



Sri Sathya Sai **Jyoti** Meditation

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation





Sri Sathya Sai **Jyoti** Meditation

Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation

© PRASHANTI CHARITABLE TRUST 2016

Published by Prashanti Charitable Trust, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Campus, Sri Sathya Sai Marg, Via Bhatar Char Rasta, Althan, Surat 395007.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or copied, stored or transmitted or used in any manner whatsoever without the written permission of the publisher except for the use of brief quotations in a book review. Breach of this condition is liable for appropriate legal action.

Compiled by Rajiv Gosai and team

Edited by Lalita Giani

Design and layout by Bhavna Bhambhani

Vector resource: [www.freepik.com](http://www.freepik.com)

Price: Rs.

First edition – July 2016 – 1,000 copies

Printed by Sai Kirti, S-56, Belgium Square, Delhi Gate, Ring Road, Surat – 395003.

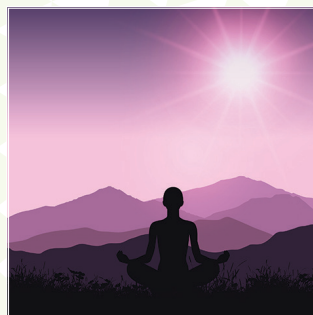
# Inside the Book



Preface  
07



Meditation  
09



Silence  
23



Soham  
29



Jyoti Meditation  
37



Asana  
59



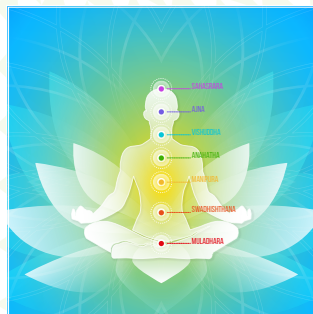
Pranayama  
63



Mudras  
67



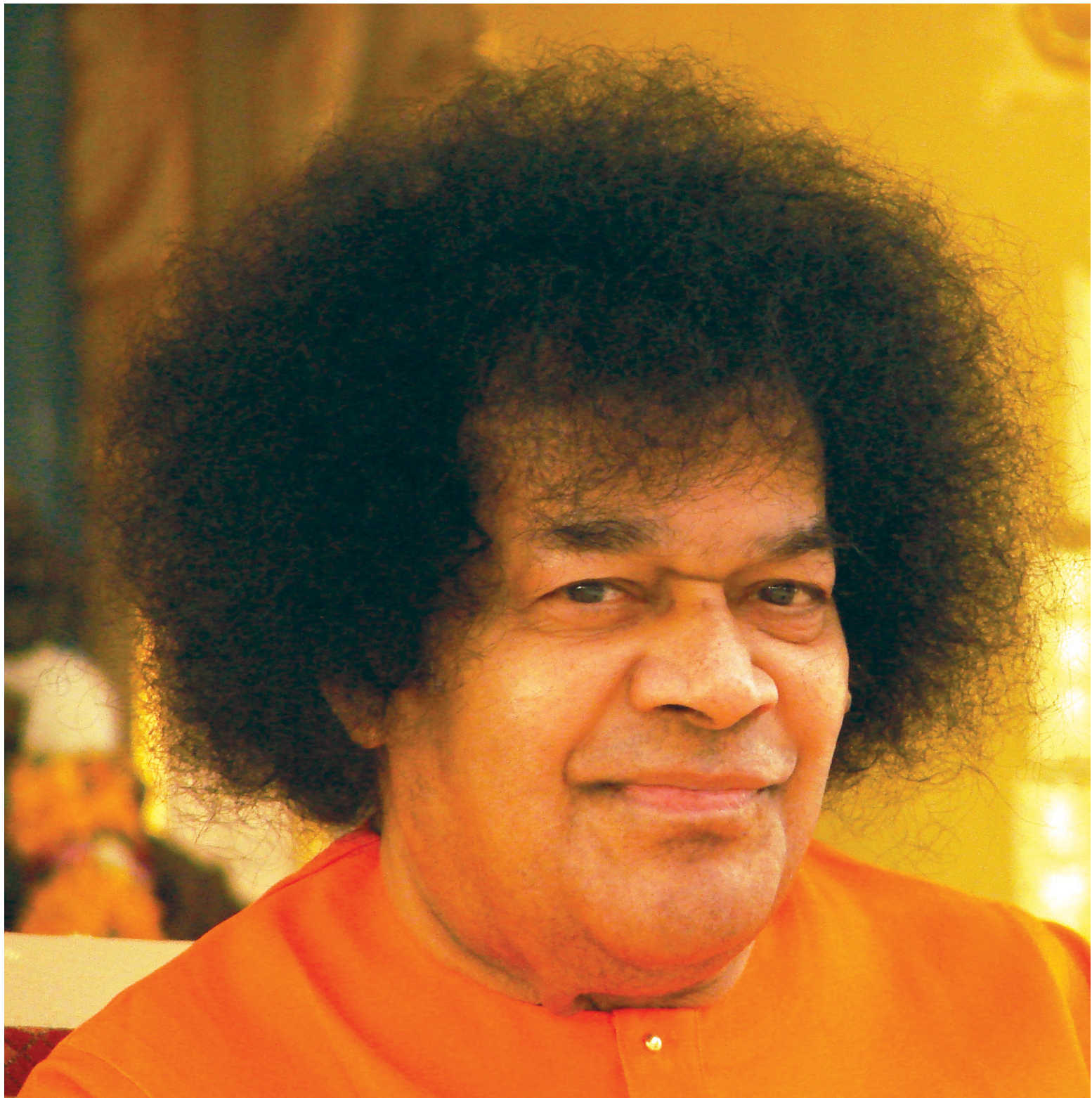
Koshas  
71



Chakras  
77



Self-assessment  
83



# Preface

Om Sri Sai Ram! I am extremely happy at the publication of the guidelines for Jyoti Meditation.

This form of meditation coupled with Namasmarana is a very unique package gifted by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba to mankind. In fact, it is the simple path shown by Bhagawan for the common man to embark upon his or her spiritual journey.

I am also very appreciative of the immense work and research conducted by the dedicated team of young men and women from all over India being members of the Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, India. This team was ably led by Brother Rajiv Gosai from Gujarat.

I also thank my colleague, Shri N Ramani, All India Vice President and Smt. Kamala Pandya, All India Dy. Coordinator, Bal Vikas, for guiding the youth in this matter.

I am sure that this book will be of immense help to all in the world who wish to embark on their spiritual journey as enlightened by Bhagawan for all times to come. I pray that all benefit from this endeavour.

Dated this 20th day of June, 2016.

In His service,

**Nimish Pandya**

All India President, Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisations, India







09 Chapter One  
Meditation

# REAL MEDITATION is getting ABSORBED in GOD

as the only thought,  
as the only GOAL.

God only,  
only God.  
Think God,  
breathe God,  
LOVE God.

*Conversations with  
Bhagawan Sri Sathya  
Sai Baba  
~ Dr. John Hislop*

## What is Meditation?

*Dhyana* (Meditation) induces God to come down to you and inspires you to raise yourself to Him.<sup>1</sup>

Meditation (*dhyana*) is the process by which the mind is trained to acquire concentration. As a result of meditation on the highest *Atma* (*Paramatma*), the mind will withdraw from sense objects and the sensory world. At that time, the intellect (*buddhi*) must assert its authority and command the mind (*manas*) not to entertain any feeling except the thought of the Fundamental Basis.<sup>2</sup>

The NAME is essential for meditation, for that alone can ensure quick success. Even if complete faith is not forthcoming quickly, the practice must not be given up or changed, for practice will certainly yield victory. Meditation is spiritual strength, the strength that will keep off the disease of worldliness (*samsara*).<sup>3</sup>

Meditation gives concentration and success in all tasks. Through meditation alone, great personages and sages (*rishis*) have controlled their mental activities, directed them towards the pure (*satvic*) path, established themselves at all times in contemplation of the Lord, and

finally succeeded in achieving union with the Godhead.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Source: *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 7*

<sup>2</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini, Ch. 1 - 'Power of Meditation'*

<sup>3</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini, Ch. 13 - 'Developing One-Pointedness'*

<sup>4</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini, Ch. 13 - 'Developing One-Pointedness'*

The path of meditation (*dhyana-marga*) will destroy ignorance (*ajnana*), and it will grant the individual union with the Godhead (*Brahmaikyatha*).<sup>5</sup> Man is Divine. He can purify himself to perfect divinity by the process of *dhyana* (Meditation).<sup>6</sup>

### Yearning and Determination

Through meditation, understanding will increase and wisdom will grow. For this, a person should develop interest in, and a yearning and determination to succeed in meditation—that is, a yearning that will not tolerate any obstacle. Yearning must have the strength to inspire endeavour. In fact, yearning is but dormant endeavour; endeavour is yearning in action. When yearning is weak, endeavour declines; when yearning is strong, determination to succeed is also strong.

### Three stages in Meditation: Concentration, Contemplation and Meditation

Sri Sathya Sai explains: There are the three stages in meditation: concentration, contemplation, and meditation. Gearing all the senses into action is concentration. Right from dawn to dusk, whatever activities we perform, they are done with concentration. There is a border between concentration, which is below the senses, and meditation, which is beyond the senses. This border is known as contemplation. When contemplation deepens, it moves naturally into meditation. Meditation is entirely above the senses; it transcends the senses.

Let us understand the concepts of Concentration, Contemplation and Meditation with an example: There is a rose plant and in it you have the leaves, thorns, branches and flowers. In this context, the ability to distinguish between thorns, leaves, branches and flowers, can be termed

---

<sup>5</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini, Ch. 14 - 'Power of Meditation'*

<sup>6</sup>Source: Bhagawan's discourse in Kampala, Uganda, East Africa on July 8, 1968

as Concentration. After looking at all these, one can identify the rose. Once you are able to see the rose and concentrate on it, then you can pluck it without touching the thorns. Once you have plucked the flower, there is no relation whatsoever between the flower on the one hand and thorns, leaves and branches on the other. The separation of the flower from the other parts of the plant is called Contemplation. Then you take this flower and offer it to God. After you have offered the flower to God, the entire plant, your hand and even the flower do not exist at all. This offering, where others have disappeared and God alone exists, is called Meditation.<sup>7</sup>

### Control the Mind

Controlling the mind is the first step in meditation. Our basic attitude towards things in life keeps changing. The same object appears attractive at times and unattractive at other times. Sometimes we welcome something with great fondness, and at other times, there is no desire to even see it. The mind is the cause of this. Therefore, it is necessary to train the mind to attain a certain balance.

