the results of tests indicated Cancer. Embryonic Antigen was at a value of 18.7 with maximum allowable value of 5.0. Besides this other tests were done and finally scanning of the bones verified the metastasis in skull, spine, ribs, and pelvic bone as suggested by Dr. C.M. Furnival. I was given Radiation therapy. Further chemotherapy was not advised because of my diabetes problem.

My condition was deteriorating and my husband was advised that I am a terminal case with only a few months of life remaining for me. In the mean

time my husband had learned the Sahaja Yoga techniques and started applying them frequently on me. Additionally other Sahaja Yogis were helping me. My reaction to pain had diminished substantially. In December, 1990 I visited my birth-place Brisbane, Australia, to visit family members. Here I was examined at the Royal Brisbane Hospital on 7th December, 1990. The diagnosis was confirmed and they opined that Radiation treatment and chemotherapy did not help in the prevention of bone metastasis and subcutaneous tumours on the head and throat. Some medicines were prescribed to ease the symptoms as there is no cure for cancer. On 27th December, some Sahaja Yogi medical doctors worked on me. Gradually I started feeling better and the subcutaneous tumours started receding.

About middle of January 1991 my husband started in full earnest the practice of Sahaja Yoga and started working on me quite frequently. All I can say is that it is now 22 months from August 1990 when metastasis was first felt and I am doing well. I would like to mention that it was my husband who had the faith that I would be able to push back the shadow of death, not me, so the question of faith healing may be eliminated. Indeed I am the beneficiary of Sahaja Yoga practice in its pure form. Secondly my husband could predict on many occasions that subcutaneous tumour will decrease in size by next day and it happened. Finally I would like to tell that last September in 1991, I developed a lump in my other breast and felt very upset. Vibrations were given by my husband who is a Sahaja Yogi and indeed in about two weeks time the fatty lump disappeared completely. This is the true account of my encounter with cancer and my efforts are to contain it through the Sahaja Yoga practice.

Role of Sahaja Yoga in the Treatment and Prevention of Some Heart Diseases

According to World Health Organisation (WHO) statistics it is estimated that approximately 12 million deaths occur every year from cardiovascular diseases throughout the world. Further this figure would be much higher by the turn of the century. One of the commonest cardio-vascular disease responsible for this is high blood pressure and it is also one of the most important public health problems in developed and developing countries. The disease is famous as a silent killer because symptoms appear very late and by that time an individual is already a victim to its harmful effects. In India it is estimated that there are 50 million hypertensive patients, half of them do not even know that they have high blood pressure¹. Twenty-five percent of the world population is supposed to be in the grip of this disorder. In 90 to 95% patients the etiology is not known and hence the question of its prevention and cure is largely uncertain². There is sufficient evidence that psychological stress may be the root cause of this disorder. This presumption is based on the patients' history and is the experience of most of the cardiologists.

The progressive increase in the incidence of hypertension in big cities where life style is very hectic further gives credence to the above supposition. Whenever an individual is not able to cope with the stresses and strains of life, there is breakdown of adaptative mechanism leading to various types of diseases. Another common heart disorder is Ischaemic heart disease. Ischaemic heart disease (disease due to less supply of blood to the heart) is a single major cause of premature cardio-vascular deaths in most of the industrialised countries of the world. The highest rates reported in males (35-74 years) are from Finland, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, England and USA. In Japan the rate is one-sixth of that in USA³. Myocardial infarction (heart attack as we call) is also one of the commonest disease

in hospitalized patients in western countries. In USA approximately 1.5 million cases of myocardial infarction occur every year and 35% of those who suffer invariably succumb to this dreaded disease. Extensive epidemiologic studies convey the impression that upper socio-economic class that has adopted the culture of the western industrialized countries suffer more from Ischaemic heart disease (I.H.D) and Myocardial infarction (heart attacks) in comparison to lower socio economic group. The available data suggests that psychological stress in the upper socio- economic class may be the reason for greater incidence of these disorders⁴. The important question is as to why there is more psychological stress in upper socio-economic group. The reason is their hectic life style since morning till late in the night. Further such people focus their attention too much on planning the future policies and methods for obtaining maximum efficiency. As a result they work like machines to get the desired results within a specified deadline. In case results are not as expected then they go into frustration which is one of the factors for psychological stress. On the top of it sudden financial constraints, Income Tax problems, Court cases, trouble with union leaders, industrial disputes etc. add fuel to the fire and when one is not able to cope with the situation there is adaptative breakdown leading to various psychosomatic disorders. The other causes of emotional stress are death of a spouse, or of a child, divorce proceedings, sex difficulties, unemployment, problem with the Boss, personal injury, financial crisis, retirement etc. Now there is a valid clinical impression that psychic or emotional stress is associated with precipitation of overt Ischaemic heart disease and sudden death.

This hypothesis of psychological stress as one of the important risk factors for the Ischaemic Heart Disease (I.H.D.) and Myocardial Infarction has been tested in the west on experimental model. The experiments were done on spontaneously hypertensive rats. These animals showed exaggerated arteriolar constriction response to psychological stress and if they were shielded from such stimuli the rise in blood pressure is delayed and ultimately the evolution of hypertension is modified. Thus this is the clearest evidence to suggest that stress plays an important role in the causation of high blood pressure which is a predominant risk factor for the causation of Ischaemic Heart Disease (I.H.D) and Myocardial Infarction (M.I.)

Further it has been shown recently that blood cholesterol which is responsible for narrowing of the coronary arteries also increases when one has to face psychological stress for a long duration. Further some experiments on dogs have shown that when dogs were exposed to behavioural stress there was decreased blood flow to the coronary arteries of the heart

due to activation of neurally mediated coronary alpha-receptors leading to constriction of coronary arteries which causes less blood supply to heart. As a result of this one is liable to suffer from Angina due to Ischaemic heart disease or it could lead to Myocardial infarction.

In another experiment it was demonstrated that when psychological stress was given to rats they developed high blood pressure due to arteriolar constriction.

From this it has become absolutely clear that psychological stress is one of the important risk factors for the causation of high blood pressure, Ischaemic heart disease and Myocardial infarction. The other risk factors are (a) intake of high quantities of saturated fats (high cholesterol diet) (b) cigarette smoking (c) high B.P. (d) obesity (e) physical inactivity. It is now well recognised that cigarette smoking causes hardening of blood vessels (aethero sclerosis). If this smoking is eliminated or reduced then it clearly decreases the risk of developing aethero sclerosis. Statistical evidence supports a mean increase of about 70% in death rate and three to five fold increase in the risk for Ischaemic heart disease in men who smoke one pack of cigarettes per day compared with non- smokers. Those who stop smoking show a prompt decline in risk and may reach the risk level of non smokers as early as one year after abstenation. In Framingham study, Ischaemic heart disease in middle aged men with blood pressure exceeding 160/95 was more than five times than in persons having normal blood pressure i.e. 140/90 less.

Most of the cardiologists feel that in younger patients smoking is one of the commonest risk factors. In fact, this was found greater among those who smoke about twenty cigarettes a day. It is regrettable that smoking is very common in student community and there is no sincere effort to stop it at this stage. Moreover the concept of adopting preventive measures for the control of heart diseases just does not exist at all in most of the states of India and also in other developing countries.

Dr. Paul K. Whelton⁵, Director, Epidemiology and Clinical Research at John Hopkins Medical Institute in USA told recently in an International Symposium on Preventive Cardiology at AIIMS, New Delhi, that there was epidemic of heart diseases in United States in 1960s but due to extensive preventive measures there is a progressive decline in the incidence of heart diseases after 1973. In India, he felt the trend of heart disorders is increasing fast and the only way to contain it would be possible if people adopted preventive measures to reduce the risk factors. The Government has taken certain measures against smoking in public places and government offices but the results are not very encouraging.

Smoking is a pernicious habit and one finds it very difficult to leave it

altogether. Recently while analysing the data on behavioural changes in persons who have been doing Sahaja Yoga for two to five years, it has been observed that 90% subjects left smoking altogether in a varying period which ranged from three months to a year. The remaining 10% subjects mentioned that they actually did not feel the cool breeze while doing Sahaja Yoga Meditation. The stage of thoughtless awareness also could not be achieved.

Besides various reasons cited, they could not be regular in their practice of Sahaja Yoga as well and that is the reason why these 10% could not leave smoking.

In view of this Sahaja Yoga seems to be of unique value in helping people get rid of their smoking habit. This could be explained scientifically as well. As told earlier Sahaja Yoga is responsible for awakening of the primordial dormant energy (Kundalini) present in every individual⁶. Actualisation of Kundalini awakening takes place in the Limbic area (Sahasrara) of the brain which gets enlightened. As such behavioural changes occur in an individual due to which one develops aversion to adharmic ways of life. It is well known to medical scientists that Limbic area is responsible for controlling the emotions and behaviour of an individual. This explains as to why after Sahaja Yoga an individual leaves smoking and drinking alcohol on their own. As a matter of fact, nobody asks them to leave it. The effect is so profound that people develop aversion to the smell of cigarette smoke and sometimes it is to such an extent that they cannot even bear a person who is smoking or drinking near them.

