

A NAME TO THE NAMELESS

A Tantric Journey Through the Mental Vortexes

Dedicated to Satya

William Enckhausen

Preface

I was initiated into a Rajadhiraja Tantra Yoga tradition when I was a student in Austin in 1993. I adopted a very healthy vegetarian lifestyle without drugs and alcohol. Within a few months the kundalini began with what would be a very long and intense awakening. As a student of psychology and world literature, I had heard of kundalini and other mystical energies but I had never thought they were real, live forces. I thought it was just interesting archaic symbolism, and not an actual force within the human body that rises up through the spinal column to awaken higher states of awareness. The universal symbol for this force is the serpent. It is said to be a covert, spiritual force beneath the surface of conscious awareness, like a coiled snake. Kundalini is the fundamental intelligence behind life and evolution, waiting to be awakened when the mind finally desires liberation from finite mental bondages. As this divine “serpent power” rises through the spinal column, one experiences states of deep spiritual realization. For the yogi, kundalini is the force that unites the human with the divine.

One day after classes and a short meditation, at which I was merely a beginner, I laid down on my back due to exhaustion. I felt a soothing force begin to rise up my spine. As this point of white, soft energy rose up into the thoracic region of the spine, I began to hear the sacred Om sound. It became frightening because there was only Om and nothing else. I opened my eyes but could not see anything. My faculties of sight and hearing were unified and there only existed Om. I knew I was being dissolved in a force that was vibrating within every particle of the universe. It was ecstatic and exhilarating but terrifying. I felt my whole identity would disappear and never return. The kundalini was entering the medulla. I began to repeat my mantra for meditation but it only made the experience more intense. Instead, I began to repeat my name, William, over and over and trying to remember that I was a student in Austin, Texas on the physical plane of reality. The kundalini began to go back down as Om diminished. I couldn't take any more.

After that experience I became very confident but experienced a lot of mental turmoil. It was very productive turmoil in that all negative memories from my past were being quickly purged and purified. I began to feel completely whole and that I had already lived a very complete life. The second time the kundalini rose was a few months later. I saw the same light in my spine although this time it was an infinitesimally small point. Physical reality disappeared and I began to “see” from Om and nothing else. I opened my eyes but could not see anything. My faculties of sight and hearing were unified and there only existed Om. I knew I was being dissolved in a force that was vibrating within every particle of the universe. It was ecstatic and exhilarating but terrifying. I felt my whole identity would disappear and never return. The kundalini was entering the medulla. I began to repeat my

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My last thought before losing awareness of not just the outer world, but also the inner world of vision, was that the forms looked Meso-American. Only years later would I learn of the Mesoamerican concept of kundalini, what they call Quetzalcoatl, the "Plumed Serpent." The quetzal is a colorful bird of Chiapas and the mayan symbol for the kundalini, the spiritual energy of evolution and enlightenment that resides dormant within the mind.



(The kundalini was named Quetzalcoatl by the Toltecs and Kukulcan by the Mayas. A version of the image of Quetzalcoatl is on the Mexican national flag to this day.)

After this experience I lost all interest in a career and marriage and a “normal” life. I barely graduated the university and went to India seeking more understanding. There I met Chidghananda, a solitary old monk well-venerated in his order. He was regarded as a saint and I felt so honored that he took me into his close friendship and care. Sometimes I would accompany him with his evening meditations. He always heard the holy Om sound and it increased in his meditation. It was obvious that he regularly experienced ananda, divine bliss. He was truly one of the most loving human beings that I have ever met. My experiences had intensified near him at Ananda Nagar and it was clearly divine will that I had met such a teacher to guide me through these powerful processes.

At the time I wanted to become a monk but Chidghananda himself told me that I was a bit of an oddity and would not fit in well with the monastic organization. He said that my spiritual work was coming to an end, and that I didn't really need to do anything else with my life rather than meditate, live simply, and help others as much as I could. Although sharply criticized for his



[Video Interview with Dada Chidghananda](#)

influence over me, he followed his conscience and spoke only the truth to me. Although very confused as to what to do with my life once the ideal of being a monk was fading, I was aided by a dream in which Anandmurti commanded me not to worry about becoming a monk, but just to “see the world as a frame-less photo and wander through the night.” Anandamurti has always spoken to me through dreams in such an elevated, poetic fashion. Later, as a confirmation he told me in another vivid dream that “all that matters is to do dhyana dasha.” He used those Sanskrit words, one of which I knew of not until a friend looked it up in

a Sanskrit dictionary. What Anandamurti said was “all that matters is to do service through meditation.” I was often unsure if in these dreams I communicated with the spirit of Anandamurti, or if Anandamurti had become a mere symbol in my consciousness that had penetrated my dreams. Either way, these dreams always made perfect sense to me and enlightened difficult situations. If they were my own projections, then they came from the deepest, most intuitive parts of me that have never let me down.

It was soon after that I met Chandranath and his wife, Ram Pari Devii. They were some of the first initiates and spiritual teachers, or acharyas, personally taught by Anandamurti in the 1950’s. They were undoubtedly the most spiritually elevated beings that I have ever met. The whole environment around them was bliss. Even their lifelong employees, like the cook and the gardener, had become highly developed yogis. Speaking with Chandranath removed any doubts I had about my meditation and he told me that the intensity would calm down with time. He gave me invaluable tips about the mystical subtleties of spiritual practice and left me with the deepest sensation of divine peace that I still feel each time I recall being in his presence. Both he and his wife were established in the practice of samadhi (experiential union with the Supreme Consciousness) and could enter into it at will. They were free, realized souls whose only reason to still be physically incarnated was to help others along the path. After meeting them I realized that more important than being a monk or householder was to simply try to be at one with the Supreme Consciousness at all times, as they were.



When I sat next to Chandranath and tried to listen to him speak of the Supreme Consciousness I could not understand a word he said. He took me into himself and there was only silence and a soft, white glow. I still try to recall that experience and become so still, forget even breathing, and there is still only silence and a soft, white glow.

People like Chandranath have set a practical example of how a realized yogi can live in the world. It seems miraculous, perhaps even absurd, that the human mind can unite with the Supreme Consciousness. We can truly say “I am This” from the most sincere and complete part of our beings. However, it seems even more miraculous the benevolent grace that emanates from such a realized being and their ability to transform others. He seemed to me a man so simple and pure and I never felt that he was asking anything from me; he only gave himself wholeheartedly to anybody seeking guidance. For a yogi who practices samadhi regularly, such a conscious and humane expression like Chandranath is the most natural and simple creation of the Supreme Consciousness. When the microcosmic mind dissolves into the Supreme Consciousness, there is really no ego, nor even I-feeling, that binds one to the relative plane. Many yogis leave their bodies after such experiences. Others, like Chandranath, mysteriously returned to the relative plane of earthly existence and continued to serve others. I think that when one enters the breathless state of samadhi and dissolves completely into the Supreme Consciousness, then it is only this One that can breathe the breath back into this unified yogi. If it weren't for people like

Chandranath, his wife and Chidghananda, who really set such a practical ideal, then I probably would have thought that such beings existed only in the distant past, in legends, and that the modern world is no longer habitable for advanced yogis. In the most mystical and subtle ways, people like Chandranath leave an undying imprint on the people they affect, and thereby leave their mark on the collective consciousness of humanity as a whole.

A Name to the Nameless is a work in which I explain my experiences with tantra yoga in the format of philosophy and psychology. Instead of writing about very subjective mystical experiences, I decided to explain my experiences by going more deeply into Tantric spiritual science. Experience proves theory and I have discovered that Tantra is a universal spiritual science that sprouts up about all over the world, not just in India, Tibet and China, but in Meso-america as well. Who knows where else in the world exist traces of this secretive spiritual science? Most of my early inspiration was due to the spiritual influence of Anandamurti and a few of his disciples, like Chidghananda and Chandranath. Quetzal Manik, or “White Feather,” was a Mayan teacher whose “Tantra Maya” practices that I later encountered only deepened my understanding of the Indian Tantra I had been practicing for years.

Introduction: Tantra as a Practical Realization of the Perennial Philosophy

There has never been nor will there ever be a more exalted inspiration than the realization of the oneness of the human soul with the Infinite Being. This is an ever-renewing germ of thought in the perennial philosophy that will sprout wherever there are noble hearts and great minds that seek to love and understand the deepest parts of our being. The greatest sages of all eras and cultures have proclaimed this great truth: that the deepest source of a human being's existence is at one or in union with the Supreme Consciousness. The universality of such a cardinal idea is not necessarily due to the cultural transmission of a great seer to others following his or her cultural descent, nor is it necessarily due to the influences of one culture upon another. Its universality represents the realization of spiritual aspirations innate to the nature of humanity. For an individual to understand the essence of one's inner "I" which transcends all of the particularities of his/her biological inheritance, cultural orientation, social conditioning, and personal tastes, is to know the essence of the universal "I", the infinite consciousness and life-source of the universe.

The fundamental spirit of this book is an attempt to understand the psychological and spiritual processes involved in the realization of the Infinite. The explanation of these processes will be described within the theoretical and practical framework of the intuitive science of Tantra. Instead of being a religious or philosophical system of thinking, Tantra is an experiential and intuitive science that is based on spiritual practice or sadhana. Theory explains the how and why and is verified by one's own experience through the intuitive introspection of sadhana. Intuition and empiricism aren't separate ideas in Tantra. Just because something is experienced on the internal levels of mind, doesn't mean it isn't a "practical experience." The greatest human discoveries have always been intuitive, even intellectual and scientific realizations. The practice and outlook of Tantra encompasses not just the spiritual and internal planes of existence, but the intellectual, emotional, and physiological as well. The explanation of the mental and spiritual processes involved in the quest for our self- realization must examine the whole spectrum of human consciousness from the "simian to the seraphic." One must understand all of the modes of thought and expressions of feeling that influence one's soul. It is also necessary to understand how one changes and evolves from one stage of thinking and feeling to the next. Most importantly, Tantra sadhana is the quest to liberate the mind from the complexes and fetters that bind it in limited identifications that cloud our thought and narrow our feeling.

Intuitive understanding gives mental freedom, peace and purity. With intuition, the radiance of the eternal, inner “I” becomes simple and self-evident.

To realize a spiritual philosophy and worldview that comprehends our nature as a whole may seem especially difficult in an age where scientific, empirical knowledge is so specialized and compartmentalized. The modern scientific disciplines are so fragmented and isolated from the other disciplines within their broad family. However, science seems to see no other alternative than to fragment and isolate in order to reach precision and accuracy.

Tantra literally means expansion from crudity. It is a process to transform the instinct into intellect and further transform intellect into intuition, where head and heart are so perfectly balanced. The uniqueness of the Tantric approach is that spiritual practice and realization follow certain psychic and spiritual laws that are embedded in the subtle nature of the mind. There are mental dynamics and laws that function just as clearly as gravitational force functions in the physical world, for example. This subtle knowledge is discovered through the trials of sadhana, of inner experimentation in the mental laboratory. Aurobindu termed this process “mystical empiricism.”

So often one thinks that a scientific approach to knowledge is only antithetical to a spiritual and intuitive means to higher knowledge. And there is certainly good reason for this. One has not only to look at intellectual and cultural history with all of the conflicts of faith versus reason. One can see the contemporary disparities between knowledge of the physical world opposed to knowledge of the mental and spiritual spheres. Science can rationally explain our physical world to some extent. However, it is very rare to find people or institutions that can explain the spiritual and deeply psychological layers of our being in a rational, lucid and methodical manner. Most of the time spirituality is seen as religious dogma and conventional belief systems instead of a practical science. One of the greatest struggles that human culture faces today is the reconciliation of the scientific world view with a modern and rational spiritual world view.

This synthesis of the spiritual and scientific approach is possible without deadening an integrated, holistic spiritual outlook with the tyranny of scientific materialism and reductionism. What is needed is a philosophy that recognizes the transcendental unity behind the changing and ephemeral phenomenon of nature while at the same time recognizing creation or nature from a perspective of the most heightened, benevolent and refined spiritual intellect: an intellect so pinnacled it conceives the essence of things while at the same time upholding “sharply delineated concepts,” as Steiner puts it. Therefore, we must realize that not even the fall of a sparrow can happen without the cosmic will but to also know

the hidden, esoteric cause. We must perceive and conceive the subtle mechanisms that bring about the manifestation of cosmic will.