The waters of a river leap from mountains, fall into valleys, and rush through gorges; tributaries join at various stages, and the waters become turbid and unclean. So too, in the flood of human life, ups and downs occur all the time. No one can escape them. So, we have to accept this fact and, far from being afraid and worried about problems, one should view them as adding to one's experience. One should not only feel like this, but one should be calm and serene whatever happens, then, all troubles, whatever their nature, will pass away lightly and quickly. For this, the control of the mind is essential.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup>Source: *Sadhana – The Inward Path*

<sup>8</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini, Ch. 3 – 'The Goal of Meditation'*

## Control the Senses

Control the senses (*jnanendriyas*), which run helter-skelter, control the flood of thoughts and plans and schemes; withdraw from the sense objects, the false fears, the absurd desires, the sorrows, the worries, and the artificial pleasures that now fill the mind. One must train oneself to realise that everything is an illusion; joys and the sorrows, desires and fears are all transitory. The overactive mind must be relaxed and our thoughts must be stilled. We need to withdraw from our senses. This takes a lot of practice and effort. Do not give up.<sup>9</sup>

To control your thoughts from wandering, repeat the name of the Lord; that will keep out your sorrows and troubles and there will be no room for worries and anxieties in the mind. Without the effacement of the mind, spiritual wisdom (*jnana*) cannot dawn. The full person is one who has succeeded in this.<sup>10</sup>

## Concentration and One-pointedness are the Keys

Every minute, internal and external promptings and temptations arise and accumulate in people. One cannot attend to all of them at the same time, so one fixes attention on what one considers the most important one. This is called concentration (*avadhana*). Concentration is needed to grasp any subject well. Purposefully directing attention on a subject and fixing it there is one-pointedness (*ekagratha*). This is also a condition of the mind. Concentration and one pointedness help to focus effort on any selected task. Concentration is the foundation of all successful endeavour. It is needed not only for meditation but even for our daily living. Whatever the task one is engaged in, doing it with concentration will develop both self-confidence and self-respect, for they are the result of the attitude of one's own mind. The mind may waiver between

---

<sup>9</sup><sup>10</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini, Ch. 3 - 'The Goal of Meditation'*

the bad and the good. Concentrated attention must be employed to keep the mind attached only to good prompting. Success or failure in the good task depends upon one-pointedness. One-pointedness will increase power and skill. But it cannot be won without conquering the overactive mind. This one-pointedness, this conquest of the mind, is acquired by meditation.<sup>11</sup>

Concentration, according to yoga scriptures, is the fixing of the mind on one object, without any deviation. Concentration alone can make meditation successful. Its very nature is one-pointedness; its power will negate hesitation.<sup>12</sup>

Concentration means, when all senses and desires fall away and there is only God. In between concentration and meditation, like a separation between the two, is contemplation. Concentration to contemplation, then meditation. As long as one thinks 'I am meditating' that is the mind and not meditation. As long as one knows he is meditating, he is not meditating. In absorption in God, one puts aside every form and merges into God. In that process the mind naturally stops.<sup>13</sup> Avoid no-pointedness and many-pointedness.<sup>14</sup>

## Contemplation

Contemplation is achieved when the senses withdraw for some time and attachment to the objective world slackens. When you have completely broken away from all attachment, you enter a state of meditation.<sup>15</sup>

Meditation is the process of sublimating concentration (which concerns itself with the realm of

---

<sup>11</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini*, Ch. 3 - 'The Goal of Meditation'

<sup>12</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini*, Ch. 13 - 'Developing One-Pointedness'

<sup>13</sup>Source: *Conversations with Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba* by Dr. John S. Hislop

<sup>14</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini*, Ch. 7 - 'Remember GOD and Meditate'

<sup>15</sup>Source: *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks*, Vol. 17, pg. 191, 192

the senses), which leads into contemplation (which concerns itself with the realm of the mind and reason), resulting in meditation (which concerns itself with the realm unreachable by logic or thought or even imagination).<sup>16</sup>

## Discipline

This discipline of meditation must be rigorously followed. In fact, *dhyana* (meditation) means ‘discipline’. Discipline, regularity, steadiness—these are the essentials of meditation. A spiritual aspirant who keeps these things in view can achieve quick results. Meditation is a cure for the illness of worldly existence (*bhava-roga*). Along with it, another drug must also be taken; its name is contentment. If there is contentment in the mind, one enjoys an endless festival.<sup>17</sup>

## Contentment

The royal road to meditation is contentment. Just as a traveller who has trudged along for miles in the scorching sun feels refreshed when taking a bath in the limpid waters of a cool and shady lake, so too the unfortunate individual struggling in the scorching heat of desires feels happy and relieved when bathing in the lake of contentment.<sup>18</sup>

A sense of joy is necessary for meditation and concentration to progress, but many things deprive you of the atmosphere of joy. So you must pray sincerely, in order to be free from such obstacles. The recital or repetition of mantras will be of great help.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup>Source: *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 16, pg. 5*

<sup>17</sup><sup>18</sup><sup>19</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini, Ch. 14 - ‘Remove Defects from Character’*

## Call Upon God

Meditation is the royal road, the easy path to the goal. For meditation to be effective there must be steady practice with no hurry and no worry. With steady practice, the person will become quiet and the state of meditation will naturally come about. Success is assured. Call upon God, He will help you. He will respond and He himself will be your Guru. He will guide you. He will always be at your side. Think God, see God, hear God, eat God, drink God, love God. That is the easy path, the royal road to your goal of breaking ignorance and the realisation of your true nature—which is one with God.<sup>20</sup>

In the beginning, meditation may be easy and interesting. The first few steps will be encouraging. But when you begin to ascend the higher steps of the stairway of dhyana, unforeseen obstacles will crop up. However, one should not get disheartened by these unexpected hurdles. They must be taken in their stride with courage and conviction. A person should not undertake the *sadhana* of *dhyana* without the strong will to do so. For the weak-minded persons there is an easier alternative, that of *nishkama karma*.<sup>21</sup>

## Gain Inward Vision

Every thought, every word, every deed has to proceed from the full consciousness of knowledge. Direct your intelligence not to wander about but to dwell constantly in the inner world! This is the inward quest (*antar vimarsha*), and meditation (*dhyana*) is the most important instrument needed for this.<sup>22</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup>Source: *Conversations with Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba* by Dr. John S. Hislop

<sup>21</sup>Source: *Summer Showers in Brindavan*, 1979, pg. 159

<sup>22</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini*, Ch. 3 - 'The Goal of Meditation'



The spiritual aspirant can start on the inner quest (*antar vimarsha*) by self-examination with humility and devotion. Every thought, every word, every deed has to proceed from the full consciousness of knowledge.

Once the individual (*jivi*) is on the way towards the goal, the individual will derive full contentment from within and discover within himself the source of bliss. The cravings and ambitions, delusions and falsehoods, animal needs and antics that were worrying the individual till then, all vanish. Those who persist in the path of discrimination (*vichara marga*) will always be seeking the eternal truth that lies behind the dream-like illusions of this world. They receive the grace of the Lord, and realise the *Atma*.

### Gain Pure Knowledge

By constant endeavour, we gradually reach a stage where a new understanding dawns, clear and unruffled. When the heights of meditation are reached, this understanding becomes so strong that one's lower nature is destroyed. Then only 'You' remain. The entire creation is a delusion of your mind! One alone IS. Truth (*Sathya*), the Lord, Being-Awareness-Bliss (*Satchidananda*), the highest *Atma* (*Paramatma*); the One is the Self (*Shivoham*).

### Identify Totally with the Object of Meditation

When we start meditation, three things are involved. First, there is the person who meditates, '*dhyata*'; secondly, there is the object of meditation, '*dhyeya*', and thirdly, there is the process of meditation itself, '*dhyana*'. In true meditation, all these three merge—there is no *dhyana* and no *dhyata*; all merge into One. That is pure knowledge; the wise one (*jnani*) will be aware only of *Atmic* bliss (*Atma-anubhava*).<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup>Source: *Summer Showers in Brindavan*, 1979

## Atmic Bliss is the Goal

That is the goal—attainment of this transcendent divine experience, of *Atmic Bliss*! Meditation and meditation alone has the capacity to make one transcend the vicissitudes of time and space and make one ever the same equanimous individual, one with the Creator himself.

Since the *Atma* pervades all, the individual also loses the “I-ness” and gets immersed in his inherent divine nature. Such a person is a real great soul (*mahatma*), a liberated soul (*jivan-muktha*) immersed in bliss (*ananda*) and peace (*santhi*).<sup>24</sup> Meditation (*dhyanam*) should never be judged on mere external standards; they are to be judged by their inner effects. Their essence is their relationship to the *Atma*.

## Withdrawal from Sense Objects and Purification of Organs

After seating oneself in a comfortable and stable posture, steadying the breath, *Pratyahaara* (withdrawing of the senses from the sense objects) and *Anga Nyasa* (purification of all the organs of the body) is to be done. Light is the greatest purifier, for it dispels all darkness. Light is made to traverse throughout the body, purifying all the limbs and senses, and is installed in the lotus of the heart in which is to be enshrined the *bhaavachithra* (mental thought picture) of the Form of the Lord for the purpose of *dharana* (concentration) which would lead to *dhyana* (meditation) and ultimately to *samadhi* (the state of super conscious bliss).<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini, Chp 3 - 'The Goal of Meditation'*

<sup>25</sup>Source: *All India Bal Vikas Gurus Conference, 21-11-1979*

## The Life Force

To sit straight (during meditation) is important. Between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> vertebrae is the life-force. If the spine is injured at this point, paralysis occurs. If the body is in a straight position, the life force may rise up through the straight body and give the quality of intense concentration of the mind.<sup>26</sup>

The *Atma* is everywhere, but for the purpose of sitting in meditation, the life principle can be considered as being 10 inches above the navel and at the centre of the chest. An ‘inch’ in this measurement is the width of the thumb at the first joint.<sup>27</sup>

## ‘Monkey Meditation’ is Harmful

The mind plans and executes innumerable deeds and roams over vast expanses, all in the twinkling of an eye! It operates with unimaginable speed. It conceives an object and dallies with it a little, but it soon discards it for another more attractive object towards which it flees and about which it begins to worry!

The spiritual aspirant (*sadhaka*) has to be ever watchful of this tendency of the mind. When the mind flits from object to object, it must be brought back to the right path and the right object. That is the correct spiritual practice, the path of concentration and meditation. If, however, the aspirant does not struggle to achieve this one-pointedness but leaves the mind to itself, following its vagaries from this to that, the process deserves to be called ‘monkey meditation’ (*markata dhyana*)—a type of meditation that is very harmful to spiritual progress.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup>Source: *Conversations with Bhagavan Sri Sathya Sai Baba* by Dr. John S. Hislop

<sup>28</sup>Source: *Dhyana Vahini, Ch. 13 – ‘Developing One-Pointedness’*

# Sri Sathya Sai's Mahashivaratri Discourse

“Remember  
these three things: The first  
one is Concentration. The second one is  
Contemplation. The third is Meditation.