Secondly according to Sahaja Yoga hypothesis, Left Vishuddhi Chakra, Left Anahata Chakra and Right Svadhisthana are usually involved in an individual who is prone to develop heart disorders⁷. When Kundalini gets awakened by doing Sahaja Yoga, it clears all the chakras of the body and thereby helps in the prevention of heart diseases.

The other risk factor is high blood pressure in an individual and this could be effectively tackled by Sahaja Yoga. As told earlier it has been scientifically established by research study on patients of high blood pressure that Sahaja Yoga has been found statistically effective as an adjuvant therapy in patients of essential hypertension⁸. Further it was found that the patients could keep their blood pressure in normal range simply by doing Sahaja Yoga for 20 minutes a day.

As such it is argued that since psychological stress, high blood pressure and smoking are important risk factors in the causation of Ischaemic heart disease and myocardial infarction, it is logical to hypothesize that if an individual incorporates Sahaja Yoga practice in his daily routine for twenty minutes a day, it would go a long way in preventing the important risk factors and thereby these heart diseases^{9&10}.

Cases of Healing through Sahaja Yoga

Many cases of essential hypertension and Ischaemic heart disease have been cured by adopting Sahaja Yoga life style. As mentioned earlier, the effects of Sahaja Yoga on patients of essential hypertension has been found to be statistically significant and Sahaja Yoga has been found very helpful as an adjuvant therapy. Ischaemic heart disease cases also showed a remarkable improvement by the practice of Sahaja Yoga.

A very interesting case of Ischaemic heart disease which was declared by the Cardiology Department of a renowned hospital for a coronary bypass surgery got completely cured by the grace of Shri Mataji through Sahaja Yoga is mentioned for the information of the readers.

(1) Mr. Bahri Malhotara, a Pune-based industrialist told the delegates at the Conference on Preventive Medicine Through Sahaja Yoga in 1990, at Pune, about his own personal experience of Ischaemic heart disease cure through Sahaja Yoga. The experience is narrated below in his own words :

"I was a patient of Angina and doctors diagnosed me as a case of Ischaemic heart disease. For sometime medicines were effective but afterwards the condition further deteriorated and so I was advised to consult some eminent cardiologists at Bombay. Accordingly, I went to one of the best private hospital for a thorough cardiological check up as advised by the specialist. After seeing the reports of coronary Angiography and other investigations, I was advised by the cardiologist to go for a coronary bypass surgery.

In view of this, all the preliminary arrangements for the surgery in United States were made and I had to fly within a week when some near ones insisted on me to meet Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi as her 'Sahaja Yoga' has got unique curing effect. I was very hesitant to believe in such things and thought that it would simply be a waste of time since eminent cardiologists of Bombay had given a verdict for coronary bypass surgery. Anyway due to insistence of my near ones I agreed to meet Shri Mataji. Fortunately she was at Pune and somehow we could manage to get an appointment. I told Shri Mataji about my problem. Shri Mataji raised my Kundalini, smiled and said "Now relax, you are alright"

This did not convince me. Moreover I did feel some pain while leaving her place. So next day I again went to her and narrated the problem. Shri Mataji said "Mr Malhotra you would be alright. Have faith and do Sahaja Yoga". Then she said "you can get all the investigations done again and see what your doctor says." Accordingly I went to Bombay for a repeat check up. All investigations including coronary angiography were done. The reports were shown to the same cardiologist who advised coronary bypass

surgery. The Doctor was stunned! To his surprise there was now no blockage in the coronary arteries! He said, "Mr Malhotara you are alright and now there is no need for coronary bypass surgery. What treatment you took! It is showing miraculous recovery." I said, "It is the grace of Shri Mataji and Sahaja Yoga". I was so happy. I could run without any difficulty.

(2) A report received from Luciano-Ghirardi born in 1928, from Rome, Italy, who had myocardial infarction, is mentioned below in her own words:

"I spent my childhood and my youth in Paris. I had to leave for Italy in 1941 because of the war and here I completed my studies. I worked as civil servant in Italian Foreign Affairs Ministry and in May, 1986, took retirement due to heart problems. Earlier in February 1986 just after my return from Moscow where I had been working, I had an attack of myocardial infarction while sitting in an arm chair and reading a newspaper. I lost consciousness and came round after 12 hours later, to find myself in the I.C.U of a hospital. I made a steady progress and after 40 days in the hospital returned home. I retired from my work as declared disabled. I paid four visits a year to a cardiologist and lived under permanent medical care. I remember the doctor telling me that I was very lucky to be alive. In this difficult year I got my Self-Realisation through a Sahaja Yogi. I kept on doing Sahaja Yoga regularly and about a year later I went to see the specialist. After ECG etc he was astonished. The sign of scar from the attack was no longer visible in the ECG. Since then he told me that I no longer need further cardiological check-ups."

Behavioural Modification Through Sahaja Yoga A Strategy for Prevention of AIDS

The Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) was originally defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as the disease which is indicative of defect in cell mediated immunity. The examples cited for such diseases were Kaposi-sarcoma, a life threatening opportunistic infection of *Pneumocystis Carinii* Pneumonia. AIDS is caused by human immuno deficiency virus (HIV). This virus is Lymphocytotropic and selectively infects human T Lymphocytes.

The AIDS was first discovered in 1981, but it has since then reached epidemic proportions with over 38,000 cases reported in USA alone. It is estimated that 1 to 2 million Americans are already infected with the HIV¹⁻⁴. In addition, the Public Health Service recently predicted that approximately 270,000 cases of AIDS will have developed by 1991⁵. Worldwide, thousands of Europeans and possibly millions of Africans are also infected with HIV¹. AIDS did not exist in USA till 1970. In 1981 CDC announced two cases in homosexuals at New York and Los Angeles. Since then the number of cases started increasing drastically. By mid 1986 approximately 22,000 cases had been reported in the United States alone. The disease has taken the shape of a global epidemic. Sexual contact is the major mode of transmission of the AIDS retro virus. Transmission can also occur via blood, as in individuals who share contaminated needles for I.V. drug abuse or for blood transfusions. Mothers may transmit the virus perinatally to their infants.

Among adults in USA 73% cases are among homosexuals or bisexual men (mainly in New York, San Fransisco and Los Angeles); 17% are among I.V.drug abusers, 1% in haemophilics, 2% amongst those who received blood transfusion, 1% in heterosexual partners and 7% into none of the above categories. Except for sexual transmission, there is no evidence

that the virus could spread among family members living in the same household with AIDS patients.

In just six years after the initial description of the clinical syndrome and four years after the first detection of the etiologic agent, much has been learned about AIDS and HIV. Seldom has medical science progressed so quickly and yet the AIDS epidemic continues unabated¹. An acute illness occurring three to six weeks after primary infection has been documented in a few patients. It is characterised by fevers, rigors arthralgias, myalgias, maculo papular rash, urticaria, abdominal cramps and diarrhoea. Patients with full-blown syndrome demonstrate one of a number of patterns of disease. About 50% patients develop *Pneumocystis Carinii* pneumonia. Patients complain of prolonged i.e. six to eight weeks of breathlessness, dry cough and inability to take a deep breath². Fever is almost invariable. Other conditions could be bacterial pneumonia, fungi infection, Kaposi Sarcoma and Lymphoid intestinal pneumonia. Gastro intestinal and hepatic manifestations could be varied. It may start with oro-pharyngeal discomfort or retrosternal chest pain, difficulty in swallowing, ulceration of gastro and duodenal mucosa. Diarrhoea, mal-absorption and weight-loss is a common symptom in patients with chronic HIV infection. Large deep ulcers of perianal area are diagnostic of AIDS. Hepatitis in patient with AIDS may present with fever, abdominal pain, hepatomegaly and abnormal liver function tests³.

Neurological Manifestations:

The disorders of the nervous system most commonly seen in patients with AIDS are encephalitis, meningitis, cerebral space occupying lesions, demyelination, retinitis, myelopathy and peripheral neuropathy. The common complaints of encephalitis patients are loss of balance, forgetfulness, loss of concentration and lethargy. In cases of meningitis headache is universally present in all the patients. The other symptoms are fever, neck stiffness, nausea and vomiting. Sometimes, unusual demyelination disease is seen in AIDS patients, which causes aphasia, blindness, hemiparesis and ataxia⁴.

