

Sahaja Yoga

a beginner's guide



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Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, founder of Sahaja Yoga

What is Sahaja Yoga?

"At the very outset we have to understand that truth is what it is, we cannot conceptualize it, we cannot organize it and we cannot use it for our own purpose. Moreover, with the blinkers on both the sides like a horse, with all our conditionings, we cannot find the truth. We have to be free people. We have to be open-minded people, like scientists, to see for ourselves what is the truth. If somebody preaches something, professes something, says something, it is not to be accepted blindfolded."

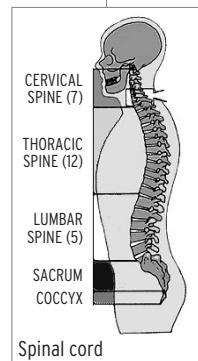
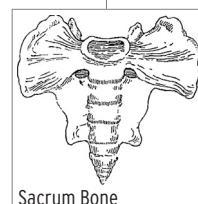
Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

Sahaja Yoga is a meditation technique developed by Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. *Sahaja* means "born with you" and *Yoga* means "union with the divine." Sahaja Yoga is a natural and spontaneous process that gently transforms us from within, enabling us to manifest and express positive human qualities and to enjoy the peace and the bliss of life described in all scriptures. Sahaja Yoga is an inner revolution that brings about the transformation of human beings into spiritual beings who gradually manifest sublime qualities of compassion, generosity and detached, unselfish love, and who live in a progressively profound state of bliss and inner peace. It is a living process and a gradual transformation of our awareness, not a mental projection or a concept.

Sahaja Yoga is not a fad movement that becomes popular overnight and then collapses like any "ism" that we believe in one day and then denounce the next day. In the same way that a seed sprouts, then grows from a small shoot into a mighty tree, Sahaja Yoga grows both individually and collectively in an entirely natural way.

Sahaja Yoga is a spiritual movement of global proportions. People from more than 100 countries around the world, from all age groups and diverse religious and social backgrounds, are united by their experience of the same inner joy and peace.

Sahaja Yoga involves the awakening of a subtle spiritual energy known as the *Kundalini* which lies dormant in the sacrum bone at the base of the spine in three-and-a-half coils. *Sacrum* is derived from the Greek word for "sacred." The gentle awakening of this Kundalini energy and the inner journey of self discovery is known as Self Realization or Yoga. Those who have received Realization are known as "realized souls" or *dweejaha* in Sanskrit, meaning "twice born."



Experience of the Cool Breeze

The awakened Kundalini rises up the spinal column until it reaches the limbic region of the brain from where it flows gently through the top of the head at the fontanelle bone. The Kundalini can be *felt* coming out of the fontanelle bone as a cool breeze or cool vibrations (*chaitanya*). These cool vibrations can also be felt on the fingertips and on the palms of the hands.

It is very important to understand that we feel these sensations on our central nervous system. It is for this reason that Sahaja Yoga cannot be referred to as a blind belief. It is an experience and a scientifically provable phenomenon. In the same way that all human beings can feel the heat of the sun's rays upon their skin, all human beings can feel the cool vibrations and can experience Sahaja Yoga in the same way.

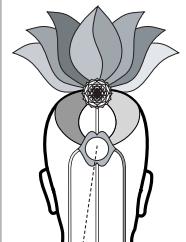
The experience of the cool breeze on the hands and on the top of the head is the physical evidence of the awakening of the Kundalini and its union with the all-pervading power of the Divine. Many people may experience a warm breeze, instead of cool breeze, coming out of their hands and the top of their heads. This indicates that Kundalini is doing its work of bringing the various aspects of a person into balance, and this heat is a result of its work. Once the various aspects come into balance, the heat goes away, and a cool breeze can be experienced. It may take some time to experience the cool breeze, and experienced practitioners of Sahaja Yoga (Sahaja Yogis) can help in clearing out any obstacles to experiencing the cool breeze.

In the Gospel of John, Christ makes references to both the cool breeze and the need for second birth, and indicates that spirituality is an experience:

“Truly, I say to you unless one is born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God.” Nicodemus replied, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born again?” Jesus answered, “Unless one is born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit. Do not be amazed that I say this to you. The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so it is with everyone

who is born of the Spirit.... Truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony.”

New Testament – John (Chapter 3)



Gap between thoughts

Thoughtless Awareness

The Indian scriptures describe the following four states of human awareness:

<i>Jagruti</i>	the waking state of consciousness
<i>Swapna</i>	the dreaming state of consciousness
<i>Sushupti</i>	the state of deep sleep in which the mind, the ego and superego are still
<i>Turya</i>	the state of thoughtless awareness beyond the mind

The first three states of awareness are commonly experienced in our daily lives. The fourth state is the state of thoughtless awareness or *nirvichara samadhi*. This is the state in which the constant rising and falling of thoughts in the mind comes to an end. At first a gap—*vilamba*—begins to appear between the thoughts. As this gap grows the thoughts diminish and, with the regular practice of meditation, the mind enters easily into thoughtless awareness. The attention becomes still like a lake without any ripples on it and a deep inner peace begins to dawn upon our awareness.

When there are no ripples on the water of a lake, its surface becomes almost invisible as it reflects the beauty of the landscape around it—the trees and the sky and clouds. In the same way, the still mind reflects the beauty of the creation and melts into the bliss and the peace of the divine. Our growth in Sahaja Yoga lifts us to this higher level of consciousness.

“Now, instruction in Yoga (Union). Union is restraining the thought-streams natural to the mind. Then the seer dwells in his own nature. Otherwise he is of the same form as the thoughts.”

Patanjali – “Yoga Sutras”

“Empty yourself of everything.
Let the mind become still.”

*Lao Tze
Tao Te Ching,
verse 16*

“Enjoyment is only possible when you are beyond your mind. With your mind you can never enjoy. It’s like a big load. It will not act, it will not help. Enjoyment comes when you are in complete silence—in a rippleless lake. The reflection of all the joy that is created on the shores of that lake are completely reflected, they are

not deflected. If there were ripples it would have been a different image altogether and would have been something nowhere near the image of reality.”

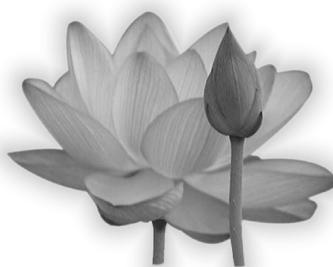
Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Italy, Oct 1, 1995

In the state of thoughtless awareness we think neither of the past nor of the future. We are entirely in the present moment, in the state of *being* and do not waste the precious moments of life thinking about times that are finished forever or yet to come. We start to enjoy our Self, our Spirit, our own inner beauty and the beauty of creation. We start to enjoy *being*. We are able to enjoy the singing of birds and the scent of flowers at a much deeper level as we are no longer bombarded by the meaningless mental chatter that assails our awareness and pollutes our attention, distracting us from the simple joys of our existence.

In this state, we start to feel the vibrations of our chakras and our surroundings (and the effect of our behavior and lifestyle) on our fingertips. As a result we spontaneously and naturally change ourselves and our environment so that we maximize the joy, both for ourselves and for those around us. Shri Mataji has described this as “innate religion.”

“The Self, which is in fact the Lord and which is called ‘I’ because it abides in the body, is different from the physical and subtle bodies. ‘I am that Spirit. I am without attributes, actionless, eternal, ever free and indestructible. I am not the body which is ever changing and unreal.’ This is called Knowledge by the wise.”

Shri Adi Shankaracharya



About Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 14:25

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, known affectionately as Shri Mataji or Mother, is the first spiritual teacher in history to give large-scale Self Realization as described by many great saints and prophets of the past. Today, millions of people all over the world have experienced their spiritual ascent, described and predicted by these great prophets, thanks to Shri Mataji. Her physical presence has been seen to be the catalyst for the en-masse awakening of the Kundalini. Even more remarkably, merely holding one's hands, palms upwards, towards a photograph of Shri Mataji is enough to grant Self Realization, as long as there is the desire to receive it.

"Behold thy Mother."

John 19:26

Shri Mataji's early life

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, a descendant of India's royal Shalivahana dynasty, was born to a Christian family at Chhindwara, Maharashtra, near the geographic center of India. She was born at noon on the Spring Equinox, March 21, 1923. She was born Self Realized and knew from her birth that she had a unique gift which had to be made available to all mankind.

Shri Mataji and her parents, Prasad and Cornelia Salve, played an active role in India's fight for independence. Her father, a talented lawyer and close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, was a member of the Constituent Assembly of India and helped write India's first constitution. He was a renowned scholar and was fluent in 14 languages.

As a child Shri Mataji lived for a time, along with her parents, in the ashram of Mahatma Gandhi who affectionately gave her the nickname "Nepali." Even at a young age, her deep wisdom and understanding was evident to the Mahatma. Shri Mataji played a courageous role as a youth leader in the fight for freedom. In 1942 she was arrested, imprisoned and tortured for her participation in

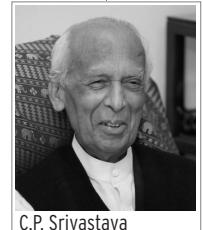


Mahatma Gandhi



Gandhi's "Quit India" Movement. She later studied medicine at the Christian Medical College in Lahore, in what is now Pakistan.

Shortly before India's independence, Shri Mataji married C.P. Srivastava, one of India's most respected high-ranking civil servants. Mr. Srivastava held the post of Joint Secretary to the Office of the Indian Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, from 1964 to 1966. Later, he was unanimously elected for four consecutive four-year terms as Secretary General of the United Nations International Maritime Organization based in London. He was knighted by the Queen of England in 1989 and received similar honors from many countries for his service.



C.P. Srivastava

Shri Mataji's Sahaja Yoga work

After fulfilling her familial duties of bringing up two daughters, Shri Mataji embarked on her spiritual mission. On May 5, 1970 she was meditating on the many problems of humanity on a lonely beach in India, when a blissful divine experience filled her whole being and she knew that the moment had come for her unique spiritual gift—the ability to give en-masse Self Realization—to be shared with the whole of humanity.

Shri Mataji began with a small handful of people in India. She worked with Western seekers beginning in 1973, after her husband's transfer to London. Very soon thousands of ordinary people in many countries were getting the blissful experience of Kundalini awakening and discovering for themselves that, using Shri Mataji's techniques, they could also pass this experience on to others, just as one candle can be used to enlighten another.