Concentration is momentary. As you watch My Form, it  
is concentration. As the Form moves away temporarily, it is  
contemplation. Later this impression will remain forever. When this  
impression is permanent, it is meditation.

So the meditative state is eternal. You are limiting yourselves to concentration  
and contemplation. Both of them are not permanent.

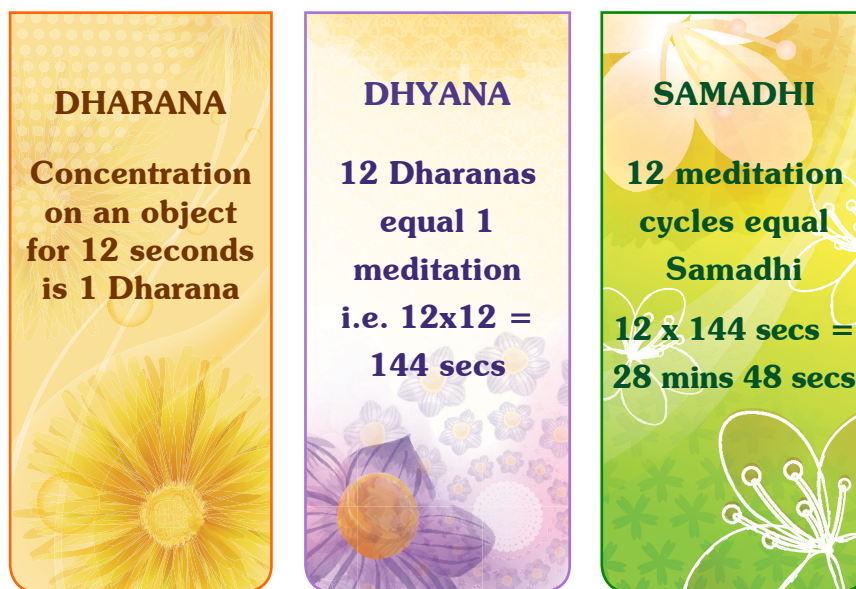
Initially, you have to focus on concentration. Gradually, you have to  
focus on contemplation. You should eventually come to a state of  
unwavering thoughts. The impression of the Form should not  
fade at any time. The Form should remain whether your  
eyes are open or closed. True meditation is when  
you can visualise the Form  
at all times.”

---

<sup>1</sup>Source: *Sadhna – The Inward Path* pg. 93, 94

# Schedule for Meditation

The recommended time for meditation is before dawn (between 3:00 AM and 6:00 AM). The 'auspicious time' is from 4:30 AM to 5:15 AM.<sup>1</sup> Swami cautions us that regularity is most important. He also recommends a few minutes of meditation in the evening after dusk. Swami instructed His students to look at any object: a flame, idol or picture for 12 seconds with total concentration and without blinking the eyelids. This is concentration (*dharana*). Twelve *dharana* concentrations make one meditation (*dhyana*). This means that meditation should last for  $12 \times 12 = 144$  seconds. Thus, proper meditation need not last more than 2 minutes 24 secs. Twelve meditations equal one *samadhi*, which amounts to  $12 \times 144$  seconds = 28 minutes 48 seconds.

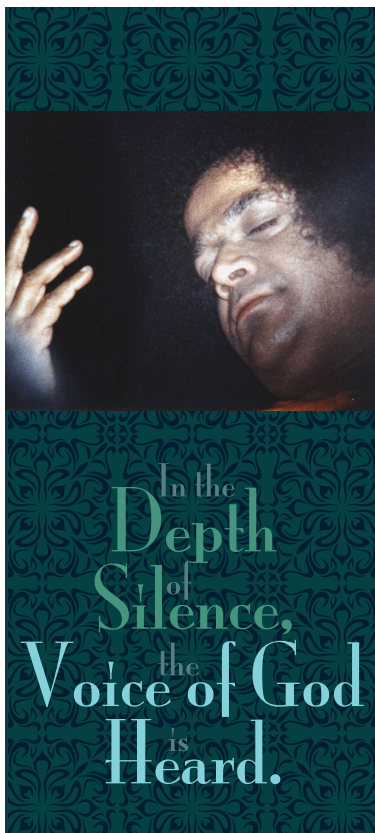


<sup>1</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Volume 6, Eyelids & the Pupil*





23 Chapter Two  
Silence



# Silence

Sri Sathya Sai says:

“It is only in the depth of silence, that the voice of God is heard. You feel the presence of God when silence reigns. In the excitement and confusion of the market place, you cannot hear His footfall. He is *Shabda Brahma*, resounding when all is filled with silence.”

What is Silence?

Silence is the first step in spiritual discipline; it makes the other steps easy. It promotes self-control; it lessens the chances of anger, hate, malice, greed and pride.

## Outward Silence

Is silence just refraining from talk? Is it speechlessness? Is it to be tight-lipped? What is silence? Externally, keeping quiet is silence. But in spirit it is not so. You may remain silent, but if thoughts are negative, the thought process that goes on within disturbs you, agitates you, irritates you, instigates you. In front of our boss or superior, we may remain silent nodding our head to whatever he says; does it mean, that we agree with what he says? Is that silence spontaneous or enforced? What purpose does it serve anyway? Is it positive? In what way is such silence helpful? Some people are apparently silent, but highly manipulative. Is silence in such an instance positive or negative? It is certainly negative. Positive thoughts may motivate you, inspire you and guide you. But one thing common to both the situations is that you are not



silent. Yes! You are silent outwardly, but inwardly you are not. Then what is the use of such silence?

Students can study well when silence is observed and when they are undisturbed. Why? For concentration of the mind, silence is essential. When it is noisy, we cannot concentrate. We can work well if we can concentrate on the work entrusted to us—it may be any field, Engineering, Medicine, Teaching, or any other. Patients need silence as they cannot bear any noise, because of their sickness. In front of elders, seniors, noble souls, and teachers, if we remain silent and observe, we can learn more from them, from the richness of their experience. Silence is patience. Silence is concentration. Silence is humility. Silence is respect. Sometimes silence checks indiscipline and disorder better than admonition. Silence is a method of teaching. By remaining silent we can express our dissent or disagreement. Silence, then, is eloquence. Silence is discipline. Therefore, silence is essential in all spheres of human activity.

### Spiritual Silence

Spiritually, silence is a penance. It is a process to turn inward. One has to learn to look within, beyond the senses. Spiritual experience and awareness are possible only when we develop insight and not merely look outwards. Spiritually silence helps the aspirant to go to the very source of life and energy, which is beyond the body, mind, intellect and senses. Spiritually, silence is meditation as it is only in meditation that one transcends time and space.

It was Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi whose silence was a spiritual gospel and a teaching. His silence was more precious than many sermons and messages. When thought, word, and deed are at variance with each other, it is impossible to maintain silence. Even if it is externally practiced, such silence is meaningless and useless. Perfect harmony between thought, word and deed ensures, enlivens and motivates silence which is the reflection of inner peace and

tranquility. A spiritual seeker does not wish to divert his attention from God, and a true devotee does not relish any talk other than that of God. If a devotee indulges in vain talk or gossip, his concentration gets diluted, and his faith gets shaken.

### The Mind Disturbs the Silence

If we go to the root cause, we shall find that it is entirely the mind that distracts us. The mind finds pleasures in the external world. The mind delights in diversity. It is dual and hence it is after the dual world. The mind satisfies the senses and they in turn get gratified. Therefore, too much talk indicates too much of involvement and indulgence in this world. It also signifies attachment and possessive instinct. Body attachment and attachment to material objects make a person feel self-conscious and crave for self-recognition. This innate impulse sometimes makes him talk too much. The pride of achievement and the ego of accomplishment unknowingly make him desire for praise. This makes a person start listing out his achievements and accomplishments, whether it is necessary or not. However, mere silence does not mean a state of a balanced mind, since passions of jealousy, envy, hatred may also force a person to keep silent.

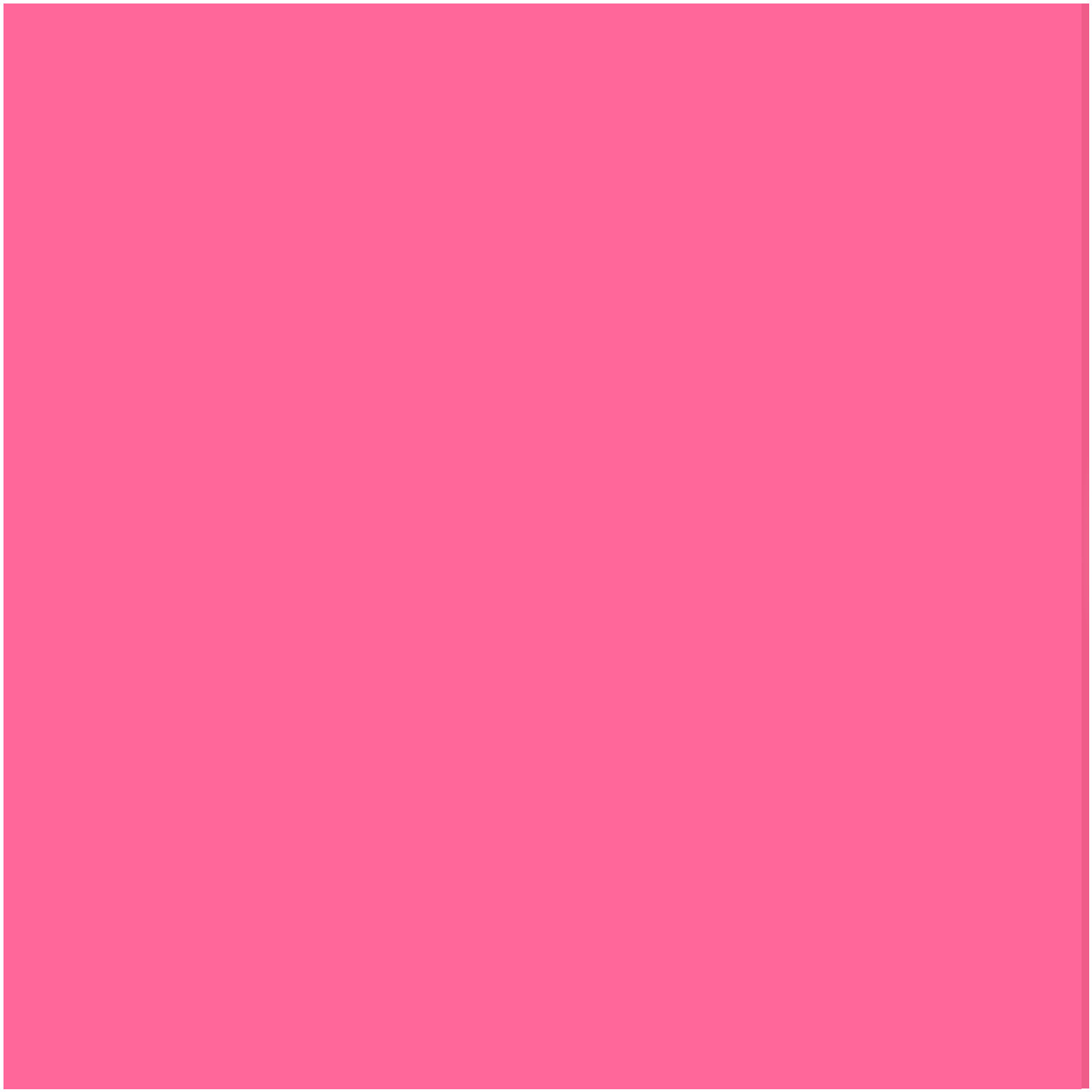
### Surrender the Mind

What is to be done now? Turn to God in all humility in full awareness that you are an instrument in the Divine hands. He is the indweller. When you realise in full faith, that everything is His gift, the so called 'I' or 'ego' or 'mind' ceases to exist any longer. When you submit to Him and do not feel that you are the doer, then it is complete surrender. It is only in this stage, the mind does not exist. This is called the withdrawal of the mind or *amanaska* or *mano laya*. Then you are speechless. You do not find words to express the state of your 'mindlessness'. You do not want to be inhibited by inadequate expression of the experience. Physical experience can be expressed. Spiritual experience is beyond words and can only be described as explained in the

*Taithreeyopanishad* to define *Atma* or *Brahman*, which is beyond the levels of comprehension and expression is, *yatho vacho nivarthanthe, aprapya manasa saha*, meaning ‘words fail and the mind cannot grasp Divinity’.