For a spiritually oriented mind there is no end to the capacity to understand this universe. In accordance with Tantric theory, we can understand and conceptualize everything in this creation be it crude matter or subtle mind. The only limitation to our knowledge is in defining our inner "I" consciousness. What is meant is not the common use of the term consciousness as particular perspectives and idiosyncrasies of an individual. Consciousness is rather the fundamental Witness that is the hub of the identity, a Supreme Subjectivity. All of the personal qualities, experiences, feelings, and intellect are but spokes stemming from the hub of the Supreme Consciousness. All that exists is seen by the Supreme Consciousness. There is no existence apart from this, only the illusion of our separateness. Our deepest subjectivity or sense of Self is in essence the immediate, inner presence of the Supreme Consciousness. The Upanishads ask, "How can the Knower be known?" The Supreme Consciousness witnesses and sees all minds and hearts from its state of pure, subjective Consciousness and cannot become an object even for the most refined intellect. The only way to know the Absolute is to become one with it, to merge into it by discerning its reality within the inner feeling of "I- exist" and to know and feel that you are It. This refined, mindful, intuitive vision is the essence of mysticism. This is the highest spiritual knowledge and existential realization possible in Tantra: to be and live in union with the Supreme Consciousness.

And what about the stages along the journey? Are there realms of being in-between the relative physical world and the Absolute? Are there simply name and form here and namelessness and formlessness there? Or does the spiritual and contemplative life becomes so nebulous and abstruse that we entirely abandon our intellect and language when things become subtle? And what of the passions and sentiments? What is their place and purpose in existence? A truly spiritual outlook must have the scope of understanding the array of feelings from the basest to the passionate to the most noble of human sentiments.

In the times we live in, psychological balance and a deeper meaning of life is quite rare. More rare is finding a spark of cosmic consciousness present within ones life. The lot of humanity is moving towards self- alienation as meaningless pawns in a degenerated materialistic system with little or no regard for humanistic and spiritual endeavors. It is no wonder that so many lives are governed by fear, resentment, insecurity, ambition, and vanity when there are so few healthy channels for human expression. When a sincere person does try to open the heart and mind, one finds so much inner conflict and confusion that the temptation to rejoin the herd- consciousness is almost irresistible. One finds not the inner,

blissful consciousness but rather a quagmire of self-doubt, repressed fears and complexes.

However, we must find a solution, both as individuals and as a united human society. We must not give way to fear and apathy and the repression of what is truest and pure in our nature. Tantric philosophy and practice may give us such a deep understanding of all of the mind's existential and emotional needs that it is possible to understand and heal them. With the integration of the psychological limitations one can progress onward toward the deeper, intuitive layers of mind until one finally understands the core of consciousness and purpose of life. Finding this great "I" within liberates one from suffering and shows the way to freedom. This inward gaze is a feeling of eternal joy, of knowing beyond all doubts that the internal "I" has always been free. Our truest essence is bliss.

The Supreme Consciousness is the Self, the subject and witness of all created things- the mind, the body, and the entire universe. This blissful, pure Self is so essentially unified with in us and so close that the mundane mind can't even grasp it. Mysticism is the process of revealing what is inside and hidden. This mystical union is possible through the science of sadhana, spiritual practice. Through cultivating our inner oneness with the infinite Consciousness our entire being can indeed be gazed upon from that abode of bliss.

Through our union with the source of infinite knowledge, resourcefulness and creativity, all things are capable of being understood. Within the universal mind, is the intuitive perspicacity to penetrate the secrets of heaven, the subtle worlds, or divine realms. It can understand all things, including itself, up until the point it asks itself "from where have I come, what is my source?" The Vedas even mention that Brahma, the Creator, does not even know its origin. Only when mind attempts to fathom the unfathomable is it ultimately defeated, but defeated in bliss. Like an arrow in its target, the mind becomes lost in Brahma. Mind dissolves in its essence and origin with that final inquiry. "The only way to know Brahma is to become Brahma."

This understanding brings us to a very fine balance between the intuitive approach of eastern mysticism and the dynamism of the western intellect. At one extreme is the complete transcendence of the mind, world, and body: at the other, the reduction of all things to matter. So the modern contemplative must of course be able to tread the fathomless ground of the godhead, of the absolute, uncreated Brahma. While at the same time it is necessary to maintain an acute intellect and intuition that can fully comprehend all the spiritual and psychological processes along our journey through the physical, psychic and spiritual worlds. With this harmonious balance of the inner (subjective) and outer (objective)

spheres the individual attains his/her own emancipation by realizing the Infinite Being within one's very own existence. This realization cultivates one's deepest humanity and gives the wisdom and compassion to care for and further the progress of all creation.

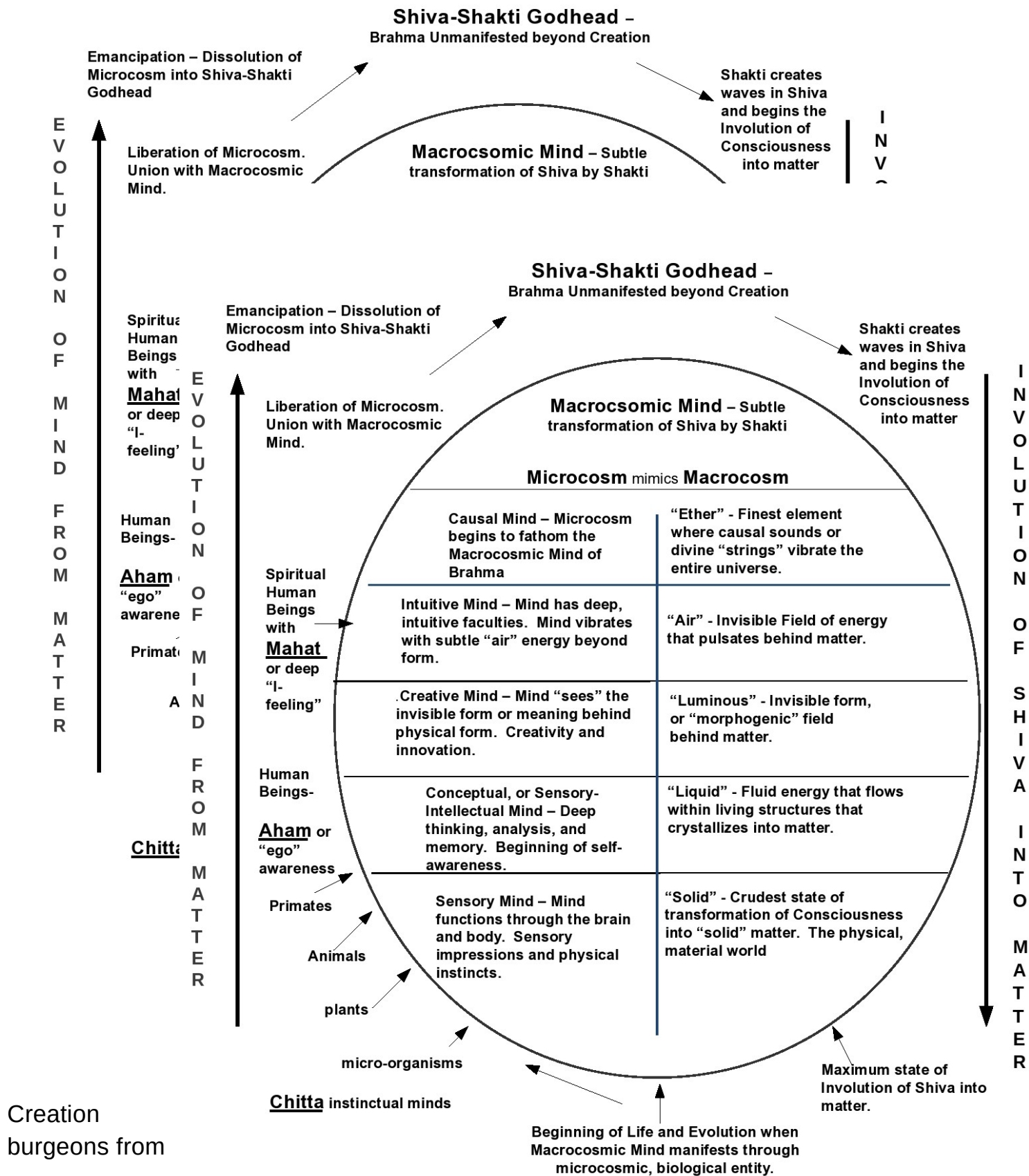
Part I: Tantric Cosmology: Involution and Evolution of Consciousness

Metaphysics and psychology are unified in Tantra. Ultimately, the deepest studies of our inner nature merge with absolute reality beyond our relative mental, psychological projections about reality. The still, quiet, and introspective mind can be focused and tuned in to the greater universe. One learns to live in harmony with an inner peace and wisdom that connects the personal, microcosmic being with an inward, hidden order in the universe. The Tantric theories about creation, involution, and evolution are very deep and complex. I refer the serious metaphysical reader to Idea and Ideology of Anandamurti or the works of Sir John Woodruff for a more complete description of Tantric cosmology and metaphysics. This book is more focused on psychology and phenomenology than metaphysics.

Central to Tantric cosmology are the concepts of Shiva and Shakti. Shiva is infinite consciousness and Shakti is divine, creative energy. Shiva is the transcendent First Father of our Consciousness and Shakti is the Great Mother Creator. They are inseparable in essence, like fire and its capacity to burn. Together they are Brahma, the Supreme Consciousness, or godhead, to use a concept from Western mysticism. Shiva and Shakti have separate names so that we can conceive of the distinction between essential being and the activity that results from this being. Shiva is infinite being, an infinite ocean of consciousness. Shakti, the creative energy, is the force that creates waves on the ocean. Shiva is absolute being, consciousness, and bliss, while Shakti is the energy behind change, creation, and becoming. Unified in Shiva, Shakti is tranquil and there is no expression, like a placid ocean. This is the godhead, or Brahma, where there is no change or becoming, no universe, planets, life, nor Big-Bang. All is one, eternal and infinite. When Shakti awakens her creative activity, she begins to create waves on this infinite ocean of Shiva. She only appears to be separate because of the multiplicity of the apparently separate waves she creates. Finer waves are finer aspects of creation, while grosser waves are condensed, material levels of creation. All is Brahma, all comes from the Shiva-Shakti godhead, whether manifest nor non-manifested in creative expression. There exists no other entity than Brahma.

When Shakti becomes active creation comes into being. Her creative activity burgeons out of the essence of Shiva. Shiva is the “material” or basic stuff of creation and Shakti is the operating, creative force that forms Shiva into

created manifestation. Everything that exists is a wave on the ocean of Shiva vibrated and sustained by the infinite energetic potential of Shakti. The whole universe is a spectrum of vibrations from the finest wavelengths of the Macrocosmic Mind to the grossest levels of matter. Carl Sagan referred to our material world as “star stuff” and provoked a new understanding of how we see the material world. Tantric cosmology would go even further and state that “star stuff” is but Consciousness bound by Shakti into matter. It is the infinite being of Shiva that is in the essence of all. The created universe is considered maya or cosmic illusion because we perceive it as separate from the great Consciousness within.



the infinitely subtle and moves toward cruder manifestation. All creation is a gradual reduction of the infinite wave-length of Consciousness. Creation is like an iceberg in the infinite ocean of Shiva- Consciousness. Shiva is the ocean while Shakti is like the cool air that freezes a part of the ocean and makes an iceberg. Both iceberg and ocean, like creation and Consciousness, are of the same essence. The subtlest aspects of creation are but finer vibrations of Shakti. The Macrocosmic Mind is the first and subtlest expression to manifest out of the infinite ocean of Shiva. Unlike pure Consciousness, Mind has the qualities of both Shiva and Shakti. It is a tranquil, intelligent being like Shiva, but also an active being like Shakti. It is through this Macrocosmic Mind that the material universe manifests. The action of Mind is like the cooling effect upon the iceberg. Subtle waves of Shiva-Consciousness are transformed into energy and matter. Everything that exists is first conceived within this great Mind that continues to guide the involution of Shiva into the material expressions of the universe. The Mind of Brahma is GOD- Generator-Operator- Destroyer. Brahma generates all creatures in its mind, they are operated or sustained by this mind, and ultimately dissolved or “destroyed” by this mind as all created things are impermanent.

What we call “matter” is really a spectrum of very fine energies that eventually manifest in apparently solid form. There are 5 levels of material expression: ether, air, luminous, liquid, and solid. The subtler elements like “ether” or “air” aren’t like space and oxygen. They are very fine fields of energy behind matter and form. Their subtlety is like “ether” or “air.” Matter has these very subtle, invisible layers or “dark matter,” (the ether and air layers) as well as more empirically quantifiable gross expressions (luminous, liquid, and solid) as well. When matter reaches its most dense state in the core of a star, there Shiva has reached his maximum state of density. Shakti cannot condense Shiva’s vibration any further and this phase of the involution of Consciousness is complete. Shakti has awakened Shiva for the cosmic dance of creation and has transformed the infinite, motionless Shiva into the jagat or moving, living universe. Shiva is infinite and the creation of the universe is just an imaginary transformation within Shiva’s infinity. Still, Shiva remains as witness to the jagat. The universe is just waves on the infinite ocean of Consciousness and always remains within Brahma.