Strategies for Prevention⁵ :

(a) General health education, information and counselling, (b) Screening of blood and organ donations, (c) Surveillance and (d) Behavioural modifications

Health Education and Health Information is one of the major

preventive strategies for reducing the spread of HIV throughout the world. Although research continues there appears at present no cure or vaccine. The pioneers of health education campaigns in the USA and UK have voluntary groups, initially directing their efforts towards homosexual men. Following these, substantial changes have taken place in sex behaviour and also reduction in the incidence of HIV infection. Clinicians should take the lead to practise preventive medicine and respond both sympathetically and with sound practical information.

Preventive Sexual Transmission

The epidemiology of HIV infection in UK indicates that people who take part or have taken part in particular activities are currently at much higher risk than others. These are homosexuals and bisexual men, intravenous drug users, haemophiliacs, the sexual partners of these individuals and those who have had sexual contacts in parts of Africa. Even though the prevalence among those without a recognized risk factor is very low, it requires sexual contact with only one infected person for transmission to occur. The sensible message for everyone should be that "in order to reduce the risk of AIDS one should reduce the number of sexual partners". Or should know about his partners, previous sexual history and drug use history. Always use a condom. The HIV sero positive individual may wish to consider bringing his or her regular sexual partners for counselling and testing.

Preventive Transmission in Those Who Inject Drugs

Stop Using Drugs and Stop Sharing Needles : This is done by stopping the sharing of needles and other paraphernalia of drug use (syringes, mixing bowls and spoons) used in injecting works. Ideally the best prevention is to stop using drugs. Sahaja Yoga can help in it in a long way. It has been seen that people who do Sahaja Yoga regularly, leave smoking, drinking and drugs.

HIV Antibody Testing : All blood donors should be screened for HIV antibody with appropriate counselling. All suspected positives should be discarded.

Screening of Blood and Organ Donations : All factor VIII preparation for Haemophilics should be heat-treated to destroy any active virus. Donors of organs and semen must be screened for HIV antibody.

Preventing Vertical Transmission : Women with risk factor for infection should be offered counselling and HIV antibody testing if they

want it in early stages of pregnancy. Therapeutic termination of pregnancy could be offered on grounds of risk to foetus. Pregnancy may increase the risk of AIDS progression in the mother. Sero positive women should also be advised against breast feeding their infants, since one such case has been reported.

Preventing Transmission by Blood, Blood Products and Organ Donations : All blood donations should be screened for HIV antibody. All suspected or confirmed positive blood is discarded. All factor VIII for haemophiliacs is now heat-treated to destroy any active virus. Donors of semen and organs should be screened for HIV antibody before organs are used.

A Call for War Against AIDS

Prof. Luc Montagnier, discoverer of AIDS virus, recently pleaded for a massive international effort with active public involvement for preventive care against the disease. He cautioned against any complacency in the fight against the disease. As per WHO forecast, by the year 2000 AD the majority of AIDS cases would be in the third world and that too largely due to heterosexual contact. The AIDS infection would remain unknown unless widespread screening for AIDS antibodies is undertaken in developing countries.

Foreign Travel⁵ : In central Africa, transmission of HIV is through heterosexual activity and sex should be avoided while travelling abroad, as at home one should be reminded of risks of casual sexual encounters particularly in areas where HIV is highly prevalent. Casual heterosexual encounters are very risky and should be avoided. Travellers should be reminded that in many parts of the world screening of blood for HIV before blood transfusion is not carried out.

Behavioural Modification Through Sahaja Yoga

Sahaja Yoga as described earlier in details is a method of awakening the primordial dormant energy (Kundalini) which is present in 3-1/2 coils at the base of spine in the triangular bone called sacrum. Besides this each of us has a subtle body which has seven important energy centres (Chakras) and three important Nadis which are known as Ida, Pingla and Sushumna. Ida is on left side and corresponds to left sympathetic chain, Pingla is on right side and represents right sympathetic chain and Sushumna is represented by spinal cord and corresponds to parasympathetic nervous system. The seven centres (Chakras) are Muladhara, Svadhisthana, Nabhi, Anahata,

Vishuddhi, Ajna and Sahasrara Chakra. When Kundalini rises from its abode, it ascends up and clears the chakras on her way to Sahasrara, "Lotus of a thousand petals" on the top of the head. When Kundalini pierces Sahasrara chakra a sort of cool breeze is felt on the hands. This has been called as 'Chaitanya Lahri' by Adi Guru Shankaracharya. This subtle cool breeze in Sahaja Yoga language is called as vibrations⁶. At this stage Kundalini makes contact with the unconscious (All pervading power) and one attains superconsciousness. One becomes capable of knowing about everybody on a vibrational basis. This is due to the fact that one's own consciousness merges with the collective consciousness and that is the reason one is able to perceive the vibrational state of another person⁶.

Once an individual gets Self-Realisation the inner transformation starts working and divine qualities are exhibited by an individual. One experiences improved physical and mental health and old habits of smoking, drinking alcohol and sexual encounters with casual partners disappear in due course of time. In a survey study on people who joined Sahaja Yoga practice it was found that in some cases, the above vices disappeared in a few days, but usually in three to six months period about 90% people have been able to leave these vices. As regards sexual encounters with casual partners it is prohibited in Sahaja Yoga. Muladhara Chakra situated below Kundalini (Fig.8) is one of the most delicate chakras presided by Lord Ganesha who informs mother Kundalini about the right time of awakening. A sense of chastity is essential for the growth of this Chakra. Adultery, pornography, tantric practices, flirtation, lustful attention spoil this chakra. AIDS is supposed to be due to bad Muladhara Chakra⁷. Even Christ said, "Thou shall not have adulterous Eyes". This is very important. However, sex should not be suppressed as it is a physiological desire. For this an individual should get married and should have sex with his wife alone. Wisdom lies in the life-time marriage with one lady because marriage is a collective sanction of the society and has in-built security essences for the proper growth of the children. With sensible married life and following the normal codes of morality as per Dharmic codes described in sacred scriptures the Muladhara becomes strong and gets awakened by Sahaja Yoga technique⁸. The awakened Muladhara Chakra brings forth wisdom, strength and inner sense of right direction and one cannot think of casual sexual encounters. Not only that one even cannot have adulterous eyes, because immediately it will produce heat or burning sensation in the heel of the palms. One becomes careful and clears his Chakra to come back in balance which is essential for keeping good health and to be free from sexually transmitted diseases which are caused by bad Muladhara Chakra. A shift of consciousness in this direction has already started in about 52 countries of

the world who are requesting their people to adopt Sahaja Yoga lifestyle to prevent the spread of dreaded diseases like AIDS which is spreading fast all over the world.

This is going to usher the beginning of a New Age. With this there is a possibility of overall change for a new paradigm, a new way of viewing life and a new type of understanding on this planet. Sahaja Yoga prescribed ages ago in Markandeya Purana and now rediscovered by Her Holiness Mataji Nirmala Devi in 1970 is an Ideal Yoga in bringing about a transformation in human beings from within. It fills one with compassion and love for the society. One is lifted to a higher plane of awareness where animal instincts do not bother him. One gets the right direction for various activities of life. One starts enjoying disciplined life. One's Muladhara Chakra becomes strong. Such a person cannot have casual sexual encounters or even adulterous eyes and this is a very important Behavioural Modification which occurs through Sahaja Yoga.

In view of this it is felt that Sahaja Yoga practice would go a long way in the prevention of AIDS, for which at the moment there is no treatment, nor is there any possibility in the near future even for any vaccine to prevent this disease which is engulfing the world like a wild fire.

Holistic Medicine and Sahaja Yoga

The term 'Holistic health' has become very popular recently but it is a misnomer because when we talk of health it implies wholeness. However, it makes a lot of sense when we talk of health care or holistic medicine. Before we go to holistic health care or holistic medicine let us examine the concept of health as it stands today in most parts of the world. Generally when we talk of good health, most people feel that it means absence of disease. As a matter of fact good health means absence of disease and something more than that. What is that something more is a vital point to understand. Health as defined by the World Health Organization (W.H.O) means physical, mental, social and spiritual health. This holistic concept implies a sound mind in a sound body in a sound social environment which is a prerequisite for the spiritual health of an individual to know his own Self. In other words health is a balance between man and his environment for 'Self-Realisation'. This state is not static and therefore should be maintained continuously as man interacts with his environment. This approach is more closely connected with the concept of the quality and meaningful life, encompassing spiritual aspect.