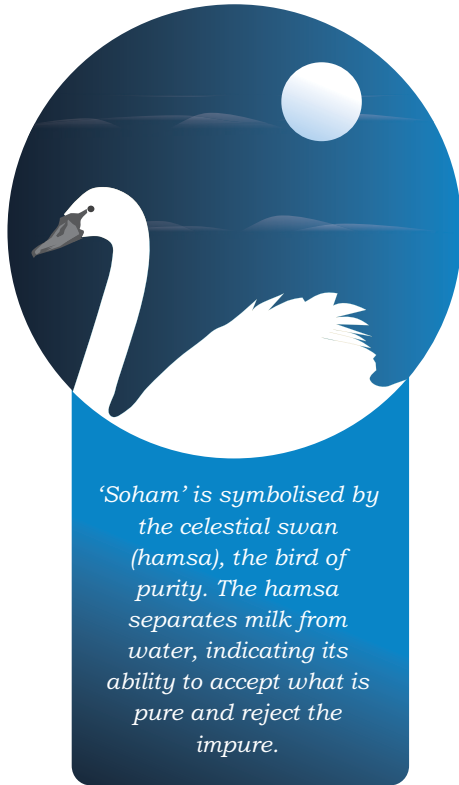
Physical silence is the outward discipline. But silence in a spiritual sense is *sadhana*. Physical silence helps others to do their job undisturbed. But spiritual silence helps your own upliftment as divinity unfolds itself in a state of silence. Physical silence is enforced and insisted upon, whereas, spiritual silence is accepted and welcomed willingly by the aspirant. Physical silence may not necessarily convey the inner peace and joy one experiences. But spiritual silence truly reflects inner peace and bliss, so this kind of ‘silence’, which may also be called ‘quietness’, quietens our inner emotions, agitations, disturbances, turbulent waves of desires and prejudices, so that both internal and external silences become a single entity.

May Bhagawan bless us with such a gift and observance of spiritual silence.





29 Chapter Three  
Soham



## Soham

*Soham* is the natural *mantra*, the *mantra* of the self. 'So' is 'He, God' and 'Ham' is 'I, the individual'. 'Soham' is 'He is I' or 'I am He'. This means, the *jiva* (individual soul with ego) is *Brahman*, no more and no less.<sup>1</sup> This *mantra* is inherent in us and repeats itself continuously from birth to death.

“Before you start *dhyana* (meditation), chant *Soham* (I am God), inhaling 'So' and exhaling 'Ham'. *Soham* identifies you with the infinite and expands your consciousness. Harmonise breath and thought. Breathe gently, naturally; do not make it artificial and laboured. Slow breath calms emotions. The mood of relaxation produced by this *Soham* recital is a precondition for a profitable session of meditation.”<sup>2</sup> ~ Sri Sathya Sai

### How Many Breaths Do We Take in a Day?

Aim high, resolve on the supremest adventure—everything will be set right to lead you on to the goal. In fact you are urged on towards this by your very breath, which repeats 21,600 times a day. *Soham* emphasises the identity of the Indweller with the Principle that is Imminent in the Universe. You may declare with your tongue, “There is no God,” but the breath repeats 'So' as it goes in and 'Ham' as it goes out; He who is imminent is the I who is resident!<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 9, 'Vaster than the Vastest'*

<sup>2</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 7, Japa, Sadhana*

<sup>3</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 7*

The 21,600 breaths per day is the typical experience. It is the average of one's life. At times of exertion or stress the breathing will be very fast; at times of peace and quiet it will be slow. Some people may have an average of more than 21,600 breaths per day. A practised yogi may average as low as six or seven breaths per minute. The slower the breathing, the longer the life span. The short-life monkey will breathe nearly 40 times per minute. The long-life snake will breathe three or four times per minute.<sup>4</sup>

### *Koham, Who am I?*

Each individual is born with the question '*Koham?*' on his or her lips. 'Who am I?' The answer is given by every breath: *Soham!* (I am He!)<sup>5</sup> Man is born ignorant; he dies a *jnani* (wise person) with the declaration '*Soham*' on his smiling face.<sup>6</sup>

### *Hamsa*

*Hamsa* (celestial swan) is the pure bird that is endowed with the rare power of discriminating between water and milk, even when they are mixed. The swan receives only the milk (that is to say, it separates the valid from the invalid, the lasting from the fragile, the true from the untrue).<sup>7</sup> Let your mind have no waves: let it be silent, level, calm, so that the *hamsa* can sport thereon!

The bird, in this physical cage wherein man is imprisoned, is always, from the moment of birth to the moment of death, chirping '*Soham*', declaring that the *jiva* (individual soul with ego) and *Deva* (God) are One. It is this affirmation that is the justification for the gift of life. When the chirp

---

<sup>4</sup>Source: *My Dear Students!* pg. 284

<sup>5</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 7 - 'My Three'*

<sup>6</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 6 - 'The Wet Wick'*

<sup>7</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 9 - 'Vaster than the Vastest'*

does not emanate from the breath, the body is a corpse, *savam!* When it manifests, it illumines and fills the cage with the divine fragrance; it is a tabernacle, *Sivam!* Identify yourselves with the *mantra* the bird chirps and the breath repeats. You might forget any other *sadhana* (spiritual discipline) or any other duty to yourself, but, the breath never, even for a moment, forgets this *sadhana*—reminding you of your innate Reality, namely, I am He, He is I. That is the refrain of every breath.<sup>8</sup>

### *Soham* Transforms into *Om*

Bliss is the nature of *Atma*, your own innermost Reality. That Reality is reminding you of its existence. The Self is repeating that it is not the limited, not the prisoner (held by the body). It is a wave of the vast ocean named 'He'. Inhale the vast, exhale the limited. This has to be observed during the waking stage. When you are in deep sleep, the awareness of the body disappears; there is no awareness of the outside world of which, while awake, you felt you were a part. There is no 'So' or 'Ham', no 'He' or 'I'; it is all one; one integral whole.<sup>9</sup>

When you watch your breath and meditate on '*Soham*', slowly the 'I' and the 'He' will merge; *Soham* will transform to O and M i.e. *Om*, the *Pranava*, the primal sound, which the *Vedas* (ancient scriptures) proclaim as the symbol of the formless, all-knowing God.<sup>10</sup>

The mind has been holding conversations with itself, when it is supposed to be silent! Give it perpetual tasks. Ask it to climb a pillar and slide down it whenever it has no other work. The pillar is '*Soham*'. Let it repeat *Soham* all the time.<sup>11</sup>

---

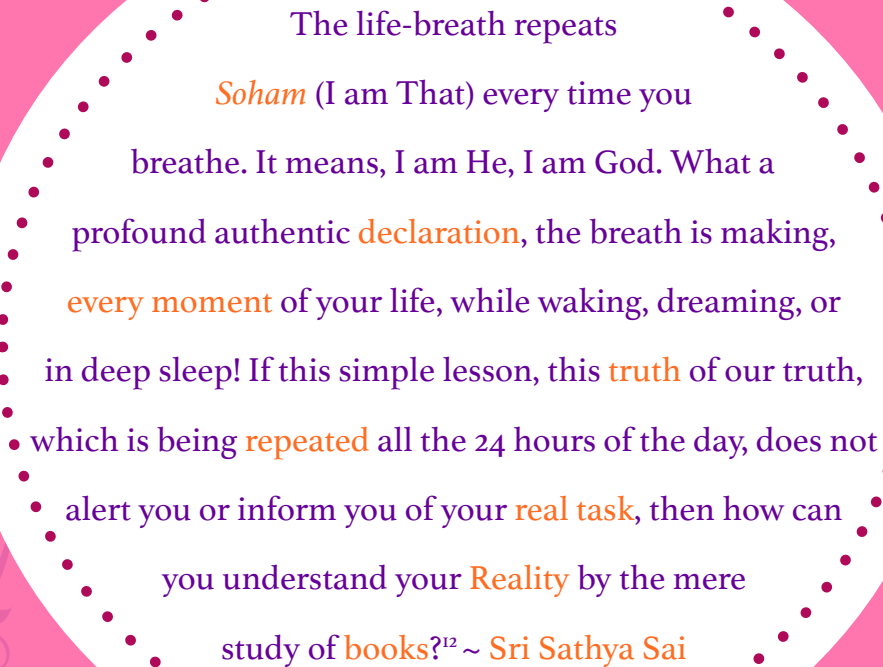
<sup>8</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 9, 'The Labryinth'*

<sup>9</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 6 - 'Voyaging on the Sea of Bliss'*

<sup>10</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 10 - 'Meditation'*

<sup>11</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 9 - 'The Mind Stuff'*





The life-breath repeats  
*Soham* (I am That) every time you  
breathe. It means, I am He, I am God. What a  
profound authentic **declaration**, the breath is making,  
**every moment** of your life, while waking, dreaming, or  
in deep sleep! If this simple lesson, this **truth** of our truth,  
which is being **repeated** all the 24 hours of the day, does not  
alert you or inform you of your **real task**, then how can  
you understand your **Reality** by the mere  
study of **books**?<sup>12</sup> ~ Sri Sathya Sai

---

<sup>12</sup>Source: *Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. 8, 'The Toughest Armour'*



*God is the life-breath of every soul.*

---





37 Chapter Four  
Jyoti Meditation

# Why is a Flame Used for Meditation?

The flame ( *jyoti* ) never diminishes in luster, no matter how many lamps are lit from it. Hence the flame is the most appropriate symbol of the eternal Absolute.