Mind comes from Consciousness. Mind projects the physical universe with its infinite creative power as Shakti has made all things from Shiva-

Consciousness. Life is the attempt to express the Macrocosmic Mind within a physical structure like a little bubble within its own created universe. Life resists entropy and organizes itself. It takes matter and energy from its environment and puts them to its own use. Life, even in its simplest of forms, is an intelligence created and guided by the Macrocosmic Mind of Brahma that is sustaining the physical universe. Mind is something much more subtle than any physical energy in the universe. It is the guiding and sustaining force for biological life. Mind acting upon matter is a state of organization and moves contrary to the force of entropy that governs the material world.

The intelligence of Shiva and the energy of Shakti are always behind the phase of involution, of created expression. Shakti leads Shiva away from his state of infinite oneness and non-duality. In the phase of evolution, Shiva leads Shakti's created activity, the universe, back toward his pure state of Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss. Considering that there is such an intelligent force as Brahma behind the physical world, it should be a little easier to conceptualize that the physical world is not something static and fixed and that matter is not an absolute state of existence. Matter is bound Consciousness. Consciousness releases these bonds through the creation of life. The second law of thermodynamics, the law of entropy, is but a game that Shakti plays in the basement of her creation, this physical universe. Behind this ephemeral, passing show is all the intelligence of all of the anterior planes of existence that preceded and designed the involution of the solid factor, or physical world. The physical world is but the outermost ring of concentric circles around the Consciousness Nucleus of Shiva. Shakti's gravity and entropy are stronger in the physical world where all of the impetus of creation has reached its nadir. Still and quiet, Shiva remains the nucleus force behind all of the creation and is ultimately the supreme creator and giver of life, which is but a spark of Shiva Consciousness. Shiva is Hunab Ku, the center and nucleus of the universe. Consciousness is the nucleus of all nuclei- galaxy centers, planets, biological cells- all are the progeny of Brahma.

When the Macrocosmic Mind manifests as life in a physical structure it is referred to as a microcosmic mind. The microcosm is but a bubble within the unified Macrocosmic Mind. There is but one Mind that manifests in many forms, like the reflection of one moon on many ponds. Life, or evolution of Consciousness, is an attempt to retrace the steps of creation generated in the phase of the involution of Consciousness where Shakti manifested Shiva, and thus return to the original Shiva-Shakti union. Mind is a vehicle for this bound

Consciousness and uses successively finer physical mediums to return to the essential state of unity in Brahma. The evolution of biological life is the manifestation of the microcosmic mind's evolutionary march toward re-union with Brahma.

Most expressions of life are still in the pre-conscious stage of evolution. There is Consciousness, no doubt, as Shiva is behind all mental expressions and therefore behind all expressions of biological life. However, these entities are not entirely conscious of themselves. The mind is still confined to the sensory, instinctual level. Only the chitta, or objective, Sensory Mind has manifested. Chitta is the aspect of mind that takes on the impression of the external world within the physical brain. It is the outer part of mind that relates to the subtle life forces of the body. It also regulates the physiological instincts that relate us to this sensory world. The sensory organs transmit and impress external signals into the chitta. Chitta is like a mental "plasm" or LCD screen that gives us a picture show of external reality. The instincts inherent in the chitta respond to this image and, in turn, act upon the motor organs in the brain to respond to the external world. As life evolves the chitta becomes more complex as the brain and nervous system have developed more refined instincts. Greater degrees of intelligence begin to manifest through the refined chitta. Chitta is the medium in which the mind responds to the determinism of the external, sensory world but also the recipient of guiding intelligence from the Macrocosmic Mind. Chitta, although grossly bound to a biological entity, is still an aspect of the one, omniscient Macrocosmic Mind and it is this mind that ultimately guides all evolution back toward union with Brahma.

Undoubtedly, the most evolved intelligence of embodied, microcosmic consciousness on this planet is the human mind. Here, self awareness is clearly established. There is a sense of "I am" with a desire to discover itself and grow mentally and spiritually. As the instincts of the chitta have become very refined, the intelligence of the mind, the Aham, manifests. Aham is the ego or intellect. It is the intelligence that says "I am" and looks for ways to nourish, understand, and protect its identity. The impressions created in the mind by the relationship between the nerve cells and the mental chitta are witnessed by the Aham-intellect or ego and there is the thought that "I am walking by the river, there is an oak tree with an agreeable smell. I think I will sit here for a while." Here, the mind isn't operating at the purely instinctual level of the Sensory Mind. There are subtle thoughts, judgments, and impressions that act upon the more objective, Sensory Mind and chitta. The

Sensory Mind and chitta are always in the present while the Aham may be very busy processing experiences in the present, remembering the past, or creating imaginary realities and fantasies with the help of memory and imagination. Because Aham is the "I am," the ego has many existential desires and needs in the mental arena beyond the simple sensory world. Consciousness comes from the infinite Shiva but now Consciousness is bound within a human body, with a Sensory Mind, but even more complex is the notion of "I am" with its intelligence and all of the needs and potential experiences that will eventually awaken this limited, separate notion of "I am" into union with Shiva.

**Subjective
Chamber of
Mind**

Mahat
"I exist" Pure I-feeling
Intuitive feeling of existence behind
the flux of the intellect and ego.

Aham
Ego, Active "I", or Intellect.
Mind has self-concept and
desires to expand awareness.

**Objective
Chamber of
Mind**

Chitta
Mental plasma that takes
on the form of perceived
objects.

As human desires become more refined and meaning and purpose are established, the self-concept of the Aham is cultivated. It is only due to the natural flow of mental evolution that this limited Aham-ego concept desires to expand into something still greater. When the separate ego begins to wonder with creative imagination as to why some things are good and beautiful and meaningful and seeks to increase these subtle, mental needs, we encounter higher realities. We find greater levels of union with nature and the social world, deeper levels of friendship and intimacy, and greater wonder toward the great universe and everything in it. These higher existential experiences break down our separateness and gradually make us more universal citizens. Mahat, or the pure I-feeling, manifests when the intelligence of the Aham is witnessed by something finer and more internal than the Aham-intellect that is so occupied with the complex social world. Mahat is the pure intuition of "I exist," pure mindfulness. It sees the intellect of the ego from its quiescence deep within, beyond time. It is the closest approximation to what one would call the "soul." It is the inner light just behind the first memory in childhood, your pure, inner "I" before it was impressed upon so firmly by the outside world. Experiences in the brain and chitta may affect the ego, but the Mahat, the pure "I", is never affected. It is the part of you that just is, the finest part of your mental being. It is your personal, dear and sweet feeling of pure existence that seems so special that it belongs to you and no other. This deep feeling of "I" experientially reveals immortality in that it is the key to feeling the Universal "I" that is within all souls. It seems to be everywhere and in all people. A truly intelligent microcosm that has properly cultivated the Aham-ego awareness will always find the ground of their person here in the quiescent "I" of Mahat. Shiva and the Mahat are so close in proximity and similarity it is practical to say they are identical. The finest part of the mind, the Mahat, is a perfect replica of Shiva-Consciousness. But Shiva is the witness even of Mahat, and is the lord of the mind. Even though Mind bound itself in creation and has had to pass through a phase of evolution to re-manifest itself, the fundamental consciousness of Shiva has never changed. He has witnessed the entire universal drama since its inception. The infinite ocean of Consciousness sustains all things always. It is the fundamental identity or "I-Witness" beyond the Mahat.

Tantric sadhana follows the natural flow of mental development from the instinctual chitta toward the Aham-intellect toward the Mahat-intuition. For human beings whose minds are dominated by more animal propensities, the practice of sadhana is very focused on physical and moral discipline. One needs a lot of force or Shakti to overcome these tendencies. This is called the Shakta, or Warrior stage. The Warrior aspirant needs a Moses or Krishna image to inspire dharmic rectitude. This is the "Warrior" stage of Sadhana. Warriors convert chitta instincts into conceptual Aham-intellect identity by following a strict code of social and spiritual discipline.

For those more developed minds who have moral discernment and a clear intellect and who are not so fettered by the limitations of the Aham- intellect, sadhana is a little more internal. Sadhana isn't so focused on hero worship like in the Warrior

stage. In this next stage the “enemies” are clearly seen as more internal and subtle, like vanity or the desire for spiritual power. One who overcomes these limitations becomes almost god- like and feels a deep union with Brahma always. This state is called the Devotional stage. Devotees convert the Aham-intellect into the intuition of the Mahat, the pure “I.” Here the spiritual aspirant, the sadhaka, is in the process of becoming one with god, the Generator, Operator, and Destroyer of the universe. The devotee has already passed through the stages of discipline and duty, of work and study. There remains only the desire to live in unity with Brahma. However, the danger here is that the Aham expansion is toward something so great that the Aham will always try to claim this greatness as its own. However, due to the mind’s rapid, inward movement, Shakti’s reactions will come quicker to those that are closer to union with Her purity. They will always be taught that the fat camel can never be forced through the most subtle and pure “eye of the needle” The pure “I”, is like a point of a needle where no form nor image may arise. Union with Shiva is possible only through the surrender of Aham, and the devotee knows and understands this secret. All of the devotee’s being is surrendered to Brahma in meditation. A yogi always strives for this one- pointed perfection of mindfulness, or ekagrata.

And for those blessed souls who attain this devotion, the non-dual knowledge of the Shiva-Shakti godhead is not far away. Being so secure in the home which is this divine universe and fearing nothing, the devotee surrenders completely to Shiva and attains oneness with the immortal, unalloyed state of Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss of Shiva. Even god, The Generator, Operator, and Destroyer becomes “undone” as the microcosm merges into the silent grounds of the Shiva-Shakti godhead. Meister Eckhart tells us that in the truest spiritual renunciation, not even god can bind the union of the soul in the godhead. The iceberg has melted back into the ocean and there is only the still, infinite ocean of Shiva, the Infinite One. This is the final, Shaeva stage. “Shaeva” refers to the followers of the ancient Tantric practices given by Shiva, the prehistoric yogi who first systematized Tantra in a non-dualistic style. Shaevas dissolve the entire mind-chitta, Aham, and Mahat into Shiva. The mind has achieved yoga, absolute union.

It is through sadhana that a microcosmic consciousness becomes one with the Macrocosmic consciousness or Shiva. Shakti bound Shiva into the created universe in the phase of involution. In the phase of life and evolution Shiva, through each and every one of us, seeks to return to his immortal abode. Sadhana, in all of its stages, involves the awakening of the kundalini. Kundalini is really the divine force of Shakti dormant in the base of the spine like a coiled serpent. Her “awakening” involves the gradual elevation of this fundamental creative force up the spine and into the brain, where Shiva resides within the microcosm. Kundalini Shakti is the fundamental intelligence behind the microcosm, behind its evolution from crude to subtle. There has been so much physical clash in biological evolution. There has been so much to learn and understand with the evolution of Self awareness and

intellect. But most important is our internal, spiritual desire for freedom and liberation from suffering. Sadhana shows us the way to find this very fine, internal flow into yoga, into union.

Part II: TANTRIC PSYCHOLOGY- Mental Processes in the Realization of the Infinite

The fundamental urge behind all beings is the endeavor to expand towards the Infinite. From the rudimentary amoeba to the complex emotional and intellectual human being is this movement and expansion from its current evolutionary status toward greater, yet unrealized potential. The infinite Consciousness itself has “assumed the guise of finitude” through so many and various expressions that consciously or unconsciously seek re-union with their essential nature. This evolutionary march is only partially, and at its crudest levels, a struggle for self-preservation with its constant struggle for physical existence. Behind all of the effort and struggle is the eternal play of the Infinite seeking to regain its pure state of eternal repose in the Shiva-Shakti godhead. Biological evolution is the mark of this divine effort, while sadhana is the final impetus to complete this cosmic flow.

It is not the purpose of this work to give an account of the entire Macrocosmic process of evolution. The focus is rather on the final stages of Macrocosmic evolution as it is encapsulated in the development of human beings. And even within the context of human development the focus will be more on the psychological and psycho-spiritual aspects of this development, rather than the simply biological stages of psychological development.