Such a concept of health for all by 2000 A.D. is a global commitment. We all know that the wealth of any nation lies in its healthy population. India is signatory to Alma Atta declaration in erstwhile USSR to achieve health for all by 2000 A.D. The national health policy of the Government of India had been approved by both houses of parliament, signifying the political will for the implementation of this policy. The health policy has to define the most appropriate pattern of approach to tackle this problem. This is yet to take a concrete shape in the above context for implementation purposes. Modern health care system would have to go far beyond the scope of conventional allopathic medicine to deal with a large number of phenomenon that influence health. No doubt modern medicine excels in biological aspects but there is an urgent need for these aspects to be related

to psychological conditions of human beings in their social environment. One has to appreciate the complex inter-dependence between mind and body in health and illness and also the inter connectedness between man and his surrounding environment.

Keeping this in mind some scientists at the Brunel University near London organised a conference in May, 1974. The theme of the conference was "New Approaches to Health and Healing", Carl Simonton¹, oncologist and trained radiation therapist and his wife Stephaine presented a revolutionary paper on mind/body approach to cancer therapy. Dr. Fritz of Capra², a pioneer researcher on philosophical implications of New Physics while describing his experiences of the above conference said that "A profound shift in the concepts was about to happen in western science and philosophy which was bound to lead to a new medicine. From the discussions emerged a set of new concepts that would form the basis of future holistic system of health care. One of the basic new concepts was recognition of the complex interdependence between mind and body in health and illness, suggesting a 'Psychosomatic' approach to all forms of therapy".

Currently the field of mind-body medicine is rapidly expanding. In the last five years several papers have been written concerning the effect of mind states on illness³⁻⁴. As mentioned earlier the term holistic is used to describe an approach to health care which spans both the conventional western medicine model and the alternative source of medicine as available in different parts of the world. Tracing the origin we find that the word 'Holos' stems from the Greek word meaning whole or complete. The word 'Holism' was first used by Smuts in his book *Holism and Evolution*. He used to describe the philosophical systems that looked on the whole system rather than on parts⁵.

Principles Involved in Holistic Medicine

The basic principles in holistic medicines are⁵ :-

1. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. It means that while examining a part e.g. heart, one should be aware of how the emotions, thoughts, aspirations, diet, family, society, culture and environment impinge on the functions of the heart. Thus holistic medicine challenges the notion of the linear cause and effect hypothesis and draws on systems theory for its explanations.

2. Use of alternative systems of medicine, e.g. classical Chinese medicine. Their concept of 'Chi' and Yin, Yang, acupuncture, homeopathy, ayurvedic medicine, bio-feedback method, Yoga and visual imagery etc.

3. Involvement of the patient: In holistic approach there is an

emphasis in encouraging and facilitating the patient to take some responsibility for his recovery process.

4. **Physician heal thyself:** The holistic approach further suggests that health (physical, mental, social and spiritual) of the physician is also an important component in the outcome of the interaction between doctor and patient. The two ancient medical systems - one western and one eastern, whose concepts of health and illness are relevant even today are western system of allopathic medicine and classical ayurvedic medicines of India. Western medicine is now practised all over the world. Looking at the history of this system of medicine, we find that this Hippocratic medicine developed from the ancient Greek system of treating patients whose roots go back to pre-Hellinic era. In Greece, healing of the illness was considered as a spiritual phenomenon and it was associated with many deities. The important healing deity worshipped in those days was Hygiea.

Evolution of Modern Medicine

At the end of the second millennium B.C. invaders imposed their views of religion and social orders. The old myths of God and Goddesses were thought to be baseless and a system with powerful male God Asclepius was portrayed⁶. The Asclepian system had a firm faith in the healing power of God and it was thought as an effective treatment procedure⁷⁻⁸. Afterwards Hippocrates medical system represented the culmination of Greek medicine and had a lasting influence on western medical science. It is documented that famous physician Hippocrates lived in Greece around 400 B.C. The essential features of Hippocrates medicine were based on belief that illnesses are not caused by supernatural forces or demons but are due to derangement of natural phenomenon which should be studied scientifically. Further it was emphasized that medicine should be practised as a scientific discipline encompassing prevention of disease, as well as its diagnosis and treatment. This concept has formed the basis of present western system of modern medicine. Hippocrates' writings also contain a strict code of medical ethics known as Hippocratic oath, which is administered to every medical graduate at the University convocation at the time of the presentation of MBBS degree. The Hippocratic tradition with its emphasis on interaction of body, mind and environment brings about an important view of the western medical system which is strongly appealing even today as it was twentyfive hundred years ago.

As a matter of fact during the last 200 years the vast scientific development led to the view that human body works like a machine and diseases are due to mal-functioning of different parts of the body. In 20th century the

same mechanistic approach continued in biomedical sciences and characteristic changes were the progression of biology to molecular level. Detailed knowledge of biological functions at cellular and molecular levels were most responsible for the development of new drugs. Discovery of penicillin in 1928 ushered in a new era of Antibiotics. Discovery of Insulin and then Cortisone marked another important milestone in the progress of medical science.

Simultaneously technology has taken a central role in modern medicine. Diagnostic and therapeutic tools developed recently are due to tremendous advances made in Physics, Chemistry, electronics and computer sciences. They include computerised automatic blood analysers, CAT Scanners, Whole Body Scanners, Cardiac Pace Makers, Heart Lung Machine, Renal Dialysis Machine, Lithotripsy, Ultrasound and Magnetic Resonance Imaging. These are a few important ones besides many which cannot be discussed here due to space constraints. With these advancements in the field of medicine now it has been possible to prevent many infectious diseases. Dreaded diseases like Plague, Cholera, Typhoid, Tuberculosis, Diphtheria, Tetanus and Malaria have more or less been completely wiped out of India and also from other developing countries. In 1960 heart transplantation came as a great breakthrough in the field of surgery. It was a marvellous achievement of surgeons and the whole world was thrilled at this unique success in the field of medicine. This was followed by coronary bypass surgery which gave a new lease of fruitful life to heart patients. Kidney transplantations are also quite successful and the patients of renal failure can now be saved who otherwise had no hope to survive ten years back. Liver and brain transplantations are also in experimental stages and the day is not far off when doctors would be able to transplant these organs successfully.

In spite of such marvellous, wonderful and thrilling achievements the medical science could not provide proper treatment for some of the most common psychosomatic diseases like essential hypertension, migraine, bronchial-asthma, cancer, low back pain, disseminated sclerosis, spondylitis, epilepsy etc. etc. What is the reason for this? If we look back at the history of scientific development, we find that physics and mathematics dominated all the disciplines of science including biology. Renne-Descartes, one of the renowned mathematicians of his time, asserted that there is nothing included in the concept of body that belongs to mind and nothing in that of mind that belongs to body. In other words mind is separate from the body. This strict division between body and mind led medical scientists to pay all the attention to the human body and the psychic aspect of illness could not be given due importance.

Changing Views

This view is now changing and health does not mean only absence of disease but something more. This something more is mental, social and spiritual components which are integral parts of health. Further all over the world there is a strong feeling that man should not be treated as a machine. There is a growing awareness in most parts of the world to see the Universe as a living system rather than a machine. It is felt that systems view of living organism can provide an ideal basis for a new approach to health care system based on our cultural heritage. This new framework takes into account the physical as well as mental, social and spiritual aspects of health as visualised by the W.H.O.

Systems View of Health

The systems view of health is based on systems view of life. Living beings are self-organising systems that display a high degree of stability. The stability is dynamic and is characterized by continual multiple and interdependent fluctuations. To be healthy, such a system should be flexible. Nowadays there is a growing awareness that although western medicine has made tremendous advancements and has contributed to the elimination of the dreaded diseases of past (as mentioned earlier) this has not restored health of human beings in totality. In holistic view of illness physical disease is only one of the several manifestations of a basic imbalance of the organism. Other manifestations may take the form of psychological and social pathologies and when the symptoms of a physical disease are effectively suppressed by medical intervention, an illness may well express itself through some other modes. Indeed psychological and social pathologies have now become major problems of public health. According to a survey 25% of USA population suffers from psychological problems to an extent of becoming handicapped in society and needing medical treatment.

At the same time one finds an alarming increase in the number of alcoholics, violent crimes, sexual assaults, accidents and suicides. All these represent the symptoms of a deteriorating social health of the nation. Donald Fredrickson⁹, Director, National Institute of Health, says, "The reduction of life in all its complicated forms to certain fundamentals that can then be resynthesized for a better understanding of man and his ills is the basic concern of biological research. In this mechanistic approach, medical problems are analysed from organs and tissues to cells and then to cellular contents and in this way the basic original problem itself is lost on the way".

The history of modern science has shown that the concept of human being reduced to molecular level is not sufficient for understanding the human condition in health and illness. The increasing dependence of medical care on complex technology has given rise to a sharp trend for specialization in different disciplines of Medicine and Surgery. As a result of this super-specialisation the doctors are having a tendency to look after a particular part of the body. For example a nephrologist usually looks after the kidney, a urologist looks only after the urinary system and so on. In this way they forget to deal with the patient as a whole. Further the cost of medical care in India has tremendously increased. This rising trend is similar to that of western countries, particularly USA.

