

Anahata

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Introduction

By examining the spiritual heart we can begin to understand the reasons for the limitations the egocentric "I" notion that distorts the pure reflection of pure and infinite consciousness ("Hunab Ku" in Tantra Maya or "Shiva" and "Atman" in Indian tantra) in the human mind. Within the spiritual heart exist the roots of our divided and fragmented modern consciousness but also the qualities of compassion, understanding and unity with the true "I" within. All of the expressions of the so-called "vortexes" are balanced by understanding the spiritual heart, what yogis call the Anahata Chakra. I prefer to use the term "vortex" instead of "chakra." The traditional symbol of the Anahata chakra is a lotus flower with 12 petals. Each "lotus petal" is literally a subtle energetic vortex spiraling out of the greater vortex or "lotus," like many small tornadoes that group together to form one giant vortex. These petals or minor vortexes are known as vrttis- vortexes of mental energy. These vrttis implicitly vibrate the entire mind and body and explicitly qualify them so as to express particular states of thought and emotion through our biological entity. Vrttis are the fundamental intelligence behind our thoughts and feelings, the hidden programming of human cognitive and emotional life that vibrate the entire mind body system. Vrttis are invisible quantum "tornadoes" whose subtle activity cascade down into expressions of the physical world through one's body. The complex biological processes in the brain and endocrine system channel these mental tendencies into physical expression. Grosser mental frequencies correspond to more instinctual tendencies while finer mental frequencies express more refined and humanely conscious tendencies. The Anahata Vortex, in the center of the chest, is subtle like the higher vortexes with their finer, cognitive tendencies, but at the same time has grosser qualities like the lower vortexes (at the navel and below) that express more instinctual and egocentric tendencies.

Up until the Anahata Vortex the human being is but a "raging bundle of desire in a dying animal," to use the words of Yeats. The Manipura Vortex (at the navel) gives one an intimation of the infinite with its infinite desire for expansion, but falls short of the pure conception by projecting infinite desire on finite objects. The Manipura is still governed by ontological hunger with its accompanying

cravings, demands, and impositions on the objective world. It can ask "how?" and then proceed to manipulate and maneuver the external world according to its internal desires, but it lacks the self-reflective conscience to ask "why?" or "what for?" in a deeply moral sense. The Manipura Vortex is balanced only when it is under the guidance of the more conscious and moral Anahata. It should be very clear to the reader that much of the present day ills in our materialistic and capitalistic pseudo-culture are due to the over activation and exploitation of the Manipura Vortex.

"Anahata" means not harming and it is at this layer of mind that truly rational, self-reflective, compassionate, and judicious human qualities begin to emerge. It is the vortex located in the center of the chest and is often referred to as the "heart chakra." It is the fulcrum on which rests the directional flow of the human mind. Below here the mind moves outward, toward matter. Here and above the mind can move inward, toward pure Spirit, toward Hunab Ku.

The Anahata Vortex is associated with the Intuitive Mind (Vijinanamaya Kosa), the layer of mind associated with intuition and the aerial factor. Instead of the Anahata Vortex via the Intuitive Mind being associated with the vibration of form, like the Manipura, it is here associated with the vibration of touch or impression. With the Anahata's functioning on this higher, elemental level it receives the subtle impressions, in the form of abstract ideas and intuitive feelings, which emanate from objects. It has the possibility of perceiving a deeper idea of the essence of the object thought or felt upon, be it an object in nature or another living being. The thought forms or archetypes of the Manipura, creative level are but manifestations of the original, formless ideas as they exist in the Vijinanamaya Kosa. The Intuitive Mind is the realm of pure ideas that Plato, Socrates, and the ancient Greek philosophers inquired about.

Although the Manipura Vortex (3rd Chakra, the "City of Jewels") and the Creative layer of mind associated with it are endowed with intellect and creativity, the mind is still too preoccupied with the fiery, impulsive propensities that keep the mind moving outward, into the senses, which thereby prevent a deep, rational, and intuitive understanding of self and world. The Manipura is about self acquisition while the Anahata is about self-actualization. Due to the relative lightness of the aerial factor and the self-reflective propensities associated with the Anahata, the mind is here able to reflect and gaze upon form from a more enlightened vantage point. If the Manipura level of mind is likened to a fire that not only enlightens but also consumes the realm of form, the Anahata is like the lightness of a supine cloud that drifts languidly above the multitudinous forms in nature.

The Anahata is only the beginning of a non-attachment that leads to a transcendence of the separate, phenomenal self. The individual ego and will are

still present but much more self-reflective and non impulsive than the Manipura. Here the ego and the will become an object for the understanding or discriminative mind to reflect upon. And it is because there is now an abstract self concept that is rooted deeply in the Intuitive Mind , the personality (Aham) can not just be conscious of the desires and propulsions in the sub-conscious mind, but also redirect those very same tendencies to more conscious and intelligent outlets. With this capacity to consciously redirect the propensities that fetter the mind into crude mental limitations, the Aham personality is then able to reflect more upon the nature of itself. There is therefore a much greater manifestation of the pure and limpid I-feeling at the Anahata. Instead of the self being bound up and defined by the restless, incessant activity of the ego or doer-I, the sense of self is now more of a witness of the ego's activity. The "I" is still bound to the ego to a degree but it is lucid enough to know that it is independent. This deep sense of "I exist" or knowledge of self existence can question what tendencies lead toward an inner state of harmony and self understanding and which ones lead one further into spiritual and psychic bondage. In short, a deep sense of morality and conscience is born here; one much deeper than a mere superego that was imposed from without at the Manipura level.

It is at the Anahata that we see the first manifestations of dharma or psycho-spiritual movement, the movement of the mind toward the spirit. The sense of self abstracted from the senses and extroverted will can more freely pursue the inner life and seek higher meaning. It can understand the way the Tao or the moral order of the universe functions so as to conform the individual will with that cosmic will. The mind begins to understand that it is only through becoming a responsible, conscious, and whole person that there can be any real meaning in life. The life lived only through the senses and passions and superficial form is now seen as a great bondage that can never bring any deep fulfillment.

As mentioned above, the Anahata is only the beginning of self-transcendence. There is the abstracted feeling of the "I" that is ultimately independent of all objective qualities but the identity is still bound and mediated by subtle mental concepts defining the nature of self. There is not yet the undifferentiated and pure expression of the eternal I- feeling unmediated by the self-referential concepts of the Aham. Although there is a great degree of the pure I-feeling present the mind still uses concepts to refer itself to the objective experiences that it is attached to (the memories, personal history or self-narrative, self defining characteristics, intellectual and emotional qualities, etc).

It can be said that the Anahata Vortex is the occupation of the mind with the "I." The ego or Aham is not necessarily seeking to indulge in its limited self, but seek its origin in the I-feeling. The problem comes about when this fascination with the nature of ones consciousness is projected into one's finite self-concept. All of the growth energy of self discovery instead goes into some form of egotism. Vanity, narcissism, selfishness, and hypocrisy are the results.

Half the 12 vrttis of the Anahata are "positive," growth promoting vrttis and the other half are "negative" or at most neutral, self-justifying defense tendencies that perpetuate the ego's limited boundaries instead of expanding and refining them. There is still a limited and bounded sense of self, but with the potential to discriminate between vice and virtue. There is also still the boundary of self and not self to be overcome, although not as marked as in the Manipura and Svadhistana. Harmony, balance, and proportion are key elements in this fulcrum that is the Anahata to help determine what is growth-promoting and virtuous (self, or good for the self) and what is vice, or inappropriate for spiritual self-growth (not self).

In the Anahata there appear to be two hexagons. Really, there is one. They seem different because one moves clockwise or centrifugally, and the other moves counter-clockwise or centripetally. Here we can see the fundamental yin-yang or centrifugal-centripetal interplay of the universe at work within the human mind. Together these forces combine to make the Anahata Vortex. These are 12 points at which the balance and imbalances of the human consciousness may express themselves in a refined way. When there is perfect balance and there is no escape through any vortex or vrtti in the 12 vertices, Shiva (Hunab Ku) always enters the human mind through the spiritual heart with its neutral force of consciousness or citishakti. Citishakti is the Consciousness that controls Shakti, creative energy because this divine creative energy has its essence in Shiva, or Consciousness. Shiva and Shakti are like fire and its capacity to burn; they are completely and eternally inseparable. All creation in this universe is due to the activity of Shakti and the conscious base of Shiva that silently witnesses the play of creation while at the same time offering its being as the essence on which Shakti may create. The right side of the Anahata is dominated by the solar or centrifugal energy of Shakti. The left side of the Anahata is lunar or centripetal Shakti. The centrifugal force under the control of the witnessing entity of Shiva becomes the Son, the primordial creative expression of the Supreme Consciousness within the human and personal medium. It is for this reason that the Vedantic sages meditated on the right side of the spiritual heart, the nexus of where the super-personal Atman "touches" the personal and human.