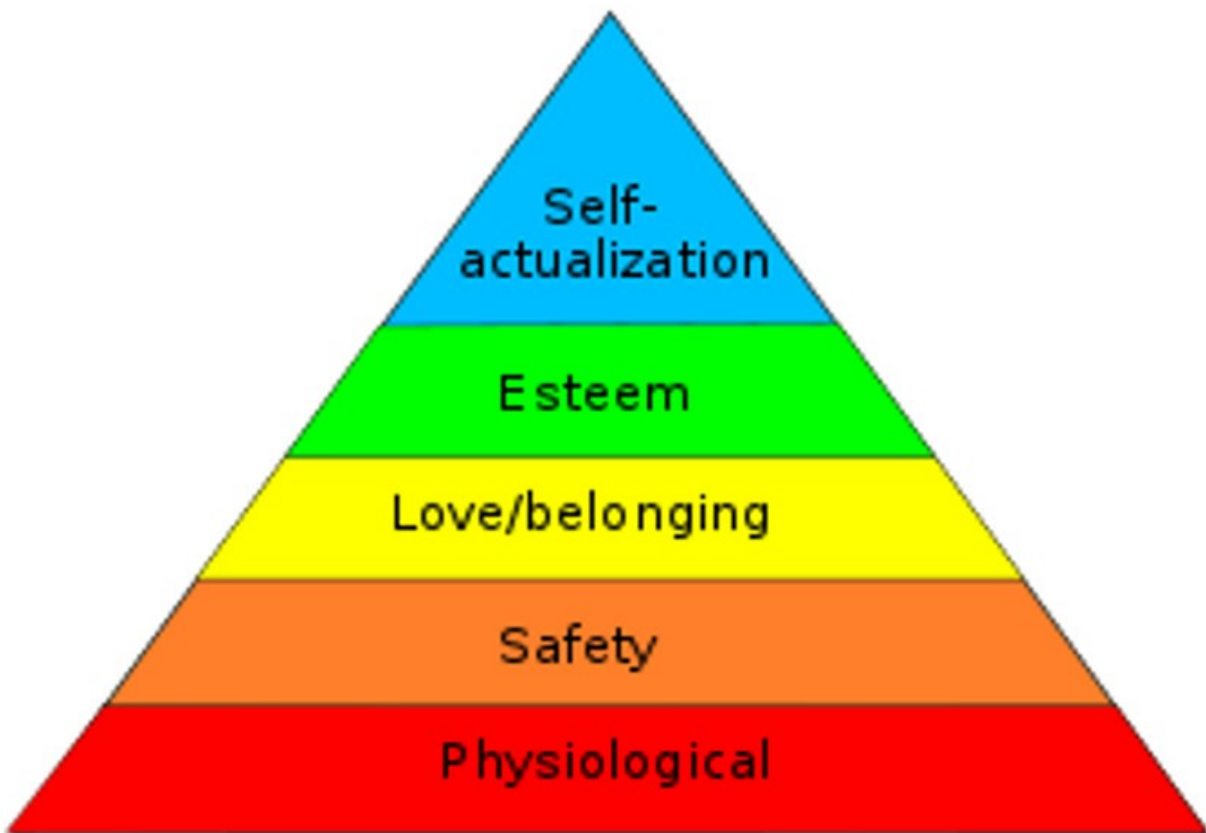
According to Tantra there are 50 main mental propensities embedded in the human mind. The Sanskrit term for mental propensity, *vrtti*, literally means vortex or whirlpool. We can imagine the microcosmic mind colored and qualified in the phenomenal world by various *vrttis* that distort and dis-configure the objective chamber of the mind, causing it to only see the objective, distorted images of the mind instead of the reflection of Shiva within. They are the Tantric tornadoes that cause this great illusion, or *maya*. All stages of relative, microcosmic consciousness are conditioned by these *vrttis*. They are the veil through which we see many spectrums of reality.

Vrtti is often translated as instinct. This is correct provided the term instinct is elevated from its common usage referring to biological and unconscious activities. The propensities, or *vrttis*, are cognitive and emotive modes of functioning in the various layers of mind: sensory- instinctual, conceptual, creative, intuitive, and causal layers. They range from the basest of instincts and defense mechanisms for the primordial sensory-instinctual mind to the most complex, self-conscious, reflective, and intuitive qualities of the higher intuitive and causal levels. Therefore, the 50 *vrttis* are modes of mental functioning that include all of the drives, urges, propulsions, emotions and subtle longings that make up the human mind.

The essence of the 50 vrttis are sound vibrations or “strings” in the Mind of Brahma. The microcosmic mind with its 50 vrttis mimics the causal sound matrix of Brahma. Sound is the most subtle material and therefore causal vibration for all of the other, lower elements. These 50 causal sounds are not only the sounds of the human vrttis but also causal sounds that Generate, Operate, and Dissolve the created universe. Besides being the causal forces in human phenomenal awareness, the causal sound vrttis also shape not just our conceptual, social world but form our inner, metaphysical reality. This abstract idea of how this created universe is so intricately connected to human consciousness will be a little clearer after discussing the following chapters.

The vrttis do not function randomly and haphazardly but have an orderly, guiding function that leads one from gross to subtle levels of consciousness. Their unfolding or manifestation parallels the awakening of the kundalini. This innate intelligence of the microcosm utilizes the unfolding of the vrttis in the evolution of the mind. When the ego needs protection the lower vrttis manifest to attempt to strengthen the fragile personality. When the ego is ready for expansion the higher vrttis then begin to manifest themselves in successively more complex forms. This unfolding expands from the physical to the psychological to the spiritual desires. This idea is quite similar to that of the modern trans personal psychologists, although the level of development continues a little deeper in Tantra. The core of Tantric philosophy and meditation practice is the notion that the person who can cultivate the higher propensities to overcome the lower, instinctual and self-serving vrttis realizes the true and eternal nature of the Supreme Consciousness behind the limitations and separateness of the mind. This idea is not fundamentally different than the humanistic psychologists of the 20th century. For example it is very easy to parallel Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs to the successive unfolding of the mental propensities in Tantra Yoga. In both models, more basic and fundamental psychological needs must be met before one can grow and expand into higher levels of integration.

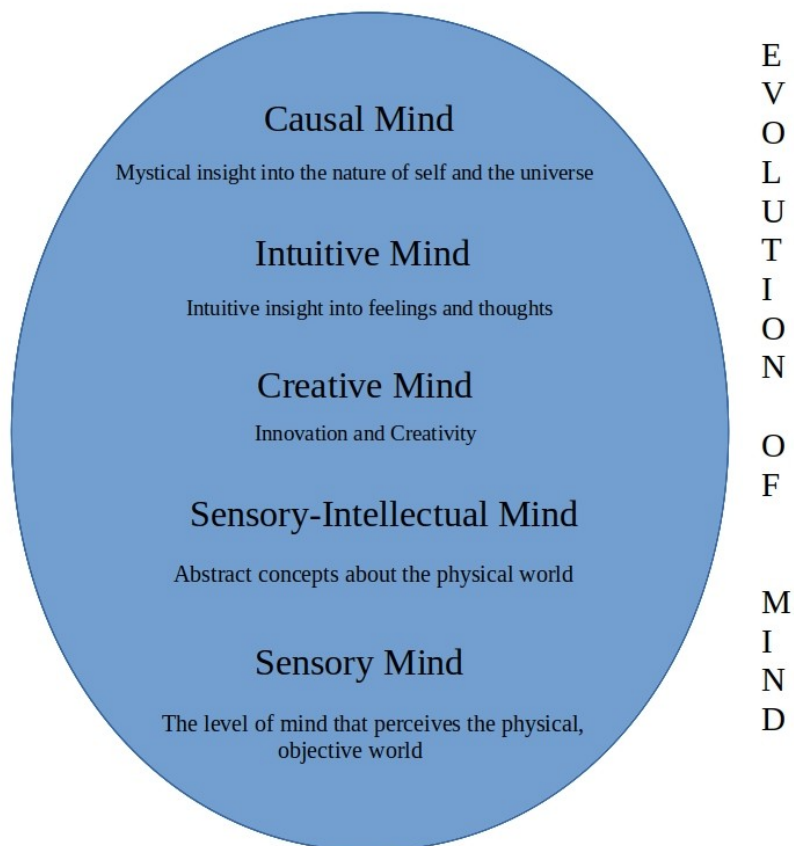
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



While discussing the evolution of spiritual consciousness through the successive unfolding of the mental propensities it is important to consider how these propensities function within the mind itself. Again, stated simply, the mind can be divided into two spheres: the objective and the subjective. The objective sphere (chitta) of the mind is connected to the vibrations of the universe through the senses. It also holds these impressions like a plasma screen as well as the responses to these impressions in the form of instincts, feelings, thoughts, and memories. There are 5 layers (kosas) in the objective sphere of the mind- Sensory,

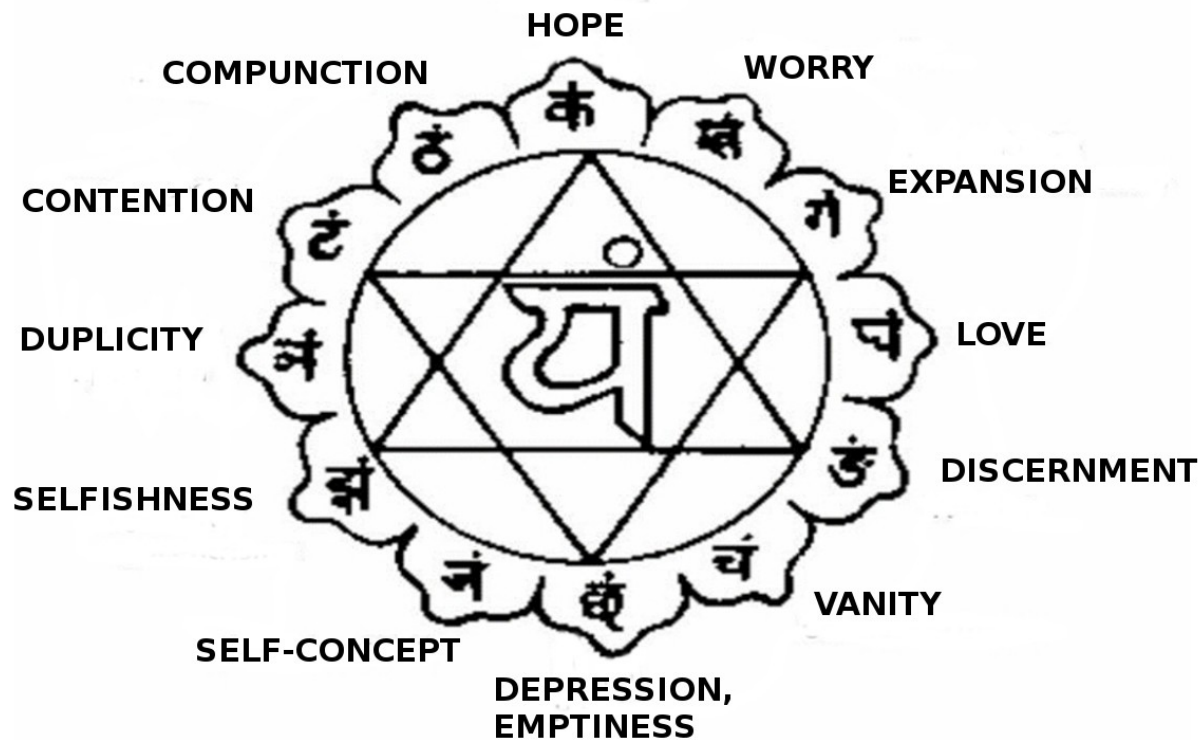
Conceptual, Creative, Intuitive and Causal. They will be more fully discussed in the next part of the book. The lower ones are of course connected to the cruder, material vibrations as well as the cruder propensities and layers of mind. The more subtle and spiritual layers of mind are connected to the more refined levels of the objective world. The vrtti vibrate the chitta and impose a pattern of thought, action, or feeling in the mind. Our thought, feeling, and desire are all conditioned by these fine, vibrational threads. Vrttis are mental archetypes that vibrate the chitta, the brain and nervous system. The vrttis are therefore related to the control of hormone and neurotransmitter activities, which is a very important part of mental development and fine-tuning of the nervous system to finer states of awareness. Balancing the vrttis is a central part of Tantric practice. Lower vrttis must be transmuted into higher ones but ultimately the state of union with Shiva is beyond all vrttis. For this reason Patanjali declared “yoga chitta vrtti nirodha,” or “yoga is the suspension of mental vrttis.” When there are no vrttis on the pond’s surface it is possible to see the still, brilliant reflection of the moon.