As such important contributions are being made in the area of holistic medicine. Risk of cancer and AIDS is threatening the whole world. Traditional western medicine has failed to cure these diseases forcing the patients to go for alternative medicines. These diseases like cancer, hypertension, migraine, AIDS, epilepsy etc. have inspired new approaches towards health care. Many new therapies practised in the west are non-specific. They concentrate on the intangible aspects of healing such as powerful will to live, cultivating self-love, spiritual messages, imagery and visions.

Alternative Methods of Healing

The underlying principle of all such therapies is that the true healer is inside every individual. The new methods utilised in the west are of varied nature. They range from relaxation to massage, visualisation, acupuncture, acupressure, shamanistic healing, body work, use of myths, hypnosis and bio-feedback. Many western doctors are using holistic methods in the treatment of their patients. Dr. Bernie S. Siegel¹⁰ in his book 'Love, Medicine and Miracles' talks about quietening of mental activity, withdrawal of body and mind from external stimulation for contacting deeper layers of the mind. The goal is to reach in trance. He has reported his experience in surgical practice with cancer patients who survived with this therapy.

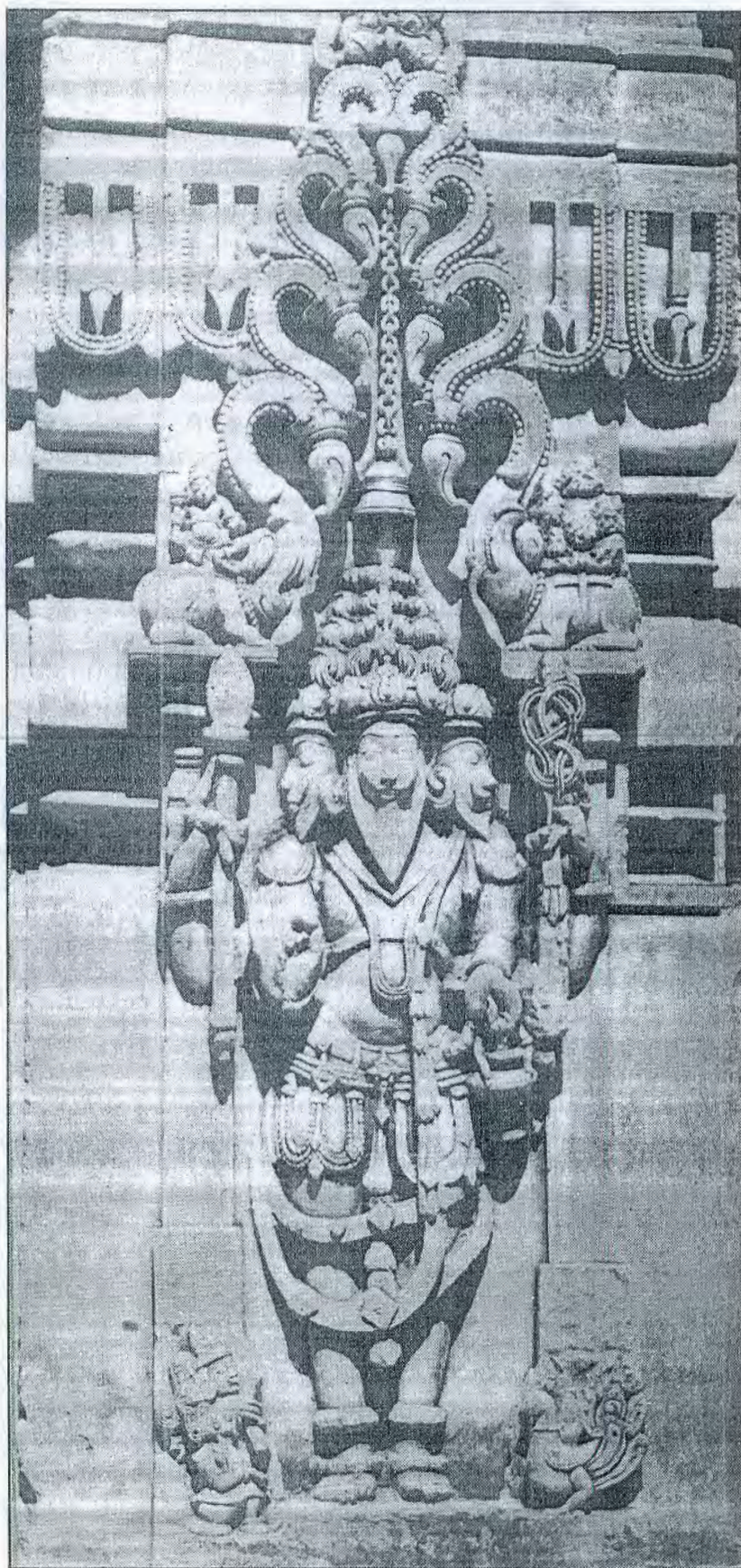
Dennis T. Jaffe¹¹ while writing on healing from within emphasised that one's feeling, behaviour, stress levels, conflicts and beliefs contribute to overall susceptibility to disease and by improving on these one could maximise healing. Louise-Hay¹² advocates that self-peace, harmony and balance in our minds is essential to heal patients. She says, "What we give out, we get back". Further she explains the power of Love, which could play a very important role in the well-being of people. Joseph-Heller¹³ and William A. Henkin talks about the role of body work in holistic health care.

Diverse forms of body work are derived from four principal traditions, e.g. energetics, mechanical, psychological and integrative. Energetic tradition is based on Indian notion of Chakras and on Chinese idea of Acupuncture. Ailments are thought to occur due to energetic imbalances. According to Acupuncture theory health is achieved when flow in the meridians is properly balanced between Yin and Yang. To cure, Acupuncturist stimulates appropriate meridians by inserting and withdrawing extremely fine needles. Mechanical tradition is based on body's tangible parts and their inter-relationship; the inter-relatedness with pulleys, levers, hinges and plates which because of stresses and tension become worn out or misaligned accordingly require adjustment.

Practices of Chiropractic and Osteopathy have also been advocated. Chiropractic is a mechanical realignment of the vertebra of the spine. Usually it is the Atlas vertebra which gets misaligned and its alignment brings about a great relief. Osteopathy is based on the realignment or manipulation of the bones in other parts of the body. Joseph Heller¹³ developed structural body work based on the experience of body as a Hologram. It integrates the principles of mechanical, psychological and energetic traditions not only in exercises or body work sessions but also in functions of daily life. Bobbie Probst¹⁴, another worker in the field of holistic medicine re-emphasises our ancient dictum that mind and body are inseparable. While talking about conscious and unconscious mind it has been argued that any idea one holds to be true in the subconscious, becomes a binding on the outcome. In conclusion he writes that with this method even wheezing and sneezing disappeared in Asthmatic patients.

Ayurveda

Let us look at another alternative system of medicine available. The ancient medical system of Indian Ayurveda (Ayu means life and Veda means, to know) means the knowledge of life. The origin of this healing art could be traced back to Creator-Brahma who gave this knowledge as contained in the text of Ayurveda. According to Hindu Mythology, Brahma is known to be the first teacher of Universe and he composed a very voluminous Ayurvedic text but afterwards abridged it into eight parts with Medicine (Kaya-Chikitsa) and Surgery (Shailya-Chikitsa Tantra) as the main subjects. Brahma propagated this knowledge through Daksha-Prajapati to Ashwani Kumar and Indra who was considered as Chief of Gods in heaven. According to Sushruta Samhita, God Indra passed on this text to Dhanvantri and from him to Sushruta. It is said that Ayurveda is no more available in its original form but most of its contents are revealed in the



Brahma, one of the Trinity and original author of the Ayurveda. In his left hand he holds a Kalasha (Vase) containing Amrita (ambrosia) i.e. nector of life. From Channakeshav temple, Belur 11th, century.

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works of Charak and Sushruta. The texts originally written about 1000 B.C. are considered as the most authentic representation of Ayurvedic text.

The glory of the practice of surgery during the remote antiquity goes to Sushruta. It is recorded that Jivika (6th Century) was personal physician to Lord Buddha and practised even cranial surgery at many occasions (Takakusu). The ancient Ayurveda travelled with Buddhism to Asian countries and thus flourished in Buddhist monasteries and reached Indonesia and became the medicine of island. From there it travelled to Mongolia and North-East Siberia. One of the most famous Ayurveda Physicians from these places was a Siberian, Mr. N.N. Badmaev (Keswani)¹⁵. The medicine of Tibet is also based on Ayurveda. With the coming of the Muslim conquerors to India from 10th century onwards, the glories of Ayurveda declined rapidly due to lack of patronage from rulers. However, it is reported that during Prophet Mohammad's time a famous medical school flourished in Senna, Southern Arabia, whose Principal Harith Bin Kaladhad acquired knowledge in India. The superiority of Hindu civilisation started a great exodus of Indians into West Asia. A famous Hindu practitioner in Baghdad was Saleh-bin-Bhela who cured Ibrahim, a cousin of the Khalifa, after Harun's personal physician Gabriel, an expert in Greek medicine, had declared Ibrahim dead (Lassen).

