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KRIYA

TUNING THE HUMAN INSTRUMENT

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The human being is very much like an instrument. It can be tuned.

There is no doubt about it, the human being is very much like an instrument. It vibrates with energy, thought, and sound. It can resonate both harmony or dissonance. Most importantly, it can be tuned so that it reliably resonates harmonics that are in tune with each of our life paths. The sages of ancient India understood this deeply and developed the yogic sciences and arts as a way of doing exactly that.

The body with its tissues, organs and electrical nerves. The mind, the senses, the thoughts, feelings, the emotional fabric and its subconscious matrix. The subtle channels through which our life-force moves, and the magnetic field generated by all of it. The human instrument is sophisticated, mysterious and profound.

Our modern instruments of measurement cannot yet fully measure the subtle forces which operate in our body and indeed the Universe. That which the Ancient Indian Science calls prana, we call life-force. More accurately we can say life-force intelligence, or even more so, life-force-love intelligence.

It is the prana which animates all things. It is that which rotates the earth, that which moves the rivers downstream, and perhaps even that which holds the stars in the firmament. It is the prana that somehow grew us in our mother's womb; and it is the prana which somehow propelled us down and out of our mother's womb at that unforgettable moment when each of our lives began, and have continued up until this very moment.

In our bodies, it is the prana that beats our heart, that digests our food, and that animates the countless physiological processes that our survival and vitality continuously rely upon. How do our bone cells know how to choose calcium, and our muscle cells protein? Who is making those decisions? There is a great intelligence to life — one that none of us fully understands.

“We are not separate from the earth. We are her. These are our bodies. And when we die, our bodies are going back into her.”

FROM THE TEACHINGS · SESSION 1

Will scientific instruments of measurement ever be able to explain it all? Perhaps, but probably not. Leaving some mystery alive is not necessarily a bad thing. There are certain types of knowing that come from inner experience, not outer verifications. Who could ever actually describe what this all really is, anyway? We cannot, and as soon as we try, we may quickly regret

our attempt.

Most of us can agree on this — life is magnificent. The body, mind, energy, and all of its mysterious facets is indeed an extraordinary instrument. According to the yogi scientists of ancient India, the human body is extraordinarily difficult to attain from an evolutionary perspective. Therefore, to find ourselves at this moment, possessing the precious human existence, is a wonderful thing. Our life is precious, and the human instrument which acts as the vehicle for our life is equally precious.

Even if we currently think poorly of our own body and mind, that is perfectly okay. We all have been there, or end up there from time to time. However, it is crucial to try to realize that you are already perfectly equipped. There is nothing about your true self that you need to change. It is the mind and its deep subconscious tendencies which obscure your innate brilliance. As you will discover in the following passages, as well as in the full course, tuning the human instrument is both purifying the obscurations to your innate brilliance, as well as magnifying that brilliance so it shines through you in every domain of life.

*“The shining jewel — that is the real you. Sat Nam. The inner brilliance.
And all of Kriya Yoga is illuminating that within yourself.”*

FROM THE TEACHINGS · SESSION 1

You currently embody the instrument that is more than capable of delivering deep happiness and fulfillment. We all know that our body can generate tremendous pleasure. But what we don't all know is that it can generate extraordinary pleasures and wisdom at the subtle and super-subtle levels. This, in turn, opens us up and connects us to our much greater Universe. Our purpose becomes clear, life is filled with meaning, and we cherish every moment.

CHAPTER II

The Concept of Kriya

An intentional action to bring about a desired effect.

The concept of kriya is essential to the understanding of Kundalini Yoga. However, some time will be needed to fully grasp its meaning. A comprehensive understanding arrives as we gradually become familiar with the many contexts in which the word is used.

The Sanskrit word kriya (क्रिया) comes from the verbal root, 'kṛ' (कृ), meaning, "to do, to make, to act, to perform, to bring about." The word karma, meaning, "action and effect," comes from this same root.

Kriya, in its broader context, literally means: action, doing, activity, or practice.

Therefore, kriya is an intentional action to bring about a desired effect. The purpose of kriya yoga is to unite the finite mind with the infinite mind (samadhi). Under this broader umbrella, specific kriyas are employed in various other contexts, such as purification of the body, healing, expanding awareness capacities, and so forth.

In the LFA approach to Kundalini Yoga, a kriya is the primary vehicle for catalyzing transformation in the body, mind, and energy system. Here, a kriya is typically an exercise, meditation, or a sequence of exercises and/or meditations strung together.

“The Kriya is a tool of yoga. The yoga is the experience of the infinite. Don't mistake the tool for the thing itself.”

FROM THE TEACHINGS · SESSION 4

CHAPTER III

Working with Kriya in Kundalini Yoga

In Kundalini Yoga, the kriya is the catalyst that sparks the magic. It combines asana, mudra, pranayama, and mantra into a single synchronized activity. It generates an inner environment that then guides the mind and body through an experience of transformation. That which was stuck becomes free; what was dense becomes subtle; what was frantic becomes calm; what was confused becomes clear.

For that transformation process to occur and to be transported into a new, elevated state of being, a threshold must be crossed. The combined asana, pranayama, mudra, dristhi, and mantra generate a pressurization of the system. As the kriya progresses, the energy builds. The body is being asked to steady itself in the kriya, often for a prolonged period of time. A decision must be made. Either we give in to the pressure and disengage the practice, or we choose to persevere and stay the course.

“The first seven minutes of this kriya — definitely the worst part. Minutes seven through fourteen, that's when the chi starts to flow. That's when you meet the real threshold. And you have to decide — are you going to meet it?”

FROM THE TEACHINGS · SESSION 3

Here, a tension builds between the body and the mind. Do I continue this practice, even though my arms are burning, my mind is revolting, and I simply cannot bear the idea of continuing any longer? This is a threshold point, the pressure of transformation. The body/mind cannot rely on its ordinary means of maintaining its equilibrium. It will need to tap a deeper reservoir of energy. When it does so, the body is given a new lift. Somehow, the practice no longer seems unbearable. A feeling of inner bliss starts to blend with our discomfort. The mind moves from its turbulence, the body lightens, and a meditative space emerges. Dharana (concentration) has started to convert into dhyana (meditative force).

Of course, the process is not always so dramatic. For instance, a threshold we encounter when practicing for an hour will be far more pronounced than when we practice for three to seven minutes. Yet even in a relatively short and easy kriya, the same process is at work, just more subtly.

By nature, the kriya asks for our full presence. Initially, to coerce the mind into maintaining its attention on the point of focus requires persistent willpower and determination. The mind is stubborn and does not often obey our commands so easily. As the kriya progresses, the