The left side of the Anahata is the "Mother of God", the centripetal energy of Shakti that always brings the expressions of the Son (the centrifugal movement of creation) back to the neutral force of Shiva Consciousness. The centripetal force never lets the centrifugal force become entirely lost into manifold expression and always brings it back to center. Together, in balance, these binary forces of creation manifest in the human being to the grade that there is a balance in the 12 vortices or vrttis at the 12 vertices of the 2 hexagons. When there is less duplicity, arrogance, vanity, and selfishness (negative vrttis), and more love, discernment and faith (positive vrttis), then the process of the unification of the

microcosmic consciousness into the Macrocosmic Consciousness of Shiva is well under way. It is here in the spiritual heart of Anahata that the nameless, transcendental godhead may evolve a name for itself, for us, within each of us.

The Dynamics of "Ka" and "Kha" through Hope and Worry

The vrttis or vortexes of the microcosmic mind are subtle sounds that result from the tension of internal and external mental movements. They are evolutionary efforts to guide and direct the microcosm in its march towards union with the macrocosm through yoga. These sounds are subtle in that they are vibrations created from tensions in the psychic, non-material realm. They are heard through deep concentration. According to tantra, are the 50 fundamental mental vibrations of the human mind that when spoken audibly form the Sanskrit alphabet. Vowel sounds are causal and unmanifested ideas in the Macrocosmic Mind. They are beyond time and space. Consonant sounds are effects of the causal mind that control the manifestation of more tangible tendencies of the microcosmic mind. This is the reason that in tantric meditation much importance is given to the use of mantras which are intelligently organized from these fundamental sounds.

The sound "ka" is the first sound at the 12 petaled lotus of Anahata Vortex. "Ka" is the first consonant to break out of the causal sound matrix, or logos, of Shiva. With this sound vibrates the great idea of hope, that everything created comes from bliss. At the anahata level of consciousness we are so aware of ourselves and our world. It is important that our lives be meaningful and useful and move in a spiritual direction. True hope is the practical knowledge of "I am That". The eternal I-Witness, the Atman, sustains and guides my every movement. It is knowledge that everything that comes my way, comes from Shiva. Eventually this pure movement of "ka" weakens and is distorted, then we put our hope in relative issues, in our petty ego, in religion, politics, or the like. Hope is divided by worry, doubt, and fear that our meaningful reality structure will not endure. Worry is the second vrtti of the Anahata Vortex and will always counterbalance hope until hope is honed into a pure and unwavering Self-confidence. Together, these two vrttis represent the fundamental duality of modern human consciousness. Hope is "ka", and worry is "kha".

The fundamental lunar, centripetal, and introverted sound of "ha" descends to ka, thus making "kha". The lost mental movement that has dissipated into false hopes is brought back to center with the addition of "ha" to "ka". "Ha" has the capacity in and of itself to bring any errant microcosmic movement back into balance. "Ha" controls the internal, centripetal movement of the mind. It is an aspirant, exactly between the end of the vowels and the beginning of the consonants and thus functions as a mediator between the visible and invisible, the causal and the manifested effect. The following vrttis that continue to unfold

reflect this dual movement of an externally-moving consonant paired with the internally-moving "ha" to balance that consonant's movement when it weakens.

Hope

The function of the microcosmic mind is always the medium between the inner identity and its outer world, be it a physical, mental, or spiritual worlds. The Manipura (3rd vortex at the navel), with its craving and blind attachment, attempts to will desired things into being. With the qualities of the Anahata previously described one would expect to find a vritti that helps bring an inner desire into being in a more discerning and less impulsive manner. Hope is the inner belief that what one truly and deeply needs will manifest itself into being. With the purest hope there is no manipulation by the will to bring the event about, but the self rather relies on the power of belief and faith to bring wish into reality. So the medium of the activity of this vritti (as well as others in the Anahata) is neither through the sensory and motor organs nor the imposition of will, but through the eminence of intuitive thought. Of course people often hope for selfish and trivial things due to the pull of the Manipura vrittis on the Anahata, but the propensity of hope potentially has the sublime function of giving one an inner sense of knowing, despite any lack of empirical, sensory experience. When the Anahata is purified it has the capacity to understand the meaning and ideal of form in the deepest sense. When the heart is pure one can intuit the underlying meaning of a given situation. Here one's own elevated thinking can apprehend the subtle, cosmic intentions that are being thought into being by the Cosmic Mind. An inner sense of certainty ensues from this along with the belief that goodness will somehow come to fruition, despite the limitations of the personal will to force it into being.

The power of faith or hope is one of the most profound capacities of the human mind. The reason that faith has been so highly regarded as a great virtue by all of the so-called higher religions is that it places the power of will into a force higher than the individual will and egocentric authorship. It thereby helps to bring about the realization that the cosmic will is supreme and gives one even greater faith in the benevolence of the cosmic moral order. This inner, intuitive certainty further inspires one to transcend the turmoil and incessant anxiety of a self separated from Shiva, the Supreme Self.

Worry

While hope gives one the secure conviction that their own welfare is dear to Shiva and thereby relieves the perpetual burden of a fearful, limited self having to pine and struggle to assert its identity by coercing and shaping the objective world to its will, worry is exactly the opposite. When one is worried or excessively concerned over an event or an inner ability there is a lack of faith or hope that things will turn out for the good. The outside pressures or the internal

inadequacies seem to be the causal factors regulating life instead of a hidden, intelligent order. And because of this concern over the preponderance of outside circumstances and a lack of inner strength and confidence, the fretful ego may resort to its habitual methods of asserting itself. Instead of a reliance on dharma or Tao to bring things into fruition the worried and separated ego reverts to using its own isolated will, mundane intellect and Sensory Mind. Instead of the ego relying on the guidance of the quiescent eternal "I" or conscience, it uses its own mental projections of the objective mind to fulfill its own end. Here the fulcrum has shifted toward the negative pole. The pressures and strains of a more complex consciousness aren't directed to one's own higher intelligence and therefore the higher mechanisms (hope, discrimination or rational judgment) aren't used to cope with the contradictions and limitations of the separate self. Instead the ego may lean on its old habitual behavior patterns to deal with the more complex struggles that a higher consciousness must bear. Here we have the misplaced situation of a mind capable of deep and abstract thought but only using those deep and idealistic thought processes to think about the difficulties of a situation while the activity used to solve the issue come from a lower, previous levels of awareness.

This paradigm is exactly the issue plaguing the present level of human evolution. The upper end of the bell-curve of human consciousness is in-between the stages of the Manipura and the Anahata levels of development. Although there is a great degree of this new-found self-awareness and rational intelligence, it doesn't yet understand its own true significance (as well as that of others) and how to apply this knowledge to the world at large. How else can one explain how intelligent and relatively civilized people use their shrewdness and technological understanding to ruthlessly exploit nature, manipulate economic forces at home and abroad, and wage war over oil? This leap in awareness at the Anahata is certainly the saving grace of humanity but if that awareness doesn't incorporate and integrate the previous mental structures (the Manipura and Svadhistana), then all sorts of complex mental issues arise, such as duplicity, selfishness and repression. This will be a common theme throughout the Anahata Vortex: whether one uses one's higher intelligence to continue developing psychologically and spiritually or whether this greater development of consciousness and intelligence simply becomes a tool to exacerbate, exploit and perpetuate the impulsive vrttis (craving, blind attachment, sadism, etc.) of the Manipura.

The Dynamics of "Ga" and "Gha" through Expansion and Love

The spiritual heart is the Anahata Vortex. Anahata means "not holding." It is the intuitive level of mind that begins to understand that there is an infinite vastness and dignity inside itself and can begin to let go of blind attachments caused by an underlying sense of fear and insecurity. The intuitive mind of Anahata vibrates in tune with the Aerial Factor, a very fine form of matter or prana that manifests its intentions toward form, yet being beyond form itself. When completely purified

this prana no longer needs to vibrate with the vrttis or vortexes of the mind. The breath stops completely. One is empty of form, but full of bliss. One hears the inner logos of Shiva, all the sounds that make up Om, and sees how fine vibrations of prana manifest the entire material universe. These rhythmic vibrations or "strings" or pulses of prana stem from the "root" sounds of the Causal Mind, the logos of Shiva. One day the human genius will be able to map and even quantify these fine vibrations that make up the so called "quantum void." Then, human beings will begin to understand the secrets of the dimensions between mind and matter.

Until this placation of the spiritual heart, the vrttis of the Anahata will continue to guide and develop our awareness toward this understanding. These fine sounds of the vrttis will vibrate the mind and attempt to regulate the endocrine and nervous systems so that they can develop higher functions. The 3rd and 4th vortexes of the Anahata Vortex are controlled by the sounds "ga" and "gha." "Ga" manifests a tendency towards self-expansion and development of latent qualities, and "gha" manifests a tendency toward deep, human affection, or love. Before the manifestation of the vrtti of expansion, the mind's "endeavor" is really expansion of the ego based on conquests of physical space and material or acquisitions psychic meaning for the separate, fearful, ego-dominated personality. This is the world of action and reaction. The separate ego is always trying to find meaning and security to compensate for its isolation and fear. One tries to fit into the social and economic systems with ready-made patterns. These patterns most often do not harmonize with the cosmological order and we suffer reactions accordingly.