SUPREME SUBJECTIVITY - ATMAN



The vrttis of the mind are situated in certain mental substations, vortexes, or chakras. The seven traditional “chakras” will be referred to in this work as “vortexes,” eg. Svadhistana Vortex, Manipura Vortex, etc. Chakra literally means a whirling circle, wheel, or vortex. Any given vortex is the sum of the vrttis that pertain to this greater vortex, or chakra. The vortex governs the expression of its vrttis. These vortexes are figuratively depicted as lotus flowers with a specific number of petals. The number of “petals” on the “lotus flower” of the vortex is the number of vrttis that vibrate a particular vortex. Each petal is an escaping vrtti of subtle energy from the center of the vortex.

The Anahata (4th) Vortex



Vortexes are not physical centers. They have a physical correspondence along the spinal cord and resonate with glands and nerve bundles. These vortexes are contained within the chitta, or objective chamber of mind, which has a direct connection with the brain, glands and nerves. The lower vortexes are contained within the cruder portion of mind and are therefore more extroverted and instinctual as they are associated with cruder realms of the objective, material world. The more subtle, higher vortexes are more introverted in that they are contained within the subtler portion of the objective mind, and therefore reflect more subjective, internal awareness.

In the subjective chamber there is more intellectual, creative and intuitive expression rather than instinctual impulses of the objective mind. With the grosser portion of the objective chamber it is like trying to see the reflection of the moon on choppy water while the subtle aspect of the objective mind is the reflection of the moon on placid water.

The section on spiritual practice (sadhana) will explain more fully the mechanics of the mind and body relation through the vrttis and vortexes. For now it is sufficient to know that the propensities are located in certain mental substations, or vortexes, located along the spine. The traditional “lotus petals” on the vortexes are actually the location of the various vrttis and the number of petals at the various vortexes represent the number of vrttis there.

The Muladhara Vortex

The Muladhara Vortex is the base of the mind. It is connected to the most primitive, reptilian structures of the brain. It is located at the very base of the spine, which in reality is the base of the brain. All of the so-called vortexes really have their root in the brain, with corresponding centers along the spine. Just as the reptilian brain is the most basic part of the human brain, the most basic level of the mind is the Sensory Mind, or *kamamaya kosa*, the layer of physical desire. The Sensory Mind is the level of mind that functions with the aid of the physical body and its sensory and motor organs. Mind is not matter. Mind is a subtle entity. Mind comes from Consciousness and matter comes from mind. However, because at this level the mind is bound into a microcosmic organism, mind must express itself with a material body. It is within the “solid factor” or material realm that there is a nervous system with cells, nerves, nervous tissue, glands, organs, etc. The physical body with all of its components is the vehicle of the subtle entity which is mind. The body undergoes changes as the mind expands just as the mind undergoes changes as the body adapts with its environment. Within the Sensory Mind are all of the physical instincts necessary for any given organism to adapt to its physical environment. The instincts of the Sensory Mind guide the mind unconsciously toward eating, sleeping, reproduction, and self-defense.

From here onward, I will use the terms Sensory Mind and the physical body almost interchangeably. However, there is a great difference. Although the Sensory Mind functions through the body’s sensory and motor organs whose control-centers are in the brain, the root of the sensory faculties is in the objective mind, the *chitta*. Without the sensory faculties in the mind, the body can’t function and without the body, the sensory faculties can’t function. It is because they are interdependent that, for simplicity’s sake, they will be used interchangeably.

The base for the kundalini or Shakti is in the Muladhara Vortex. Shiva draws her upward towards his position in the crown, or Sahasrara Vortex. All intelligence that the microcosm needs in its evolution lies dormant here in Muladhara. Shakti, the force responsible for all of the waves on the vast ocean of Shiva in this great universe, has taken position as the root of life’s fundamental vitality. She is the primordial energy that controls all forms of creative energy. As Shakti of the Macrocosm she binds all things. As kundalini, she liberates all microcosms from the Macrocosm in due course of their evolution. It is the awakened kundalini or Shakti that devours all of the *vrttis* on her way up to Shiva in the crown, or Sahasrara Vortex. When she arrives there, they are unified and the mind dissolves back into the Shiva-Shakti godhead. All of this evolutionary potential lies dormant in the Muladhara base, just as the reptilian brain system is the base for higher mid-brain and cortical development.

Most of the evolution of life on this planet is continually evolving within the sphere of the Sensory Mind in the Muladhara. The instincts are gradually being refined as the mind must adapt to changes in its environment as well as changes within the organism. The mind and body always work as a coordinated team. An animal mind needs an animal body while a more developed mind needs a more refined physical body. Recall that the Macrocosmic Mind must manifest itself in a crude, biological form at the beginning of the evolutionary phase so that it can, in time, liberate itself from its own created bondage. Therefore, even the Sensory Mind has, in latent form, the intelligence of the Macrocosm via kundalini working behind it. The Macrocosm cannot manifest itself entirely in a crude, physical form. It can only manifest its objective chamber of mind, the chitta, in a physical form. Only with future evolution may the intelligence of the Macrocosm, evolving through a microcosm, evolve the subjective chamber of mind- the Aham and Mahat. The intelligence of the instincts is guided and regulated by the Macrocosmic Mind. Their purpose is to propel the organism's mind onward in the evolutionary chain so that eventually Self awareness can develop.

Contemplate the perfection of the Sensory Mind in pre-conscious beings. A seed knows exactly when it is time to sprout and all of its processes of becoming a seedling and then later a plant are perfectly manifested. A sea turtle knows, just after hatching from its egg, to go directly to the ocean. Later in life it follows the planets electromagnetic vibrations to return year after year to mate at the same place in the ocean. Or a baby mammal; it already knows that it needs to feed from its mother. All of these examples, and millions of others, all function so harmoniously without having to think or learn the activity. It is truly the latent intelligence of the Macrocosmic Mind that is attempting to evolve itself back to its origin by means of microcosmic evolution.

The 4 Muladhara Vrttis- Kama, Artha, Dharma, and Moksha

The Muladhara Vortex is the base and relay station for all of the desires and directions of the human mind. The four directional vrttis of this vortex are kama- physical desire; artha- or mental desire; dharma- psycho- spiritual desire; and moksha- pure spiritual desire. An undeveloped human being has only physical desires. A human with a little intellect and self- reflection develops many mental and emotional needs. An intuitive person is always desiring to be closer to the spirit, while the most developed human beings long only for liberation, nirvana, or moksha. The Muladhara is the fundamental "square" that forms the 4 great directions of the mind. This fundamental square has the basic qualities of all microcosmic existence. All the possible states of microcosmic existence express themselves through this physical base. Kama is the orientation of the Sensory Mind toward the physical world. The Sensory Mind derives pleasure and

sustenance from the senses. The desires of kama vritti are simple, hard-wired instincts that help us relate to the physical world. We have hunger, fear, sexual desire, etc. It is our animal, physical being.

Artha is the stage where the Conceptual Mind derives not just pleasure but its psychological identity and personal significance from the realm of ideas about the physical world and social environment. It is more mental, conceptual and psychosocially oriented. One has a name, a job and an internal identity. It is the stage where intellect or conceptual Self awareness is cultivated so as to grasp the nature of the world and the personal ego through more abstract concepts and subtle desires embedded in the creative intellect. Dharma is the movement of the Conceptual Mind towards the spiritual, our intuitive development. This psychospiritual flow of Dharma is the endeavor of the Aham-intellectual mind to comprehend the spiritual nature and meaning of existence. One cultivates an intuition of things not physically perceived; deep purpose and meaning, moral beauty and an intimation of a divine order. Moksha is the longing for absolute emancipation from the entire relative world, the ensconcement in the pure, unconditioned Consciousness. Here the mind has traversed the whole spectrum of being and has manifested all of the necessary potentials to interact and understand those levels of reality. Having traversed the spectrum of human existence, one now desires to complete the cycle of existence, death, and rebirth by a return to the absolute and unconditioned consciousness beyond the scope of finite, relative existence.

It may seem strange that the Muladhara Vortex, the lowest station of the mind that controls the physical body and Sensory Mind, is the root of all human propensities. One may ask: "How is it possible for the subtler propensities such as those of dharma and moksha to be rooted in the Muladhara?" All desire is a longing for expansion and liberation from limitations whether one is speaking of the physical, the psychic or spiritual desires. The physical desires are an attempt to help the mind expand its arena in the physical realm. The psychic desires direct the mind toward psychic expansion in order to liberate one from mental limitations. Spiritual desires liberate one from spiritual ignorance and existential suffering. Even the desires in the basic levels of existence are desires to expand from limitations.

Physical desire, or kama vritti, is how mind expresses its longing for expansion when encapsulated in the physical world. The Macrocosmic mind is the essence of the microcosmic mind. All of its immense potential is latent in the microcosm, waiting with time and evolution to manifest this potential within this microcosmic receptacle. The Sensory Mind is how the Macrocosmic intelligence expresses itself while bound into the solid factor and the physical body. Mind, at this level, is

dependent upon the physical structure- a nervous system with sensory and motor organs. Mind, because it is bound within the physical sphere, must use physical organs in order to express itself. A yogi who only seeks dharma and moksha still has a physical body and these vrttis condition the physical body in such a way that the body and the nervous system can channel such tremendous spiritual force. If the body could not accommodate these higher vrttis with their advanced cognitive and emotive modes, then we wouldn't have a body capable of experiencing higher states of awareness. The human mind is an architecture designed from high above to relate harmoniously with the here and now of the physical body.

The root of infinite desire is present in the Sensory Mind but the mind at this stage only knows the physical world. However, behind the physical longings are the longings for something greater. Life and mind, bound by the force of Shakti in involution, must pass through this stage of evolution in order to unfold its higher potentials.

The microcosmic mind, as described by Anandamurti, is a 'relative, functional, and ever-changing entity.' It is relative in the sense that it is not absolute; it expands and evolves. Mind is relative and ever-changing in that along its journey it can never plateau at one stage for an undetermined period of time, as its innate tendency for expansion. And the mind is functional not just in the sense that it perceives, thinks, desires, etc. However, its ultimate function is as a vehicle to realize the Brahma, to reunite with pure Consciousness.

Each of the 4 stages (kama, artha, dharma, and moksha) progress and evolve out of each other. Though they can run parallel to each other, a higher tendency cannot begin to manifest until a requisite degree of development is manifested in the preceding stages. For example, dharma cannot begin to manifest until the mind has undergone mental expansion first. It is quite unthinkable that a mind functioning primarily through the senses could make a jump to an intuitive, psycho-spiritual mode of operation without first undergoing a great deal of cognitive and emotional expansion.

Kama is psycho-physical in that the mind is concerned exclusively with objective, sensory phenomenon. Here, the mind moves toward matter. Through clash and cohesion as a result of interacting with the sensory world the intellect and a self-conscious personality develops (artha vrtti). Intellect and personality manipulate and order the sensory world through thinking and will. Artha is a system of self-conscious and ego-bounded thinking and feeling that helps us find our niche in the social world. As intellect and self-consciousness develops mind begins to realize its own boundaries and limitations and seeks the means to liberate itself

from these limitations. Due to this inner tension the mind with its innate guiding and self regulating faculties seeks a higher order of intellectual and emotional functioning. This greater self awareness can deal with more subtle struggles and challenges. The mind is forced to look for answers to confusions and existential dilemmas. New desires have caused tension in the personality and this self-reflective personality looks for meaning or artha in a more internal manner. Intuition, therefore begins to manifest with dharma vrtti. Intuition is nothing more than the refinement and heightening of the intellect that helps one see even deeper into self and world. As intuitive capacity increases the mind is even less bound to sensory desires and the limited Aham-ego-intellect. This intuitive, dharma vrtti involves very deep self reflective and moral states of awareness in which one begins to realize one's existential place and purpose in an orderly universe. One understands that one is a spirit embodying the physical world

Intellect represents the power of the subjective mind over the objective sphere of mind and senses with its ability to reflect and reason about sensory phenomenon. Similarly is intuition the ability of the deeper, intuitive Mahat to guide the Aham-intellect. Intuition is the ability of the deepest part of the Mahat to see with such clarity and insight the functioning of the Aham-intellect. It is thereby illumined in such a way that it begins to function at a subtle level closer to the realm of pure spirit and thereby perceive phenomena with a spiritual orientation. At this stage the level of mental functioning is furthest from its most basic orientation of kama vrtti and now tends toward the spiritual as dharma vrtti. The mind is "relative and ever-changing" and always expanding towards the Supreme Consciousness. Its final desire is to move from the psycho-spiritual orientation of dharma to the purely spiritual union with the godhead. Moksha is this desire to return home to the Infinite. The Tantric concept of moksha is very similar to the Buddhist idea of nirvana.