Unlike the many so-called "gurus" of the modern era, Shri Mataji has never charged for her lectures or for giving Self Realization. She has always insisted that you cannot pay for your enlightenment and has warned of the dangers of going to the many false, self-proclaimed "gurus" and cults who are only interested in making money and are not capable of giving Self Realization. In addition to her spiritual work, Shri Mataji has also started a number of charitable organizations in India to help the poor and the sick. Among these are a large hostel for destitute and homeless mothers in Delhi and a hospital in Mumbai to treat people using Sahaja Yoga techniques.





What is meditation?

"Union with the Essence of our Lord comes about quickly... provided suspension of thought has been practiced long enough. From this I understood the prophetic saying 'better an hour of meditation than seventy years of religious practice,' since by this meditation a man is transported from the created world into the world of purity; and one could also say, from the presence of the created into the presence of the Creator. And God is our Warrant for what we say."

Shaikh al-Arabi ad-Darqawi - 'Letters of a Sufi Master'

Meditation is not something that we *do* but is a state of our awareness in which we are not thinking. To get into this state we must let go of all our thoughts. This process is known in Sanskrit as *vichara shaithiliya* meaning "relaxation of the thoughts." At first it may be hard to become thoughtlessly aware even for a few minutes a day but by following the advice in this booklet and by listening to Shri Mataji's many lectures, the subtle techniques that will help to achieve this state can be easily learned with a little dedication and perseverance.

Thoughtless awareness, or *nirvichara samadhi*, is the first step on the path of Sahaja Yoga. Without achieving this awareness we are not practicing Sahaja Yoga properly. Try to be honest with yourself about how thoughtless you are becoming in meditation. Watch your mind and your attention and try to detach your attention from all the thoughts that come into your mind.

I
"Controlling
the thoughts
and the
activities of the
senses, let the
yogi practice
meditation
for self-
purification."

Shri Krishna,
"Bhagavad Gita" (6:12)

Go within yourself

"Try to meditate. Meditate more, so that you reach that inner being. And this inner being is the vast ocean of bliss which exists in every one of us, the vast flood of light that floods everybody's inner beauty. So to approach it, you have to go within yourself by denying things which are against it, against your movement.

"Sometimes the wind can be very, very strong for you to not understand that the glory of God is within, but turn back. Every moment remember that your movement has to be inward. When you move inward you forget the ideas of your outer glories. It is an individual journey towards God. When you meditate and when you reach there, then you become collective. Before that it's an

absolutely individual journey within. It's an absolutely individual journey.

"You should be able to see this; that in this journey nobody is your relation, nobody is your friend. You are absolutely alone, absolutely alone. You have to move alone within yourself. Don't hate anyone, don't be irresponsible, but in a meditative mood you are alone. No one exists there, you alone, and once you enter into that ocean then the whole world becomes your family, the whole world is your own manifestation. All the children become your children and you treat all people with equal understanding.

The whole expansion takes place when you enter inside your Spirit and start seeing through the eyes of the Spirit. There's such calm, such peace, such bliss within you. You have to be ready for that journey. In that journey you are alone in your meditative state, and the more you find something in your meditation, the more you want to go and distribute it to others.

That has to be. If that does not come into you then it has not worked out, there is no purity, there is some sort of a bias.

"In that individual pursuit, whatever you find, you want to enjoy it with others, you want to give it to others. This is the sign of the person who has been really meditative. The one who has been meditative and has not been able to distribute what he has found is cheating himself and cheating others as well. Because that joy that you receive in your meditation has to be distributed, has to be given, has to be shown. It should flow in your being as the light radiates from every illumined lamp. You don't have to take a vow to say that 'this is an enlightened light'; in the same way a saint should not have to be certified that he is a saint. The depth you achieve within yourself spreads all over. It is such an action and reaction. The deeper you become, the radiation is much more.

"A simple, very ordinary person, uneducated person, can be like that. We have one gentleman called Varick in Bombay. He's an old man, and is so deep. He radiates love. He's so meditative. You don't have to spend too much time on meditation.

"But whatever time you spend, whatever you gain, has to be visible outside—how you radiate and how you give it to others."

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – 1988

Meditation is effortless

“In the same way vibrations are coming, they are radiated. What you have to do is to expose yourself to it. The best way is not to put in any effort. Don’t worry at what point you have a problem. Many people during meditation, I have seen, if they catch somewhere they go on looking after it. You just don’t have to worry.

“You just let it go and it will work by itself. So you don’t have to put in any effort. This is what meditation is. Meditation means exposing yourself to God’s grace. Now the grace itself knows how to cure you. It knows how to mend you, how to settle down itself into your own being, how to keep your Spirit kindled. It knows everything. So you don’t have to worry as to what you have to do or what name you have to take, what mantras you have to do. In meditation you have to be absolutely effortless, expose yourself fully and you have to be absolutely thoughtless at that time.

“Supposing, possibly, you might not be thoughtless. At that time you have to just watch your thoughts, but do not get involved into them. You will find gradually as the sun rises, darkness goes away and the sun’s rays go into every part and makes the whole place enlightened. In the same way your being will be completely enlightened, but if you put in an effort at that time or try to stop something within you or try to give it a bandhan, it will not.

“Effortlessness is the only way into meditation, but you should not be lethargic about it—should be alert and watch it. The other side could be that people just doze off. No, you have to be alert. If you doze off, nothing will work out. That’s another side of it. If you are lazy about it nothing will work out. You have to be alert and open, absolutely aware, completely effortless, absolutely effortless. If you are absolutely effortless, meditation will work the best.

“Don’t think about your problems at all, whatever chakras you have, anything, just expose yourself to the vibrations. See when the sun shines all the nature exposes itself to the sun and receives the blessings of the sun effortlessly. It does not put in any effort, it just receives the sun—the sun’s rays start acting. In the same way the all-pervading power starts working. You are not to maneuver it, you are not to do anything about it. Just be effortless, absolutely effortless.

“Do not take any names (mantras). Do not bother if... this is catching, that is catching. It is working out. It will go on working as long as it can and it will do the miracle that it has to do. You don't have to worry about it, it knows its job. But when you put an effort you actually create a barrier for it. So no effort is needed, be absolutely effortless and say ‘let it go, let it go’—that's all. No mantras are to be chanted. In case you find it's impossible then you can take my name, but there is no need even. When you put your hands toward me that is the mantra, it is sufficient, this gesture itself is the mantra. You see there is no need to say it more, but the thought in the mind, the emotions, is what we spread our hands to that and it should work. When this emotion is absolutely complete, there is no need to say any mantra—you go beyond it.

“So one has to be absolutely effortless, absolutely effortless. That is what it is. Meditation is for your own ascent, is for your own capital gains that you have to have. But once you get to it, you also achieve your powers. Like if you become the governor, you get the powers of the governor. At this time you don't have to think about anybody else.

“You are not to put your attention towards anybody else but just receive, just receive it. Do not think about any other problem, but that you have to be absolutely effortless. It would work the best on the people who are just receiving it.

“You have problems, that's why you are here, but you cannot solve them, they are to be solved by the divine power. This must be understood fully, that we cannot solve our problems. It is beyond us to solve our problems. So leave it in the hands of divine power and expose yourself effortlessly, absolutely effortlessly.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi — London, Jan 1, 1980



How do I meditate at home?

Whenever it fits your schedule, you should meditate every day for at least 10 minutes. Some people find that beginning the day in a state of peace and silence makes the whole day go better. Some people find the best time is in the evening, where the soothing effects help take them into deep and nourishing sleep. And many people meditate both morning and evening, and include some cleansing techniques (described later) with the evening meditation.

Shri Mataji has recommended the following meditation techniques to enable us to enter thoughtless awareness, but meditation is not merely a technique. It's very important to understand that meditation should be done from the heart, with love and respect for the divine Spirit that is within each of us.

Preparing for meditation

Place the photograph of Shri Mataji respectfully on a clean table or shelf and light a candle in front of the photo. It is preferable to put a cloth under the photo and to place the photo in a frame. Place the photo approximately at eye level, so that you can see the picture clearly.

When sitting down to meditate you should always begin and end the meditation by raising the Kundalini and giving yourself a bandhan.

Raise your Kundalini

(See the illustration on the next page.) To begin, place the left hand in front of your Kundalini, which is at the base of the spine. Place the right hand behind the left hand, with both palms facing your body. Move the right hand over the left hand and back under the left hand. Now slowly raise your left arm, keeping the left hand in the center of your body, moving up the spinal cord.

While your left hand moves upwards, continue to move the right hand up the inside and down the outside of the left hand.



Raising the Kundalini

Watch your hands while raising them and tilt your head back as the hands move above eye level. When above the head, spin your wrists and tie a knot as shown in the diagram on the opposite page. Raise the hands from the base of the spine to above your head in this way a total of three times. The third time, tie three knots.

Give yourself a bandhan

Next we give ourselves a *bandhan* (protection). We describe an arc with our right hand from the left hip, over the top of the head to the right hip and back again. This should be done calmly and rhythmically to feel the benefit. Do this seven times. The eyes can be closed or open while giving yourself a bandhan. Keep the left hand palm upwards on the lap.



Giving yourself a bandhan

Daily Meditation

- a. Having raised your Kundalini and given yourself a bandhan, sit with your hands palm upwards towards the photograph of Shri Mataji and look at the photograph for 5–10 minutes without thinking. Then close your eyes. Watch your thoughts and let go of any thoughts in your mind. Be patient. The thoughts will gradually recede and the gaps between them will increase. If your attention is wandering, say, “Where is my attention?” This will bring your attention back to your Spirit and stop the thoughts. Try to identify with your Spirit by saying, “I am the Spirit, not this body or these thoughts.”
- b. If thoughts are still there, you can say, “Not this thought” each time a thought rises. The thoughts will slowly give up. You can also say, “I forgive everyone.” Say this sincerely from the heart and it will have a powerful effect.
- c. If you are thoughtlessly aware, relax and enjoy the meditation. Keep watching your thoughts. Keep your attention inside and see how you are feeling. You should start to feel peaceful and joyful and may feel the chakras in your body awakening.
- d. Finally, try to put your attention onto the Sahasrara chakra, on top of the head, for a few minutes before raising your Kundalini again and giving yourself a bandhan.



