



At each other's throats again? Blame your brain.

MOST of us are not very good at handling our emotions. We get into ridiculous arguments with our lovers, handle our children's tantrums in precisely the wrong way, are either too creepy or too aggressive with people at work. We watch, with a mixture of awe and irritation, those charmed few who seem to be able to keep everyone happy and get exactly what they want. It is this widespread flaw that accounts for the remarkable success of Daniel Goleman's book *Emotional Intelligence*: It has spent more than 30 weeks on the best-seller lists.

At school, for instance, enormous emphasis is put on teaching children to think properly and almost none on how to handle relationships. And yet, as Goleman's book shows, children who are good at dealing with difficult emotions not only get on better with their peers, but do better academically as well.

Researchers are beginning to come up with findings that should help all of us to run our lives better. Professor Joseph LeDoux, of New York University, has found a previously unknown pathway in the brain that, at times of stress, sends messages directly to the amygdala (the part that deals with emotions) before they go through the prefrontal lobes, where thinking and judging are done.

When this happens, the amygdala hijacks control of your behaviour so you act fast and furiously. That is fine for escaping from lions, but not so good on the roads or in a domestic row.

But the problem is not just that you lash out - you cannot think straight either. That is because the prefrontal lobes also control our working memory, which is like RAM on a computer - it is where we briefly hold the information we need to do calculations, construct an argument, make comparisons. But when messages are coming thick and fast from the amygdala this is disrupted.

In his book, Goleman calls this process "flooding", and the idea is now being looked at by Professor John Gottman in his laboratory at Washington University, Seattle, to help couples who have got stuck in a vicious cycle of domestic rows.

Men, Gottman has found, are much more affected by arguments than women. Thousands of trials in the laboratory have shown that they are likely to start "flooding" at a much lower level of criticism and they stay in a flooded state, with all the associated negative emotions, for longer.

"During an argument we will often see their heart rate go up by something like seven beats a minute," he says. More than 10 beats and the amygdala is likely to cut in. The most dangerous female emotion turns out to be contempt: "It's a real killer," Gottman says. "There is even a special facial expression for it. The muscles pull the corners of the mouth to the side, usually the left, while the eyes roll upwards."

Couples in the lab are regularly filmed having arguments, while instruments record their physical reactions. "We can now predict with 90 per cent accuracy which couples will be together in three years' time," Gottman says. What counts is not the number or fights, or how in love they say they are, but simply the ratio of praise to blame. "Couples who say five positive things to each other for every one negative should be OK. If the ratio drops to one in two, they're in trouble."

"What's exciting about this work is that it promises to heal a split in our thinking which scientists inherited from Christianity. Just as the Church taught that the job of the mind and the soul was to get control of the sinful body, so psychologists have always behaved as though thought and problem-solving is the pinnacle of human achievement. In fact, we all assume something similar when we talk about 'keeping a cool head'."

But it turns out that hijackings by the amygdala are only half the story. Another researcher, Professor Antonio Damasio, of the University of Iowa college of medicine, has been working with brain-damaged patients who

have lost the links to these emotional parts of their brain.

There is nothing wrong with their intellect: many achieve high scores on IQ tests, but ask them to make a simple decision, such as whether to have their next appointment on Wednesday or Thursday, and they desperately attempt to calculate every possible factor that might be relevant, a process that may take up to half an hour.

IQ tests were originally developed to predict how well people were likely to do at work, but it now seems that a far better predictor, not only of career success but of school performance, is someone's emotional IQ.

JEROME BURN  
Guardian, London

By the time you read this most of you will know that Shri Mataji has decided against coming to Australia for this year's Shiva Puja. On the one hand we are naturally disappointed, particularly that She will now not be able to inaugurate our ownership of the country property at Balmoral Village by Her presence at the Puja which was to have been held there. This is all the more keenly felt considering the energy and enthusiasm that was building towards this auspicious event. On the other hand, we are relieved that She has listened to Her advisers and to our own collective second wish that She not undertake what is always going to be an arduous journey. We shall have to do something about moving Australia a little closer to India.