With the vrtti of endeavor at the Anahata the latent qualities of the Macrocosmic Mind, the repository of infinite, omniscient knowledge, can begin to manifest themselves. New qualities, interests and subtle desires begin to manifest in the personality. It is a psychic instinct that directs us toward greater meaning at the intuitive level of mind. Where did your spiritual and creative desires come from and when exactly did they start? What hidden force directed you toward certain people, certain places, books, or practices that opened up your inner spiritual life? At the intuitive level of mind we begin to realize that there is an inner vastness that is really living our lives and really knows how to do it. One only has to convince the separate ego to go along with this flow.

"Gha", the vibration that regulates affection, is the counter-balance of endeavor, or "ga." Knowledge via expansion of the mind is useful to solve existential problems and it is imperative that this knowledge be developed in all spheres of existence- physical, social, psychological and spiritual. However, no form of knowledge is complete without love, without a greater human purpose for this knowledge. At the anahata level, reason and affection aren't yet separated. Head and heart are one. And it is possible that all of the finer human qualities and

intelligence may serve us not in an accelerated collective destruction, but toward universal love and justice. It is only when the warmth of deep human love is missing that the mind becomes a rogue mind that constantly devours itself and others and keeps itself forever separate from the intuitive order of existence. Spiritual knowledge without the development of the finer, loving qualities of the personality is an impossibility. This level of love is not yet universal compassion because there are still finer needs of personal significance. However, the development of these higher emotive functions eventually lead one toward universal love or compassion, a quality of the Vishuddha (5th) vortex, an even higher level of human consciousness. Here, one is so close to the Atman that there remain few, if any, personal needs and one only loves without any expectation or desire of reciprocation. When Anahata is purified it becomes a direct conduit for the Causal Mind of Vishuddha.

Endeavor

Endeavor is the effort to unfold enfolded or dormant qualities of the personality. We see that with the Anahata that there is the ability to think in a very deep and meaningful way. With this sublime ability the mind can probe into the deepest grounds of thought potential to discover and create new modes of being for itself that further the expansion of human potential and knowledge of existence. At the Manipura (3rd vortex) there was still the impulsive hunger for expanding the mind in relation to its external conceptual world. With the vritti of endeavor the mind can expand itself not merely by assimilating more of its outer environment, but by finding inner, intuitive qualities that broaden and enlighten the concept of self. Endeavor is the effort to discover who we really are on the inside. Now that there is a greater degree of Mahat (self-reflecting awareness, "I exist") and therefore intuition, with a corresponding decrease in the externalized intellect, the mind begins to question what the "I" truly is. At this stage the personality is very well aware of the limited ego-driven tendencies and seeks to know the reality and identity behind these limitations. And it is only when the limited ego is frustrated with its external expansion and clearly sees its own bondages that the desire to realize its inner and fuller potential is aroused. Here one truly sees the life of incessant self-concern, ambition, and attachment as the illusion of Self. With the manifestation of Mahat or "I- feeling" and intuition one can look down upon the fray and ask "who is it that sees all of this?" There is a calm, quiescent eye in the storm of the self and one begins to desire what it is and how to attain it. Endeavor is quite simply the desire for the understanding of Tao, of dharma.

However, this movement is endeavor to realize and not realization itself. The ego here assumes the qualities and identity necessary to live in accordance with a deeper understanding and experience of existence. It is not ensconement and establishment in the intuitive life but the movement toward that. Instead of the ego having an image of itself in accordance with its external desires, it now manifests the qualities that help in its psycho-spiritual orientation. Such qualities

are necessarily ones that help to understand, accept, and integrate the lower propensities into a more refined self-concept. Such qualities are an acute awareness, non-judgment of self and others, acceptance, compassion, moral conscience and an adamant resolve to bring these qualities into expression. While discussing this growth of self it is necessary to mention the 3 laws that regulate the unfolding of higher propensities to incorporate and compensate for the lower. These laws are recapitulation, transmutation, and integration. It is clearly seen now how successive levels of development grow through previous levels and that the vrttis at higher vortexes are a similar though more refined expression of the lower vrttis. The vrttis recapitulate themselves in successively higher modus operandi. The mind isn't entering entirely new form as it evolves to higher levels; things are just restated in a more subtle way. For example, endeavor isn't impulsive like its predecessor, craving (at the Manipura), but both have to do with mental expansion. Due to the fact that there are higher, more conscious tendencies that correspond to more subtle levels of existence, there is by necessity a transmutation of the energy used in the expression of the lower as it moves toward the higher. Endeavor requires patience and deep awareness, not forced and willful activity as in craving. Vrttis are ingrained tendencies, mental instincts, that have evolved to serve an evolutionary purpose and so there isn't a rapid, immediate transition from the old to the new. The new has to be born into being and the old will continue to assert itself. This evolutionary shift in mental expression therefore requires tremendous energy conversion. This process happens unconsciously through an innate and expansive guiding faculty as well as through the will and choice. One can decide to move along and follow one's inner voice that is leading the transmutation. If not, then there is always trouble. A factor necessary for the successful transmutation of the higher frequency of mental energy is integration. The old must be incorporated into the new. That old expression of energy must be entirely directed into the new faculty; otherwise the mind will be split in that there are now opposing expressions of mind. This split may either be to duplicity, a regression to previous modes of behavior or a repression of the lower by the higher. To use our previous example, the spiritually oriented personality propelled by the endeavor vrtti may repress his ambitious tendencies from his conscious awareness, but these old ambitious and willful tendencies still have an energetic momentum to assert themselves unconsciously. He may therefore express duplicity or hypocrisy by saying one thing and unconsciously doing another. A similar psychological dissociation of the lower from the higher was mentioned while discussing worry and will be dealt with more when discussing the vrttis of vanity, selfishness, duplicity, and argumentativeness as these tendencies reveal an incomplete integration of lower vrttis into the self-reflective, intuitive, and magnanimous potentialities of the Anahata.

This dissociation of the newly emerging tendencies from the old, ingrained behavior patterns produces what classical psychology has termed the shadow.

The shadow doesn't reside in one particular kosa, in other words it is not a layer of mind. It is a defaulted mechanism of integration from one mental emotive level to the next. Whatever is not accepted and integrated and therefore either repressed or suppressed is relegated into the shadowy category of the "not me." For example, if the mind doesn't have the vigor to make the jump from the Svadhistana (2nd vortex) to the Manipura (3rd vortex), then the entropic vrttis of the Svadhistana become the shadow for the vigorous and ambitious mind that is trying to function at the Manipura level. The entropy of the Svadhistana vrttis will complicate and confound the autocratic Manipura vrttis. The externally driven personality may suppress his/her tendencies that are associated with insecurity and lack of confidence. In a similar manner, if the jump to the Anahata from Manipura is not complete, as in our previous example, then the vrttis or cluster of vrttis that constituted the former personality at the Manipura become the shadow.

Affection

The affection of one sentient being for another as expressed through this tendency at the Anahata is not one of an intense desire to consume and possess another solely to gratify one's own appetites. The quality of interpersonal dialogue at the Anahata is a mutual, inter-subjective regard. There is a love based on the deeply human qualities of another. It is not completely selfless, however. Here there is still a desire to hold onto the qualities of another because of the deep meaning (artha) that is given. This form of attachment isn't to satiate one's hunger for external expansion but is a fondness for the other based on the way that others affect them in a deep and soulful way. With affection one's heart is touched by another. The inner qualities of another are loved by means of the deeper qualities of the one who loves. In this dialogue the one who is loved is regarded for who they really are on the inside and the lover exercises and discovers more of his/her deeply human affective capacities.

Human love, whether intimate and romantic, familial, or brotherly has such a tremendous hold over us that it both liberates our hearts from self-enclosure while at the same time holds us only to those that we personally love. Affection must be perfectly balanced in order to bring happiness, otherwise it breeds suffering. It brings happiness when the regard we have for others supersedes our own selfish wants and demands and thereby propels us beyond self-interest. Affection always leads to obstacles when it is exploited. This is done by placing the importance of the personal meaning that it gives us and the demand to keep receiving it over the true needs of others. In the words of William Blake, "Love seeketh not itself to please, nor for itself hath any care. It gladly gives itself with ease and creates a heaven in hell's despair."

Many love only to receive love and recognition from others without giving much themselves. Only when affection reaches a functional synergy or symbiosis where

both the lover and the loved interchange roles freely, both harmoniously giving and receiving, that a person can truly begin to realize the higher function of love. Human love in all of its forms is an intimation, an emerging expression of divine love. Love is the only seed of spirituality. One who is loved feels worthy and whole, regarded and respected. The one who loves sees the power of transformation upon another by and from their own emotive forces within. Once the person feels love-worthy by others a noble confidence and self-respect, or respectful Self awareness is gained that permits one to love freely, without fear, selfish demands and an imposing personal need. And are not fear, selfishness, and our personal demands and insistence the tendencies that reflect a lack of true confidence, Self awareness and self-respect, and therefore, a lack of love? Only a strong and integrated mind can truly love. At this level of personal integration one understands how love is the essential element, the magic elixir for the growth of soul that cures all of the fear, selfishness, and suffering in life. One sees how oneself has been transformed by it and can't help but want to share it with others. This is the culmination of personal love: to love without strings attached and not to expect anything in return. Love ceases to be a mere feeling or personal need but rather a spiritual principle with the deepest meaning and power. When this stage is reached an even deeper and universal spiritual love can begin to emerge. This more exalted tendency is at the Vishuddha (5th vortex). Love and affection begins at the Anahata but reaches its fullest expression at the Vishuddha.

