

Sri Chakra

Blossom 3, Petal 3

APRIL 1991

Guruji on our Tradition

Here is an article by Guruji on our tradition:

We follow the tradition of *manasa putras* of BRAHMA, Sanatkumara, Sanaka, Sanadana, and Sanatsujata. They were oblivious to any action including all religious rites called karmas. For them there was left nothing to be done or left partially done or undone, nothing scared of profane, or nothing pure or impure.

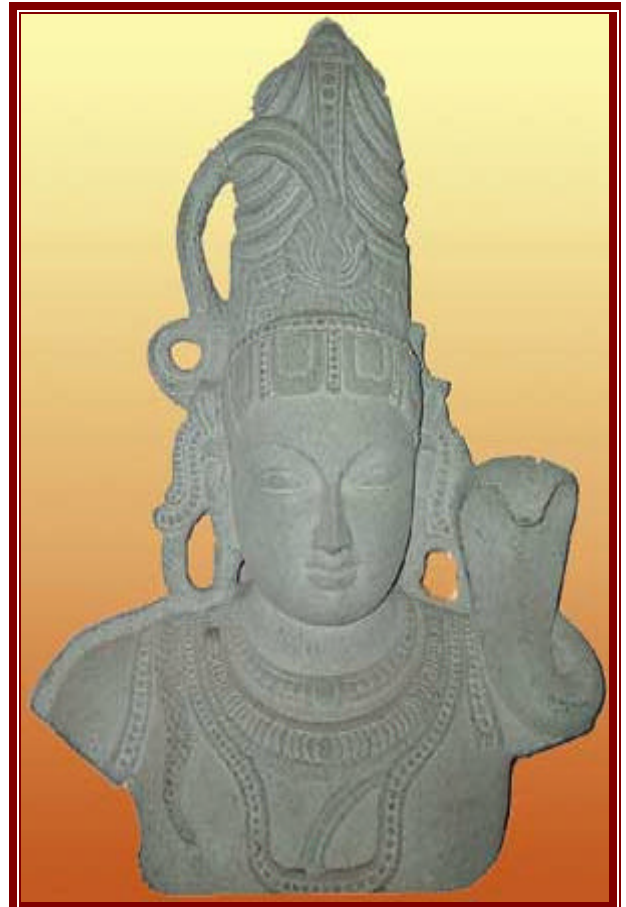
Mathas, temples, spiritual movements and social welfare organizations are only traps which slow down the real *jijnasu* the seeker who is able to go it alone. Go where you will, be with who you will, but do not become bound anywhere or to any one and that includes this peetham or this matham of this Guru. Attachment to any physical form slows down. The real feet of Guru you must not leave are ANALYSIS & ENLIGHTENMENT. We never, ever try to coerce or tie down in any way the people who come to seek near us. It is because we really love you that we want to set you free.

When you are with me, I give you my undivided attention. And when you leave, it's as if you never existed for me. Act in the living present. The past is gone, is gone is gone. Do not thing even for a moment about the past. That way you will overcome the feelings of guilt, shame, and unnecessary worry about them. Do not worry about future. Do not cling to your possessions including your own body.

The unwise consider that their practices alone are correct, and that the practices of others are incorrect. The wise person knows that habits, customs, lifestyles, food habits of all peoples at all places and at all times, all traditions, all races, and ethnic groups are MINE only. Thus such a person is a vegetarian and a non vegetarian even though he chooses not to eat meat. Such a person is a MUSLIM, CHRISTIAN, HINDU, BUDDHIST, AND ALL ROLLED INTO ONE. Such a person is cognizant of the identity of all with Brahman. Therefore there is no attachment or repulsion towards any path.

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THE JOURNAL OF THE SRI RAJARAJESWARI PEETAM, RUSH. N.Y



Meditation

By Amritananda Saraswathi

What is meditation?

Meditation is to mentally bring into focus all your sensory and motor organs in order to completely visualize, feel and experience an object that is pleasant. The object could be anything indeed. But since the mind tends to focus on interesting things, and interesting things happen to be pleasant, consequently pleasant objects are recommended for meditation. It helps greatly if the object of meditation happens to be a living form, such as flowers, lakes, gardens, clouds, Gods, angels, humans, etc. Meditation is an interaction with a living object. Silent communication with a living object is the main aim of meditation.