We believe it is important for the National Collective to gather together each year, it is our intention to proceed with the Shiva Puja and the National Seminar, most probably at Bundilla camp and most probably on the weekend of 1st and 2nd of March. The camp will be available to us after midday on Saturday 1st March. Ample space is available at Burwood and the other Ashrams of Sydney for those arriving early and wishing to stay on afterwards.

We will be holding two major Public programs on March 3rd and 7th while the vibrations are at their strongest. Considering the pattern of Public Programmes that is developing without Shri Mataji's presence in person the future has now arrived where the work of Sahaja Yoga is up to us all. Everyone is invited to help as we begin a new phase in our evolution as Sahaja Yogis.

Yours Sincerely Michael

### The Public Programs

This year we will be mounting two major Public programmes in Sydney, in the week after the National Seminar at Shivartri Puja, while the vibrations are at their strongest. This program will be funded from the requested contributions from the NSW Collective, a letter outlining the scope of this contribution will be included with the letter of Invitation to Shivartri Puja.

These forthcoming Public Programs represent the beginning of a new phase in our evolution as Sahaja Yogis where we will be responsible for spreading the message of Sahaja Yoga. Life for us is Sahaja Yoga, our goal is to ascend and to help the ascent of others. This is the path to which we have committed ourselves and much of the work of Sahaja Yoga is about enlightening ourselves and others.

In the lead up towards the Puja and Public Programs all of us will need to be alert and dynamic and see that it is up to each one of us to get more involved than we have been before, each one of us knows that we can do more.

There is much to do and the promotion of the Public Programs will be achieved by our effort and manifest desire. It should not just be the same set of people who are distributing the posters and handbills, everyone who is able needs to be involved with the upcoming Poster and Handbilling days. Last year many posters and handbills were left in our homes and not distributed, we should all work together to ensure that this is not so this year. We need to be aware of what we are, and what we are doing for Sahaja Yoga. If we fix our desire to spread Sahaja Yoga then this becomes a collective desire, ensuring success.

It cannot work out if we think we are all Sahaja Yogis and want to support the work, then do nothing, we all need to be involved, there is no other way seekers will be attracted. It is at this time that the dynamism of the collective should come to the fore. It will be this dynamism which will fill the venues in the days to come.

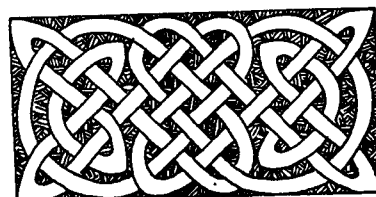
Shri Mataji is our ideal in all things, and we should think of how much She has done to spread Sahaja Yoga. All of us have been selected as Sahaja Yogis with a definite purpose, now it is up to each one of us to take on this great task.

Jai Shri Mataji

Chris and Peter



Mike & Olga Merritt (and 240 Sanja) are moving from Brisbane to Sydney. Any one interested in sharing a big house at Brighton near the sea 'phone 07 386 90505



In Delhi and around Sahaja Yoga is spreading very fast. Delhi being the capital is full of politicians, however people still are seeking the spirit. It is really great. Example of painting - it is a simulation of reality, but not the reality. To experience Reality one needs a feeling for the subtle - it is a miraculous thing. We have not yet reached reality. People run after the gross aspects of religion and feel that their own religion is best. There are two types of people - one is surrendered to false religions and the other is lost in ego. They will do a lot of penances for false religions.

H.H. Shri Mataji told a nice young man that he didn't need to do anything to achieve self-realisation. He asked Her what could he do each morning at 4 o'clock. It is wrong to believe that everyone will achieve self-realisation. Transformation will happen whether we like it or not but if we desire it we will catch the subtle wave.

We need to identify the problems in ourselves, especially after getting realisation. Introspection is very important because as Sahaj spreads it can also break apart - forming groups. This is very dangerous. It starts with a single person talking about others and it spreads. Don't criticize others.

You have come here to make yourselves complete Sahaja Yogis. It is better to see our own faults. Nobody else can correct us. Christ talked about this problem - "Beware of murmuring souls". People were talking to H.H. Shri Mataji, criticizing people in front of Her.

Another play is the leadership. It is just for name's sake. She is very sad that people are wasting their time with such things. She said She can't expect India to be like Russia. People in India are very comfortable and don't have to do much - hence the gossiping.