Here affection as artha (personal meaning) is fully transformed into dharma (universal and essential meaning). In the end there is but one Friend, in many colors and in many places, who moves through infinite love behind all our faces.

Vanity and "na"

The order of the vortexes or vrttis of the microcosmic mind moves from the subtle to the gross, or internal toward the external. The order of the Sanskrit alphabet moves from the deeper vowels in the throat toward sounds gradually made more forward in the mouth; from the guttural toward the labial sounds. The alphabet, like the order of vrttis, starts with the vowel sounds that are eternal and beyond time, and continuing with the succession of consonants that move within time. "A" for example, can sound constantly, without pulsation or pauses by the tongue. Vowels are eternal. Consonants like "ga" or "ca" requires pauses and repetitions of the tongue. Pulsation is the mark of time, the "mental measurement of the motivity of action." This is a very interesting example of how the internal, intuitive macrocosmic order is mimicked and repeated in the physical body of the microcosm.

These sound vortexes or matrices or "strings" are adaptations for the mind to act according to various layers of density. They vibrate on certain elemental planes

whose end expression is always the manipulation of matter via the physical body. These vortexes break through from these higher energetic planes, explode in the microcosmic mind, and cause a corresponding explosion in the body by moving the brain to fire off hormones and neurotransmitters. Each sound vortex has its unique purpose and function. From a spiritual perspective, we can categorize them as pro-matter or pro-spirit. A vortex that is pro-matter will lock the mind into the physical body with cruder thoughts and lower passions. Mental energy is transmuted into physical expression. A pro-spirit vortex balances the body chemistry in such a way that the mind and body are placid and calm and capable of conceiving and feeling the workings of heaven, the subtle planes of existence. This allows that the mind metamorphoses itself finally into the original substance of Consciousness.

The Anahata Vortex is a balance of these inner and outer tendencies. Half are "positive" and half are "negative", or pro-spiritual and pro-material. The negative tendencies lock the mind and body into egocentric patterns of thinking and feeling. The lower nature is still not convinced of its truer purpose in existence and still maintains and defends its separation, its vanity. The positive tendencies take the sincere aspiring personality into deeper levels of humanistic and eventually spiritual thinking and feeling. The fifth vritti of the Anahata Vortex vibrates with the sound "na", the guttural "na." The various "n" sounds, the guttural, the palatal, the cerebral, and the dental "na" sounds are not paired with a "ha" sound, like the consonants. They don't go out, so to speak, and don't need the centripetal "ha" to bring it back. Instead, all of the "na" sounds refer to certain generalized egocentric states of mind that generate from the nucleus of the ego that is determined by and constituted of the rest of the dual natured vortexes. To understand this point, the fifth vritti of anahata, the guttural "na", controls the expression of self-regard, which is always to varying degree an expression of self-love. When the expression is refined and confident, it is a form of self-respect. When the person lacks confidence, then it always tends toward vanity. Instead of being expressions with a counter-balance like the other consonants, the "na" sounds are more like generalized states or attitudes of the ego. The other "na" sounds are also purely egocentric states of being like hypocrisy, jealousy, and ambition, which correspond to the palatal, cerebral and dental "na" sounds. The repetitions of 4 consonants followed by "na" continue throughout the Anahata Vortex and down into the manipura (3rd vortex). This creates a pattern of 1-2-3-4-"n"utral-1234-"n"utral and so on. The rhythm merges back into the "n"ucleus, and from the nucleus receives a new impulse. This can also be described as a rhythm of centripetal centrifugal, centripetal, centrifugal, neutral and so on. The ideas of the sounds of the vrittis vibrating at certain tones with certain rhythmic patterns give scope for deep speculation and investigation into the fundamental "music" of the universe and how perhaps our human aesthetics may mirror this fundamental, harmonious order.

It is now clear that the mind and personality affected by the propensities of the Anahata Vortex are deeply self-conscious, ideational tendencies that lead the person to a more abstract but congruent self concept. The self- concept at the anahata level isn't so much defined by the physical body, its urges, and the grosser elements of its environment. The mind and personality is abstracted from these levels and its focus is more mental and ideational. The personality is informed by the deep and abstracted thoughts of "who am I essentially, unconditioned by my environment?", or "what do I truly feel." Vanity represents the self-centered triumph of the individual over the outward pull of the social environment. The social environment demands conformity and a submission of the self to the collective. The process of individuation, contrarily, is the discovery of the true identity of the person. This represents the endeavor of the individual to overcome the fear of its own social alienation as well as the social censorship for moving away from the dominant social paradigms that have conditioned the emerging, evolving self into limited self-concepts and narrow social boundaries. This process is natural and healthy in the evolution of mind back toward Spirit; it seeks the unbounded knowledge, being and bliss of its essential, unconditioned, and uncreated essence. Vanity, however, represents the incomplete and partial process of individuation. Vanity looks back on its growth and achievements out the entropic pull of conformity, insecurity, shame and weakness with a sense of self-satisfaction and proud accomplishment.

Instead of finding its grounding in pure Spirit or in its dynamic relationship to Spirit, the ego secures a niche for itself in its own qualities, abilities, achievements, and self-referential words and symbols. In other words, the ego proudly identifies only with the objective, relative, and ever- changing qualities that color and qualify the pure feeling of I instead of the "pure and eternal I" itself. However, vanity does not imply the bounded identity of the ego with its own qualities. Qualification and bondage of the I doesn't necessarily mean pride and vanity. Instead, vanity is the aggrandizement and exclusive identification of the ego with its own qualities. The process of the whole evolving through the part, or the Macrocosm becoming through the microcosm, is ignored. The ego sees its objective qualities and proud accomplishments as its subjectivity, as its fundamental identity. It is more than the confusion of the subject with the object however, as the sense of doership (ego or Aham) is alienated and encapsulated from the rest of the mental being.

Here the ego doesn't recognize its full mental, psychological makeup and gives no regard to the subtle evolutionary forces trying to express and manifest themselves through the individual. The individual instead sees its own ego as the origin and be all and end all of existence, "I am the center of the universe". The true self is pure, unconditioned, and free. Shakti's gunas generate all of the qualities for that Subject. With vanity there is the confusion of the subject with objective qualities. The I qualified and intermingling by objective qualities is

mistaken as the hub of the identity. There is no wonder that vanity and pride are universally considered the greatest error and flaw possible for humans. The Macrocosmic process of evolution and becoming through the microcosm is usurped by the limited ego with its claim to the authorship of this process. A fact that many people don't realize is that vanity is a weakness. It's easy for one to mistakenly see how accomplished people with vanity are actually strong and fearless people. However, if one looks deeper into the dynamics and origins of vanity one will clearly understand that vanity is a compensation for uncertainty and fear and a home for ambition and compulsion. In other words vanity represents the qualification of a more intelligent and conscious mind by the unresolved complexes associated with the vrittis of the svadhistana (2nd vortex) and manipura (3rd vortex) propensities. The conflict of the doubt, shame, and fear with the ambition, blind attachment, and lust for achievement on the battleground of the manipura seeks a shelter in a higher and intelligent form of awareness at the anahata. Vanity aids in the compensation and assuagement of this conflict by putting one's psychic energy into higher qualities and components of the self. A more abstract notion of self-recognition emerges as the glory of the internal ego with its self-reflective ideas of itself are embellished. Here the identification with one's own psyche becomes the channel for the psychic energy or the momentum and inspiration of the mind. The ego may still qualify itself with its external achievements, but it is the internalization of these achievements by an abstracted identity separated from its environment that gets the focus of awareness. The liberation of the identity from the body and environment is the summum bonum of human life if the process is carried through to completion without creating separation. Most of us are somewhere in-between; realizing that we have a transcendent identity separated from world and body but are still contradictorily associating this abstract notion of "I" with the objective qualities of world and body, and are therefore bound to the imaginary notions of "me and mine."

The Dynamic of "Ca" and "Cha" in Discernment and Depression

In the phase of involution, Shiva, the infinite consciousness, has been transformed by his immortal consort Shakti, the divine creative energy, into all that is in this universe. Shiva is the material cause of the universe, Shakti is the efficient cause. Shiva is pure light. Shakti is gravity that apparently bends trajectories and attempts to mold this pure light into her created forms and molds. It is Shiva itself that has willingly become "star stuff," the Thing from which all finite things are made of. Shiva and Shakti as the Supreme Consciousness have projected this universe from their essential purity. Life is a creation made on the return journey, where star-light and matter are yearning to evolve beyond physicality, into pure energy, into mind, and finally back again into Consciousness. Therefore, the soul trapped within life and evolution, or "microcosm," is fundamentally dominated by

the centripetal, return, or evolutionary force. "Ha" is the sound of this primordial centripetal energy of mind. It is the first vritti, or vortex of the mind, which is pure subjective awareness. "Ha" pertains to the Ajina Vortex, the essential and purest level of mind. Here the mind mysteriously fathoms the unfathomable Atman who is entirely beyond the mind itself. The mind "conceives" this inconceivable truth in understanding that "I am That"; "I am Consciousness itself, and not this mind." It is an entity subtler than mind who sees the mind. "Ha," the center-seeking, centripetal force of the mind is the only mental vritti that goes entirely into transcendence, into the pure subjectivity of Shiva. Even the noble Vishuddha tendencies relate to the external world in a spirit of service and chivalry, but "Ha" is a force of mind, of Shakti, that surrenders itself only to Shiva. Its comforting to know that it is the only force that can entirely dominate the mind and unify it in the infinite abode of Shiva. The universe conspires against our external desires. It is only here that all desires find their fulfillment. All of the other 49 major vrittis go outward. "Ha" is the only tendency that delusion can't touch. The very existence of the parasite who feeds on unconsciousness depends on your not going back to the One, of your inability to transmute your little "I", the ego, into the great "I-Witness." Therefore, only surrendering to the infinite Atman will bring an end to ignorance's dominion. Only the entity who stands beyond good and evil can liberate one from good and evil.