Now the basic functions of the mind at its various stages has been over-viewed. Kama is sensory-instinctual; artha is intellectual or rational; dharma is intuition; and moksha is purely spiritual. However, within these 4 general stages of functioning are very specific cognitive and emotive means of orienting the mind to the respective levels of reality on which it is functioning. The other 46 vrttis (50 minus karma, artha, dharma and moksha) work within these 4 general directions. There are many vrttis that express and work under the direction of kama, while there are other vrttis that resonate and express the direction of artha, for example. One can imagine the other 46 vrttis as a spiral that ascends from the Muladhara base. The 4 basic vrttis create their own particular vrtti that resonates and qualifies the other 46 potential vrttis. As such, the Muladhara Vortex is always resonating with the higher vortexes, just as physical, material reality always

resonates with higher planes of subtle matter and mind. This concept was called psycho-physical parallelism by Anandamurti.

Within these 4 basic vrttis are encapsulated all of the other propensities that unfold or manifest as the mind expands and develops. Kama, or physical desire, activates the propensities of the 2nd, and 3rd vortexes. Artha activates the 2nd through 4th vortexes. Dharma, or psycho-spiritual longing has mainly to do with the 4th and 5th vortexes. Moksha, or pure spiritual longing, activates the 5th, 6th and 7th vortexes.

The physical body and Sensory Mind in the Muladhara Vortex remain in the physical realm of the solid factor under the influence of the 4 general vrttis. The influence of the 4 vrttis simply modify the physical body to accommodate the level of mental functioning. Kama flows only with the Sensory Mind and body and the senses simply serve physical desires.

When artha, or psychic desire is guiding the senses, the senses are vehicles for the intellect. We can reflect and think about the external world instead of just instinctively react. For example, the hand can react instinctively and withdraw from something sharp or hot. It can serve as an expression and vehicle of thought when the mind makes a plan to carve a canoe from a log and the hand follows and works according to mental ideas. When intuition or dharma is guiding the senses, the senses become very still, yet more alive and conscious. For example, the physical hand may express graceful movements from elevated song, music, or dance that correspond to very deep ideas in one's soul. With dharma, the external world as seen through the senses is something very fine. One can see through the play of the senses and see any form of separation in the universe as a simply play of the Sensory Mind. We see the particular waves of sensory perception yet intuit that they are part of a vast ocean. Nature is something beautiful and mysterious. Something image-less is moving all images. Only when moksha vrtti directs the mind is the Sensory Mind is entirely transcended as the entire mind merges into Shiva.

In the practice of yoga the Sensory Mind and its sensory and motor organs continue to play a vital role in cultivating the higher vrttis of artha, dharma, and moksha. The body is a vehicle for the mind. Tantra yoga is the science of using both the body and the mind as a vehicle for consciousness. The practice of asana positions the body, with its sensory and motor organs, in such a way as to redirect the physically-oriented vital energies inward. Even to reach deep stages of meditation it is necessary to accommodate the body and senses so that they facilitate and create physical states of hormonal expression that correspond with spiritual states of mind.

An important note must be made before further examining the specific characteristics of the vortexes and vrttis. The explanation of the tendencies associated with the mind at each vortex are greatly simplified due to the fact that there is a very complex dynamic and association of all of the vrttis with each other, both within their respective vortexes and without. There is no absolute linear and isolated manifestation of the vrttis; instead, they all interact and qualify each other. Although it is a general rule that we move from vortex to vortex, there are very complex interactions between the vortexes. The following descriptions of these propensities are theoretical in that it is an attempt to explain each tendency as it is in itself, without the influence of the others. While discussing the propensities of the higher centers or vortexes more reference will be made to how this complex interaction occurs. If there were only 50 basic propensities functioning in all human beings without an intricate mosaic of combinations amongst them, then the personalities of humans would be rather simple and monotonous. What makes each character or personality so unique in their complexity is the vast variations of the clustering of propensities that make up a particular mind.

The Svadhistana Vortex

Within the human genome is a record of all previous forms of life; from human to hominid to Gila monster. All of ancestral life is within our little microcosmic existence, and recorded in our DNA. After so many life experiences as microbes, plant, reptile, and mammal the microcosmic mind eventually becomes conscious of itself. Just as there is now a more developed cerebral cortex built upon the reptilian and mid-brains, the Aham-intelligence begins to evolve and replace the blind instincts of the Sensory Mind and chitta. There are now thoughts and feelings and other qualities of internal, subjective mental awareness that begin to influence the biological organism. Human consciousness is clearly, sensibly conscious and self-reflective as the subjective chamber of mind begins to have influence over the objective chamber.

The human being occupies a unique though quite odd place in the spectrum of microcosmic evolution. Plotinus said that humans exist somewhere between the level of the gods and the beasts. No longer is the modern human being existing in an unconscious Eden, devoid of self consciousness, driven only by instinct, and completely fused with Nature, Shakti's creation. Nor are we completely unified in the transcendental Shiva Consciousness, utilizing the full extent of our intellectual-intuitive capacity and liberated from instinct and blind attachments. Rather, we are an odd admixture and alloy of animal and god, of instinct and reason. Our evolution is incomplete; our spiritual resplendence is only beginning to dawn from unconscious obscurity.

The emerging ego with its Conceptual Mind is now separated from its unconscious, instinctual fusion with nature. The Aham with its self awareness and existential needs is more abstracted from the simple here and now of animal life. However, most lack the intuition to see beyond the Aham-intellectual boundaries and into an ever greater, conscious union with the Macrocosm. The evolution and healing of our separateness is a progression and expansion of the separate Aham toward greater, harmonious union with the created universe. Our liberation requires that we properly cultivate the development of universal love that penetrates all of nature and human society and unites us with others in a spiritual sense. For a human being there certainly is no real freedom in unlimited sensory revelry. The purpose and plan of the evolution of human consciousness is of not to regress back into unconscious impulsivity nor is it to defensively sustain itself in its present status. Life is an evolutionary movement and flow. Spiritual and psychological evolution is the process of developing Self awareness and confidence in oneself while harmoniously existing with others.

The Sanskrit word for the human being is manusa or 'mind preponderant being.' The Svadhistana Vortex vrttis protect the most basic and fundamental security of a mind-preponderant being and are intended to serve and protect the continued evolution of human awareness.

It is easy to see them as refinements of the self-defense and preservation mechanisms of those found in primates and other animals. A human mind has more a complex notion of self and our fundamental self preservation drives and defenses are not simply sex, fear and aggression. Our instinctive defenses bear the stamp of human complexity and Self awareness on top of the purely animal instincts. They protect the emerging ego from the dangers that threaten its psychological integrity and thereby keep the mind from sinking back into a stage devoid of higher self- consciousness where there is only confused, unbridled instinct.

Svadhistana, in accord with its function, literally means "self- establishment." It is the self-establishment of the mind with a notion of Self awareness, or Mahat, the subjective 'I'. However the Aham is still heavily bound by the instinctively oriented chitta for there to be really deep, clear understanding of the inner "I". The study of the propensities of the Svadhistana Vortex help the sadhaka to understand the essential desires of the Svadhistana. A focused intellect can grasp insights into the nature of hidden propensities with a little help from this practical, psychological study of these propensities. By knowing what they are and what they exist for, we can understand our personal complexes in the light of a broader understanding of human nature.

The Svadhistana Vortex expresses the Conceptual Mind and is a vehicle for this mind to express its particular intelligence within the emerging personality. No longer is the mind solely guided by fixed physiological instincts in the chitta. The Svadhistana, "self-establishing" mind is thrown out of an instinctual Eden and is forced to face duality and make choices in a more conscious, conceptual human world. In this duality one is all too acutely aware of separation and there is so much ignorance and self-doubt hampering the harmonious development of the Svadhistana, "self-establishing" mind. The Macrocosmic Mind must guide this process of self-establishment that is besieged by so much external clash and confusion. The Conceptual Mind has received a spark of Shiva's self awareness, intellect, and humane love to help us in this journey. The Conceptual Mind can think and plan as well as feel and love because it is Self aware and intelligent. There is still duality between self and other, between outside and inside, but there are also the tools to resolve these natural limitations. This separation from the world "out there" permits the intellect to accumulate knowledge and experience more complex social and inter-personal relationships. If human development is

harmonious and balanced, our reason and human feeling increase and there is a greater feeling of unity with the universe, the Macrocosmic Mind of Brahma.

This ability for the mind to abstract itself from the senses and body by thinking, planning and willing also gives rise to an abstract concept of self, or personality. The mind now has personal, conscious qualities. We are now beings with the needs of a person; security, love, belonging, and

purpose. This concept of self is newly-emerging, and the Svadhistana Vortex needs to secure a grounding and base. Just as animal and mundane, human life need security from physical dangers to continue to exist, the Conceptual Mind of the Svadhistana Vortex needs psychological security and proper intellectual and social development. The sole function of the Svadhistana is to secure this psychological base for the emerging ego. Having this rational base with psychological, emotional security ensures that this delicate and emerging awareness will be able to experience more avenues of intellectual, cultural, and interpersonal, emotional development.

All of the intelligence of the Conceptual Mind is utilized for this purpose. When there are the appropriate conditions for this level of mind to function completely without hindrance, then the mind can continue to manifest its higher potentials. A mind that has these fundamental security needs met will indeed have the fundamental self confidence necessary for the ego to proceed with its growth. The vrttis from the 3rd and 4th vortexes imprint themselves upon the establishing Svadhistana personality and guide it toward wholeness. A person with a balanced Svadhistana Vortex will feel secure in the world and believe that there is goodness in it as well as within. There will be confidence and ability as well as rationality. The practical and rational, emotionally balanced Svadhistana keeps one mentally balanced without irrational, harmful emotions and projections. It is only when the mind lacks these fundamental qualities, that the Svadhistana Vortex has to use its hard-wired defense mechanisms to compensate for an emotional insecurity mental confusion in one's being. These defense mechanisms are the 6 vrttis of the Svadhistana Vortex.

While the Conceptual Mind does involve the process of conscious, intended reasoning, the majority of its activity is still very unconscious and instinctual. The mind at the Svadhistana level of evolution is only beginning to express human self awareness. There are the resources of the Conceptual Mind available but very little self awareness to actually utilize them. A strong mind will be less influenced by these propensities because of its self-confidence and mental strength, while a weaker mind will be affected by them. The propensities of the Svadhistana may pirate the Conceptual Mind and force it to work under the control of these

instincts. It is only when the mind has understood the effect of these impulsive, blind vrttis that the cognitive abilities of the Conceptual Mind can be fully utilized instead of being controlled by the vrttis. The fewer the compensatory vrttis, the more complete is the access to the mental level. Recall how the vrttis are whirlpools that force distortion on the mind field. It is like trying to see the vast beautiful landscape with a tornado approaching. This model is true for all of the vortexes and levels of mind. At any given level, mind has the full ability to access the entirety of its higher cognitive resources only when there is less distortion from its vrttis. The expression of a vrtti is an emotive instinct that helps the mind to relate to its respective level of

reality when its cognitive resources are not sufficient. Therefore, the activation of the vrttis in the Svadhistana Vortex, the seat of the rational mind and the personality's foundation, weaken the mind's rational faculties by vibrating with "irrational" thought patterns from these compensatory vrttis. Each vrtti has its "reason" in that there is a very clear and definite compensatory, self-protective purpose. Because these vrttis respond to situations of fear and insecurity that have threatened one's harmonious self-establishment, they blindly react to these situations with an instinctual "irrationality."

The 6 Svadhistana Vortexes

1. Indifference

The first vrtti of the 2nd vortex is indifference. A mind that is struggling to develop its personality foundation will certainly encounter situations that threaten its emotional stability and security. When some type of event threatens balance and stability the mind may simply act indifferent to the effect the situation actually has. An indifferent person may suffer greatly or be extremely affected by physical or psychological abuse, an insult, social neglect, etc., and show no apparent concern for the distress that they should be experiencing. Indifference, when it is expressed toward oneself, may take the form of repression. The thoughts, feelings and memories that cause one pain or discomfort are simply censored out by the ego. Instead of being overwhelmed by the negative impressions of suffering in the world, in the family, or inside the person, the mind finds a way to feel indifferent to these damaging impressions.

Take the case of a person who has been mistreated or neglected and has thereby lost trust and the ability to form close relations with others. Perhaps this person wants to love and be loved, but has always encountered pain instead. This is indeed a great trauma for the personality who needs love and trust in order to grow and expand and have the confidence to be able to give love. To compensate for this great loss a person may turn callous and lack regard for others. Attention

isn't truly given to others because of this complex. Being fixated on one's own needs, one doesn't see the needs of others and perhaps even imposes upon them with their own blind needs.