Jealousy and competition should not be possible in Sahaja Yoga. If we are involved in anything like this we should know that we aren't even on the edge of Sahaja Yoga. It could be the influence of politics in India. With such things you can never feel the joy. Close your ears and say "Stop! I don't want to listen to you." The one who listens is also not a Sahaja Yogi.

If one cleanses oneself you can love many more people and people will recognise the spirit within you and get 'Atma Darshan'. We can stop world problems with the power of the spirit. We don't need to fight to do this. Only thing is we need to be aware and alert about it.

We need to spread our spirituality - not just sit like a sadhu and meditate nicely. If we fight amongst ourselves who will respect you and know you are a Sahaja Yogi? People will be attracted by your personality. We have so much power we don't really need to do anything or even move our hands. We just need to achieve this state. One side is to observe the play around us - the other side is to observe oneself - "Am I getting involved in the murmuring? Are others benefitting from my yoga?"

Now the situation is better than it was. We are not writing to H.H. Shri Mataji with family problems of a personal nature; 'my father, my son etc' however, now the attachment is transferred to the local area. Shri Mataji can't go everywhere and we shouldn't expect Her to. Goat says 'me, me, me - (mine [me] mine, mine)' but when we make strings of the goat and play them it makes the sound 'tu hai swara - You are [tu hai] You are...doing it. The one who has experienced this doesn't need to even say 'Tu hai'.

Many miracles are happening in your life each day. Now what is there to be thought about? There are so many Ganas to do what you desire. You must have the capacity to witness those miracles - what is the point of telling to blind people. The most important thing is to experience Reality. It is very subtle and very vast. You will see that you are not small anymore - you are small but also infinite like the sky. When you dissolve like a drop in the

ocean you become the ocean. Who is there to fight then? Doubts and questions arise because of our attachments. An example of attachment: People in the West didn't want children then after Sahaj they became very attached to their children. You must understand that God and the Adi Shakti are looking after your family.

Attachment drags you down. Breaking this feeling is very important. Don't run after the taste of one type of food. Become the Witness - you don't gain or lose from any situation. You are outside the situation. Then you will be surprised you can forgive anything very quickly. (Cigarette smoking is due to left visshuddhi.)

The whole vision changes and one starts to wonder at how the whole thing is put together. The brain, which is used to pulling things apart [analysis] then integrating things [synthesis] - this power comes from God. To a person who speaks ill of someone just say 'but this person was praising you.' We have to bring people together, not separate them. This is collectivity. It is a living Being; like a body, one finger cannot fight against another.

If one part of the world is affected then the rest of the world gets affected. The Austrians and Germans have gone to Israel out of a sense of responsibility. Twenty Israelis went to Egypt and did a programme. It gave H.H. Shri Mataji immense joy to see the two enemy countries coming together. This type of expression of love can only happen when you detach from your own problems. The Indian yogis need to forgive the Muslims. Shri Mataji cannot remember what colour people are. Mothers don't discriminate between colours. When this love spreads then all the titles which separate people will drop away."

Notes taken by Graham Brown in extreme cold of Delhi camp. Love from Christine.

### SAHAJA YOGA SCHOOL

Dear Parents,

Jai Shri Mataji!

RE: INDIA SCHOOL AND BIRTHDAY POOJA - 97

#### 1. TRAVEL TO INDIA

To be part of the group travel arrangements, you are kindly requested to return the forms posted to you. Travel bookings will only be made upon receipt of this form which should be returned by 18th of February, 97. The \$100 deposit per passenger should accompany the form or be placed into your school a/c.

#### 2. Ticket Payment:

Money should be in your school a/c by 18th February at the latest please. Fares are:

\* \$1450 (+\$32 tax) for all students 12 years or over on 19th March.

\* \$970 for all students under 12 years on 19th March.

\* Adults going to Pooja and accompanying children please forward \$1350 (+\$32 tax)

\*\*\*\*\* Please note these fares are Ex-Sydney only\*\*\*\*\*

\* Passports must be valid to at least 1st February, 98 for students.

\* Visas must be valid to at least 15th January 1998 for students.

Please call anytime for account information.

Kindest Regards,

Robert Richardson.  
25/01/97.