While incarnated in human form and passing through the soul-building experiences of this world we must know and cultivate the positive propensities of mind that help us to expand and adapt to this relative world while never forgetting that our true home is in the spirit. We must discern between the relative and the absolute, between finite and infinite. The world isn't inherently corrupt, we just haven't properly learned how to handle ourselves. We haven't learned to economize the infinite nature of desire.

Discernment is the sixth propensity of the Anahata Vortex. It is administered by the sound "ca." Discernment is conscience, the force of Consciousness over the mind. Mind harmonizes with the sublime, transcendental consciousness and lives and acts according to its inner way. The inner path can only become pure when we really know the difference between what liberates us and what does not that which causes suffering and delusion. Desire is tamed only through the realization that it always brings some form of suffering in the end. The only desire that truly liberates is the desire to become one with the Infinite. It is only when a soul has struggled and wrestled and developed its discernment that the instinctual nature of external desires begin to lose their grip on the mind. The finite can never satiate the infinite. External desires can never bring nirvana. Striving after this liberation doesn't mean giving up the world entirely, but a seeker must have the eyes open so as to properly navigate through maya. With the development of discernment, temptations may come more to test you, but finally help to establish one in a deeper understanding in which renunciation truly becomes

sweet and not something forced and manipulated.

Not understanding this essential truth of existence always brings emptiness, existential ennui. This is the 7th vritti of the Anahata Vortex, psychic depression, controlled by the sound "cha." "Ha" must descend to "ca" to return the undiscerning mind back into equilibrium. Hopefully, a little "dark night of the soul" will do the trick, but many fall so deep into emptiness and accept all that psorax is offering.

Psorax loves an empty, bored ego and will always find ways to fill you. "An idle mind is the devil's workshop." The greater the image that one invests in the separate ego the greater the shadow cast upon the mind by the infinite radiance of consciousness. We don't understand that it is our own shadow cast by an inflated vain image that traps us in this maya. If there is a place for an image in this eternal mind storm of vrittis, then I imagine that it should be as light, honest and transparent as possible. The dark schemes of the unconscious ego can't hide too well in this discerning light.

Discernment

As previously mentioned the Anahata level of mind is the fulcrum on which rests the directional flow of mind. If the Svadhistana and Manipura propensities qualify the Anahata propensities one may get an intellectually developed mind with a definite and abstract sense of separateness lacking warmth and moral conscience. This aloof coolness is due to the fact that the intellect and abstract, self-concept is still preoccupied with the self-establishing propensities of the Svadhistana Vortex and/or the self-acquisitional propensities of the Manipura. The ability of a heightened consciousness and personality with a potentially deep, inner life and capacity to think and feel deeply is in this state unable to use this consciousness to relate with others in correspondingly deeper ways. The drives of the lower vrittis usurp the intelligence of the higher. The propensity of conscience or discernment informs the mind with the ability to use its reason to determine what choices and modes of being lead toward the growth and expansion of the inner life in relation to Spirit as well as world. It can also discern what actions lead toward the confinement of self-centeredness and psychological stagnancy. With conscience the mind can understand its potential for self-centeredness while at the same time be in touch with the intuitive ideas that guide the mind out of its limitations and towards spiritual realization.

Discernment, the ability to know what is good and just, is a propensity that is rooted in the Intuitive Mind. Having a deep, intuitive ability to understand and peer into the nature of the self and the world enables one to act in accordance with truth. The intuitive conscience spoken of here is the essential conscience, the conscience as Consciousness; it is the representative of Spirit within the mind.

Discernment, or viveka, is not the external, conventionally imposed script of do's and don'ts, but the inner voice and benevolent guidance of the eternal Tao. The higher order of harmony in the Tao, or Cosmic Mind, is intuitively understood by the Aham at the Anahata. These subtle laws are translated into microcosmic existence and harmonized with humane sentiment and discerning wisdom. . The principles of Yama and Niyama serve as guidelines to develop this natural, moral conscience that is guided by the Intuitive Mind.

Depression

There are 3 main degrees of depression that can be experienced. The propensity of psychic stupor at the 2nd vortex is of course the heaviest. It represents a crippling of the entire psychological foundation. With melancholy at the 3rd vortex there is an entropy of the dynamic, extroverted propensities that link the phenomenal self with its world. The vritti of emptiness at the fourth vortex is, as the name implies, a mental depression in which the conscious ego experiences ennui, boredom, lack of meaning, and dispiritedness. It is more of a psychic and existential malady as opposed to a mere crippling of the drives and instincts that characterize melancholy and psychic stupor. The Aham, or ego, feels empty not just because the world is not in harmony with the psyche but the psyche is not in harmony with itself. The Anahata Vortex is concerned with the deep meaning of the phenomenal identity, of what the true nature of the personality is. Psychic depression results when these existential needs are not fulfilled or realized. There is only an empty, inner space. Nothing connects and integrates the self definition with itself as well as to other selves and society. Essentially, this type of depression ensues when the ego is not in harmony with its conscience, the deeply intuitive ideas that link all elements of the personality together and give it inspiration and direction. Conscience is the guiding spirit within mind. It shows us what is virtuous and how to align ourselves with the spirit of benevolence or Dharma at any given moment and in any situation.

The flow and dynamics of mental life is not a chaos but a very refined order. It is only when the ego resists this intuitive order that one can become confused, alienated, enervated, and eventually depressed. Depression, especially when experienced existentially at the Anahata, has its own meaning and order. It is in fact a wake-up call to be more conscious of what we are and how we should be. In many cases depression manifests in periods of great transformation. "Before preparing a man for great things, heaven first fills him full of bitterness and despair," a Taoist friend once said. Perhaps depression, at least when viewed spiritually, can serve the purpose of making us more real, more aligned with our inner selves. The duplicity and incongruities within the personality are undermined and disabled from further perpetuation. So often the ego invests itself in socially constructed and uncreative images, in a superficial conformity to a conventional system, or just never explores or listens to its own inner voice that is always

calling for expansion and transformation. Psychic depression can root out the subtle forms of egotism and vanity in even the most spiritual of minds. St. John of the Cross termed this type of dispiritedness the "Dark Night of the Soul." It appears as a contraction and dulling of the mental faculties but underneath there is a spiritual process occurring that is helping a soul move beyond all of the limitations and boundaries that keep it confined to its separateness and self-enclosure. And with psychic depression there is the ability to ruminate over why one feels heavy and lacks meaning, why things are just not going right, and to thereby find solutions. Our inner lives are never haphazard and meaningless. Life is a constant process of becoming. Each and every situation is an opportunity for growth-to exercise our discriminative intellect, insight and humane compassion. Within us always is conscience, the voice of Spirit, incessantly guiding and directing our lives for our greatest good. We need only to listen to and be true to ourselves.

The Dynamics of "Ja" and "Jha" in Self and Selfishness

With the seventh vrtti of the spiritual heart, we move into the right, solar side of the Anahata Vortex. Here the centrifugal force is stronger than the centripetal force and the tendencies on this side move more outward than inward. The seventh vrtti is the need for self-definition or "Aham vrtti". Aham is ego or "doer-I". Aham really doesn't denote egotism or selfishness, which is in fact the eighth vrtti. I call Aham "self-definition" because it is simply the need to understand yourself in the relative plane of existence; who you are, who you have been and who you want to do in this life. It cannot be a negative tendency because the human mind propelled by this vrtti always desires clarity, expansion and betterment of its existential position. In fact, this tendency can take one so deep into the question of "who am I?" that the very separateness of the ego-dominated "I" disappears into the eternal "I Witness". To follow this vrtti to its origin takes one back to the headwaters of the godhead where it pours itself out into every microcosmic soul. The Aham is the active, doer-I; but just behind it is the I witness that is perfectly still, eternal, and simple. Where does one begin and the other end? It is just like trying to find the edge of a shadow in that there is no real, defined limit. The ego in its most noble expression is but a relative vehicle for the super-personal Consciousness to express itself as a person, as a Self-realized human being. And it becomes so, or will become so in every microcosm. When one truly trusts oneself, then the person is sustained by the I-Witness itself. To simply remember and ideate on the Witnessing Entity behind your person will always put the mind into balance and all problems are placed in a clearer perspective. The person is but an ornamentation, an unintentional flash whose image is illuminated from an image-less act from deep within one's inner Subjectivity. This expression is controlled by the vibrant and buoyant acoustic root of "ja." The degeneration of this manifestation of the Macrocosm in the microcosm is egotism or selfishness. It is controlled by the sound "jha." Here is

where a temple to the separate, fearful and vain ego is built and worshiped by the vrttis below the Anahata Vortex. The egocentric and vain desires coupled by the unconscious emotional complexes take refuge in an embellished image of oneself. Where selfishness reigns, death is not far away. The underlying reason for our crisis of consciousness, culture and self-definition is not just the natural limitations of evolving beings but the enforcement of this vrtti by our society and its institutions. Instead of fostering a sense of inter-being and cooperation, most of us have learned individual separateness, competition and domination. Within a capitalist and individualist society there is space for just a few "winners" while so many suffer from a lack of personal fulfillment and social alienation that leaves them spiritually estranged and neurotic. I was born in probably one of the most neurotic and mentally ill societies on the planet, at least for the so-called developed world. Now, in the north of Mexico, I see that most people want to have a typical American life-style and that these materialistic, individualistic values only further corrupt what is already quite a troubled culture.