Meditate with your heart

“With respect if you do meditation it’s perfect. But first of all, your heart and your mind must have respect. In any way, when you meditate, you should do it with love, that’s all. Love will cleanse everything.... Love means without any malice, without any anger. Something that is desired. It’s such an abstract thing that you cannot put it in words, but it’s a feeling within you. And when you meditate with love, means, supposing you are very angry and you are frustrated, then you come and meditate and go on saying things like “Mother do this, kill him! Do that!” It doesn’t work out. But in love, means actually it is no thought. It’s just a feeling. Feeling of emancipation. Just a feeling.” *Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – London, 2001*

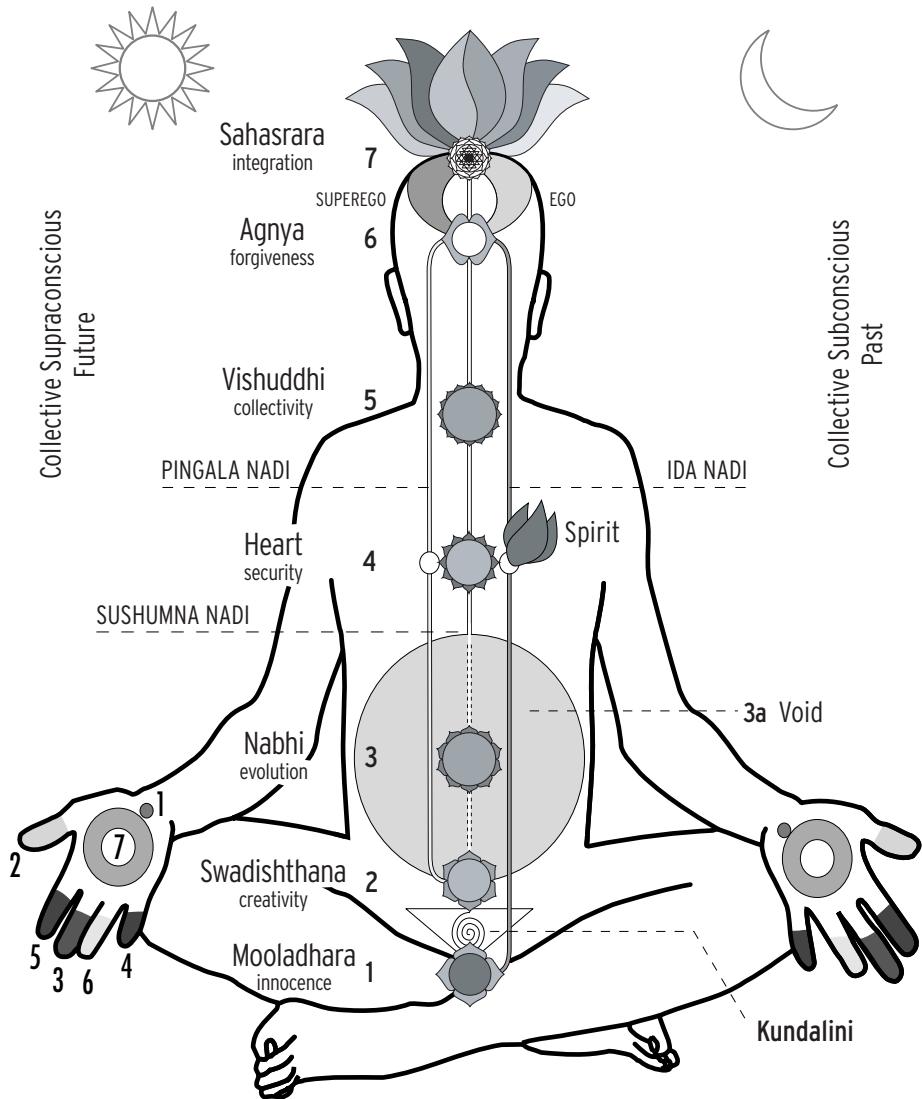
“The thought that starts moving in our mind all the time which creates tensions is not the thought of the Spirit. So what you should say is ‘Not this thought, not this thought, not this thought, not this thought, not this thought’—and see how you relax. Now you are relaxed. ‘Not this thought, not this thought.’.. Just go on refusing accepting any thought. So you go into Nirvichara. In that state you feel the Spirit. Christ has done the greatest work on this, I should say, but we do not understand because his life was like a micro thing you see, 33 years. So we have to open it out a little bit and see what he did. He has given us the greatest weapon, of forgiveness.

“When you forgive a person, what do you do? You accept the situation, to begin with, and secondly you forgive what you think has been done wrong to you. But because nothing can be done wrong to your Spirit, you just forgive, because you are the Spirit. And when you forgive, you have found that your tension goes away. So even to your thoughts if you say, ‘Alright, forgive this thought, forgive this thought,’—because the thought is also not to be punished. ‘Forgive this thought, forgive this thought, forgive everything.’ Not forget—forgive. Because then you will even forget that you are the Spirit.” *Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Hampstead, Easter 1984*



The Subtle System

Central Path of Evolution
Collective Unconscious



The Subtle System

"Formless yet complete, existing before heaven and earth. Silent and limitless, alone and unchanging. Pervading everywhere, yet untiring. It is the Mother of all things under heaven. I do not know its name so I call it 'Tao'."

Lao Tze - Tao Te Ching, verse 25

When we sit and meditate, one of the first things we may feel is a burning or tingling on different fingers and parts of the hands. These sensations indicate the state of our subtle system—cool indicates *balance*, heat indicates *imbalance*. Sahaja Yoga includes many techniques for removing the heat and stress from the subtle system, allowing us to more fully enjoy our meditation and see the benefits in our daily lives.

The Subtle System consists of seven energy centers (chakras), three energy channels (nadis) and the Kundalini. The chakras correspond to the plexuses of our central nervous system and the energy channels correspond to the Sympathetic and Parasympathetic nervous systems within the spinal column. *Chakra* means “wheel” in Sanskrit, because the chakras rotate clockwise. Like lotus flowers, each chakra has a different number of petals, which corresponds to the number of sub-plexuses within each physical plexus.

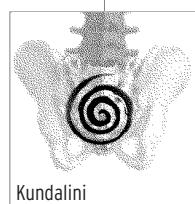
The Kundalini

“Turning away from materialism... I have entered into the sky of the mind, and opened the Tenth Gate. The chakras of the coiled Kundalini energy have been opened, and I have met my Sovereign Lord King without fear.”

Kabir – “Guru Granth Sahib,” pg. 972

The Kundalini is a subtle, feminine energy that resides in the sacrum bone at the base of the spinal column in three-and-a-half coils. In the same way that a power cord connects a lamp to the household current, the awakened Kundalini connects human awareness to the *Paramachaitanya*, the all-pervading power of divine love.

The Kundalini can be thought of as a rope with thousands of strands. When we first get Self Realization, only one or two strands find their way through the chakras and reach the Sahasrara chakra at the top of the head. However, with daily meditation, gradually more strands of the Kundalini connect us to the divine power and the



experience of meditation becomes more profound and blissful. The Kundalini, and the experience of its awakening, have been described by various Indian saints such as Adi Shankaracharya (ca. 600 A.D.), Kabir (ca. 1500 A.D.) and Jnanadeva (ca. 1200 A.D.).

Establish the Spirit

“Now how do you remove the thought from your mind is the problem. Thoughts are all the time in your mind... but when the Kundalini rises, then what happens is that these thoughts become elongated... and there is a gap in between the thoughts and this gap is the place of our peace. If you achieve that peace, the world peace can be achieved. By just taking placards, by shouting for peace, you cannot establish peace. Peace has to come from the hearts of human beings. In the hearts of human beings peace can be only established when you establish the Spirit.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

The Three Channels

Left side (Ida nadi)

Also known as the Moon channel, this channel looks after our left sympathetic nervous system and is the channel of our emotions, our desires and the record of our past experiences. In its pure state it expresses the qualities of deep joy, pure love and compassion. If we are weak or damaged on the left side, symptoms include emotional attachments, self-indulgent behavior, depression, low self-esteem, guilt, lethargy, and ritualism. Left-sided people believe they are “always wrong.” These problems can be cured in Sahaja Yoga using cleansing techniques such as the three candle treatment (see page 44).

Right side (Pingala nadi)

Also known as the Sun channel, this channel looks after our right sympathetic nervous system and provides energy for our creativity, our rational mind, futuristic thoughts, and our physical energy and dynamism. An imbalanced right side shows up as egotistical and dominating behavior, self-denial, extreme rigidity, arrogance, pride, anger, and intolerance. Right-sided people believe they are “always right.” A simple solution to an overheated right side is to put ice on the liver and do cold footsoaking (see page 41).

Central channel (Sushumna nadi)

This is the nadi of our equilibrium and evolution. It regulates our autonomous nervous system which looks after the heartbeat and digestion—things which our body does for us without our conscious will or control. As our attention moves to the Sushumna, our human awareness evolves and our attention gradually stops swinging like a pendulum from the past to the future, from the Ida nadi to the Pingala nadi, from sadness to happiness, from lethargy to overactivity, and remains always in the center, in the present moment. Our awareness becomes peaceful and our nerves bubble with joy.

The Seven Chakras

There are seven major chakras within our subtle system: Mooladhara, Swadishthana, Nabhi (Manipura), Heart (Anahata), Vishuddhi, Agnya and Sahasrara. Each chakra has different qualities and, by awakening these chakras, we awaken and enhance their qualities within us, making us more balanced and integrated. Our enlightened chakras give us joy and peace.

1. Mooladhara chakra

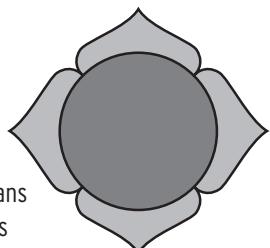
Physical manifestation: Pelvic plexus

Number of petals/sub-plexuses: Four

Element: Earth

Controls: Excretion and reproductive organs

Qualities: Innocence, wisdom, fearlessness



“A person who is filled with Virtue is like a newborn child.”

Lao Tze – Tao Te Ching verse 55

“The devotees of the Lord dwell forever in peace. With a child-like, innocent nature, they remain detached, turning away from the world.”

Guru Nanak – ‘Guru Granth Sahib’

“..unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Jesus Christ – Matthew 18: 2

“The True Person is detached and humble and to the world appears confusing. The people all strain their eyes and ears, yet the True Person remains childlike”

Lao Tze – Tao Te Ching verse 49



Situated below the sacrum bone, the awakened Mooladhara chakra gives us innocence and wisdom. Innocence gives us joy without the limitations of conditionings and prejudice, a quality that can be found in small children. This quality diminishes as we grow up and develop a sense of ego and selfish desires. Fortunately this innate innocence is never destroyed and can return to us by practicing Sahaja Yoga. It is like the sun which is obscured by clouds but which shines again after the clouds pass. In India the elephant-headed deity, Shri Ganesha, is worshipped as the essence of innocence and wisdom. He has the body of a child, symbolizing innocence, and the head of an elephant, symbolizing humility and wisdom.