The flame is accepted by all religions. In Hinduism, the  *jyoti*  is worshipped to eliminate all kind of darkness. We chant ' *Tamasoma Jyotir Gamaya* ' i.e. 'Lead me from darkness to light'. Also, in the form of  *yagna*  (fire ritual), the flame has been worshipped since Vedic times.

Outside India, the earliest known traces of controlled fire were found at Gesher Benot Ya'qov, Israel and dated to an age 790,000 years ago.

Indo-Iranian fire worship is found at the transition from the Sintashta-Petrovka to the Fedorovo culture around 1500 BC in Zoroastrianism.

Fire worship in Graeco-Roman tradition had two separate forms: fire of the hearth and fire of the forge.

Fire is an element of theophany in the Hebrew Bible's burning bush, pillar of fire, and the eternal flame of the Menorah.

Holy fire in the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem has been documented since 1106 A.D. in Christianity.



# Preparation for Jyoti Meditation Module 1

## Time of Meditation

As per Swami's guidelines, *Brahma Muhurat* (between 3:00 AM and 6:00 AM) is best for meditation as the body is refreshed after a good night's sleep and the mind has not got busy with the day's activities. Beginners can select any suitable time and stick to it. You have to sit for meditation at the same time every day.

## Place for Meditation

Choose any quiet place where you can meditate without disturbance.

## Seat for Meditation

Sit on a clean cloth or mat.

## Asana for Meditation

Choose any comfortable asana in which you can sit for a long period. Most people find it best to sit in *Sukhasana* (simple cross-legged pose).

## Mudras for Meditation

You can sit in *Jnana* or *Chin mudra*.







# Jyoti Meditation Module 1



# Jyoti Meditation Module 1

Jyoti Meditation Module 1 is to be practiced regularly for a minimum period of 90 days.

Find a quiet place.

Do not sit directly on the ground (avoid direct physical contact with the earth). Take a clean white cotton cloth/mat or *Asana* (seat) to sit.

Sit up straight in a relaxed and comfortable posture. You can sit in *Sukhasana* or *Padmasana*.

Keep your hand in *Jnana mudra* (for clarification on *mudras*, please see chapter on *Mudras*.)

Sit in silence for 5-10 minutes. Observe the silence and reduce physical movement as much as you can. Withdraw from the external.

Place a lighted candle with an open steady flame in front of you at about 1.5 to 2 feet distance from your body and at the height of your eyebrows. The position of the candle should be such that the line from the flame to your eyebrows and your body makes a 90 degree angle.

Look at the flame steadily without blinking your eyes.

Now, close your eyes gently and try to feel the flame between your **eyebrows** (*Bhrukuti*).

Feel the light in between the eyebrows and let it illumine the **intellect**; feel the light fill your **forehead** with a golden light of love and goodness and spread it up to the **back** of your head.

The light is pure, it gives knowledge and wisdom, it is sacred.

Now gradually take the flame within your **body**; bring it down slowly through the **throat** up to the level of the **heart** but in the **middle** of the body. This place is the location of the spiritual heart.

Imagine your heart in the shape of a lotus bud. As the spiritual heart receives the warmth and the light of this loving flame, its lotus petals open out one by one, removing the darkness from your thoughts and emotions and bathing them with light.

As the petals open out, the flame enters the centre of the lotus. Gradually, the flower fades away and all that is left at the level of the spiritual heart is the sacred flame spreading its love and warmth all around.

The light is within you. Now take this light to the different organs of the body to make them sacred and pure. First, take it up the way it came down earlier through the throat and take it to one of the **eyes**, then take it to the second eye and then locate it in the **middle** of the two eyes. Now both eyes are lit up with the divine light i.e. '*Jyoti, Netra Jyoti*'. Swami says, "See good, do not see bad." Silently pray, "I shall see only good around me."

Now bring the *jyoti* gradually down to the **nose** and nostrils and then bring it into the **mouth** and place it on the **tongue**. Now your tongue is filled with sacred pure light. Swami says, "Speak good, do not speak evil." Pray, "May I speak the Truth only, may all falsehood vanish from my

tongue; may I speak softly and lovingly, may I sing in adoration of the Lord, may I eat and drink healthy foods and beverages, may I grow in strength because of the food I take in through the purified mouth and tongue.”

Now, take this light first to one ear and then to the other ear, purifying **both ears**. Swami says, “Hear good, do not hear bad, think good, do not think evil.” Think, “May I hear no evil, may I listen to good sounds only, devotional music, cheerful words, no criticism of others.” Now place the  *jyoti*  in the middle of the two ears right in the centre of the **brain**.

Now, take this  *jyoti*  gradually down through the throat towards one of the **shoulders**, then move it down one arm, to the **hand** up to the tips of the **fingers**. As the  *jyoti*  travels, it warms up and purifies the **muscles, blood and flesh**, each **finger** and the **thumb**.

Now, take the  *jyoti*  up gradually the same way and take it to the other shoulder, down the arm up to the fingers of the other hand. Then bring it up and place it between the two shoulders. Now **both arms** and **hands** are purified. Swami says, “Do good, do not do evil.” Pray silently, “Whatever work I do with my hands will be God’s work, will be good work.”

Now take the  *jyoti*  gradually down through the **stomach**, up to the level of the two **legs**. Take it to one of the legs and down right up to the **toes** and purify them. Then bring it up and move it down the other leg up to the toes.

Now bring the  *jyoti*  back between the two legs; both legs and **feet** have become pure. Pray, “Let my feet lead me on a good path to good places; let them not take me to places where I should not be going.”

Next, bring the  *jyoti*  up and place it right in the centre of the **spiritual heart** from where it had started.

“My whole body has become pure and illumined.”

Keep the  *jyoti*  here for some time.

Now any thought that comes should be pure and loving; as the thought comes, let the thought go. Think, “I am only a witness; I don’t get entangled with the thought.” Gradually the thoughts will fade away, less and less thoughts will come, more and more bliss will be enjoyed and a time will come when there will be complete purity within.

“My whole body is filled with divine light.”

After some time, gently touch both your hands together as we do **Namaskar** and then touch these hands to your two eyes, gently rub both the eyes and very slowly open them. Spend the whole day in calm and quiet, bliss, peace, and happiness.

End the meditation with the **Shanti (Peace) Prayer** (given on the next page).

## Shanti Prayer

*Asatoma Sadgamaya*

(From untruth lead me to truth)

*Tamasoma Jyotirgamaya*

(From darkness lead me to light)

*Mrutyorma Amritamgamaya*

(From death to lead me to immortality)

*Om Shanti Shanti Shanti*

(Om Peace Peace Peace)

# Benefits of Jyoti Meditation Module 1

*Jyoti* Meditation helps us to control the senses.

With the help of *Jyoti Dhyana*, one can develop one pointedness and increase concentration. This helps us on our spiritual journey. Students will be able to study with increased concentration.

Through meditation we can gain control over the mind and purify it.

*Jyoti* Meditation increases memory and will power.

*Jyoti* Meditation calms and relaxes the mind and reduces stress, depression, hypertension, headaches.

When the mind is calmer, anger, fear, fault-finding, grief, and all kinds of negative thoughts are reduced.







Jyoti Meditation Module 2



## Preparation for Jyoti Meditation Module 2

### Time for Meditation

The best time for meditation is *Brahma Muhurata*. *Brahma Muharata* means early morning, between 3:00 AM and 6:00 AM. During this time, the senses are quiet. Do not take a bath before you sit for *dhyana* (meditation), because the ritual of the bath will arouse the senses and distract physical and mental energy.

## Place for Meditation

Meditation for proper practice should be at the same place and same time. The place of meditation should be clean and quiet, where you can sit without any outer or inner disturbance.

## Seat for Meditation

We can sit on a special mat/ piece of cloth/ cushion that we use only for prayers. This acts as an insulation for not earthing the body currents. The level of sitting can be one to two inches above the ground, on a wooden plank with a woolen sheet covered with a fine white cotton cloth.

## Asana for Meditation

You can choose any *asana* that is comfortable. Ensure you choose an *asana* in which you can sit comfortably for a long period. *Sukhasana* or *Padmasana* is the best for most people.

## Mudras for Meditation

You can sit in *Jnana mudra* or *Chin mudra*.

# Jyoti Meditation Module 2

Jyoti Meditation Module 2 is to be practised regularly for a minimum period of 180 days.

Find a quiet place.

Do not sit directly on the ground (avoid direct physical contact with earth). Take a clean white cotton cloth/mat or *asana* (seat) to sit on.

Sit up straight in a relaxed position.

Sit in a comfortable posture. You can sit in *Sukhasana* or *Padmasana*.

Place a lighted candle with an open steady flame in front of you at about 1.5 to 2 feet distance from your body and at the height of your eyebrows. The position of the candle should be such that the line from the candle to your eyebrows and your body makes a 90 degree angle.

Keep your hands in *Jnana mudra* or *Chin mudra*.

Now chant *Omkar*, the glorious Universal *Mantra*, the '*Nada Brahma*', at least three times but preferably 21 times. The mind under the influence of this divine sound slowly loses momentum and becomes more and more tranquil and steady.

Observe your breath. Regularise your breathing and now chant the *mantra Soham* slowly 21 times. Be aware of your breathing. (Please read chapter on *Pranayama*).

Look at the flame steadily without blinking your eyes.

Now, close your eyes gently and try to feel the flame between your **eyebrows** (*Bhrukuti*).

Feel the light in between the eyebrows and let it illumine the **intellect**; feel the golden light of love and goodness in, above and behind the **forehead**.

The light is pure, it is knowledge and wisdom, it is sacred.

Now gradually take the sacred flame within your body bringing it down slowly through the **throat** up to the level of the **heart**, in the **middle** of the body. This place is the location of the spiritual heart which is located to the right side of the physical heart.

Imagine your heart in the shape of a lotus bud. This spiritual heart receives the warmth and the light of this loving flame and its lotus petals open out one by one, removing the darkness from our thoughts and emotions and bathing them with light.

Feel the love and let love fill your entire heart. (Swami says, “Love all, Serve all”).

Now let the flame go slowly up to the **brain** and fill the entire brain with light. Light removes all the negative thoughts from your mind and fills it with good thoughts.

Visualise the  *jyoti*  light up the entire path wherever it travels.

Bring the  *jyoti*  down to the  **eyes** , filling both eyes with light. Swami says, “See no evil, see what is good.” Silently pray, “I will see only good things with these eyes.”

Now take this light to both  **ears** , purifying them. Swami says, “Hear no evil. Hear what is good.” Pray, “May I now listen to good sounds only, devotional music, cheerful words, no criticism of others.” Now place the  *jyoti*  in the  **middle**  of the two  **ears**  right in the centre of the brain.