One can carry this selfishness over into one's spiritual practice as well and selfishly seek enlightenment. One who truly knows the Atman also loves from this sublime stance. I have seen many who devote long hours to meditation and/or yoga but really make no progress because they think only of themselves and their spiritual image. In fact, they create much imbalance in their lives and fail to see how they only begin to suffer more than when they were just mundane people. As an Upanishad states, "those that seek only the finite go into darkness. Those who seek only the infinite go into deeper darkness." Yoga is the balance of adjusting the internal and external mental flows and making them one. One really needs a fairly balanced mind before beginning spiritual practice. Unfortunately, yoga, and especially Tantra Yoga, is not a form of psychotherapy designed to cure modern psychological complexes. Rather, it is a form of pinnacle, "apex psychology" designed to help well-adjusted people attain spiritual realization. For those not so well-adjusted, a clear, psychological understanding of yama and niyama coupled with gentle asanas and meditation is necessary before attempting any other practices. If one looks at the world of yoga, it is mostly an ego show and there are very few who really understand the implications of what they are teaching. Many are just asana clowns, but it gets even more dangerous the higher one goes up the ashtaunga (8-limbed) ladder. I lived in a monastic community with many Tantra Yoga practitioners. Although there were some very good examples of mature meditators, there were also so many who were often quite neurotic because they couldn't digest all of the unconscious and sub-conscious psychic content that their practices were awakening. Instead of finding enlightenment, one only ends up deeper in the quagmire of an ignorant ego besieged by so many emotional complexes. They probably would have been better off with families and a less intense spiritual practice. For the ego that contemplates and surrenders to the inner radiance of pure awareness, selfishness becomes something aversive. Selfishness is revelry in the ignorance of

separateness. It is born of suffering and dies in suffering. The individual who truly understands his/her inner self will always contribute something good to the collective well-being. Through the contemplation and devotion to the pure "I" beyond thought and volition, one can't help but find oneself in all persons.

Ego, Self-Identity

Aham-vritti does not refer to egotism or the vritti of vanity. Instead, this propensity is the feeling of one's actual identity. It is the existential concept of what one's psychological make-up consists of, independent of inferiority or superiority complexes, of what the essential nature of the personality is. It informs one of what are the innate proclivities; one's cognitive styles and affective tones, whether one is introverted or extroverted, a thinker or a feeler, analytical or intuitive, etc..

This self-concept is a notion of identity that organizes and structures the various propensities and modes of thought into an organized concept of a general identity. Ego vritti gives a thought-form to the notion of "I". Although the "I" or Mahat is clearly manifest at the Anahata Vortex, it is still qualified by phenomenal reality. The reality of the ego here is mental and psycho-spiritual. Ego, therefore, is a concept of what the "I" is in relation to the relative world.

Deep and wondrous potentials are possible with this vritti. The human notion of the "I" is most often bound into sociological, national, cultural, and regional as well as the limited notions of the lower personality. However, a great potential resides in this vritti in that the eternal spiritual identity, Shiva, can find an abode of expression through the human personality. There is truly only one Aham in the universe, and it belongs to the Macrocosmic Mind. Only through association of the Macrocosmic Aham with the microcosmic chitta does the Aham feel that it belongs to the physical body and psychological identity. Maya, ultimately, is but a trick of the senses and the Aham who identifies with their relative reality. While it is true that the human personality is something relative as it is within the domain of Shakti, there is, however, the reflection of the fundamental consciousness that informs the notion of identity. At this stage of the cultivation of the spiritual personality the objective qualities and concepts that qualify the Identity are not so much a bondage but rather a means of expression in which the ineffable Infinite Being expresses itself through the finite personality. The objective qualities are transparent in that the personality no longer clings to outer, conditioned notions for self-reference. Here one understands that the infinite Shiva, in itself, is not a personality with any qualities. It expresses itself through the finer, subtler realms of the relative, created world. Personality or character cannot exist for the Infinite without the limitations of finite definitions. Conversely, personality cannot exist in the finite without the reflection of the subjective, existential feeling of I, which is Infinite. Character, therefore, is the breeding

ground of the Infinite to express itself consciously through a finite medium. Of course all of creation is the progeny of Shiva, but it is within the developed human being that self-consciousness knows itself fundamentally as Supreme Consciousness, even though there still may be subtle qualifications of that Consciousness. But without those subtle qualifications, the Infinite would not have a personality.

All human beings are gods in disguise. Only one who treads the deepest ground of their being and identity realizes that their life, their being, and relative existence is in truth a vehicle for Shiva to manifest itself in multitudinous forms of personality. The infinite gives a name to the nameless. This is perhaps the sweetest and melodious truth of human life: that human life is verily the Life Divine.

Egoism, Selfishness

While all of the vrttis of the Anahata Vortex are related to the concept of self, half of them bind the identity to the limitations of self while the other half, the positive qualities, provide an impetus for the expansion of the phenomenal self. With vanity there is an embellishment and pride with the qualities that one identifies with in an attempt to establish one's existential identity. The vrtti of selfishness is similar with its fixation on the qualities of the limited identity. However, with this tendency there is even more of a sharp and guarded egocentrism than with vanity.

Vanity is a limitation, but at the same time gives one a sense of pride and confidence with a belief in their self-efficacy. One can have a healthy personality with good qualities but still hold onto a little pride. Selfishness is more of a pathology in that the personality is lacking of true and meaningful qualities and instead of endeavoring to expand in soulful and meaningful ways, it fixes one's psychic energy exclusively on preserving the notion of self. A proud person can at times step outside of their boundaries and connect with others. This is more difficult for the selfish in that their self-concern and importance is not just to polish off and refine the personality. Rather it is a defense that helps to hold together the integrity of a weak ego structure.

Very often this vrtti is found to work in accordance with the vrttis of the second vortex. Resentment, compulsion, repression (of the 2nd vortex) are all propensities that hold together the integrity of the ego's foundation. If the ego isn't well integrated and the 3rd and 4th vortex vrttis haven't integrated and compensated for the second vortex, then the 4th vortex personality will be very contracted. The potential for psychic expansion at the Anahata Vortex will be concentrated on the security of a fragile self-concept that is perpetually insecure. The character of such a person is often aloof, distrustful, and vacillates between a constrained emotional detachment and a repression of infantile tendencies and a

compulsion to act upon them. One also maintains a very marked self-other boundary that keeps others at a safe distance.

Duplicity and "na"

If there ever were a favorite hiding place for psorax in the human mind, it must be in the vortex or vrtti of duplicity. Recall that psorax is the term that Pluma Blanca referred to as the centripetal or return force in the universe that always pushes back against and apparently punishes microcosmic, outward actions that are not in harmony with the original, balanced actions of the Macrocosm. This outward, frustrated projection remains lodged in one's mental and physical body in the form of a reaction like a constant itch under the skin, or something much, much worse. Every previous mental action still weighs and acts upon the mind in the present. Only in the spiritually ignorant microcosmic mind is there a need for this act of compensation to put the universe back into order after distorting it with an impulsive will. Is psorax really evil? It just pretends to be the bad guy to reflect our own shadow. Behind everything in this phenomenal world exists an underlying love.

With duplicity the mind has evolved what seems to be an efficient mechanism of allowing 2 contrary systems to function side by side without any contradiction, or so it seems. The "raging bundle of desire in a dying animal" and the sincere, responsible, conscious human being incarnate in the same being. Hermann Hesse's Steppenwolf comes to mind here. Duplicity acts as a form of repression and distortion of what really is true about our lives in the more shadowy area while at the same time giving free reign to the wolf inside without compunction or pangs of conscience. In short, duplicity is a lie. It is an attempt to save face, to not admit that one is governed by the shadow.

The shadow, and therefore psorax, is everywhere humans are; in individuals and the collective. The grossest examples exist common society, in our daily conventions, and especially religion and politics. The imperialist governments create their own enemies or "terrorists". They themselves promote, manipulate or even create corrupt foreign regimes who prostitute their natural resources and human labor to the powerful nations. They will never hesitate to make the most absurd lies so as to wage war and kill millions to steal the natural wealth from the rest of the world. The average citizens go along with it and wave their flags and get fat while unwitting soldiers and private security forces and other drones go off to other lands to kill people and bring their "demonocracy" to all. Where does psorax fit into all of this? What kind of shadow is created from an individual that believes these lies and what kind of greater monster is created by a collective body that goes along with the myth? Even greater and darker is the shadow of the shrewd people that fabricate these false realities for their own benefit. The

reactions from these actions are all so apparent in the collective depression, neurosis and zombification of the common people who have little notion of or feel helpless to the false realities of their lives. A life unconnected to the subterranean flow of unity consciousness will always be compensated by cosmic law; the grosser the transgression, the grosser the reaction.