This tendency is not something that is consciously thought out and decided, like not choosing to listen to the annoying complaints of a neighbor, for instance. This *vrtti* is a mechanism that is more hard-wired into the mind to keep a threatening situation from distorting, confusing, or even consuming the personality. As the Svadhistana Vortex upholds the basic, fundamental structure of the emerging personality, one can understand how the propensities preserve such a delicate and tenuous structure. The *vrtti* of indifference isn't simply a conscious suppression of

undesirable perceptions, but a very deep and instinctive defense against anything that threatens the structural integrity of the personality.

It should be clear that this propensity does not only function in relation to the other defensive propensities of the second vortex. One can very clearly see this tendency functioning in people with developed and complex personalities. In fact, the more complex the personality becomes the more sensitive it is to more subtle, psychological disruptions. In this light we can see how this *vrtti* is responsible for the phenomenon of psychological repression. Certainly a way of denying the effect of a disturbing situation or internal thought that doesn't coincide with the self- concept is simply to deny its effect by repressing it. With repression there is a system of compensations set up to focus the mind in another direction to repress the pain, suffering, or undesirable thoughts and impulses. The complex will always try to project itself somewhere else. The range of this repression varies according to the intensity of the trauma. On the lighter level of intensity one may be repressing a painful experience that affects a certain part of their personality but one is able to repress the pain and still function, although a little neurotic. At the other extreme would be psychosis, where the tension is so overwhelming that the Baluchistan, self- establishing mind begins to fragment and distort.

The phenomenon of indifference or repression is like a great stone under the surface of a stream. One can't see it, but its effects are visible. Indifference, or any other lower *vrtti*, take their toll on the mind in that their reactionary nature must force or distort a certain state of mind. Might there come a time when this repressed energy wants to rise to the surface? Might the stream of consciousness move a little deeper and dislodge the great, dense stone? This would require further repression and distortion to keep the repressed reality hidden. However, this tension will somehow manifest in a variety of mental and physical symptoms.

The only way to transform and transmute this vritti is to be able to see it. However, the ego has built all kinds of structures so that it doesn't have to see what is so painful. In fact, a great part of one's personality is based on a reaction against past sufferings. One has all kinds of unconscious arguments for not wanting to see. Opening the black box would require one to substitute their defenses and false security with a more deeper, conscious form of security and meaning to substitute for the defense mechanism of repression. One must find the essential needs of the Svadhistana in love, security, belonging, and rational self awareness. The more one finds a sense of grounding in their being with these qualities, the more these repressions are ready to come to the surface of awareness and be assimilated and processed by the higher levels of mind that guide the Conceptual Mind and Svadhistana Vortex. Establishing true meaning and love is antithetical to callous indifference and the walls of egoistic defense gradually begin to break down. The cure for whatever imbalance in the Svadhistana Vortex is in replacing the compensated vritti for its essential needs. When the vrittis of the Svadhistana aren't creating a tornado storm in the mind field, the higher vrittis can impose themselves upon the Svadhistana. Love, security, and rational insight can instead guide the Conceptual Mind and Svadhistana Vortex so that psychological development isn't thwarted by the complexes of these defensive vrittis.

2. Inertia

Repression or indifference allows the personality to maintain its equilibrium by denying the effects of threatening situations or dangerous inner states of mind. Although the mind may become split by the expression of such a tendency it is still able to maintain its self-concept, though somewhat pathologically. When there is so much suffering, confusion, and fear the mind may repress these debilitating emotions by compartmentalizing it into another part of the personality. The mind can simply deny the painful memories, the taboo thoughts or dark impulses. However, with inertia the ego has become so indifferent and exclusively focused on its conflicts that it simply gets sucked into a negative mental vacuum. The personality is so overwhelmed that it simply shuts down. This type of vacancy is not the same as melancholy, a vritti of the 3rd vortex, in that with melancholy the person's self concept is affected and dulled by a feeling of depression. Inertia is an even heavier form of depression. With inertia the entire base of the ego is affected in such a way that the personality switches into a more basic mode where there is not so much self-reflection with painful thoughts and emotions. It is a type of extremely heavy, almost catatonic, depression in which the higher cognitive functioning of the Conceptual Mind is dulled and almost entirely idle. A person may go through life mechanically, eating, sleeping, even working without

really thinking or really desiring anything. Life goes on, but in a very dull and depressed manner as the person in this state of crisis unconsciously deems it better to drop into semi-unconsciousness than have to assume the responsibility of awareness and make choices. This is where blind compulsions and paranoia creep into the mind. Without paranoia and compulsion the mind will just continue to fall into a state like catatonic schizophrenia in which one completely “checks out” of reality. The intelligence of the Conceptual Mind tries to distort and evade the painful state of mind by using other propensities as a defense mechanisms. When paranoia and compulsion try to awaken one from this existential slumber, we see how “an idle mind is the devil’s workshop.” As we will soon see, the Svadhistana Vortex has many other defenses that can function simultaneously. These complexes will continue to express itself for as long as the mind continues to its world as something very painful and continue respond in another way.

3. Compulsion

In the process of “self-establishment” the personality’s self-concept is most strongly defined by its relation to its social environment. This is true whether we are speaking of the evolution of the entire human species through the Svadhistana or the development of an individual from infancy toward maturity. No being is born liberated, one is rather born to experience liberation. At the Svadhistana level of development, the conscious sense of “I am” is not complete in itself but requires external references in order to qualify itself. When the personality is well-adjusted there exists a secure sense of belonging to a family or social group that gives one a healthy reference to one’s reality. The ego at this stage is so dependent upon its immediate environment of socialization, be it the clan, the family, or nation. Maintaining this strong and definite attachment solidifies the identity in something greater than itself. When these basic conditions of security and belonging don’t exist, the mind must find some way of acquiring them. Compulsion drives the personality to force these basic existential necessities in whatever way necessary. The mind may compulsively attach itself to an external, ready-made social image, or perhaps a rigid an isolated and defensive ego image. Compulsion also attacks sensory habits or pleasures and exploits them with its desperation.

Compulsion narrows the possibilities of choices in a mind faced with the overwhelming inscrutability of the totality of the human experience. Instead of the insecure and uncertain person having to use one’s rationality and self-confidence to adapt and choose a particular mode of being, compulsion narrows those immense possibilities by desperately clinging to one facet of the potentially whole and complete Self. Compulsion is one of the main vrttis that uphold an expanding, though uncertain, ego structure. Viewed at from a higher stage of psychological

and spiritual maturity this tendency confines and hampers the flourishing of character by compartmentalizing the personality into a isolated ego image and some impulses for it to grasp on to. But where would the masses of humanity find security if not for the repetitive and seemingly absolute liturgy of traditions, religion, politics and social convention? However, it is a great danger when there is such cultural decay and loss of deep meaning in society that there are no longer many effective systems to keep the blind and impulsive masses from falling into compulsive mental patterns, pathological behavior, or dangerous addictions. At the Svadhistana level, the fall of culture is the fall of the person. There is not yet enough strength of character in the Aham-ego to find creative channels of expression to resist social decay.

Again, it is not only that this tendency is active at only the most basic levels of the self-establishing personality. They can also be very active in more mature personalities as well. This vritti will often compensate for a weakness in an ego that is only tenuously held together. If the mind can garner all of its strength to focus on a particular image or habit or belief, then that mind is qualified by that habit, symbol, or mode of being to the

degree of energy put into it. Instead of experiencing the pull of entropy and degeneration the mind develops an outward momentum. It is a desperate attempt to hold together the structural solidarity of the self by developing a compulsive attachment to something other than the self. The object of compulsion could be something physical like a substance; an action like a repetitive behavior pattern, or a fixed fanatical and dogmatic idea that one clings to in order to have something to believe in.

Compulsion may overpower all other forces of repression when the mind desperately needs an intense experience to overpower the effects of inertia and depression. What was once an active, intervening conscience that inhibited or channelized blind impulse, may simply be forgotten or argued away. In a crime of passion, for example, the conscience is entirely overridden. With the common compulsive habits the higher, more intelligent level of personality can invent excuses, arguments, projections and distortions so that the desperate, taboo, compulsive expression is somehow permitted to exist side by side with the ego's social image. Duplicity and argumentation, for example, are tendencies of the Anahata Vortex that permit a level of really sophisticated argumentation, repression, and distortion to keep the ego unaware of what is really occurring. Dark, unconscious tendencies continue to express themselves while the most intelligent part of the personality in the Anahata Vortex and intuitive level of mind is used to make excuses and justify. This duality is common in almost all people to some degree as long as there is a rift between who one is on the inside and who

one is on the outside. To liberate blind compulsion and its defenders is a huge leap in one's evolution of self awareness. This is often a great inconvenience, even terror, that presents stubborn resistance. This liberation requires seeing, accepting, and ultimately understanding the complexes that drove the mind toward compulsive habits or addictions.

Compulsion can even hone in on purely sensual tendencies that are in the domain of kama vritti, physical desire. And because everyone somewhat familiar with the vortexes seems to associate sexuality with the second vortex, what better example could one give other than the sex? Sexual desire is a tendency of the first vortex within kama vritti, or physical instinct. This doesn't mean that sexuality can only express itself on the most basic levels of reproduction and sensory gratification. The basic, instinctual sexuality can be qualified by the higher vortexes. Compulsion is sublimated to a desire for beautiful, attractive forms in the 3rd vortex and to an even higher degree of interpersonal intimacy in the 4th vortex. Compulsive sexuality is a co-mingling of Svadhistana mental complexity with what is fundamentally a sensual and animal desire in the Muladhara, 1st vortex. Compulsive sexuality is not mere animal propagation, but a desperate attempt for the mind to establish a base for oneself through intense contact with one's own natural, repressed instincts. Compulsion will never be love, nor even romance. The danger is that other vrittis of the Svadhistana like repression or lack of confidence may express and apparently alleviate

themselves through compulsive sexuality. If there are no meaningful and expansive emotive and cognitive outlets for the mind to flow into, it can resort back into the senses for its meaning and psychological foundation. And what closer and more immediate sense of gratification is there than one's own body? Certainly it is not the healthiest equation for one to unconsciously make, but one quite common and even glorified in this society. The danger of this equation, or any other equation that the mind makes to compensate for its insecurity and lack of meaning through whatever form of sensual compulsion, is that the body is designed to accommodate the desires of the Sensory Mind. Sexuality is natural. Enjoying food is natural. But compensating for a lack of meaning in the psychological level by indulging the Sensory Mind is certainly an overload for the body to bear. The mental desires, artha vritti, must find their compensations in the mental, existential level. To channelize this heightened, more potent mental energy into the senses will always exhaust and sicken the body. By compulsive eating one makes the body toxic and damages the digestive organs and also becomes obese. Through compulsive sexuality one may weaken and damage the liver, kidneys, and the reproductive organs and exhaust one's vital energy.

I have never taken the so-called “sexual Tantra” seriously. Firstly, because the only people who I have ever known to practice such things were never really balanced. Sure, they spoke of awareness and love and transmutation and all of those nice things, but it was just all too obvious that they were just sex addicts propelled by unconscious emotions. They always left a trail of harm. It may be that there were once some more conscious practices that really didn’t trap people into their compulsions, but if they were in fact truthful, then would have to be based on yama and niyama, the ethical base for the practice of yoga. Most sexual relations ultimately lead one to suffering. It is a transgression of ahimsa, or non-violence, to project one’s selfish urges onto another. It is no wonder that in the 2 languages that I understand, the crude word for the sexual act can be synonymous with the words cheating, deceiving, or generally harming another.

The only functional sexual Tantra that I have could ever imagine is to be responsible and never try to harm anyone while at the same time make the indefatigable effort to try and understand the propensities of the second vortex. The sexual distortions exploit these fundamental vrttis. The more suffering, separation, and insecurity that there is in the Svadhistana level, the more likely that sexuality will try and compensate for these emotions. However, these necessities are valid and are so profound and fundamental to the personality that they really need to be understood. Perhaps the blind compulsions are rooted in an untimely withdrawal of a mother’s breast that left one sucking in nothingness. Or perhaps sexuality has aligned itself with an inner, unconscious resentment and lack of

confidence that tries to outwardly seduce and dominate through sexual dominance, games, or manipulation.

The purest and happiest people I have known were celibate yogis. They speak of how the mindful retention of the seminal fluid permits this energy to be used for meditation and to strengthen the nervous system. Not many people are emotionally mature enough to practice celibacy without brutal repression and the accompanying psychological back-lash. However, for those few who have deeply understood life, celibacy may come quite naturally. Really, one has to have lived and understood desire before being able to “renounce” desires.