Innocence

“There have been stories that children who have fallen from a very great height were completely saved, nothing happened to them. Their innocence is such a powerful thing. It has all the wisdom of the world, all the understanding of the world. Anybody who tries to harm the innocence, the whole world—which may not have cared so much for innocence, might not have worshipped innocence so much—stands up against anybody who tries to harm the innocence.

“You can see in your own lives around you, when anybody tries to trouble children—all of them, whoever they are, whatever may be their nationality, they all jump to safeguard that child. What is it? What is it within us that makes us so very conscious to protect the innocence?

“It’s really a shame, a great shame for us, when we find in this world that innocence is under attack. Anything else can be tolerated. Innocent people who have done nothing wrong, those who have no malice, who are living like little children, I should say, if they are attacked by anyone—not that the whole world reacts to that—but every one of them cannot bear any innocent person or innocent being being harmed.

“We don’t realize that, within us, there is the ocean of love and ocean of understanding for children. Why? Why should it be?

Why should we feel like that, especially for children? Especially for innocence? There are people who are always attacking innocent people, innocent children—there are, but no one wants to support them. No one thinks that it's proper to ill treat children. And those who have done this all suffer as a reaction."

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Cabella, Italy, 2001

Causes of problems with the Mooladhara chakra: Promiscuity, sexual perversion, lack of contact with nature and Mother Earth

Treatments: Sitting on the earth, spending time in nature (such as gardening), not looking at others with adulterous eyes, putting attention on small children or on nature

2. Swadishthana chakra

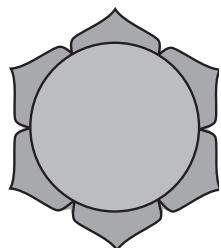
Physical manifestation: Aortic plexus

Number of petals/sub-plexuses: Six

Element: Fire

Controls: Kidneys, liver, spleen, pancreas, uterus, intestines

Qualities: Creativity, pure attention, pure desire, pure knowledge



The Swadishthana chakra moves like a satellite around the Nabhi chakra and the Void and provides us with our sense of aesthetics, art, and music, and our appreciation and connection with nature. It looks after our digestive organs and provides us with the dynamic energy to do physical, mental and creative work.

Right Swadishthana

The quality of the right Swadishthana is pure attention. Without good attention our mind moves from one thing to another uncontrollably and we find it hard to enter thoughtless awareness easily and for sustained periods.

"My mind has been pierced by the Name of the Lord, like the goldsmith, whose attention is held by his work. Like the young girl who carries a water-filled pitcher on her head. She laughs, plays, and talks with her friends, but keeps her attention on the pitcher of water."

Namadeva – "Guru Granth Sahib," pg. 972

Causes of problems with the right Swadishthana chakra: Excessive thinking and planning, dominating others, materialism, greed, drinking alcohol, drug abuse

Treatments: Cold foot-soak, ice-pack on liver (right Swadishthana and right Nabhi). See page 41.

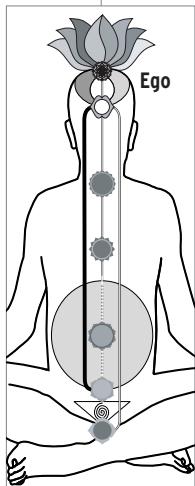
Left Swadishthana

The qualities of the left Swadishthana are pure knowledge and pure desire. Our pure desire is the desire for Self Realization, for the inner bliss and peace that is the next step in our evolution. If we do not have a pure desire to get our Self Realization then our experience of meditation is weakened. This chakra can be very badly damaged by going to false gurus. Clinging on to concepts or dogmas that you have read in books can also be a cause of a catch on this chakra.

Causes of problems with the left Swadishthana chakra: False knowledge, false desires, drug abuse, following false gurus, black magic

Treatment: Work on the chakra with a candle flame (see page 44)

The power for our creative action



"The balloon that is yellow is the Ego. You see down below it starts from the Swadishthana. This is the color of the bile within us. This Swadishthanaa chakra which is for our creativity is directly connected to the Ego. It starts rotating round the Void, and going to the various parts of the Void. The Void is the green circle within us where physically we have the uterus and the kidneys. It's a complete viscera, all the intestines, ascending, transverse and descending colon, the liver—more the upper part of liver—then also the pancreas and the spleen. So all the problems of these organs are collected by this chakra which comes out of the Nabhi chakra, and moves round and round and round, and collects all the problems.

"It nourishes and gives power, the vital power, to these organs and also it generates the necessary power for our creative action. It also collects the fat cells of the Void and converts them into the cells for the brain for its use—for the gray matter. All this work it has to do—one chakra. It manifests the aortic plexus outside—on the physical

level. It has got six subplexuses which look after all these organs. This chakra is meant for our action. When we go into action this chakra starts working. By the first power which is on the left hand side, we desire, but by the second one, we go into action and it's called *Kriya Shakti*. Now when this action starts within us it produces the byproducts or we can say all the problems of these organs, which are to be deposited somewhere and they are all deposited in the brain as ego. All the problems that we have out of this, this creativity, and the action of all these organs are to be counterbalanced and as a counter balance the ego develops."

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Oct 22, 1979

"Especially in England I have seen, also in the west I would say, everywhere, people get very easily tired. On the television also you find people will come (and sigh), "Haaaahhh." Young people!! They'll walk ten yards then they'll say, "Haaahhh." Why are we so tired? Because we think too much. All energy is wasted in thinking, so no energy left to enjoy anything whatsoever. For example, you have to have people for dinner, so you think, 'What to bring? How to make it formal? What to do?' So agitated, so nervous about the whole thing that, when the guests come they feel like running away because so much of tension.

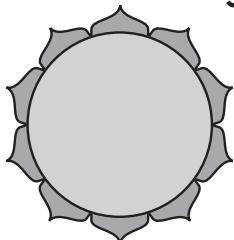


"Thinking, thinking, thinking, planning, planning, planning, planning, running. Ultimately the whole joy has disappeared. So the second center (Swadishthana) does a very miraculous thing is to provide the gray cells in our brain, when we are using it for thinking, and also it looks after your liver, your pancreas, your spleen, your kidneys and part of your abdomen. Instead of doing that, poor thing is busy only sending gray cells to your brain, because of thinking, thinking, thinking, like mad. So you develop all other diseases like liver trouble, which is very common. Then you develop diabetes — very common. Yesterday at least, there were ten people who said, "We have diabetes." Now, diabetes you do not develop by taking too much sugar—take it from me.

"In India if you go to a village you will see that he takes sugar in such manner that in the cup the spoon must stand at a right angle. Otherwise he won't drink it, and he never gets diabetes. The reason is, he doesn't think of tomorrow. He just works hard, eats his food and sleeps off nicely. He doesn't take sleeping pills either. So this diabetes comes by over-thinking, and can be easily cured if you can take to Sahaja Yoga."

Shri Mataji – Porchester Hall, London, Aug. 1989

3. Nabhi (Manipura) chakra



Physical manifestation: Navel/Solar plexus

Number of petals/sub-plexuses: Ten

Element: Water

Controls: Stomach, intestines, liver, spleen

Qualities: Seeking, peace, generosity, satisfaction, pure attention, looking after others

When enlightened by the Kundalini, the Nabhi chakra gives us unconditional generosity, complete contentment and profound inner peace. On the right side, it looks after the upper part of our liver which is the organ of our attention. The Nabhi is the center of our seeking. We seek food, shelter and comfort and, ultimately, we seek to evolve into a new state of spiritual awareness and to receive our Self Realization.

Causes of problems with the right Nabhi chakra: Excessive thinking and planning, dominating others, materialism, greed, fanaticism, drinking alcohol, drug abuse.

Treatment: Cold foot-soak, ice-pack on liver (right Swadisthan and right Nabhi). See page 41.

Causes of problems with the Left Nabhi chakra: Excessive worrying, lack of generosity, lack of care for others/selfishness

Treatment: Work on the chakra with a candle flame (page 44)

The aesthetics of matter

"At the Nabhi chakra one has to know that one should not hanker after money too much. Those who hanker too much after money may develop their right side better. They may have money, no doubt, but they miss their left side. Left side is Gruha Lakshmi [hospitality and generosity]. They have no Gruha Lakshmi in their house. They are very hectic people, they run about. They run the rat-race, they get heart attacks. If not heart attacks they will get leukemia, they will get diabetes, liver problems—all such diseases. Because their attention is on money and not on God."

“Attachment to money, attachment to people, is nothing but a hook which hooks you to baser levels. You have to rise above and then you really enjoy the beauty of richness.

“As I told you the other day, I see all beautiful things, it’s nice that I don’t possess them. See now these carpets are spread here. If they were mine I should worry, ‘Oh God, I hope they are not going to be spoiled, I hope nobody sits on them, I hope they are insured and nobody runs away with them.’ But when they don’t belong to me I am enjoying them better—other people’s things, is a better idea. This myth carries us to such an extent of stupidity that sometimes I wonder whether these human beings are human beings or they are their possessions. Their Spirit is lost, everything is lost—they are not bothered. But if their little possession is lost they weep and weep, as if they are dead.” *Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Delhi, 1983*

“The third center which we call the Nahbi chakra, this center on one side is made of water, another side with fire, around it are our ten valencies which we can call our innate religion within ourselves.

Now this Nahbi itself, or we can call it the solar plexus, or we can say the navel chakra, as soon as the Kundalini rises, she awakens this. And the light, when it spreads, you become religious. I don’t have to tell you anything—you just become. I don’t have to say that you don’t take drugs—you just don’t take it.”

“Overnight I have seen people have given up drugs, alcoholism, everything. And they enjoy their virtues, that’s the best part of it. Some people think, ‘Oh then what is the fun?’ What is this that you take something in the pub and next day you have a hangover? Here you take something and next day you’re much better off. It never comes down. It never gives you a reaction. It’s not artificial, it’s not intoxicating, it is from your nerves it’s bubbling out. So this is the center which is very important in us because most of us have a problem with this center. And here we have a capacity, by this center, that we enjoy our generosity.