Whenever the personality makes a jump from one kosa to the next there is of necessity a shift of psychic energy as well as the objectives of that psychic energy. A healthy evolutionary leap from one kosa to the next would gradually incorporate the lower tendencies into the higher. As we have seen there is a recapitulation of prior tendencies in successively subtler forms. If the old patterns of expression is not transmuted and integrated into the new, then a split within the personality occurs. The lower tendencies exist and function at the same time as the higher. And because there is a great difference in thematic structure at each mental level, there are therefore very definite incongruities in such a personality. What was once the major theme of a particular vortex becomes the unconscious shadow of the next higher vortex. For example, the propensities of the 3rd vortex that were not incorporated into the Anahata level of personality become the shadow for that personality. The tendency of duplicity or hypocrisy manifests itself when the Anahata-intelligence of the personality is unable to fully integrate the lower, now unconscious propensities, of the vortexes preceding it. Instead of the Anahata Vortex being able to transmute the psychic energy of the lower propensities into one of its own, the mind at this level tries to mask, deny, distort, or suppress these incongruent tendencies. Here we may have the case of a personality endowed with some finer, conscious qualities and intelligence; for example a little moral conscience, a warm affection for others, as well as a spiritual outlook on life. This same personality, however, still contains remnants of a previous pattern of mental functioning that run contrary to the current sense of being. Instead of consciously recognizing and working to integrate these disparate tendencies into a harmonious and conscious synthesis the mind can use its cognitive abilities to distort and mask these contrary tendencies and thereby permit them to exist side by side with the conscious personality or ego. Different environments will bring out these different, opposing tendencies. In one environment one may behave in an uninhibited manner, expressing what is normally unexpressed, while in another one may act according to social protocol. What is meant here is not the expression of different facets of the personality that actually accord to a current situation. Instead duplicity is the act of covering up, putting up a show or "persona" to cover up an undesirable inner reality. This mixing of antithetical positions within the same mind causes the cognition to cover both fields, "to hunt with the hounds as well as run with the hares." At one time the assertions, compulsions, hatred, etc. can assert itself. At another time one is kind and fair. Duplicity is when the kind and fair side refuses to really recognize its shadowy counterpart. Or perhaps it's the stable side of the personality with its seemingly confident sense of identity that distorts or denies a

weak and insecure part of the personality. Duplicity can manifest itself in various ways. What is central to this tendency is that it is an attempt at keeping two antithetical forces from clashing with each other. At the same time this tendency is a block to integration and wholeness that is possible at the Anahata Vortex. Duplicity manifests as hypocrisy when the more intelligent part of the being recognizes its inferior parts but attempts to compensate for them by setting up higher standards that cannot possibly be met by a dual and divided mind. For example, such a person may express crude and lewd behavior in the company of his friends, but denounce that same behavior while at work or church in order to uphold a persona of social respectability. Duplicity is all too easily found in religious groups where insecure people have the need for others to guide or influence them spiritually. Without even mentioning sexual deviance, there is still a mountain of dangerous examples of duplicity in religion. Duplicity allows hidden tendencies to burrow deep into these minds while the "demons" of spiritual vanity and the desire to manipulate and control others become the primary objective. Once good intentionality has degenerated, what virtue is left to protect one from the darkest parts of the shadow? It's the same situation whether they wear white collars or orange robes or rattle off scriptural sayings in Latin or Sanskrit: people that deceive and harm others spiritually through their hypocrisy have very hard falls into perversion. What was repressed and hidden becomes so painfully evident after a fall. Spiritually-minded people with discernment, or viveka, cannot tolerate these activities and belong to any groups that lie and cover up these truths. A spiritually conscious person either has to get out of the web of lies or become an agitator or revolutionary, a "heretic." Insight must extend beyond the names and forms of religion. "It is alright to be born into a sect, but not to die in one", said Vivekananda. It is natural to have duality in human existence. Sometimes we are strong and other times we are weak and cannot resist negative tendencies.

There is so much uncertainty in deeper existential matters and values. Duplicity, however, is when the mind censors and covers up the inconvenient truths by fractioning off and compartmentalizing the personality into a false image. This image is untrue in that it is an argumentation against another, undesirable part of one's being. One declares war upon oneself. Natural duality and indecision take on a distorted belief system about oneself where only one side of the dual equation is true. The more one represses and distorts the shadow, the more of a "true believer" one becomes. Fanaticism and a lot of argumentation is needed to quell the shadow. It takes a lot of internal psychological work and/or spiritual practice to integrate the disparate parts of the personality and become whole. And this is only possible with a very positive view of existence that permits the shadow to dissolve in this light little by little. Instead of becoming whole and congruent, duplicity loves to project its inner, repressed tensions of conscience onto some "other". Instead of seeing what is vile and low inside oneself it is much easier to find a scape-goat outside of oneself. Be careful entering into the shadow area of

another, whether it is an individual or a collective society. Projections of the shadow are the perfect medium to transfer one's own dark side onto another. The "other", the "enemy" may turn out to be the revealer of truth, however. It may be your best friend in that one can really begin to understand this unconscious game of shadow projection that has the whole world going insane.

The most subtle expression of duplicity is the recognition of the fact that there is only one, integral consciousness in the universe but I still can't let go of my ego with its projections of name and form onto the supreme unspeakable reality. Following a particular religion or path is an ephemeral reality of ego that deep inside I know is quite relative and very limited but always seems to stick to me and convince me of its reality. There is also the fear that Jesus, Baba, or whomever is one's guru will punish one for letting go of the name and form and approaching the nameless godhead. The formless god says "no more of this" and unifies you with the Om that is beyond but vibrates every particle of this universe! Om will always drown out your little words for god. Only a direct, unmediated understanding of Oneself destroys all religious belief and dogma. The complete purification of this vritti of duplicity purifies the right, solar side of the Anahata Vortex and allows one to contemplate the pure "I" at its seat in the human spiritual heart. Without this vortex of duplicity vibrating and bifurcating the right side of the anahata, the vedantic sages contemplated the pure Self in the right side of the chest where it radiates outward in innocence and purity. After duplicity there are two more vrittis in the anahata, argumentation and repentance. One can keep up the act, the duplicitous war of soul attrition, a little longer with the ammo of argumentation or put an end to it with a deep feeling of regret or repentance and change course toward what is eventually complete surrender of the ego.

The Dynamics of "Ta" and "Tha" in Contention and Compunction

The Anahata is the moral battleground in the war of dharma. Dharma means the true essence of something independent of our varied interpretations of it, the thing-in-itself. In this case dharma refers to human nature. We can see in the Anahata that there are innate and humane tendencies that seek to direct the mind toward subtlety and universal humanism (hope, expansion, conscience), but at the same time there evolve these abstract, egocentric protection mechanisms that keep the person bound into limited thought and feeling (worry, vanity, egoism, duplicity). If the Anahata is aligned more with a true sense of self rather than a vain sense of egoism, then the Anahata expands and the person becomes more spiritually oriented. However, this effort to expand towards spirit is something new for the materialistic mind. The good conscience of human beings is all too easily corrupted by bad ideology and social conventions. Instead of being fostered and enforced by our social institutions it is often suppressed or distorted. For example, so many Americans feel pain and sympathy when they see

images of dead Iraqis or Afghans, but their conditioned national sentiments never let them truly go against the grain and transcend their superficial nationalism. Most people find ways to justify even these actions in order to hold on to some sense of pride in their collective identity. Contention is a form of cognitive dissonance in which the intellect identifies with the false form of conscience and argues against their true moral conscience. In this example, the conscience takes the side of "God Bless America" instead of the more intuitive conscience that says "this is all a lie."

"Ta" is the sound vortex behind the propensity of contention. Because it is a movement against true conscience, it is always doomed to fail. Pure justice or dharma doesn't require the arguments of the ego and is a higher tendency in the Vishuddha. This noble concern for universal welfare is backed by dharma, which is the balance of consciousness and action, of Shiva and Shakti. However, contention in the Anahata always has a shadow, and therefore a weakness. "Tha" is the sound of the return of the weakened force of contention that wants to come back to center, in alignment with true conscience and dharma. One desires to be whole again after having become fragmented by so many contentions and false stories of self. "Tha" manifests the propensity of repentance. One truly has suffered and perhaps made others suffer. The only way out of this suffering is to become more aware, take responsibility and make some major decisions. Only in this manner will the separate, willful, and egocentric mind ever abandon its arguments and justifications for its baser tendencies.