This clearly exhibited the superiority of Ayurveda over Greek medicine. Ayurveda¹⁶⁻¹⁹ appears infinitely more sophisticated in the rules of personal conduct for longevity vis-a-vis western system and its main emphasis lies on the fact that medicine should always focus on the person as a whole rather than on disease. It believes that the main objective of maintaining good health can be achieved only if the physician has a thorough understanding of the human being. The person in his wholeness is called the "asylum" (asrya) of disease and constitutes the main subject of medical science. One of the verses of Ayurvedic text¹⁶⁻¹⁹ says, "Mind, Soul and Body - these three are like a tripod"; the universe is sustained by their combination. They constitute the basic fundamental substratum for everything. This combination of mind, body and soul is the person (Purusha); this is sentient and this is the subject matter of this Veda (Ayurveda). It is for this that this Veda is brought to light. The philosophical emphasis on the wholeness of the human being is reflected in the comprehensiveness of diagnostic examination prescribed in Ayurveda. Besides thorough physical check-up the medical examination includes evaluation of the patients, emotional and social status spheres. The knowledge of the patient's mental state is further supplemented by gaining an insight into the familial, social, geographical and cultural context. The human being in Ayurveda is conceived as a personality comprising of physical, mental, social and



Dhanvantari, who warded off death, disease and decay from celestials, the teacher of Sushruta. From Keshava temple, Somnathpur, 11th century.

metaphysical (Spiritual) aspects. Lord Punurvasu - Atreya said "that in the broader context an individual is a micro-cosmos, i.e. mini image of the great cosmos. All the features that are present in the cosmos are present in a human being"¹⁶⁻¹⁹.

Ancient physicians of Ayurveda looked at the health as a state of dynamic equilibrium of body elements. As per Hindu philosophy an individual has three bodies physical, subtle (Sukshma Sharira) and causal (Karana Sharira). Ayurvedic text¹⁶⁻¹⁹ mentions the subtle body and discusses its role in the constitution and development of a person. It is mentioned that subtle body is only visible to the yogic vision. The subtle body as described in yogic vision has got three important Nadis known as Ida (Moon Channel) on left side, Pingla (Sun Channel) on right side and Sushumna in the middle. As mentioned earlier in western philosophy the body and mind are separate from each other but can affect one another (Descartes). In Hindu philosophy mind and body are identical to each other. This thesis is also followed by Ayurvedic medicine. The above views are further corroborated in the words of Dubos²⁰. "Almost every disease involves both the mind and body and these two aspects are so interrelated that one cannot be separated from the other."

Herbal medicine was thrown in the background with the rise of western allopathic medicine. However, people all over the world are now realising that the allopathic medicines are very toxic. They cure one thing but are liable to damage some other part of the body. Ninety percent of the drugs are either Nephrotoxic or Hepatotoxic. Some of the drugs if taken for long time could cause cancer. In view of this there is a shift towards herbal medicines. Ayurvedic medicines are mostly from herbs and therefore they are gaining great popularity. Government too has shown a sympathetic attitude towards Ayurveda and it is increasingly felt that its use could fulfil the criteria envisaged in the concept of Holistic Medicine.

In view of this the term 'psychosomatic' needs some clarification. In western medicine it is used to refer to disorder without a clearly diagnosed organic basis. Recently it has been modified, taking into account that mind and body cannot be separated from each other in health or illness. So researchers today are aware that virtually all disorders are psychosomatic in the sense that they involve the interplay of mind and body in their origin.

Japanese adopted western medicine voluntarily about 150 years ago but now they are increasingly re-evaluating their own traditional system of medicine, which they believe can fulfil many functions which are beyond the capability of modern medicine. Dr. Margret Lock²¹, medical anthropologist, in her detailed study on east Indian medicine in modern urban Japan found that Japanese doctors known as 'Kanpo' doctors combine

eastern and western methods in an efficient medical system.

Health care in Europe and North America is practised by physicians, nurses, psychotherapists, psychiatrists, public professionals, social workers, chiropractors, homeopaths, acupuncturist and various holistic practitioners. These individuals and groups use a great variety of approaches that are based on different concepts of health and illness (Capra)²². It is argued that a common basis should be evolved to integrate all the alternative systems of medicine into a effective system of health care.

The recent developments have provided systems view of living organism which is thought to be an ideal basis for giving a new approach to health care system (Capra). Systems views health in terms of an ongoing process. It is a multi- dimensional phenomenon. A person may be alright physically but emotional or social problems can make a person sick. To be healthy, then means to be in harmony with oneself, physically, mentally and also ecologically.

Homeopathy

In the practice of homeopathic medicine the fundamental principle is to activate the patient's energy level or vital force. Recently George Vithoulkas²² identified Hahnemanns vital force with the body's electromagnetic field. Vithoulkas proposed a pattern of vibrations which is unique for each individual. External or Internal stimuli affect the organisms rate of vibration, and these changes generate physical, emotional or mental symptoms. These subtle symptoms represent the organism's reaction to imbalance. Homeopaths try to match the pattern of symptoms that is characteristic of the patient, with a similar pattern. Characteristics of remedy are associated with a certain vibrational pattern, that constitutes its very essence. When medicine is taken the pattern of vibrations resonates with the vibrations of the patient and thereby healing is brought-about. The selection of remedy is based on Hahnemanns law of similars - 'Like cures Like' which gave homeopathy its name.

Lack of scientific explanation of homeopathy treatment is one of the main reasons why it remained second rate healing art. Homeopathic principles and their philosophy of looking the patient as a whole exemplified many aspects of holistic health care.

Role of Sahaja Yoga in Holistic Medicine

Sahaja Yoga is a unique rediscovery of this era. Originally it was described in Markandeya Purana but was forgotten by people with the

passage of time. Her Holiness Mataji has been telling the world that Sahaja Yoga is based on subtle divine internal technology and it awakens the primordial dormant energy (Kundalini) at the base of spine, of every human being and bestows one with 'Self-Realisation'. It is simple, effortless and spontaneous. It does not interfere with any religious belief but on the other hand it integrates all the religions. It is safe and does not need any educational background and is meant for all. Moreover it is consistent and verifiable. When Kundalini awakening actualizes in Sahasrara and comes out of the Brahmarandhra (Anterior Fontanale) one goes into Nirvikalpa stage. Subtle cool vibrations start flowing from top of the head and from both the palms. One becomes aware of the collective consciousness and therefore one could easily know about the Kundalini, Chakras and Nadis of another person on his finger tips (Fig.8 & 10). As one's attention gets enlightened, one could simply by focussing the attention knows the problem of self or of another person and thus could cure it.

The Sahaja Yogi receiving this Vibratory Awareness could manoeuvre it to cure various diseases. Once these vibrations start flowing, then it is easy to rectify physical, mental, psycho-social and spiritual problems.

This makes Sahaja Yoga a par excellent method of holistic medicine because it satisfies all the essential conditions laid down in the concept of holistic medicine. Let us examine them one by one.

The first most essential condition laid down by the proponent of holistic medicine is that the individual should be treated as a whole along with his physical, mental, emotional, psycho-social and spiritual problems. All these aspects are so very important for the proper functioning of the Nadis and Chakras in our body.

Secondly, the involvement of the patient in his treatment is primary and most important. The patient has to practice Sahaja Yoga himself and he is mostly responsible for the recovery.

'Physician heal thyself' is again totally fulfilled because unless and until a Sahaja Yogi himself is not healthy, he cannot achieve the results. Therefore only a healthy Sahaja Yogi can initiate the patient.

Thus Sahaja Yoga fulfils all the basic criteria of holistic medicine. By Sahaja Yoga many diseases have been cured. Essential hypertension, bronchial asthma and epilepsy patients were treated in Lady Hardinge Medical College and Associated Hospitals, New Delhi, in a controlled study to evaluate the significance of Sahaja Yoga²³⁻²⁴. The results have already been discussed in detail in the chapter on medical researches where it was found that Sahaja Yoga has been very useful as an adjuvant therapy in above mentioned diseases. This has been because it looks after the imbalance and fragmentation which takes place in the psyche of these patients.

the root-cause of which lies in the stresses²⁶ and strains of day-to-day life, lack of security, strained relations with father and mother during childhood or marital problems after marriage etc. etc.