Then, take the light to the  **nose** ; fill the nose and nostrils with light. Life-sustaining  *prana*  is inhaled through the nose and the whole body is revitalised with every inhalation.

Now move the  *jyoti*  to the  **mouth**  and  **tongue** , purifying them. Swami says, “Speak no evil, speak only good.” Silently pray, “My tongue will only chant God’s name and say good words. It will not speak ill of others.”

Then take the  *jyoti*  to the  **throat** , filling the vocal cords with light.

Move the  *jyoti*  into the  **lungs** ; both the lungs are filled with light.

Now, take the  *jyoti*  to the  **abdominal area**  and slowly move it in all the organs: stomach, liver, small and large intestines, and spleen. All the organs become purified with the touch of the divine  *jyoti*  .

Then move the  *jyoti*  into the  **pelvic area** , cleansing the entire urinary system and other organs.

Then take the  *jyoti*  into both the  **arms**  and  **hands**  making them strong, so that they can do good work.

Then let it travel into both the  **legs**  and  **feet** , making them strong and filled with light so that they follow the right path.

Feel the  *jyoti*  within you as it penetrates your  **entire body** .

The  *jyoti*  now reaches the final body station, which is the  **head** . The light becomes a crown enshrining and covering the head.

Visualise your entire body shining and filled with this divine light. You are one with the divine light. You are light. Only light exists.

Now move the light  **outside** .

Visualise the light surrounding your physical body and  **spreading**  in ever increasing circles, spreading to family members, neighbours and even those whom you do not like. Every person is enveloped in that divine effulgence.

Move this light further outward to distant places to friends, relatives and even enemies; to animals, birds and all other objects, so that all are illumined with the same light. In this way we are no longer limited to our body, but will expand throughout the  **universe** . The world which is so vast, will become very, very small. The same divine light is present in everyone and everywhere. To expand beyond one's self and see that your light is the light of the universe, is true liberation.

After illuminating the whole universe, slowly and gradually visualise the divine flame coming back to you, entering from your **crown** (head region), going to the **spiritual heart**.

The Jyoti is now resting on a golden lotus in your spiritual heart. Slowly this  *jyoti*  turns into an orange flame. Now this orange flame takes the shape of an orange robe and our beloved Lord Sai emerges from it, smiling at you, blessing you with *Abhayahastha*. Swami is happy and so are you. Stay calm and connected with Bhagawan. Then Swami merges with the  *jyoti* . Visualise the  *jyoti*  going back to the place from where we have started the  *Jyothi Dhyana* .

Rub your palms for a few seconds. Gently cover your eyes with your palms and slowly open your eyes with a beautiful smile.

End the meditation with the **Shanti (Peace) Prayer**.



# Benefits of Jyoti Meditation Module 2

With *Jyoti* Meditation, we can master the wayward 'monkey mind' and control the senses.

With *Jyoti Dhyana*, one can develop one-pointedness i.e. increased concentration. This helps us on our spiritual journey. Students will be able to focus better on their studies.

*Jyoti* Meditation increases will power and memory.

*Jyoti* Meditation calms and relaxes the mind and reduces stress, depression, hypertension, and headaches. With a calmer mind, negative thoughts, anger, fear, and grief are reduced.

Meditation helps to develop inner strength and confidence.

Meditation is essential to immerse the mind in the *Atma*. It can raise man to Divinity and infuse the seeker with the all-embracing feeling of Oneness with all beings.

Meditation develops clarity of mind so that person doing meditation can be unaffected by worldly illusion.

*Jyoti* Meditation can be used as a healing instrument for physical disease for ourselves and others.

Regular meditation develops discrimination and helps us to make the right decisions.

After completing the above schedule of Jyoti Meditation Module I and II, the seeker can study and practice further chapters.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

As per the instruction given by the facilitators, further practice should be done **UNDER GUIDANCE** and observation of **AUTHORIZED TRAINERS ONLY**.

Deeper knowledge for spiritual seekers will be provided in the Jyoti Meditation *shivir* (camp) and annual retreats on meditation.



59 Chapter Five  
Asana

# Asana



The *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* mentions that *Adinatha* (Lord Shiva) taught 84 *asanas* to the *Siddhas*, former among whom are Matsyendra and Gorakshanatha. In his *Yoga Sutras*, Maharshi Patanjali defines *asana* as ‘*Sthira sukham asanam*’: *Asana* is that position which is comfortable and steady. With the regular practise of *yogasanas*, the *sadhaka* develops the ability to sit comfortably in one position for long periods of time, as is necessary during meditation. The various body positions open the energy channels and psychic centres. Being tools to higher awareness, *asanas* provide a stable foundation for the exploration of our body, breath, mind, and even what lies beyond.


*Asana* results in meeting with the Infinite. When the *sadhaka* arrives at this state of Oneness, s/he rises above the dualities of life, like heat and cold, sorrow and happiness, and profit and gain. S/he becomes a *Sthitaprajna*—one who remains in a perennial state of equilibrium.

*Jyoti* Meditation can be performed while sitting in *Sukhasana* or *Padmasana*. The body should be at an angle of 90 degrees with the *jyoti* i.e. the *jyoti* should be at eye level.


## Padmasana

Swami says, “When sitting for meditation, certain rules have to be observed. The first requisite is to sit in the *Padmasana* (lotus posture). While seated in this *asana* (posture), care must be taken to keep the spine straight and steady, without bending this way or that. Some persons bend their necks during meditation. This is very harmful, as the arresting of the rising *Kundalini Shakti* at the throat, where some subtle *naadis* (arteries) operate, may endanger the entire physical system. Many have suffered mental derangement on account of misdirection of the *Kundalini Shakti*. During meditation one should not bend backwards. That is also harmful.”





*Breath is the cord that  
ties the soul with the body.*

The background of the page is a light green color with several thick, wavy, curved lines in various shades of green (from light to dark) that sweep across the right side and bottom of the page, creating a sense of movement and flow.

**63** Chapter Six  
Pranayama

# Pranayama

*Pranayama* is derived from two words: ‘*Prana*’ and ‘*Ayam*’. *Prana* refers to bio-energy and *Ayam* means ‘to control’. So ‘*Pranayama*’ means the control of one’s bio-energy (through breathing techniques), which leads to greater awareness. In the *Yoga Sutras*, Maharshi Patanjali explains the stages of *Pranayama* as *Pooraka* (inhalation), *Rechaka* (exhalation), and *Kumbhaka* (retention or holding of the breath). The control of pranas or *prana-samyama* helps to render the mind and body pure. *Pranayama* calms the mind and minimises the wastage of energy caused through irregular or wrong breathing habits.

Before we start the practice of *Pranayama*, our breathing should be correct and natural. The technique prescribed is as follows:

Inhale air through your nose (the tiny hairs and mucous membranes filter out dust and toxins from the inhaled air.) Keep your mouth closed since the air inhaled through the mouth is not filtered.

The lungs expand with the intake of air. Due to the pressure, the diaphragm contracts, the stomach moves outward, and the rib cage expands as the rib muscles contract. This allows maximum inhalation of oxygen. When we exhale, the lungs contract, the diaphragm relaxes and goes upwards, the stomach goes in, rib muscles relax, and the rib cage gets smaller. This allows exhalation of maximum carbon dioxide. Inhaling and exhaling should be gentle and effortless.

Breathing has two aspects: Rate of breathing and length of breath.



## Rate of Breathing

Rate of breathing means how many inhalations and exhalations we do per minute. Normally, human beings take 21,600 breaths per day. At the time of exertion or stress the breathing will be faster i.e. repetition of inhalation and exhalation per minute increases; when a person is calm, it will be slow. A *yogi* can take six to seven breaths per minute, while a normal person takes 15 breaths per minute. The slower the breaths, the longer the life span. For example, monkeys who have a short life span take 40 breaths per minute, whereas snakes, with a long life span, take three or four breaths per minute.

Hence, the slower the breathing, the shorter is the length of breath exhaled, and longer is the life span. The faster the breathing, the longer is the length of breath exhaled, and the shorter is the life span.

## Length of Breath

Length of breath is the distance/ length of the breath measured in inches i.e. how far we can feel our breath when we exhale. The length of breath exhaled is a good indicator of the state of inner calmness. This varies while performing different types of activities, depending upon the requirement and intake of the vital air or *prana*.

In normal, effortless, regular breathing, the length of breath exhaled by human beings is nine inches. During singing, it tends to be 12 inches, while during eating it is 15 inches. In sleep, our breath is usually 22 inches long. While doing physical exercise, it is even longer. One attains longevity by bringing the length of exhaled breath to less than nine inches. If it is more than nine inches, it leads to shorter life span.

*Pranayama* in a ratio of 1:4:2 is considered best, because longer *Kumbhaka* helps in transcendency. *Kumbhaka* helps in flow of divine energy and knowledge. It also helps in achieving slower breath and hence, a longer life.

Bhagawan Baba  
Teaches Us How to Engage in  
Pranayama Practice:

“Two seconds of *Pooraka*, eight seconds of *Kumbhaka* and four seconds of *Rechaka*. *Pranayama* has to be practiced carefully for three months (90 days). Later, the duration of *Pooraka*, *Kumbhaka* and *Rechaka* can be doubled. When six months are spent in this practice, the activities of the senses are laid low. If practiced with faith and feeling, *Pranayama* will tame the agitation of the mind.”



67 Chapter Seven  
Mudras

# Mudras

Once, a devotee asked Swami, “Please explain the technique of *Tantra* through which the senses and mind can take an inward turn for seeking *ananda*.” Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai replied, “It consists of a variety of practices called *Mudras*: *Khechari Mudra*, *Bhoochari Mudra*, *Madhyama Mudra*, and *Shanmukha Mudra*. By practising these *mudras*, the sages tried to turn the senses and the mind inwards.”

Every finger on the hand symbolises a deity. *Paramatma* is symbolised by the thumb. The index finger symbolises *Jivatma*. The small, ring and middle fingers represent *Prakriti* (nature) and Her qualities (*gunas*): *Sattva* (divinity), *Rajas* (action) and *Tamas* (inertia). When the thumb and the index finger are brought together, the gesture symbolises human nature (*Prakriti*) and cosmic consciousness (*Purusha*) becoming one i.e. the individual merges with the Infinite. The objective external world disappears as *Prakriti* merges with *Purusha* i.e. the *Jivatma* merges with *Paramatma* and Realisation follows.

Meditation and certain *pranayamas* are performed with the hands being held in this *mudra*.

## *Chin Mudra*

‘*Chin*’ is derived from the word ‘*chitta*’. This *mudra* evokes consciousness. Here, the tips of the thumb and the index finger are brought together, keeping the other three fingers stretched out straight and touching each other. Do not allow the index finger to separate from the middle finger. The palm faces downwards, towards *prithvi* (earth). In this position, the earth receives the energy that you are giving out. It is said that *Chin mudra* is most effective when done during evening meditations.