Contention

The next to last vritti of the Anahata Vortex is contention. In general, contention is a way for the ego to defend itself against uncertainty by summoning up reasons and arguments to convince others or oneself of being right. We convince others through verbal argument, we convince ourselves through mental argument, through our inner thought conflicts. So often, when one argues with another in an effort to convince, one is really only unconsciously trying to preserve the projections of the mind from falling into doubt and uncertainty. The separate ego always needs to think that its position as center of its universe is secure. It is all too easy for the contentious mind to fall into lower propensities like hatred, ambition, fear, shame, lack of confidence and so on. An offended ego can even come to blows with another. Since contention is a reaction to our own inferior, unaccepted and rejected parts of ourselves like shame and guilt, human beings want to project this discomfort onto somebody or something else as a psychic purge. The people who are really like us in our most hidden ways are the people who are most threatening and should be judged accordingly. When we make judgments against others we not only condemn them but our own shadowy parts as well. And so with this form of contention and judgment we create a rift and boundary between self and others and also between self and other parts of self.

From a spiritual perspective one sees contention as an attempt to defend one's projections of how the ego fits into its personal, social, and spiritual realities. Normally, a person is not very secure within. Our beliefs are adopted from others or we anxiously or unconsciously cling to some "ideology" to secure our footing in reality. It is this very weakness in lack of true awareness that creates the need for contention. Behind most ideologies is fear and insecurity and the ideology attempts to assuage this tension. We often believe in something or someone out of ignorance, desperation, laziness, or superficial conformity. It is important to realize these parts of our personal "ideology" so we don't fall into complacency and one-sidedness.

In the deeper sense contention is indecision. "Is this morally correct?, am I really living to my full capacity?, am I in harmony with my universe?" It is quite natural and even useful in the expansion of the mind if indecision is not carried to far. All realizations are a result of clash and cohesion. When contention internalizes it begins to touch a truer reason, balanced with intuition and compassion in the spiritual heart. Here the mind is safe and secure and can finally begin to use the discerning intellect to ask the right questions. The mind begins to ask, "Who, which part of me, is thinking this and with what motive and intention?" Through this discernment and self-knowledge we eventually learn to simply let the Witness into the thoughts and feelings, to let it purify them. This spontaneously and unintentionally changes the mind by internalizing the thoughts. If a photon is changed by our expected perception of it being a particle or a wave, then just imagine how would our thoughts and feelings and even our entire mind is changed by simply being witnessed by the Supreme Consciousness within. To surrender the mind into the sublime silence of the Witness creates a reverberation of grace as an echo from this silence. All mental distortions and problems, no matter how great, may be straitened out by making the mind parallel with the Witness, by becoming one with my source.

How can one be centered in the Witness when the mind is so confused, split, and unconscious of itself? Unifying the mind with the essence of awareness makes the mind full of this awareness and purifies all the little dark, hidden caves for psorax. By relating with the most subtle entity the mind begins to mimic that entity, instead of the shadow. Mind always wants to merge into Shiva, into Consciousness. This is its fundamental attraction. Only by going seeing beyond the mind can we truly see the mind. Mind is not the fundamental being; it is not the Witness, but is being witnessed. One can see one's whole life, past present, and future merging into an Eternal Now from this perspective. Rilke asked, "Who really lives this life anyhow, is it you God?" The mind is known to the Witness as its own little self, a little wave on its own ocean, a self-becoming progeny being constantly and eternally born out of its Infinite being.

Compunction

My friends once asked me why I didn't get angry with a mechanic who once took my engine out, apparently reinstalled it by putting everything in its place but only tightened the nuts and bolts with his fingers. I say that somebody like that is already self-condemned. The best thing I could do for him was to rebuke him so as to try to induce a little compunction so that his attitudes no longer serve to degenerate him to even deeper levels of deceit. We condemn ourselves through our selfish and ignorant actions and may continue to suffer the reactions for a very long time. I am capable of feeling empathy for another and try to understand his point of view no matter how distorted it may be, and my only desire in wanting to reprimand him be that he reform himself so as not to continue to be just another burden on human society. If I am capable of this state of mind, then the Macrocosmic mind must be capable of so much more. What we call god is not an avenger or punisher, but only a savior. While it is true that the laws of karma are inviolable even for god, there are subtle mechanisms that the Macrocosmic mind has evolved through the microcosm to bring erring minds back into harmony with existence. Compunction is not shame or the desire to induce shame or any other negative tendency into another. Compunction is a very deep and self-reflective pattern of very rational thoughts and emotions that save one from the self-condemnations of shame. Everything that this little mind of ours does is interacting with a great universe, a conscious and intelligent system that pre-exists us and is a lot more aware than one could ever imagine. The blind and selfish mind only becomes aware of this after much suffering. Having burned oneself with the fire of suffering and alienation over and over, one finally begins to awaken and see the law of cause and effect at work.

To an awakening mind there will always be an opportunity for the intelligent moral order of the universe to create conditions of grace so as to call and welcome all microcosms back into unity with the Macrocosmic Consciousness. The signs are all around but due to selfishness and separation we can't allow ourselves to really understand them. Grace is for all but is only understood through a mature mind. This soul naturally desires a subtler form of existence and once shown the way it is only quite natural that there is a bit of compunction and compunction for having existed away from union in suffering and delusion. Compunction can only exist where there is truly a notion of discernment or viveka (the 6th propensity) to contrast and reflect the errors of the separate ego. When one truly knows that the inability to understand one's fears, attachments, resentments and ambitions have locked one into an absurd existence with no real purpose, the idea of continuing or falling back into the vain traps of the ego becomes unbearable. One never wants to return to such a state because it is based in suffering and delusion. Compunction serves as a microcosmic expression of the laws of action and reaction and how they are embedded in our mental structures and is a check and balance system for maintaining harmonious conduct with the universe. To have experienced the great wonder of existence, to have encountered a little bit

of the infinite presence in a few clear moments of grace, and to sustain them through meditation and devotion will always keep one's direction onward. Although I speak of compunction as the last mental vortex of the spiritual heart, it can just as well be considered the first if we count from below upward. Its controlling sound "tha", is the densest vibration of the Anahata Vortex. It couples "ta", a sound dominated by staticity and inertia with "ha", the sound of centripetal movement. Compunction, or "tha," therefore serves as a propensity that leads all of the dross and density of the human heart back into the purity of pure spirit. When there are no vrttis to create pride or compunction that perturb the essence of the spiritual heart, one becomes empty of form and intention but full of Infinite Consciousness. One's self is sacrificed to the heart of the universe. While it is true that all actions of the microcosm are compensated with reactions, there are some profound patterns in the mind that truly lead the microcosm into union. These actions don't rebound with reactions but rather dissolve themselves into the Macrocosm. "Be altogether lost in Shiva, like an arrow in its target." Because the devoted mind really does begin to flow and find grace it is received and absorbed into the life of the universe, reactions of pain and sorrow begin to cease because the ego puts up fewer and fewer projections of separation and makes fewer errors based on them. The influence of the Vishuddha Vortex enters here. Spiritual practice, no matter what name or form, must be a practical vehicle to re-align the microcosmic mental flow with that of the Macrocosmic thought projection which is this universe. To bring the mind with all of its desires, feelings and ideas into the light of the I-Witness transforms and expands the limits of the microcosm. Contemplating the ever-present Atman within one's very own I-feeling, the microcosm undergoes spiritual, mental, and biological evolution; the structures of the mind change and vibrate on higher frequencies, and the body that it incarnates undergoes subtle metamorphoses in the nervous and endocrine systems to accompany and parallel the mental changes. Participating in evolution as a responsible individual is the greatest duty that a human being has toward the collective evolution of humanity to something truly dignified and deserving of the divine potential within.

The Free Self

When the vrttis of the spiritual heart are understood and liberated, their energy retires inward into pure idea. One feels that from the center of the chest extends an element of a subtle, invisible air that is not bound by any form of gravity in this universe. From this realm of light and vibrant pulsing ideas manifest the entire physical universe. This universe is dominated by the play of the centripetal and centrifugal forces in a constant combat that can only be regulated by the Macrocosmic Mind that has spawned them. In this Aerial Factor we find the nexus between the abstract and material worlds. Although the aerial factor is a form of energy bound by the Macrocosmic process of creative involution, the consciousness that penetrates there isn't split into particularities of time, space, or

person. The I-feeling is still pure and undivided. Idea is more real than matter. To move up from here is complete dissolution of the phenomenal self into Spirit, to move down from here is the materialization of this self into the physical universe.

A yogi may delight in this ecstasy: to let oneself flow outward only from the spiritual heart and aerial factor so that your being may touch every particle of the universe. Everything becomes familiar and pure, even what is impure wants to change and transform. But even this cannot be sustained by us forever, it is the drama of the Macrocosm that will go on forever and ever. There is a part of you that gazes down upon this as well. To just go inward from here is to deliver to Shiva so many quantum, so many packets of energy, that have been trapped by Shakti's great gravity into material form. All the star-stuff that we have taken in through digestion, through perception, through ideas and interaction are finally brought into the Intuitive Mind and liberated from all form through your recognition that only Shiva exists both within and without. We transmute creation into godhead each time we truly remember home. Mind is but the entity that regulates the within and the without, the centripetal and centrifugal. Macrocosmic mind, or Shiva, sustains and projects the desire of the entire cosmological order. The microcosmic mind was what contained and projects this whimsical bundle of ideas and impressions in time and space with a notion of your person.

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