“Now we are materialistic. It’s a good idea, to be materialistic. But the aesthetics of matter are that you can give it to others suggesting your love. I think that’s the only thing matter can do. And in a very special way you can express that love. For example, somebody likes a particular thing and you go all the way to get it and give that small thing, very small thing to the person and the joy,

not out of the money that you have spent, but the feelings you have expressed, of knowing what that person would love. This kind of a depth develops within you. Such a lovable beautiful society you enter into, and you don't need anything because everybody is looking after your needs.” *Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Porchester Hall, London, Aug. 1989*

3a. The Void

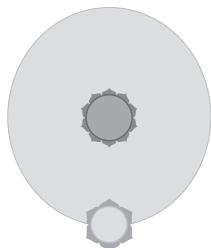
Physical manifestation: Aortic & Solar plexus

Element: Water

Controls: Stomach, intestines, liver, spleen

Qualities: Guru principle, self-discipline and dedication, mastery over self, will power, knowledge of the divine, teaching of divine knowledge

Prophets: Abraham, Moses, Zarathustra, Lao Tze, Confucius, Socrates, Raja Janak, Mohammed, Guru Nanak, Sai Nath of Shirdi



Moses



Zarathustra



Confucius



Lao-Tze



Socrates

The Void is the part of the subtle system that is created by the movement of the Swadishthana around the Nabhi and gives us self-discipline and self-mastery. Without mastery over our baser desires and our minds, we cannot become one with our Spirit. False knowledge and false gurus damage this center very much. It is for this reason that we suggest that you don't mix Sahaja Yoga with other so-called spiritual knowledge.

The primordial masters

“Any time a realized soul will come he will say the same thing. That's why there is so much similarity, I should say, the unity. In all these people, whether it is Lao Tze, whether it is Mohammed Sahib or whether it is Raja Janaka or Nanaka—they said the same thing. Now where is the difference that comes in? Also we see that these incarnations came for a different type of a job. Like Moses came to establish the Void, as we say, here in the center. All these Primordial Masters came to do that... All these people who were Primordial Masters came on this Earth to establish the balance and that's why whatever they have said, all have said the same thing.

“My task is easier because there are sensible people in these days, but when Christ lived what sort of people lived there? Absolutely cruel, violent, nonsensical. Mohammed Sahib had a very bad time. Guru Nanak had a very bad time. So you must understand that the truth when it comes to a person like that, not only that he knows but he can make others also know.

“This is what William Blake has said: ‘At this time, men of God—that’s you people—will become Prophets and they will have powers to make others Prophets.’ So people sometimes say, ‘Why didn’t it happen earlier?’ No, that was not the time. Now the blossom time has come, so it is happening.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Chiswick Town Hall, London, July 10, 1984



Mohammed



Raja Janaka



Guru Nanak



Sai Nath of Shirdi



Abraham

4. Heart (Anahata) chakra

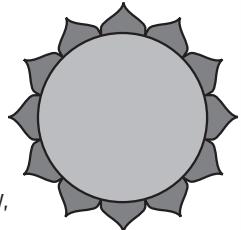
Physical manifestation: Cardiac plexus

Number of petals/sub-plexuses: Twelve

Element: Air

Controls: Heart, lungs, sternum bone

Qualities: Joy, compassion, sense of security, love, responsibility



“One should identify oneself with the *Atma* (Spirit), the witness, who does not take part in any kind of activity, by thinking, ‘I am the witness of these likes and dislikes.’ It is in this way that one comes to identify oneself with the witnessing consciousness. One knows oneself thus: ‘I am neither the body, nor the sense organs, nor the ego, nor the mind, nor the intellect, for I am within all these; I am the eternal inmost witnessing consciousness, the witness of these changing phenomena...’” *Shri Adi Shankaracharya – “Sarva vedanta siddhanta”*

Within the Heart chakra resides the Self: the Spirit or *Atma*. The Spirit manifests when our heart is open, at which point we feel the pure joy of existence and the meaning and purpose of our place in creation. The quality of the Heart chakra is pure, unconditional love. Before our realization we rarely love unconditionally—we

expect something in return. We mistake feelings of love for physical attraction, infatuation and selfishness. We love our children because they are “ours” but do not love other children in the same way. Often we expect something back from them later in life as a repayment for our love. Love that expects is emotional attachment. Pure love has no motive. It emanates from the Spirit and not from the body or mind. If you see how a small puppy runs to every person it sees in a park just to give them its love and share with them its joy, that is the essence of love. The Heart chakra also manifests in the head at the fontanelle bone (the *Brahmarandhra Pitha* of the Sahasrara chakra) so it’s important to keep our Heart chakra clean, as this is the entry point to the super consciousness, where the Kundalini escapes from the subtle system and unites us with the *Paramachaitanya*—the all-pervading power of divine love.

“And this
is what the
seeking is for.

We are
seeking
our Spirit.”

*Shri Mataji
Nirmala Devi*

Causes of problems with the Heart chakra:

Left side: Problems with the mother, neglect of the Spirit,
excessive physical and/or mental activity

Right side: Problems with the father; problems with the father’s health

Center: Insecurity, fear, lack of proper care and respect as a child

Treatments: Maintaining respectful relations with wife/husband, mother and father, and your children. Taking several deep breaths while in meditation uses the air element to cleanse the heart chakra.

We are seeking our Spirit

This Spirit in the heart is the Witness, which witnesses us, which looks after us. But we are not conscious of it. That means the Spirit is not flowing, is not radiating in our central nervous system. We are not conscious of it. We know there is someone, we know someone inside is there, we are aware of it, in a way, but it is not flowing through our conscious mind, through our central nervous system. And this is what the seeking is for. We are seeking our Spirit.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Brighton, 1980

“The enjoyment of life is only possible when we get connected to the Spirit and that connection to the Spirit is only possible if you sprout into that. You become the Spirit, as Christ has said in simple words, ‘You have to be born again.’ It looks very simple, but how? You are to be baptized. But how? Say I go to a theosophical college

or some sort of a college, they'll say: 'Now you have got the right to baptize.' Now to any intelligent man... can it be possible?

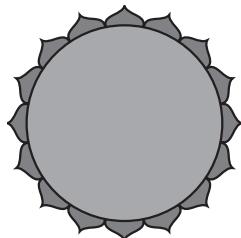
"Baptism, if it is a living process in which you have to get connected with the Spirit... that means you have to achieve a state of mind where you become the Spirit. That connection has to be established. If that connection is not established then you cannot be twice born by certifying yourself. I've seen many people they said, 'Mother, I'm twice born.' I said, 'How do you say you are twice-born? What is the certificate you have got of being twice born?' You cannot certify yourself. This is not a self-certification. Supposing a dog says, 'I'm a human being.' Will you accept it? No. I mean, it can go about and say that, 'I am a human being.' But it doesn't become one. It's a state. It's an evolutionary quality. A fish which has to become a tortoise has to become a tortoise. She can't just say, 'Oh, I am a tortoise, I am a tortoise.'

"This is where human ego comes in. By saying something you do not become. And this is one of the basic things we must know—that we have to become, in actuality, in reality."

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Hampstead, April 22, 1980



5. Vishuddhi chakra



Physical manifestation: Cervical plexus

Number of petals/sub-plexuses: Sixteen

Element: Sky/Space/Ether

Controls: Neck, arms, face, tongue, mouth, nose, teeth, thyroid

Qualities: Sweetness of communication, diplomacy, collectivity, detachment, self-respect and respect for others, brother/sister relationship

"Controlling the thoughts, speech and actions, ever absorbed in the yoga of meditation, and taking shelter in detachment; relinquishing egoism, violence, pride, lust, anger, and desires for possession; free from the notion of 'my' and peaceful; one becomes fit for attaining oneness with Brahman."

Shri Krishna – "Bhagavad Gita" (18:51)

The Vishuddhi embodies the qualities which govern our communication with others. As it awakens we discover greater self-respect (left Vishuddhi) and greater respect for others (right Vishuddhi). Our ego is not bloated by praise and we are not upset by aggression or criticism. The Vishuddhi is also the chakra that manifests the power of witnessing. By daily practice of Sahaja Yoga meditation, we become identified with our Spirit. In this state of union with our Spirit, we become the witness of our body, our mind, our thoughts, our emotions, and ultimately the detached witness of the drama of our lives.

Causes of problems with the Vishuddhi chakra:

Left Side: Guilt, immorality, lack of self-respect

Right Side: Disrespect for others, talking aggressively, foul speech, sarcasm

Center: Lack of detachment or collectivity, smoking

Treatments: Meditate with attention on the Vishuddhi chakra (base of the throat). Say "I am part and parcel of the whole."

The center for communication

"These sixteen petals look after the cervical plexus. Now this is a very, very important center and this is the center for communication. For example, when you talk you communicate. Through your hands, you shake hands, you touch somebody and you can communicate. Even if you cannot talk, with your hands you can communicate also.

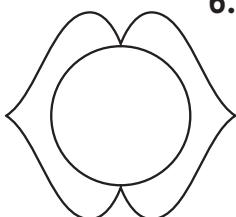
"When we think we are very responsible this center goes out. Like some people they were traveling by plane. They were from villages, they did not know what was a plane. They were told to take less luggage because it should not be a weight for the plane. So they got into the plane and put all the luggage on their heads and they said that 'We are trying to reduce the weight of the plane.' In the same way we are also behaving, when actually the all-pervading power which has created us, created this universe, and has brought us to this level of human beings is doing everything, but we think we are responsible—that we have to do it. But once you become a Sahaja Yogi you just do it but you don't think that you are doing it. You just say 'it's happening', and what a beautiful feeling it is. Then



you don't have high blood pressure, you don't have headaches, you don't have tensions—no. Because we are not doing it, it's just done and you find it's all done.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Porchester Hall, London, Aug. 1, 1989

“Now when you meditate, try to meditate in a sustained way, first of all sustain it. Then you find that you are getting into the state of Samadhi, means at a state where you start feeling the joy and the bliss of God's blessings, and then you start saying, ‘Oh God, what a blessing, what a blessing, and what a blessing.’ Once you have reached that state then you have to realize, ‘Who am I?’ Who are you? What are you? You are the Spirit. After establishing your sustained attention on the Spirit you'll develop a state where you'll be in a complete state of witnessing with joy.” *Shri Mataji – July 23, 1983*



6. Agnya chakra

Physical manifestation: Optic chiasma

Number of petals/sub-plexuses: Two

Element: Light

Controls: Pineal body/Pituitary gland, eyesight, memory, mind

Quality: Forgiveness

“The door of liberation is very narrow, less than the width of a mustard seed. Your mind is larger than an elephant; how will it pass through? If I meet such a true Guru, who mercifully blesses me with the gift, then the door of liberation will open wide for me, and I will easily pass through.” *Kabir – 'Guru Granth Sahib', page 1367*

The Agnya is the narrow gate which, when open, allows our Kundalini to ascend to the limbic area of the brain. It is the chakra of forgiveness, humility and compassion. Forgiveness is the power to let go of anger, hatred and resentment and to discover, in humility, the nobility and generosity of the Spirit. Once we start to see that by not forgiving others we are actually doing no harm to anyone other than ourselves, we start to realize that it is not only wise and generous to forgive but also very practical and pragmatic. By forgiving, we start to feel a tremendous sense of peace and relief. The embodiment of forgiveness was Christ who, while being crucified by the Romans,

said, "Forgive them Father for they know not what they are doing." He also gave a powerful mantra—"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." Forgiveness melts away all our ego and conditionings, our false ideas of racism and nationalism, and our misidentifications.