### *Jnana Mudra*

*Jnana mudra* evokes wisdom. In *Jnana mudra*, the tips of the thumb and the index finger touch each other while the rest of the fingers remain outstretched and touching each other. Ensure the index and ring finger continue to touch each other even when the index finger is bent. The palm faces upwards, towards *akasha* (sky). Morning meditations are usually accompanied by the *Jnana mudra*.

### *Khechari Mudra*

Sit in a meditation posture, spine straight, hands relaxed in *Chin* or *Jnana mudra*. Raise the chin a bit, and direct the closed eyes to look inwardly on the mid-point between the eye-brows. Performing the *mudra* with open eyes is difficult. Hence, concentration with closed eyes is preferred. Roll your tongue backwards so that the lower surface lies in contact with the upper palate, stretching it as far as comfortable. Breathe slowly and deeply, inhale, pause, exhale and hold the breath out as long as possible. Relax and repeat. This exercise brings integration of vision by which one's reality is experienced.

### *Bhoochari Mudra*

In this, meditation is done with the eyes and the mind concentrated upon the tip of the nose. When the Divine is meditated upon the tip of the nose. When the Divine is mediated upon in this manner, a unique kind of joy is experienced.

## *Madhyama Mudra*

In this, the eyes are concentrated on the middle of the nose between the tip and the mid-point of the brows. Unlike the *Bhoochari mudra*, in which the eyes may be fully open, in this mudra the eyes are only half-open. This mudra becomes easier after practising the *Bhoochari mudra*.

## *Shanmukha Mudra*

*Shan* (seven), *mukha* (gates) refers to the seven sensory organs: eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Swami says, “All our thoughts are influenced by what we see, hear or smell. We must try to control the sense organs, especially the ears and the eyes. When you close your ears even for a brief moment, you will be able to hear the sound ‘Om’ coming from within you. This *pranava* (primal sound) can be heard when you close all the doors and windows in a room and let the wind blow through a small chink.”

This is a very sacred exercise. It is also a very difficult one to practice. It consists in closing with the fingers of both the hands the eyes, the ears and the two nostrils. Gradually, one should try to do this *mudra* for as long as seven minutes at a stretch. Inhaling of breath should be done once in seven minutes. Through regular practice, this form of sense control can become a habit. No discomfort will be felt from control of the breath. By this practice, all the sense organs and the mind get absorbed in exploring the internal. The purpose of this discipline is to turn the sense organs away from the influence of happenings and objects in the outer world.

When you close the openings of the eyes, ears, nose and mouth, the sound ‘Om’ which arises from within can be heard. It represents the primal sound, the *naada bindu*. The light of the *Atma* shines beyond this primal sound. Hence the Divine is hailed as ‘*Naada Bindu Kaalatheetha*’—one

who transcends the range of the all-pervading *Naada (Pranava)*. The purpose of the *Shanmukha mudra* is to reveal to us the vibrations of 'Om'. When we concentrate on this 'Om', the senses and the mind turn away from the external to the inner world of the spirit.

Control of the mind is the means to liberation (*moksha*). Purity of mind is the primary requisite. When the mind is free from bad thoughts and is filled with good thoughts (*sankalpas*), it is called *chitta (consciousness)*.<sup>1</sup>

### *Shambhavi Mudra*

*Shambhavi mudra* involves gazing at the eyebrow center. This *mudra* aims at controlling the five *karmendriyas* (organs of action), the five *jnanendriyas* (organs of knowledge) and the four psychic agencies: *manas* (mind), *buddhi* (intelligence or power of discrimination), *chitta* (consciousness, heart), and *ahamkara* (ego). All these fourteen elements have to be directed towards the spiritual quest. The 'I' (*aham*) is sustained by *ahamkara*, *chitta*, *buddhi*, and *manas*. When *ahamkara* (ego) is destroyed, the *chitta* becomes purified. A pure *chitta* imparts illumination to the *buddhi*. When *buddhi* is illumined, the mind becomes pure. Only a pure mind can control the sense organs and direct them along the right path.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from these, there are many more *mudras* but we are only covering those explained by Bhagawan in His discourses.

---

<sup>1</sup>Source: Swami's discourse given on July 31, 1986

<sup>2</sup>Source: Swami's discourse to the students of Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning

*To see one's truth, one has to remove the five koshas.*





ANNAMAYA KOSHA

PRANAMAYA KOSHA

MANOMAYA KOSHA

VIJNANAMAYA KOSHA

ANANDAMAYA KOSHA

SOUL

# 73 Chapter Eight Koshas



“Kosha means sheath, a case, a cover. A sword is put into a scabbard. Money is kept in a treasury or kosha. You must realise that the thing kept in the case is real ‘I’. To see one’s truth, one has to remove the five koshas.”

~ Sri Sathya Sai

## Koshas

The *Atma* is enveloped by five sheaths called *koshas*, commonly known as five body systems. Each sheath is interconnected and affects the other. Each sheath is finer and more subtle than the previous one.

### The Five Koshas

*Annamaya Kosha*, *Pranamaya Kosha*, *Manomaya Kosha*, *Vijnanamaya Kosha*, and *Anandamaya Kosha*

### *Annamaya Kosha* (Physical Sheath)

Swami says, “The body grew in the womb of the mother with the help of *anna* or food taken by the mother. After birth, the body grows and is sustained by food. After death, the body becomes part of the earth which produces food. So, the physical body is called *Annamaya Kosha*.”

It is also known as *sthula sarira* (gross body), constituted by 25 principles (*Panchabhutas*, *Karmendriyas*, *Jnanendriyas*, *Pranas*, *Manas*, *Ahankara*, *Buddhi*, *Chitta*, and *Atma*). It is called the wakeful state. The *Annamaya Kosha* is maintained by food. But food also affects the mental, intellectual and spiritual bodies as well. You have all the behavioural tendencies that result from the food you eat.

### *Pranamaya Kosha (Vital Air Sheath)*

The energy sheath of life force (*Pranamaya Kosha*) consists of the five vital airs and the nervous system. *Pranamaya Kosha* is subtler and finer than *Annamaya Kosha* as it does not have gross attributes which we find in the *Annamaya Kosha*. *Pranamaya Kosha* carries *prana* (life force). Without *prana*, there is no life. All the organs are dependent on *prana*. The physical body cannot survive without *prana*.

The five *pranas* in the *Pranamaya Kosha* are: *Prana* (responsible for inhaling and exhaling) activates the head; its source is Sun. *Apana* (responsible for elimination of food) activates the lower part of the body; its source is Earth. *Vyana* (pervades the nerves of the body) activates the right side of the body; its source is Air. *Udana* (maintains heat in the body) activates the left side of the body; its source is Fire. *Samana* (helps digest and assimilate food) activates the central part of the body; its source is Space.

### *Manomaya Kosha (Mind Sheath)*

This consists of the mind and the sensory organs. Mind is called *karana*, (instrument). The senses are instruments used to contact and gather information about objects. The mind controls and directs the senses.

Sri Sathya Sai says, “Manomaya Kosha becomes conscious of everything without any of the organs of the five senses. No words are spoken in this plane, but thoughts are conveyed with images or thought forms by means of vibrations. The mental body can only be developed by exercise of mind through *Sathya* (truth), *Shraddha* (faith in God), *Ritam* (following cosmic laws), and accepting that you are God (*Tat Tvam Asi*).”

### *Vijnanamaya Kosha (Intellect Sheath)*

Human life is extremely precious. Of the five sheaths, man has in large measure the *Vijnanamaya Kosha* (integral awareness). This awareness is not present in any other being. It is for this reason that man is regarded as supreme among all living beings. Man alone has the capacity to recognise the past, present and future.<sup>1</sup> It is said that the soul is surrounded by the *buddhi* or *Vijnanamaya Kosha*. *Buddhi* is also known as the higher mental body and acquires light from the soul. The *buddhi* should be regarded as an ordinary aspect of the mind. It could be described as an image of the *Atma*, a reaction or echo of the *Atma*. Only after understanding the true nature of the *buddhi*, spiritual seekers can understand whether they are guided by intelligence or by mental delusion.<sup>2</sup>

### *Anandamaya Kosha (Bliss Sheath)*

The fifth sheath is the ecstatic, blissful *Anandamaya Kosha*. *Brahmanand* (Divine Bliss) is different from worldly bliss, which we get when hunger is appeased by a meal. The purpose of human striving, through stage after stage of spiritual progress is to attain that Supreme Bliss (*Ananda*), which is immanent in everything in creation.

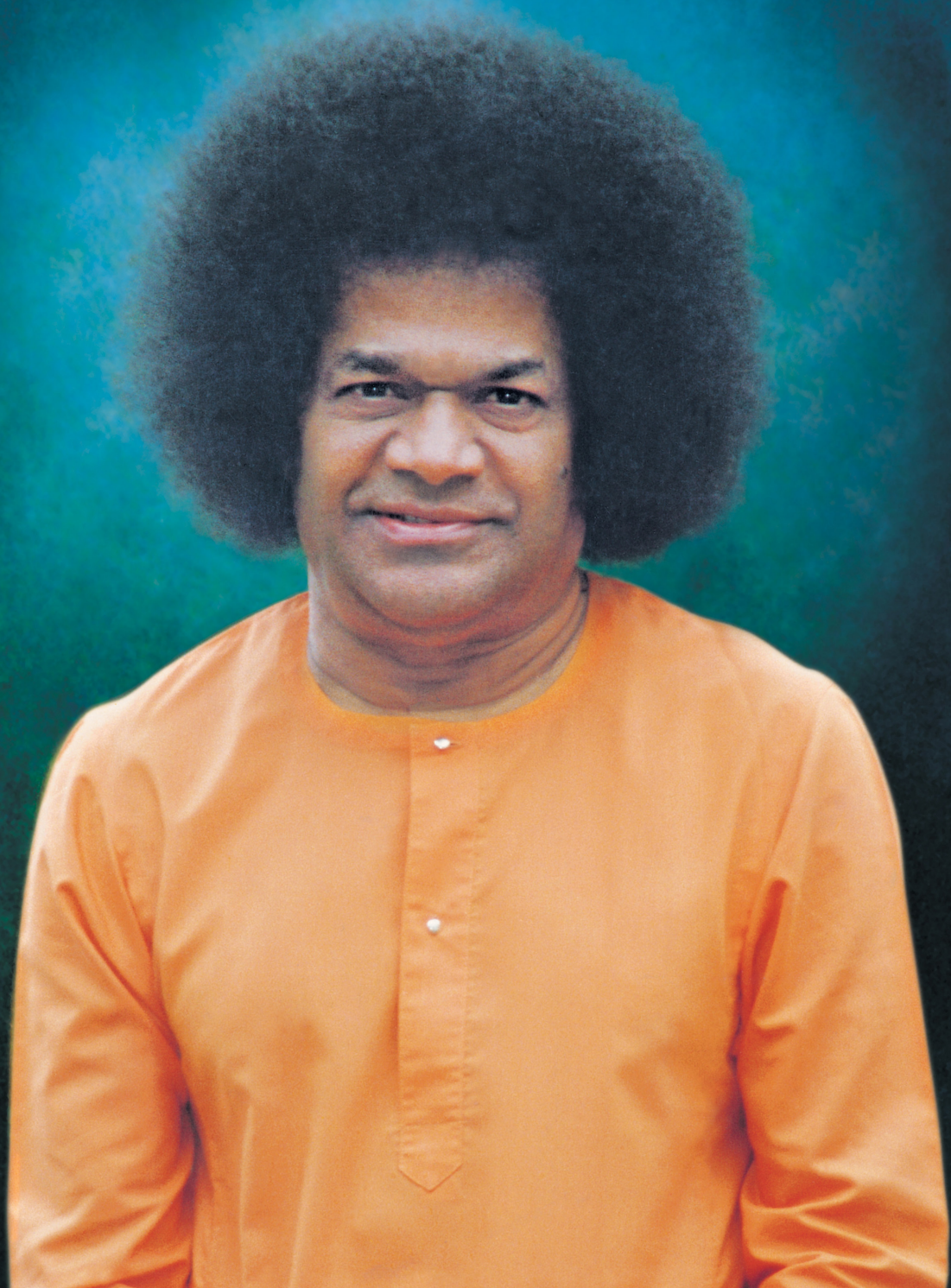
By constant contemplation of the sheaths or *koshas*, the spiritual aspirant (*sadhaka*) attains discrimination to recede from the outer world into the inner world, which is more real. Thus, step by step the person can abandon one *kosha* after another and finally dissolve all the *koshas*. Having done this, the *sadhaka* will achieve knowledge of his/her Divinity (unity with God).