Sahaja Yoga has tremendous power and transforms an individual from within²⁷. When Self-Realisation takes place, one attains super-consciousness which fulfils one with a feeling of absolute bliss. Such a condition is responsible for maximum healing. Now we know that the Kundalini awakening by Sahaja Yoga actualizes in the Limbic area of the brain, an area which is responsible for our emotions, behaviour, hunger, sex and anger. So once the activity of this area would be controlled by an individual then he is able to conquer (1) Kama (Sex desire) (2) Krodh (Anger) (3) Moha (Attachment) (4) Lobha (Greed) and Mada (Ego), which are known since ages in ancient literature to be the enemy of good health and spiritual advancement. Thus one's attitudes and perceptions towards various events in one's life change altogether as positive attitudes and perceptions are so very important for healing and good health. The flow of subtle cool breeze which is none else than Divine energy is responsible for rejuvenating the immune system and other vital systems of the body. It has been roughly estimated that 80 to 90% people who do Sahaja Yoga get cured of their diseases by clearing the chakras and lead a healthy fruitful life.

In view of this, the present medical system needs a change in which psychic aspect of man should be given a greater emphasis. Sahaja Yoga, the cultural heritage of India, in its true sense, is the only way to solve this problem efficiently. For social health care there would be urgent need for health education and framing of new health policies. Further legislation to prevent health hazards from pollution of water and atmosphere should be enacted and implemented in a phased manner. Social policies to improve education, employment, civil rights and duties, economic improvement of people and family planning are very important for healthy society. The basic aim of any therapy will be to restore the patient's balance. The changes are possible with a thorough reorganisation of medical education for holistic medicine. To prepare a medical student and other health professionals for new holistic approach, it will require a considerable broadening of the present scientific approach and much greater efforts would be required to promote behavioural sciences and human ecology.

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Glossary (Hindi/Sanskrit Words)

Adhara: Support.

Agni: Fire.

Ahankara: Ego.

Adi Shakti: The primordial shakti or energy of God, the Holy Spirit, through which the creation took place and through which Self-realisation, the fulfilment of the creation becomes possible.

Ajna chakra: (See under chakra).

Akasha: Sky, ether, infinite space.

Amrita: Ambrosia, nectar of life, elixir.

Anahata chakra: (see under chakra).

Anandamaya kosha: (see under kosha).

Annamaya kosha: (see under kosha).

Ap: Water.

Apana vayu: (see under vayu).

Apasmara: Epilepsy.

Arogya: Disease-free state.

Artha: Wealth.

Asanas: Physical postures.

Atma: Soul.

Avatara: Incarnation.

Ayu: Life span.

Ayurveda: Science of life, the ancient Indian system of medicine.

Bandha: Blocking of passages of organs by fixing their status with contraction of certain muscles.

Bandha, Jalandhara: Chinlock, when the chin is pressed against the chest.

Bandha, Mula: Vigorous contraction of anal sphincters and the pelvic diaphragm.

Bandha, Uddayana: Raising of the diaphragm.

Bhastrika: Breathing like bellows.

Bheda: To pierce through and acquire knowledge.

Bhedan, Shat Chakra: Piercing and acquiring the knowledge of six centres.

Bhumi: Earth.

Bhutas: Basic elements.

Baddha: Psychic negativity which can lodge in a chakra or a nadi and impede the passage of the Kundalini energy.

Bhoot: An entity from the collective subconscious which parasitically attacks the chakras of a living human being causing various ill effects. Bhoots are of human, animal origin, and find themselves in the collective subconscious after a life in which they went against the principles of dharma of the central channel.

Bhootavidya: Demonology.

Bija Mantra: Primal sounds.

Brahma Randhra: The anterior fontanelle.

Chakra: (Sanskrit, "wheel") Energy centre through which the prana, the subtle energy of the sympathetic nervous system, and in a realised soul the Kundalini, the subtle energy of the parasympathetic nervous system, control the activity of our body and mind. Place of interaction of our physical, mental, social and spiritual activity, but whose divine qualities only express themselves after realisation.

Chakra, Ajna: Energy centre, Lotus or Wheel located deep in the forehead between the eyebrows. In gross body it is represented by optic - chiasma.

Chakra, Anahata: Energy centre, Lotus or Wheel located in the region of the heart. In gross body it is represented by cardiac plexus.

Chakra, Manipura: Energy centre, Lotus or Wheel located in the abdomen at the level of the umbilicus. In gross body it is represented by coeliac plexus.

Chakra, Muladhara: Energy centre, Lotus or Wheel located between the genitals and anus. In gross body represented by Pelvic plexus.

Chakra, Sahasrara: Thousand petalled Lotus, located inside the cranium. In gross body represented by Limbic area of brain.

Chakra, Shat: Six centers of neural plexuses.

Chakra, Svadhithana: Energy centre, Lotus or Wheel located cranial to muladhara chakra in the pelvis deep to the root of the genitals. In gross body it is represented by Aortic plexus.

Chakra, Vishuddhi: Energy centre, Lotus or Wheel located in the neck region. In gross body it is represented by cervical plexus.

Catch: Blockage of the Kundalini in a chakra, caused by the presence of a bhoot or a baddha.

Chaitanya: The Divine Vibrations felt by realised souls.

Collective Consciousness: The state in which one's conscious awareness is not limited to one's physical body and surroundings but extends to other human beings.

Chit: Mind stuff.

Chitrini Nadi: Within the neural axis (sushumna) lies a subtle and imperceptible channel called chitrini nadi.

Deity: An aspect of God in the form of a divine person, who may take incarnation in a physical body. For instance, Shri Rama, Shri Saraswati, Shri Ganesha etc.

Devata: Minor deity, usually associated with a left or right-side power. An example is Indra, who controls the weather, particularly the rain.

Dharma: Righteousness, divine law, virtue, religion. Our dharma acts within us as a sort of pre-programming on our chakras as to how we should live our lives.

Dharana: Contemplation, holding the mind fixed on certain point.

Dhauti: Cleansing the stomach - one of the six procedures adopted in the practice of Hatha Yoga.

Dhyana: Fixing of attention, meditation.

Divyadrishti: Celestial vision.

Ego: The part of the psyche which manifests and develops the feeling of being an individual. In the body it is localised in the left-hand hemisphere of the brain. In Freud's later works the ego is construed as a precipitate of identifications. Since identification is misunderstanding of who one is, the problem of a misrecognition and illusion appear.

Guna: General characteristics of a human being could belong to either of the three qualities, Tamas (dullness, inertia, stillness), Rajas (activity, movement, agitation), and Sattwa (detachment, harmony, transcendence) which are characteristic of the left, right and central channels respectively.

Guru: Spiritual master who gives Self-realisation and who instructs and guides others in their spiritual ascent. From a Sanskrit term meaning one who leads from the darkness to the light, who enlightens.

Hatha Yoga: (see under yoga).

Iccha: Power of desire.

Ida Nadi: The principal left-hand energy channel of the subtle nervous system. It extends from the Muladhara Chakra, in the pelvis, to the left-hand side of the head below the eyes, and flows from there across the Hamsa Chakra between the eyes into the Superego, in the right-hand hemisphere of the brain. It is responsible for the power of desire within

us and it is through the left-side energy that the emotions express themselves. In the gross body Ida Nadi corresponds to the left-hand channel of the sympathetic nervous system. It is also known as Chandra (Moon) nadi.

Jiva: The soul, vehicle of the Atma, the absolute self.

Jalandhara Bandha: (see under bandha).

Kama: Sexual desire, passion, lust.

Kapalabhati: One of the six procedures adopted in the practice of Hatha Yoga. To cleanse the nasopharynx and possibly also the nasal air sinuses.

Karma: Action, duty.

Kaya Chikitsa: Internal medicine, therapeutics.

Khechari Mudra: (see under mudra)

Kosha: Sheath.

Kosha, Anandamaya: The fifth sheath of causal body which is known as Bliss Sheath.

Kosha, Annamaya: The first sheath of physical body, sustained by food (anna).

Kosha, Manomaya: The third sheath of causal body which is known as Mind Sheath.

Kosha, Pranamaya: The second sheath of subtle body which is known as Vital Sheath.

Kosha, Vijnanamaya: The fourth sheath which is called as intellect Sheath.

Kriya Shakti: Power of action.

Kumbhaka: Pause (in respiration).

Kundala : Coil, serpent.

Kundalini Yoga: (see under yoga).

Kali Yuga: The age of darkness in which humans stray farthest from their dharma, righteousness is neglected and evil flourishes.

Kundalini: Primordial energy. Reflection of Holy Ghost within us, which awakens under the right conditions and rising up the central channel, Sushumna Nadi, gives us Self- Realisation, the yoga or union with the Divine. Before realisation, the Kundalini rests in the sacrum bone at the base of the spine in 3&1/2 coils.