Causes of problems with the Agnya chakra: lack of forgiveness, adulterous eyes, arguing and debating

"Unless one
is born of
the Spirit he
cannot enter
into the
kingdom
of God."

*Jesus Christ –
John, 3:3*

Treatments: Place a lighted candle before the photograph of Shri Mataji, then meditate with the eyes open, looking at the photograph for 5-10 minutes. Then close your eyes and continue to meditate. Say, "I forgive everyone." Put your eyes towards the sky, earth, nature or on children.

The narrow passage

"Today we are going to understand the center of Agnya, Agnya chakra, which is placed on the crossing of the optic chiasma. The nerves that supply the eyes go backwards in the opposite direction and, wherever they cross, this subtle center is situated. It has a continuous connection with the other centers through the medulla oblongata. This center has got two petals and this subtle center on one side acts through the eyes and at the back of the head where you have some protrusion. This is the physical side of this center. Now the people who talk of the third eye—this is the third eye. So that we have two eyes with which we see and there is a third eye which is a subtler eye through which we can see.

"If you see this eye that means you are away from it. For example, if you can see your eyes that means you are seeing your reflection, not the reality. If you see anything that means you are looking at it. So those people who say they see an eye, for example people who take LSD and all such things, they start seeing another eye. They just see this eye and they think their third eye has opened. Actually you are very much away from the eye, that is why you can see it. You go to a supraconscious level on the right side and on the left side to the subconscious level, you can see the eye. But in Sahaja Yoga you have to see *through* that eye. Like a window, you can look at the window, but if you see through the window you cannot look at the window. So this illusion that people have that 'we can see

third eye and that is why our Kundalini is awakened', they are sadly mistaken.

"This is a very narrow passage, through which attention cannot pass normally, it is an impossible thing. It is a narrow passage, where the ego and superego fit on to each other and cross each other. And there is no gap in between for the Kundalini to pass through. So this third eye is to be penetrated through, or we have to enter into the third eye, through Kundalini awakening. But it is such a closed passage which is the door to the limbic area, which is the kingdom of God, that anybody who tries to push their attention through this closed door, either goes to the left or to the right. And this is the beginning of the trouble of the people when they don't understand that whatever is unknown is not God, is not divine. So, when they move on the right side, they go to the supraconscious area. And they start seeing hallucinations."

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Delhi, 1983

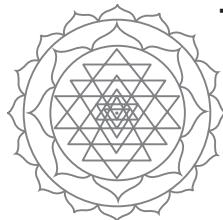


"Now on this center (Agnya chakra) when we come, as I told you, your thinking is controlled by you. You can control. If you want, you can think or you don't think.

"But in that silence you feel your peace, if there's too much of crowds, too much of problems suddenly you become the witness. You start seeing everything, seeing the problem—what it is. Unless and until you can see the problem you cannot solve it. Because you are in the problem you just get upset, but if you are out of the problem you can see it and that's what happens to you when you become thoughtlessly aware.

"What happens, as I told you, there is Christ. Christ is awakened and he sucks in these two institutions which you see there [see the head of the chakra chart], the yellow and the blue. One is our conditioning, and one is our ego. So both these are sucked in like that. These are sucked in because it is said that He died for our sins. Didn't He? He suffered for us. Are we going to suffer more than Him? We don't have to suffer, only awaken Him at Agnya and you are alright. This is the process, it opens out... alright? That's why it is said, 'You must forgive.' That's what He said, 'You have to forgive.' And when you forgive, you can ask for forgiveness."

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Porchester Hall, London, Aug. 1, 1989



7. Sahasrara chakra

Physical manifestation: Limbic area of brain

Number of petals/sub-plexuses: One thousand

Qualities: Joy, thoughtless awareness, union with the divine, collective consciousness

“Do not go to the garden of flowers! O friend! Go not there; in your body is the garden of flowers. Take your seat on the thousand petals of the lotus, and there gaze on the Infinite Beauty.” *Kabir*

“Give up your identification with the ego which is harmful and causes misery and meditate upon the Self which is the Absolute Bliss and the source of liberation.” *Shri Adi Shankaracharya – “Vivekachudamani”*

Our complete subtle instrument is integrated in the Sahasrara chakra. Each chakra has its seat here. As our attention and our Kundalini rise to the Sahasrara chakra we enter a new dimension of consciousness. We go beyond the relative to the absolute. We rise above the three channels of the subtle system—beyond the past, present and future and into a timeless state and experience the inner joy and peace of the Spirit. Losing our ego and conditionings, we enjoy the bliss of the divine. This is a heavenly place far beyond our imagination.

When the Kundalini reaches the Sahasrara, the thousand petals of this chakra begin to open and enlightenment begins to manifest. We may experience a pulsation at the fontanelle bone, followed by a subtle flow of cool vibrations. The Kundalini unites our individual consciousness to the universal consciousness. Our individual *Atma*, our soul, is connected to the *Paramatma*, the Supreme Spirit. We are suddenly tuned in to the universal wavelength of vibrations, to the subtle joy that is present in nature. These vibrations pervade the universe but before Realization we are unaware of them.

The opening of this chakra is known as second birth. Our human birth can be likened to the hatching of an egg and Self Realization to the breaking of the egg and the emergence of the bird. This is why an egg is given at Easter, to symbolize the second birth.

Sahasrara is the most beautiful part of your being

“Sahasrara is the most beautiful part of your being. It is a big lotus with a thousand petals of different colors appearing like inflated flames. It is like a flower pouring its color and fragrance around.

“Sahasrara is your awareness. When it is enlightened you get into the techniques of the Divine. The Divine looks after all the universal happenings. Every minutest particle is controlled by the Divine. When your Sahasrara opens out, and your Kundalini touches the fontanelle bone, a sort of igniting force is ready in your Sahasrara. As soon as the fontanelle bone area opens up in the *brahmarandra*, the grace of the Spirit ignites that igniting force and your nadis get enlightened. That’s how you get your enlightenment. So many things happen because of your seven centers being in the Sahasrara.

“The rationality that is separated from the heart becomes one with the heart. It becomes one with your attention. Wherever your attention goes you act in a collective way. All the activities of your attention are blessed. Your attention itself is effective. Your attention is very important, your desires are even more important, because it is such an integrated thing, your desires and your attention become one. Whatever is good for the Spirit you desire.

“It is only the Sahasrara which has to grow, not the Spirit. The more sensitive the Sahasrara is, the more it receives the qualities of the Spirit. Actually, the peace is felt in the Sahasrara. The bliss is also felt in the Sahasrara, because that is the brain, and the brain is the epitome of the central nervous system, or consciousness itself.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Le Raincy, France, May 5, 1982

“Today is a very great day, I must say, to celebrate Sahasrara—the Puja of Sahasrara. It’s a very unique thing that has happened that your Sahasraras were opened out. There were some very few people in this whole world—there were some Sufis, there were some saints, some other people also in China I know, but very few. Very few got their Sahasrara opened. So whatever they said or was written was never understood by the people. They actually tortured them, they crucified them and did all kinds of horrible things because they couldn’t bear somebody getting this Realization.

“So it’s a very great day because collectively this Sahasrara has been opened. Every one of you have got it. Also all over the world

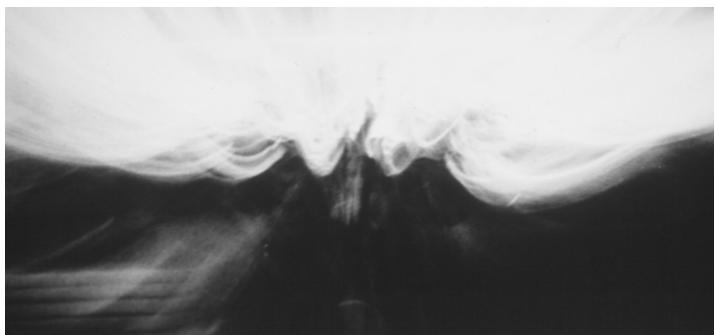


you have many people who have got their Sahasraras open. Of course we need many more for them to understand what is this great event of such a collective opening of Sahasrara. Some have grown very much after getting their Realization, very much. They have understood Sahaja Yoga very well and they have developed their depth and their consciousness—is really a great awareness of oneness with the divine.

“To be one with the divine is the greatest blessing for human beings. So far, they were human beings at a lower level of existence. They had all the problems of that level—is that of jealousies, hatred. All kinds of problems that are today, of fighting, of troubling others, destroying others and not loving others. All these problems existed because their Sahasrara was not opened. So our main problem is to open the Sahasrara of the people all over the world, which is very simple, which you can all do it, and it will work better if you do it collectively. If you are collective, you can work it out very well. Like that in Sahaja Yoga so many people have come whose Sahasrara was completely opened and they felt their depth. Firstly you must feel your depth. If you don't feel your depth, and you are not one with your personality which is so deep, then you cannot enjoy the Self Realization.

“So against all this one has to understand that watch yourself: ‘Am I egoistical?’ Ego is very limited. It makes you limited and you don't see the purpose of your life. Why have you become a realized soul? You don't understand, you just are involved in your own affairs, in your family, in your children, in your... something like that. Very low. But if you have an ego-less temperament then you are very effective—the whole power works.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Italy, May 5, 2002



“Then you start feeling the cool breeze in your hand. You can feel it all over. Some people who in the beginning felt the cool breeze could not believe it, so they closed doors, everything, and then they sat down to see. Still they were feeling it. But it works, works in the sense that you get empowered. You become peaceful, you become the witness. You become empowered that you can give realization to others. You can raise their Kundalini like this and you can establish that connection. You can do it and this is what is your right to have it, this is what will give you meaning. Otherwise, so far, whatever we have been doing is very frustrating.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – London, Aug. 1, 1989

“First of all you should understand yourself. If you don’t understand yourself, how can you understand other people? You cannot. So first this Sahasrara should be opened out fully. Fully means complete oneness with the divine. That is not difficult. Only you have to meditate a little bit and then it will work out. It has worked out in many people. I am very happy to see and meet such people in Sahaja Yoga, who have achieved such a lot of collectivity and also the awareness of a realized soul.

Ego is the greatest hurdle for your ascent. You see that ego is at a place where you have to just cross to go to Sahasrara, and to break Sahasrara is very easy otherwise. But if there is ego, you are already lost in that ego.”