Stages in meditation

There are four stages in meditation, differing in degree of concentration. The sage Patanjali commenting of these stages calls them by the names: a) Withdrawal (Pratyahara) b) Holding (Dharana) c) Unbroken, easy flow of Awareness (Dhyana) d) Union (Samadhi). We will consider each of the stages by one.

a) Withdrawal (Pratyahara)

The state of mind of a person about to start meditation is usually flitting from one thought to another in a disorderly and incoherent manner, with the various sensory inputs coming from the environment triggering random impulses leading to different trains of thought. The mind has to be withdrawn from these external stimuli. The mind has also to be prepared to become totally aware and working at its fullest potential so that the creative visualization, that is meditation, can indeed, happen.

The mind usually has a tendency to move away from the object of its concentration. This is called centrifugal

tendency (vikshepta shakti). We use this faculty of the mind initially to throw away the sensory stimuli coming from the environment in the following way:

After we close our eyes we keep listening to the sounds near and far, inside and outside. We also try to feel different parts of the body successively from the feet to crown of the head covering every part. This way we are relaxing the entire body from its feelings, stresses and strains.

Apart from relaxation, there are other very good reasons for going over the different parts of our body. The main reason is that the different parts of the body are mapped into different parts of the brain. There fore, touching different parts of the body is equivalent to energizing or accessing different parts of the brain. Thus the simple act of feeling the body results in making the brain fully aware and totally relaxed. We should not hurry about doing this. We could do about two or three passes, each one taking a couple of minutes.

There is one more important step in withdrawal. This consists of creating a mood of security peace and tranquility and power. This mood can be easily created by a few positive assertions and repeated mentally two or three times softly in the mind.

Some of these assertions could be:

1. I am peaceful and happy, here and now;
2. I am being taken care of by (fill in what you please, your guru, your favorite deity, or something else you believe in);
3. I forgive myself and all others, all sins we have committed;
4. God has given me my body to be used in service of myself and others. I love my body, I love my senses and I send my love to all of them;
5. I reserve an hour a day to be with myself and not worry about the past nor plan for the future. That hour is now. I will reserve time later on for planning and worrying about the past;
6. I define for myself the following as objects of my meditation. (Here you may choose for your object of meditation Devi Rajarajeshwari, Ganapati, Subramanya, Durga, Sri Krishna, Dattatreya, Ardhaniswara, your Guru, Mahalakshmi, Saraswati, etc, etc.) I will meditate on this with all my power at my command with all my senses and create this reality in my heart.

b) Holding (Dharana)

Having decoupled the mind from the external stimuli, having relaxed the body and energized the sensory functions of the mind and having created a sense of security, peace and power within ourselves, we are now ready to embark on the process of holding onto our pleasurable object of meditation, be it Goddess or God or Guru or Siva Linga, or Sri Chakra, or whatever.

The process of holding onto the object of meditation can be understood by comparing it to a rosary of beads. When we do japam we spend some time with each rudraksha bead of the rosary using the mantra to feel and know it then move onto the next bead, spending some time with it and so on in a cycle. Similarly, in Dharana, we keep shifting our attention to different parts of the body or the object and try to cover the whole of the object. We spend time at each point trying to feel the sound, the touch, the form, the taste and the fragrance associated with that part. When all these things are successively known, then that part becomes a living presence in our mind. When this happens, we move on to a neighboring region repeating the process. In this way we slowly, gradually and methodically go over the object of our meditation.

In the process of holding on, or Dharana, the thoughts are definitely there, but they are not incoherent like in normal thinking. There is a story, a continuous link, evolving from one frame to another, one thought to another. It is similar to a cartoon book where there are different frames but there is a story line, an experience linking one frame to another, leading the reader towards a complete evolution of the story. There is concentration owing to the happiness that we find in each frame. It is not a concentration which we do not like.