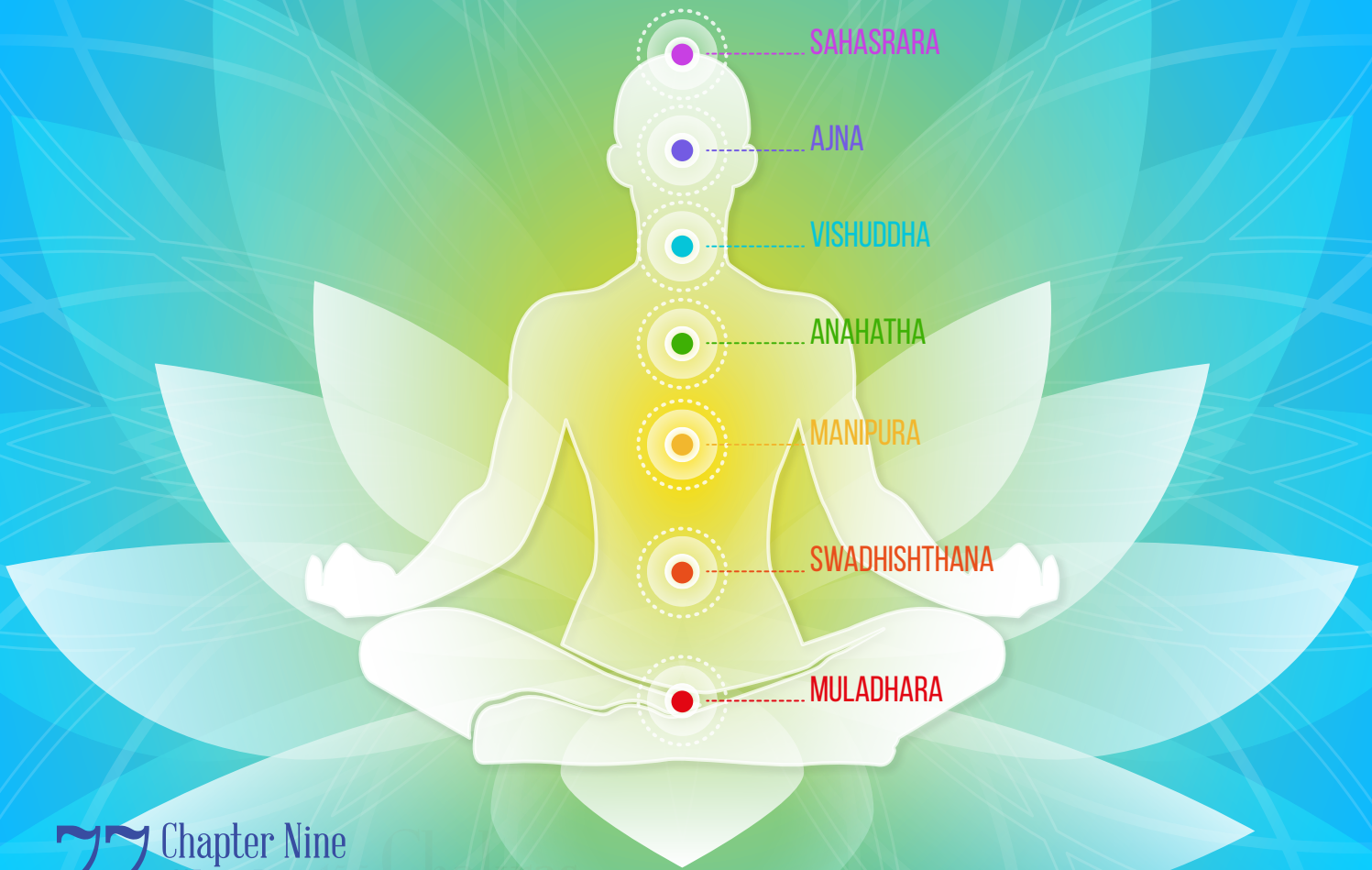
<sup>1</sup>Source: *Swami's Discourse of Apr. 15, 1995*

<sup>2</sup>Source: *Sri Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. 23, Chap. 16*



*The  
five koshas are linked with the  
five values. Dharma comes from  
Annamaya Kosha; Prema comes from  
Pranamaya and Manomaya Kosha; Shanti  
comes from Manomaya Kosha; Sathya comes  
from Vijnanamaya Kosha, and Ahimsa comes  
from Anandamaya Kosha. But LOVE  
permeates all koshas. Modern man has been able  
to progress only up to the Manomaya stage.  
He must strive to go beyond the mind  
up to the stage of bliss.*





77 Chapter Nine  
Chakras

# Chakras

*Chakras* are energy centres in our body. In every human being, there are seven *chakras* or centres of psychic power, called as *shad chakras*. These are:

*Muladhara Chakra*

*Swadhishtana Chakra*

*Manipura Chakra*

*Anahatha Chakra*

*Vishuddha Chakra*

*Ajna Chakara*

*Sahasrara Chakara*



## **Muladhara (Root) Chakra**

*Mula* is 'root' and *adhara* is 'basis or foundation'. The *Muladhara* is the first or root chakra (energy centre) at the base of the spine. It is the embodiment of the *Prakriti* (Nature) principle. It brings general vitality, strength, stability, stamina and longevity. It energises the muscular and skeletal systems. Meditation on *Muladhara Chakra* awakens the first stage of self-realisation. It is connected to the *Annamaya Kosha*. *Muladhara Chakra* corresponds to the element Earth and is red in colour.



## **Swadhishtana (Sacral) Chakra**

The *Swadhishtana Chakra*, is the guardian of the *Pranamaya Kosha*. The *Swadhishtana Chakra* is located in the sacral area. All the pelvic organs get energy or *shakti* from this *chakra*.



The lower limbs and organs are kept healthy by this *chakra*. The *Swadhishtana Chakra* is related to emotions, sexuality, reproduction energy, creativity, self confidence and response to change. The *Swadhishtana Chakra* corresponds to the element Water and is orange in colour.

### **Manipura (Solar Plexus) Chakra**



*Manipura Chakra* is located at the back of the navel. This *chakra* serves as a pumping station and sends energy to almost all the organs of the body and abdominal organs like stomach, liver, kidneys, and small and large intestines. By regulating the digestive and elimination systems, this *chakra* increases the vitality of the body. This *chakra* relates to our personal power, emotions and feelings like self confidence, will power and self discipline. The *Manipura Chakra* corresponds to the element Fire and is yellow in colour.

### **Anahata (Heart) Chakra**



*Anahata* means 'Infinite'. *Anahata Chakra* is located in the heart region. It controls and regulates the physical heart and lungs. It also controls our emotions like love. When our heart opens to divine love, our love becomes infinite. Emotions like wisdom, compassion, generosity, patience and peace are also closely related to the *Anahata Chakra*. *Anahata Chakra* is the transition point of lower to higher level energy (Cosmic energy). The *Anahata Chakra* corresponds to the element Air and is green in colour.

### **Vishuddha (Throat) Chakra**



*Vishuddha Chakra* is located near the throat region. This *chakra* energises the thyroid and parathyroid glands and the lymphatic system of the body. This *chakra* relates to communication

with the inner realms and emotions like confidence, personal expression, intuition, creativity, speech, and receptivity. The *Vishuddha Chakra* corresponds to the element Sound and is sky blue in colour.

### **Ajna (Third Eye) Chakra**



*Ajna Chakra* is located between the eyebrows. *Ajna chakra* energies the pineal gland, which is the master endocrine gland and controls the entire endocrine system. *Ajna Chakra* charges all other *chakras* partially. This *chakra* is the centre of wisdom, intuition, thinking, imagination, ability to envision and plan, and connect to the deeper levels of the self. The *Ajna Chakra* corresponds to the element Light and color indigo.

### **Sahasrara (Crown) Chakra**



The *Sahasrara Chakra* is situated at the top of the head. *Sahasrara* means ‘thousand’ and the *Sahasrara Chakra* is visualised as a thousand-petalled lotus. *Sahasrara Chakra* energies the entire brain and pituitary gland. The energy of this chakra gives us the ability to experience oneness with everyone and everything in nature, to perceive or believe in a cosmic consciousness. The awakening of the *Sahasrara Chakra* means revelation of the Divine Splendour and attainment of Supreme Consciousness. The *Sahasrara Chakra* corresponds to the element Ether and is violet or gold in colour.

# Self-assessment Form

Task	D/W/F/M	Grade	Self Assessment
Physical Exercise			
Silent Sitting/ Mudras			
AUM Chanting			
So-Ham Dhyana			
Jyothi Dhyana			
<b>Total</b>			

D=Daily, W=Weekly, F=Fortnightly, M = Monthly

Scheme	Never	Monthly	Fortnightly	Weekly	Daily
Points	0	5	10	15	20
Grade	O	C	B	A	S

---

## Feedback

---



---



---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organisation