Chakra cleansing techniques

There are many techniques for clearing any catches that we might feel in our subtle system. No two people are alike but most of us need to clear both the left and right sides regularly. It is important to feel the vibrations on our hands clearly so that we know which chakras to work on.

Interpreting the state of our chakras and nadis

If you feel a cool breeze equally on the fingers and palms of both hands, this is a sign that your subtle system is in balance. If you feel heat or heaviness on any finger or on either hand, you need to use some clearing techniques to improve the chakras or nadis. If you cannot feel clearly on your hands, see if you can feel the chakras inside the body.

We describe a part of the subtle system that is tingling or feels hot to be *catching*. For example, if the left Vishuddhi is catching (left index finger is hot or tingling), work on the left Vishuddhi. If the right Vishuddhi is catching (right index finger is hot or tingling), work on the right Vishuddhi. If both index fingers are hot or tingling then work on the center Vishuddhi. See the Chakra Chart on page 18 to interpret which chakras are catching.

If the right hand feels warmer or heavier than the left, the right side is catching. Follow the section on clearing the right side. If the left hand feels warmer or heavier, the left side is catching. Follow the section on clearing the left side. Also see page 43, “Balancing the left and right sides.”

Footsoaking

Shri Mataji has recommended that anyone serious about progressing in Sahaja Yoga should footsoak every night. The salt water used for soaking the feet is particularly good for cleansing the Swadishthana, Nabhi and Void.

“If the doors
of perception
were cleansed
everything
would appear
to man as it is:
Infinite.”

William Blake

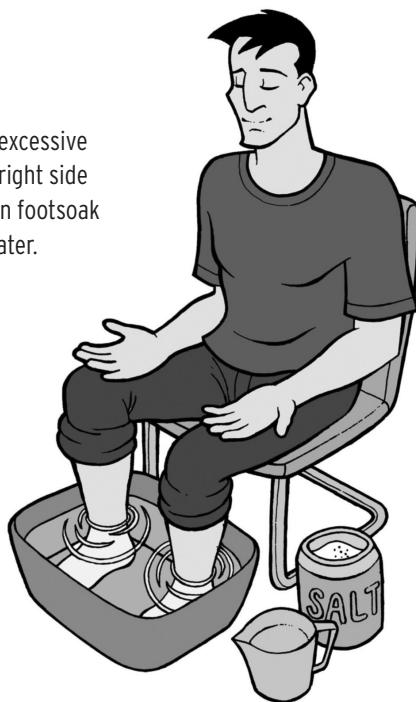
How to do footsoaking

Get a bowl, and keep it exclusively for footsoaking. A plastic bowl will do. Fill it with enough lukewarm water to cover the ankles and add a handful of salt. Keep a jug of water and a towel beside you. Meditate with your feet in the water. After meditating, rinse your feet with the fresh water in the jug and dry your feet on the towel. Pour the water from the bowl into the toilet and rinse the bowl with fresh water.

“For Sahaja Yogis, it is extremely necessary to have footsoaking treatment, at least for five minutes, before going to bed. However highly evolved you may be, and you may not be getting caught, but it does not matter. You must do footsoaking for at least five minutes. It is a very good habit. All Sahaja Yogis should light a lamp before the photograph, apply sindur, dip their feet in salted water and sit in this fashion opening out both palms towards the photograph. If you do this, more than half of your problems would be solved automatically. However busy you may be, it is not difficult to spare five minutes. All should sit like this before retiring. That will stop more than half of your catching.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Mumbai, India, May 27, 1976

Those with excessive heat in the right side and liver can footsoak with cold water.



Balancing the left and right sides

Our goal in Sahaja Yoga is to be in the center, neither “left-sided” nor “right-sided.” By following the simple techniques described below, we can bring the left side and right side into balance and reduce the pressure of the superego and the ego. The more we are in the center, the more easily the Kundalini will rise to the Sahasrara.

Strengthening the left side

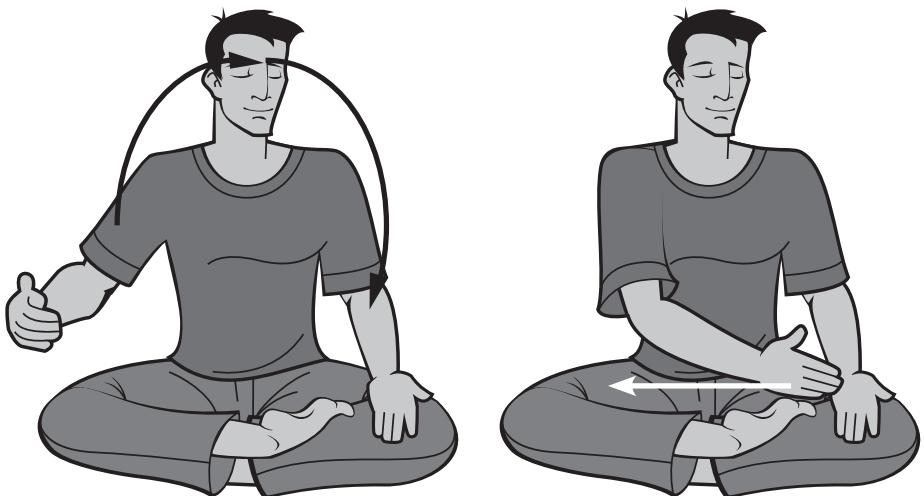
Manifestations of a damaged or overactive left side:

Lethargy, low self-esteem, guilt, living in the past, laziness, unreasonable fear

Raise the right side and lower the left side. Use this technique when your left hand feels hotter or heavier than the right. This technique strengthens the left side.

Keep the right hand palm upwards towards the photograph. Raise the right side and lower the left side by using the right hand to describe an arc from the right hip, up to the top of the head, then down to the left hip as shown. Now bring your hand back to the right hip across your stomach.

Do this motion seven times or until you feel the temperature of vibrations on both hands to be equal.



Clearing the left side using the earth element

While meditating, place the right hand on the ground (or towards the ground if you are on a chair) and the left hand palm upwards to the photograph of Shri Mataji. It is preferable, but not essential, to place a candle in front of you so that the flame is just in front of the fingers of the left hand. Continue for several minutes or until you feel the left hand become cool.



Clearing the left side using the fire element

The Three Candle Treatment Light three candles and, preferably, sit on the floor cross legged. The candles should be big enough to give a good sized flame as this will work better. Place each candle in a suitable candle holder.

A note about safety: Make sure the candles are secure and won't fall over. Place candles about 6 inches away from you. When not using the candles, extinguish them. Never leave them burning unattended.

- a. Place one candle in front of you so that while holding the left hand palm upwards, the flame is just in front of the fingers of the left hand. Then place the second candle just behind you on the left side. Make sure the candle is far enough from your body to avoid setting fire to your clothes.
- b. The third candle should preferably be shorter than the other two and is held in the right hand. First, move the candle up and down the left side of your body for a few minutes, at a suitable distance so that you do not burn your hair or clothes.
- c. Next work on each chakra of the left side by rotating the candle 7 times clockwise (top to the left), in front of the chakra (see diagram on the next page). Start with the Mooladhara and Swadishthana and finish with the superego on the right side of

the head. Pay particular attention to any chakras that you feel are catching. Before finishing, move the candle up and down the left side of the body once again.



Clearing the left side – dietary advice

Another way to improve the left side is to eat more protein and fewer carbohydrates.

Strengthening the right side

Manifestations of a damaged or overactive right side:

Materialism, futuristic planning, aggressiveness, insomnia, impatience, hot temper, talking excessively, thinking excessively

Raise the left side and lower the right side. Use this technique when your right hand feels hotter or heavier than the left hand. This technique strengthens the right side.

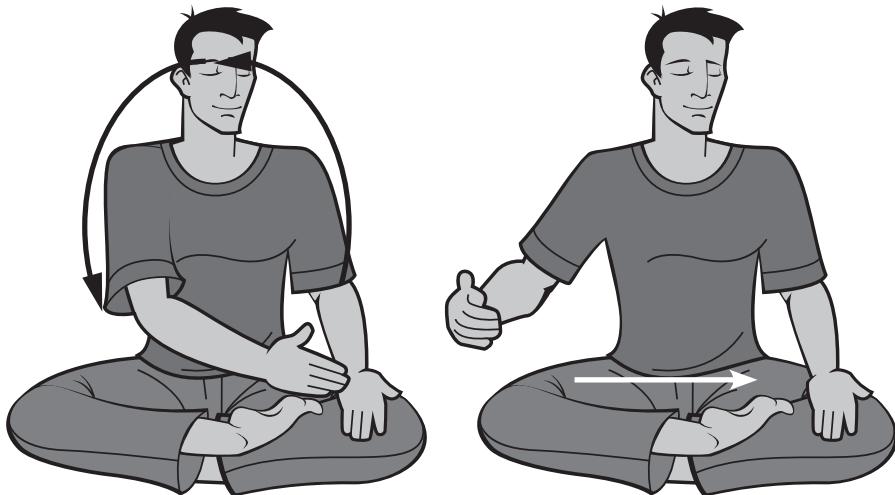
Keep the left hand palm upwards towards the photograph.
Raise the left side and lower the right side by using the right hand

to describe an arc from the left hip, up to the top of the head, then down to the right hip as shown. Now bring your hand back to the left hip across your stomach.

Do this motion seven times or until you feel the temperature of vibrations on both hands to be equal.

“Even now if you find that ego is still there, then you have to raise your left side to push it back to the right hand side with your [right] hand, one hand towards the photograph. Push the left side higher and right side lower, so the ego and superego get the balance. Do it seven times. Try to feel how you are feeling inside.”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – London, Nov 18th 1979



Clearing the right side using ice on the liver

Symptoms of an overheated liver are a hot temper and irritability. Hold an ice pack on the liver (right Swadishthana and right Nabhi — the upper and lower abdomen on the right side) while meditating. Doing this regularly will significantly reduce the excessive heat in the liver and make it easier to enter thoughtless awareness.

Clearing the right side using the ether element

While meditating, hold the left hand in the air with the fingers pointing upward, towards the sky (ether element), with the palm of the hand facing behind you. Keep the right hand palm upwards towards the photograph of Shri Mataji to receive vibrations. (See diagram to the right.)



Clearing the right side using the water element

Footsoaking is very beneficial to the right side, particularly with colder water.

Clearing the right side – dietary advice

Another way to improve the right side is to eat less eggs, cheese, red meat, fish and fried food and to eat more vegetables and carbohydrates such as cane sugar, pasta and rice. Cut down on caffeine (coffee, tea, chocolate and caffeinated soft drinks).