The concentration is there because of the “rasa” or the mood or the “bhava” in each frame. For example, when looking at the eyes of the Goddess with concentration, we may detect flashes of mirth, a hidden laughter, or a questioning or compassion or grace or erotic flippancy or anger, or anything. All these experiences are aspects of bliss. So bliss does not merely consist of pleasure alone. It can be any deeply stirring or fleeting emotion coming from the nine “rasas”: Sringara (erotic), Vira (heroic), Karuna (compassion), Raudra (anger bursting into flames), Abhayanaka (arousing fear), Bhibatsa (terribly dismembered), Juguptsa (turning away, unable to look at the gory sight), Hasya (jocular, uncontrollable laughter), Santa (peace), and Adbhuta (sense of wonder).

The process of holding on comes to a conclusion when we have satisfactorily gone over every detail of the object of our meditation. In this stage, even after our initial preparatory stage of withdrawal, there could still be some stimuli coming from outside, filtering into our consciousness and disturbing our train of thought. Examples could be a doorbell ringing with a salesman calling, or having to get up to answer a telephone call, or a discomfort in the body, and so on. Depending upon the strength of the interference, we may even forget where we were in the meditation. The best thing to do under such circumstances is to start from some approximately near-by-region where we left off.

As we are coming close towards the end of Dharana, we will have discovered there is some particular region or spot (a rosary bead) where we would like to establish a mood or a rasa and continue to spend time with it. This is the real part of Dharana. Remember the mind has the tendency to move away from the place where we are trying to focus it. (The centrifugal tendency, vikshepa shakti). After a little while the mind starts another thought unrelated to this object. A time passes like this where we do not even remember that we are doing something else. Then with a little effort, we bring the mind back to our particular object of meditation.

The stage of Dharana is thus characterized by initially having have evolving story and then finding a pleasure sport and holding on to it with effort. The mind keeps straying, but the effort keeps bringing it back. Thus effort is characteristic of Dharana.

c) Unbroken, easy flow of Awareness (Dhyana)

The stage of Dharana leads naturally to the stage of Dhyana, spontaneous concentration. The particular object of our meditation chose by us in Dharana is giving us such a real experience of the rasa that is has condensed around the object. The mind is totally absorbed in the reality of the experience, that it has lost itself and its centrifugal force. We are now living in the reality of the object of our meditation experiencing with all our senses. This unbroken awareness condensed around the object of our meditation, this easy flow of awareness and lack of effort normally needed to concentrate characterizes the state of Dhyana.

However, the object of meditation is still different from us. It is still an object. We know everything about it. We know its thoughts as ours, yet it is as if there is a mirror in front of us and we are seeing ourselves reflected in the mirrors as a the object. The three-fold division of the seer knows the seen as his own self. Yet he sees that as different from himself, as an image of himself. If we continue in Dhyana for 20 minutes we enter the final stage of meditation called Samadhi.

d) Union (Samadhi)

In Samadhi the distinction between the observer and the observed vanishes totally. There is no separate object of mediation. There is myself, the subject who is the object.

If we are mediating upon Devi, I simply become Devi in Samadhi. As Devi receives worship by devotees, so do I. As Devi blesses people, so do I bless people. As Devi exists in all beings, so do I exist in all beings. All bodies are mind, all eyes, all hands, all feet, all skin, all sense, all experience are my experiences. There is none other than me and the Goddess of eros and I worship myself through the union of the linga and yoni. Infinite intercourse with siva is my nature, unending orgasmic bliss is my rasa of Sringara.

Such is the experience of samadhi. It is not void. It is not null. It is full. It transcends all life. It transcends all space and time. It is solidified knowledge, action and desire. There is no movement in it, there is no birth, growth or death, yet it is sum total of all possible experiences, of all life forms in all the worlds at all times.

This completes our appreciation of the different aspects of meditation. We will endeavor later on to generate a series of guided meditations. It is obvious that a ritual could also be a meditation. It is obvious also open-eyed meditation is as valid a concept as a closed eye meditation

Upcoming Events from Sri rajarajeswari peetam

UPCOMING EVENTS FROM SRI RAJARAJESWARI PEETAM

N/A

TEMPLE TIMING

MONDAY TO FRIDAY

MORNINGS - 9:30 am - 1:00 pm

EVENINGS - 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm

SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

AND USA HOLIDAYS

ALL DAY (9:30 am – 9:00 pm)

Your opinion

Sri Chakra welcomes your articles, views and comments on this endeavour, We would very much like to know what you would like to see in this journal.

Please send us any material that you would like to be published

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