Manas: Mind.

Manipura chakra: (see under chakra)

Manomaya Kosha: (see under kosha)

Mantra Bijā: (see under bija)

Mantra Yoga: (see under yoga)

Maya: Materialistic qualities of the universe.

Meda: Adipose tissue.

Medha: Intellect.

Meditation: A state of being in which the Kundalini energy passes through the Sahasrara Chakra and the yogi is in collective, vibratory awareness. More particularly, the sadhana or practice of sitting in meditation, taking one's attention inside.

Mimansa: Deep reflection, inquiry, examination, investigation, one of the six systems of Indian philosophy (shad darshana).

Moksha: Liberation, salvation.

Mudra: Symbolic gesture.

Mudra, Khechari: Positioning the bifid and frenu-lectectomized tongue against the posterior nares to block the nasopharyngeal respiratory passage.

Mudra, Yoni: Symbloic posturing of pelvic region (yoni means uterus and vagina).

Mula: root.

Mulabandha: (see under bandha).

Muladhara Chakra: (see under chakra).

Nabhi: Naval, umbilicus.

Nadi: (Sanskrit, "river") Energy channels of the subtle nervous system within the human body.

Nadi, Brahma: The interior of the chitrini nadi is called brahma nadi along which Kundalini moves to stimulate various centres (chakras) during Kundalini Yoga.

Nauli: Wave-like rhythmic contractions along with the length of the rectus abdominis muscles with the diaphragm kept in a fixed position. A procedure adopted in Hatha Yoga.

Neti: One of the procedures adopted in the practice of Hatha Yoga for cleansing the nasal passages.

Nidra: Sleep.

Panchabhuta: Five basic elements of creation, viz. prithvi (earth), ap (water), teja (fire), vayu (wind and akasha (ether).

Pingala Nadi: The principal right hand energy channel of the subtle nervous system, running from the Svadhishtana Chakra, at the base of the spinal cord, to the right-hand side of the head below the eyes, and from there through the Hamsa Chakra into the Ego within the left-hand hemisphere of the brain. It is responsible for the power of action within us. A realised soul spontaneously becomes the vehicle for the action of the Unconscious. In the gross body Pingala Nadi corresponds to the right-hand channel of the sympathetic nervous system. It is also known as

- Surya (Sun) nadi.**
- Prana:** The subtle energy flowing through the sympathetic nervous system (Ida, Pingala, and their subsidiary nadis). Responsible for our behaviour and activity before Self- realisation, but afterwards brought under the control of the Unconscious through the awakened Kundalini in Sushumna Nadi.
- Pranayama Kosha:** (See under kosha)
- Pratyahara:** Control of sensory perception.
- Puraka:** Inhalation.
- Raja-Yoga:** (see under Yoga).
- Rechaka:** Exhalation.
- Sahasrara Chakra:** (see under Chakra).
- Sadhana:** The practice of meditation, taking vibrations from the photograph of Shri Mataji, and other practices, used daily by Sahaja Yogis to cleanse or purify the subtle body.
- Sahaja:** Spontaneous, inborn
- Samadhi:** Deep meditation, superconscious state, including the state entered into by highly-realised souls when they leave the body. This word is also used for the place of burial of a saint.
- Satya Yuga:** The age of Aquarius (the water-carrier, symbol of the awakening of the Kundalini energy), the Age of Gold, the blossom time in which the tree of life bears fruit.
- Shakti:** The power of a deity, frequently in the form of a feminine deity related to a masculine one (eg. Lakshmi and Vishnu).
- Subconscious:** A term used in Psychology to refer to those mental processes that are outside the range of an individual's awareness. The left-hand side of the subtle body, controlled by the Ida Nadi. Loosely divisible into the personal subconscious which contains the residues of our effective life and our memories, and the collective subconscious which contains the collective residues of mankind and all the previous phases of our evolution, in addition to entities which have deviated from the central path of evolution, and dead spirits or bhoots. Jung's Collective Unconscious corresponds quite closely with the Sahaja notion of the Collective Subconscious.
- Supraconscious:** The right-hand side of the subtle body, controlled by Pingala Nadi, contains the personal supraconscious, the realm of our plans, theories, and mental concepts, and further, the collective supraconscious which contains collective projections of the future and certain discarnate beings.
- Superego:** That part of the psyche, localised in the right- hand hemisphere

of the brain, which accumulates memories and conditionings from our own and the collective past. The superego is developed during the growth of the child through subtle and complex identifications with the parents, and by interjecting them as controlling or guiding models, with their corresponding moral attitudes.

Sushumna Nadi: The central energy channel of the subtle nervous system, along which the Kundalini flows from the sacrum to the Sahasrara Chakra at the fontanelle on the top of the head. It is enclosed within the spinal cord, and above the neck in the medulla oblongata of the brain. The Sushumna Nadi has controlled the evolution from the primitive state of the ameba to that of the human being, and evolves us further through the experience of Self- realisation. In the gross body it corresponds to the cranio sacral outflow of the parasympathetic nervous system, which is responsible for relaxing us and for unconscious bodily functions such as digestion, breathing and the heartbeat etc.

Samana Vayu: (see under Vayu).

Shabda: Sound, verbal authority regarded by the followers of the Nyaya School of Philosophy as a proof (pramana).

Shakti: Power, female principle, goddess shakti.

Shakti, Kundalini: (see under Kundalini).

Shat Chakra: (see under chakra).

Shat Chakra Bhedan: (see under bhedan).

Shat-karma: Six procedures.

Sthoola or sthula: Gross in form, macroscopic.

Sukshma: Microscopic.

Surya: Sun.

Sushumna: (see under nadi).

Svadhithana Chakra: (see under chakra).

Tamas: Darkness or ignorance, one of the three basic qualities of everything in nature.

Tamoguna: One of the three basic qualities inherent in human beings.

Tantra: Ritual, scientific work, instrument, technology.

Tantrika upasana: Worship, practice, adoration of tantra.

Trataka: One of the six procedures adopted in the practice of yoga, of fixing the gaze on some object, without blinking and keeping it fixed until the lacrimal secretion starts flowing freely.

Turya, Turiya: Literally the fourth. According to Vedanta philosophy the fourth state in which an individual becomes one with Brahman or the supreme spirit.

Tao: Chinese term for the central channel, Sushumna Nadi, which holds the other two in balance.

Thoughtless Awareness: The state of awareness of a Sahaja Yogi when the Kundalini passes above the Ajna Chakra in which the direct perception of reality through vibrations is unimpeded by mental activity.

Udana Vayu: (see under Vayu).

Uddayana Bandha: (see under Bandha).

Unconscious: A term to denote the state of an individual when his faculties of seeing, hearing, feeling etc. are not functioning normally as happens in a state of coma. The other meaning is to denote God, the field of Divine Energy and Knowledge, of which we are not conscious before realisation. After realisation the Unconscious comes into the ambit of our extended awareness, through the connection established by the Kundalini.

Vajroli: One of the six procedures adopted in the practice of yoga, cleansing the urinary passage by drawing in water through the penis into the urinary bladder.

Vasti: One of the six procedures adopted in the practice of yoga, of cleansing the rectum and colon.

Vayu, Apana: One of the five kinds of vayu located in the pakvashaya (the large intestines) and propels the faeces downwards.

Vayu, Prana: One of the five kinds of vayu located in the head (murdha) and heart (hridaya), responsible for the acts of swallowing, spitting, sneezing, respiration etc.

Vayu, Samana: One of the five kinds of vayu located near agni and moves in the entire koshtha. It enables the reception, digestion, separation of the nutrients (sara) from the food residue (kitta) and propulsion of the food.

Vayu, Udana: One of the five kinds of vayu which is said to be located in the umbilical region (nabhi), thorax (uras) and throat (kantha).

Vayu, Vyana: One of the five kinds of vayu which is said to be located in the entire body and circulates the rasa, rakta, sweda, etc.

Veda: Knowledge, sacred knowledge, scriptures of the Hindus.

Vijnanamaya Kosha: (See under Kosha).

Vishuddhi Chakra: (See under Chakra).

Vishwajyoti: The cosmic light.

Vyadhi: Disease.

Vibrations: The cool breeze (Sanskrit: Chaitanya) which tells of the innate quality of a being or object and can be felt after Self-Realisation. It is felt typically as flow of cool breeze in the palms of the hands and in the body.

Vibratory Awareness: The state of awareness of a Sahaja Yogi, in which

our consciousness is enlightened and transformed by the perception of vibrations.

Yin: Chinese term for the energy of the left-hand channel, Ida Nadi.

Yang: Chinese term for the energy of the right-hand channel, Pingala Nadi.

Yoga: Union of the individual's self with the all-pervading Divine force through the awakening of the Kundalini energy.

Yuj: To link, to join, to unite.

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