Clearing the right side – left hand on the liver

The right Swadishthana and right Nabhi look after our liver. Meditate with the left hand on the right Swadishthana for five minutes then put the left hand on the right Nabhi. (See diagram to the right.)



Techniques for clearing any chakra

1. Give a bandhan to a chakra

If you need to, refer to the subtle system diagram on page 18 to find out which chakras are related to the fingers you are feeling. You can easily clear any chakra by giving a bandhan to the chakra. This is done by rotating the hand clockwise (top to the left) seven times in front of the chakra, or until the chakra feels cool. Use the right hand when working on the chakras of the left and center channels and the left hand when working on chakras of the right side. Keep the other hand palm upwards towards Shri Mataji's photo to receive vibrations.



2. Place your hand on a chakra

Similarly you can simply place the palm of the hand on any chakra that is catching. Use the right hand for chakras of the left channel or center channel and the left hand for the right channel. In each case keep the other hand palm upwards. Do this until you feel that chakra become cooler. You can ask Shri Mataji to clear a blockage in a chakra. For example, to clear the heart, place your hand on your heart and say, "Shri Mataji, please cleanse my heart."





Taking it further

Meditate twice every day

It is vital, for those who want to enjoy the peace and joy of their own Spirit, to establish their Self Realization by cleansing the chakras and allowing more strands of the Kundalini to rise to the Sahasrara. With this in mind, Shri Mataji has recommended practicing Sahaja Yoga meditation at home on a twice daily basis—a meditation in the morning and a footsoaking meditation in the evening. These sessions can be as short as ten minutes or as long as one hour or even more if you like. You will probably find that, as you progress, you will enjoy it more and thus set aside more time for this blissful experience. If, at any other time of the day, you feel under stress or depressed, you will find it beneficial to raise the Kundalini and give yourself a bandhan and, if possible, to be thoughtless for a minute or two.

The purpose of Sahaja Yoga is not to sit in meditation all day but to meditate at least twice every day, so that we gradually experience deeper meditations and progressively improve the condition of the chakras. A profound and peaceful morning meditation will enable us to stay meditative and peaceful throughout the working day.

Shri Mataji's lectures on audio and video

Shri Mataji has given thousands of talks about the Kundalini and the subtle system, with simple and practical advice on how to improve the chakras and experience the inner joy and peace of the Spirit every moment of our lives—not just while sitting down to meditate. Equally importantly, listening to Shri Mataji's lectures is a very quick way to get into a deep state of meditation. These lectures are very helpful for establishing thoughtless awareness effortlessly and improving the quality of our daily lives. Shri Mataji recommends listening to as many as possible. Please contact your local meeting coordinator, or look on the sahajayoga.org website, for more details.

Meditation with affirmations

The following chart shows some affirmations for each chakra. The affirmations don't need to be said out loud but can be said silently inside. If you need to, refer to the subtle system diagram on page 18 to find out which chakras are related to the fingers you are feeling.

LEFT CHANNEL Shri Mataji, I am fortunate to be in the attention of the Holy Spirit.	CENTER CHANNEL Shri Mataji, thank you for giving me my Self Realization.	RIGHT CHANNEL Shri Mataji, verily you are the Holy Spirit. You are the (Teacher—i.e., your profession) of all the (teachers).
LEFT Shri Mataji, by your grace:	CENTER Shri Mataji, please make me:	RIGHT Shri Mataji, verily:
6. AGNYA Please forgive me.	A forgiving person.	I forgive everyone and I forgive myself. Please keep me in your attention.
5. VISHUDDHI I am not guilty. As I am the Spirit, how can I be guilty?	A collective person. The pure witness.	You are the sweetness and wisdom of my words and deeds.
4. HEART I am the Spirit. Please forgive me for any mistakes against my Spirit.	A fearless and compassionate person.	You are the responsibility in me. You are the boundaries of good conduct and the benevolence of a good father.
3a. VOID I am my own guru.	My own guru.	You are my guru.
3. NABHI I am satisfied. I am peace. I am a generous person.	A satisfied person.	You are the royal dignity in me. You solve my money and family worries and take care of my well-being.
2. SWADISHTHANA I am the pure knowledge of the Divine which acts.	A creative person.	I do nothing. You are the doer and you are the enjoyer.
1. MOOLADHARA I am the powerful innocence of a child.	Innocent and wise.	You are the destroyer of negativity.

Share the experience

If you have felt the benefit of Sahaja Yoga, even after only a week or two of practice, try to give Realization to your friends or family. It's a very joyful experience to share Sahaja Yoga with others.

You can use the technique illustrated below to give your friends Self Realization. Have them place the right hand on the chakras of the left side as shown and keep the left hand, palm upwards, towards Shri Mataji's photograph. Have them sit comfortably on a chair or on the floor. Throughout the exercise the eyes should be kept closed. The affirmations can be repeated silently inside.



Place right hand on lower abdomen

“Mother, please give me the pure knowledge.”
(6 times)



Place right hand on upper abdomen

“Mother, I am my own Guru.”
(10 times)



Place right hand on heart

“Mother, I am the Spirit.”
(12 times)



Place right hand where neck meets shoulder

“Mother, I am not guilty at all.”
(16 times)



Place right hand across forehead; bend head forward

“Mother, I forgive everyone.”
(2 times)



Place right hand on back of head; bend head backward

“Mother, if I have made any mistakes please forgive me.”
(2 times)

For the last affirmation (Sahasrara chakra), push down firmly with the palm of your right hand. Stretch the palm by pushing your fingers back as far as possible. Rotate the scalp 7 times clockwise while repeating the affirmation.



Place right hand on top of head; bend head forward

“Mother, please give me my Self Realization.”
(7 times)

Be collective

“Sahaja Yoga only works in collectivity”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Jan 14, 1983

“It is important that you should go to the centers [Sahaja Yoga meetings], master it, become a fully fledged Sahaja Yogi, and give Self Realization to others. You're duty bound, you have to do it!”

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi – Holland Park, London, 2001

After a few weeks or months of regularly attending an introductory Sahaja Yoga meeting, and practicing twice daily meditation at home, it is important to make a conscious effort to attend more advanced collective gatherings of experienced Yogis. Sahaja Yoga meetings are always free, and no money is ever taken for giving Self Realization.

You may already have noticed that collective meditation brings us the best meditation experiences with the least effort. This collective meditation, combined with collective interaction with Sahaja Yogis, is essential for the deepening of the experience of Self Realization and the acceleration of the inner growth towards a harmonious, peaceful and blissful life.

Don't get mixed up

Please don't make the mistake of thinking that, by mixing Sahaja Yoga with any other kind of knowledge or techniques that we feel like, we can make progress in Sahaja Yoga. Many have tried this approach and failed. If we take the wrong turning we will waste many years, damage our chakras and ultimately become unhappy and frustrated. We have listed many books from different prophets and saints of varied cultural backgrounds that have good vibrations, but as Christ has warned, “Beware of false prophets which are like wolves in sheep's clothing.”

Further Reading

For those who want to read more about Sahaja Yoga, and spirituality in general, there are a few excellent books and ancient scriptures that should enable you to see the link between the essences of all religions, and to have some meaningful insights into the nature of the Self and the Divine. Internet users can find some links to historical spiritual

texts (such as the Bhagavad Gita and Guru Granth Sahib) on our website, www.sahajayoga.org

Some of the books below are only available on certain websites, in which case the site address is given.



Books written by HH Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi

- “Meta Modern Era” – available at www.sahajayoga.org

Books written by Sahaja Yogis

- “The Advent” by Gregoire de Kalbermatten
ISBN: 1-932406-00-X – available at www.daisyamerica.com
- “The Third Advent” by Gregoire de Kalbermatten
ISBN: 1-932406-07-7 – available at www.daisyamerica.com
- “The Koran Enlightened” by Flore Descieux
– available at www.sahajayoga.asso.fr
- “A Seeker’s Journey, searching for clues to life’s meaning” by Greg Turek *ISBN: 0646244523 Knowledge of Reality Publishing, available at www.sol.com.au/kor*

A selection of other spiritual books

- “Vivekachudamani” by Shri Adi Shankaracharya –
ISBN: 0902479288
- “The Gospel of the Essenes” – *ISBN: 0852071353*
- “The Bhagavad Gita” of Shri Krishna translated by Juan Mascaro
ISBN: 0140449183
- “The Dhammapada” of Buddha translated by Juan Mascaro
ISBN: 0140442847
- “Guru Granth Sahib” – poems of Guru Nanak, Kabir, Namadeva

Various audio/video tapes are available on our website at:

<http://www.sahajayoga.org/store/audio.asp>

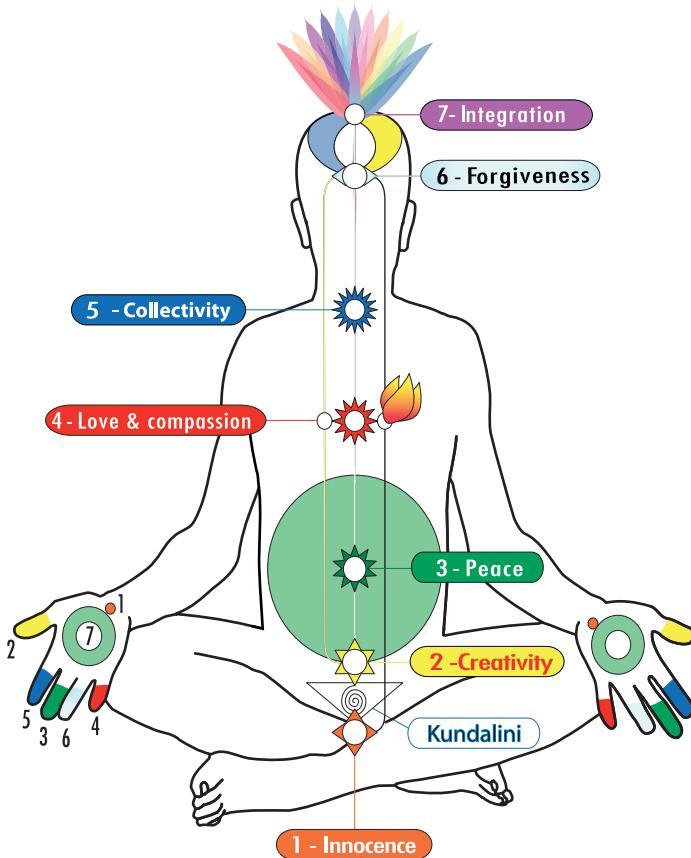
<http://www.sahajayoga.org/store/music.asp>



You can cut out this photograph, or use the cover photograph, to use for meditation.



The Subtle System



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www.sahajayoga.org