When there is no suffering, there is no desire, and where there is no desire, there is no suffering. This is true for all desires, not just sex. Few people can really understand this. Ramakrishna once said that mundane pleasure is like a dog chewing a sharp bone that doesn’t realize the “satiation” of this desire comes from its own blood. It is fear and insecurity that keep us bound into the limitation of a separate self, and therefore bound to selfish desires. Sometimes, even very

highly developed minds overlook these underlying reverberations in the shadows of the emotions. The pirates to our present state of peace are often something unseen from our past. I have found that the study of the vrttis, especially those of the Svadhistana, are paramount for finding the psychological balance that permits further balanced, intuitive, spiritual development.

4. Insecurity, Lack of Confidence

When the Aham lacks the capacity to find a basic sense of emotional security and psychological adjustment within itself and with its environment, the vritti of lack of confidence expresses itself. This propensity isn't mere existential anxiety because inferiority isn't situational or focused on a certain ability or aspect of the personality. Worry is based on excessive thinking and flighty emotions whereas lack of confidence is a more generalized contraction of the ego and a fundamental lack of faith in one's own abilities. The psychological base for all of one's thoughts are self-defeating and keep one confined to staunch limitations. Perhaps this lack of confidence came about because of habitual failures, because of a suppressive, unloving and impersonal environment, or another internal psychological disturbance that inhibits one's development and expansion. In short, inferiority comes about as a lack of love and attention and so can only be remedied by a true love and attention.

With lack of confidence, a part of oneself is giving up the struggle for personal growth and expansion. Instead of being able to use the ingenuity of the intellect and an emotionally secure personality to be able to find a secure mode of self-definition and personal meaning in one's world, the mind and personality instead contract into a state of low self-esteem and a negative self-definition. This contraction of the ego also paradoxically sustains it. If this distrust of one's own powers prevents one from acting and making choices necessary for growth, then it can also protect one from the fear of failure in these attempts. The ego sustains itself by not undertaking any new challenges that it could fail to manifest. Perhaps this failure would be more of a blow to the personality than not doing anything at all. The person squanders what little confidence they have and desperately cling to it. One is not fully alive and settles to live in fear and doubt rather than confront the demands and challenges of self establishment and self-definition.

This inferiority complex will continue to cripple one's development until one understands the causes of the complex which are always some form of a lack of proper self-regard due to lack of love and attention. The inferior always feel separate and disconnected from others. They do not feel accepted and worthy of the respect and recognition of others, although they desperately need and seek it. A person may have received little emotional security or social orientation in the

past. Or he/she may have suffered great deprivations or may have made many errors in life that finally provoked a defeatist complex.

In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.: "It is probably true that the inferiority complex is one of the most stagnating and strangulating and crushing conditions of the human personality. It distorts the personality and plunges it into the abyss of inner conflicts. And so one of the first things that individuals must do to integrate themselves and to be sure that their personalities are integrated is to seek to overcome a feeling of inferiority. This is one of the first and basic conditions of life."

Whole societies can suffer from an inferiority complex. As long as human beings are closed off into ideas of class, race, nationality and religion, the powerful will always impose inferiority complexes on those more vulnerable. What is required is that one break through the walls of discrimination and disunity with others. We must learn how to trust others as well as form positive social, familial, and intimate relationships. There are few humans that don't have at least some lack of confidence. If not, what would become of you? This tendency only dissolves to the degree that fear and narcissism are transformed into peaceful co-existence and a deep respect for others. Only by gradually transforming one's little fearful ego into union with the great, internal "I-Witness" of Shiva will the sense of inferiority ultimately be overcome. If the root of the person is infinite peace and eternal joy, how can the One continue negating Oneself? How can the Self not be in the Other too?

5. Paranoia

Inferiority, compulsion and repression have caused the distortion of separation in the ego and continually pervade and sustain the separate self. Paranoia symptomatically reveals the hidden, impulsive schemes of the fearful, separate ego who in actuality builds castles in the sand. Influenced by these negative vrttis, one is never entirely secure and happy. There always seems to be something waiting to take it all away. A great, unnamed terror activates when we see the waves of destruction getting a little closer, or so they appear.

Paranoia is a generalized all-encompassing terror that overwhelms the mind when a specific situation threatens to undermine or uproot the entire Aham structure of the mind. It is a pervasive sense of terror induced not from a situational fear, but a greater fear or perceived threat that can annihilate and consume the entire identity. The weaker the integrity and security of the Aham becomes, the more pervasive is the fear that the whole self will be swallowed up. The person who irrationally fears other people, accidents, wild animals, the CIA, reptilian beings who have invaded the royal blood-lines, or whatever other threat is projecting

their own inner insecurity and paranoia on an outside source of “danger.” Perhaps this person goes through life normally, but projecting their own inner terror and insecurity on some “other.” A person very weak will be consumed with this fear and with no manner to remedy it. They become completely dominated with the idea that something is going to destroy them and can think of nothing else than to defend themselves from it. They will gladly follow the banner of those who promise to assuage their fears.

As we will understand while discussing the higher vortexes, there are various forms of fear that are different in their degree of intensity and the level of mental development at a particular vortex. Paranoia or fear of annihilation, as stated, conjures the most primordial of fears. It is something so overpowering that the most basic animal defenses of the Muladhara get expressed and recapitulated in the Svadhistana Vortex. As long as a mind clings to a suffering, fearful ego identity paranoia will always be present. This really negative and contracting tendency may pervade the personal and social development of the personality, which only results in more alienation, suffering and fear.

While discussing compulsion it was mentioned that an outward, blind, and compulsive attachment to an habit, addiction, another person, or a rigid idea can keep the personality from disintegration during a time of psychological crisis. In this case compulsion may create some temporary, forced union with something stronger, or at least stimulating, outside of one’s fragile self. Self awareness emerges as weak, tenuous, and under constant threat of negation while struggling to maintain the new-found self- conscious and “self-establishing” mind and personality. As paranoia pervades the development of an alienated, desperate, and compulsive personality, the ego builds itself upon layers of fear, insecurity and defensiveness instead of security and a sense of belonging to a family or society. These compensations never really make one whole and the result is more separation and more fear, but with greater psychological complexity. Paranoia seems so excessive and unnecessary. However, it always accompanies the isolated, fearful ego. Paranoia is not situational fear. It not just a specific time or place that provokes intense fear, but one projects this fear into perhaps all situations. It is a psychological, Svadhistana “fight or flight” mechanism. This basic defense mechanism has habituated for the paranoid personality. Paranoia is always an

underlying hell for the imaginary, fictitious, and fear-based ego, but fearful situations are not always imaginary. The world is a terrible place for many. Sometimes there are situations that are truly fearful and destructive and one must try to find a solution without falling into fear of annihilation. Instead of creating a human society based on unity and cooperation, modern society has

become a savage, paranoid system that is all too ready to wage terror and destruction. Terrible experiences can make even a strong and sane person at least a little paranoid.

The more separate from a secure sense of self, the greater the fear. Fears from the past project themselves on to the present. The more closed we are to other human beings, the more barriers there are to harmony and peaceful co-existence. It is only when we are able to ultimately understand the clinging and grasping of our fear-based ego that this primal fear is understood. As long as we attempt to sustain a separate and fear-based notion of self there will always be an underlying instability and fear of psychological annihilation. More fear and paranoia will never cure this vicious cycle. The essential needs of the person must be found by finding the appropriate social and interpersonal conditions that permit the higher vrttis to compensate for these unhealthy ones.

6. Resentment

The most basic and essential emotional need for the human mind is love. The person that receives unconditional love from early age receives the psychological framework necessary to have confidence in oneself and in one's world. The more that I recall my earliest memories of childhood, the more I understand that such a loving childhood is recalled in this eternal present by some eternal presence inside me. They are memories of a simple self filled only with happiness and love where separation and suffering had not yet entered. Now, it is only in this eternal Now that I can find anything close to the deep bliss of these memories. In a way I have come nowhere, because it is the same eternal Now as in childhood. In the end, our entire mind will have to dissolve back into ananda, eternal bliss. It is the destiny of all microcosms. I see that life now only toward toward ananda and nowhere else. It always has and always will.

Loving relationships with other human beings is what not only gives us our fundamental emotional security and a secure sense of self in the world, but is really the foundation for all of life. To the degree that we don't have love in our lives, is the degree to which we are separated from others, ourselves, and the great Self. Christ said that we cannot love god which is invisible if we can't love man which is visible. Lack of love is always a wound for it is a negation of our true human purpose. Without it we are fish out of water or a bird without sky. When the personality is deeply wounded by another person or an aspect of their environment (oppressive social structures like poverty, violence and racism), it will most likely express a

reaction to this hurtful, emotionally damaging transgression in the form of emotional repressions, lack of confidence and also resentment. With resentment,

the intensity of this expression is in proportion to the degree of transgression and wounding of the fundamental security structures of the personality. Resentment is a response in the same manner as the transgression. The wounded and transgressed wants to react to the same degree that they were reacted upon in order to balance out the intense pain inflicted upon them.

Like the other Svadhistana vrttis, this is a fundamental defense mechanism and is a very generalized and pervasive feeling. Some harm has disrupted the security and well-being of the personality. Because of the degree of harm, the weakened personality summons up an old hard-wired defense structure from the most basic and primordial depths of the mind. This reaction is very deep and unconscious and carries with it a wrathful expression of self-defense and self-preservation from the most primordial levels of one's being. This vrtti, like the others in the Svadhistana, color and qualify the entire psychological outlook. This feeling is so often projected onto other people or other aspects of society and creates a very marked and rigid self against not-self barrier. There is a fundamental level of distrust and suspicion of others. For example, a mild expression of this may be resentment towards all forms of authority because of a deep grudge a child has towards an unloving parent. Or perhaps one is scolded or bullied at school and has a general distrust and resentment toward society. A more extreme expression would be sheer rage and an intense, pervasive hatred for anybody who may remotely remind them, consciously or unconsciously, of the original traumatic experience of being violently abused.

Whatever the degree of resentment, it will have to be let go of at some time. Resentment is like cactus spines that keep others always at a distance and stick them when they get close. Emotional healing at the Svadhistana always requires a re-orientation and re-connection to other human beings in a more harmonious and loving way. As long as there is no love, be it brotherly or romantic or spiritual, resentment will remain in defense of the damaged ego. I recall Victor Hugo's Jean Valjean in "Les Miserables." All he knew was resentment. It was the only power he had toward a hostile world. All he could do was hate. Only through a deeply spiritual transformation of love and complete acceptance by the bishop could he could begin to let go of his resentment and become a new man. This part of the narrative is a very subtle dialogue and a great description of a guru-disciple relationship. The bishop's divine compassion impressed his saintly image onto the criminal mind of Jean Valjean. The power of the bishop's love is a great will that overpowers the defensive and resentful ego of the criminal. It is so overwhelming that it takes birth in his new found soul and begins to replicate this very same image deep into the new person of Jean Valjean. It is an imposed, compassionate

pattern that endures and Jean Valjean eventually became as pure and compassionate as the bishop.

After discussing the 6 vrttis of the Svadhistana one can understand the degree to which the second vortex is qualified by the external, social world. The ego is not developed enough emotionally and cognitively and internalized enough to have a confident and centered personality to govern the mind. Instead external factors like family and social environment, socio- historical and economic conditions construct the Svadhistana, self- establishing mind. It is for this reason that the Svadhistana needs environmental security for inner equilibrium. In times such as the present with so many rapid social changes and turmoil that weaken the familiar and collective social identity, it is no surprise that there are so many 2nd vortex imbalances. Even though modern human beings are not entirely governed by the 2nd vortex, there is indeed a definite lack of firm grounding in most peoples personalities that only hinders the unfolding and expression of their higher, humanistic and spiritual vrttis. Developing a balanced social environment that fosters and nourishes individual and collective well-being is fundamental for the present and future evolution of human society. Solutions to this tragic imbalance will become more clear as we discuss the higher potentials of the human mind.

Yama and Niyama

How we see the physical world is determined by what level of mind we use to see it. Only in the lower levels of mind is cognitive activity dominated by the senses and cerebral activity. If we purify the Svadhistana, or conceptual level of mind and liberate it from narrow, egoistic thinking, then it is possible to see the world as a projection of thought. To know this is to change our thoughts and thus change our world. Here is where we realize something very deep about our essence and its connection with a higher, cosmic order that works through our evolving Self awareness, if we allow it to. With the six vrttis of the Svadhistana mind in balance, one can liberate oneself from self-exile and learn to trust that you have a place in the cosmic moral order.

The Svadhistana, Conceptual Mind is capable of abstract thought and therefore the idea of a self naturally arises. It is so important that this “self- establishing” mind be based on love, security, and rationality. Yama and Niyama are simple, yet profound guides for human conduct that foster spiritual awareness and union at all levels awareness and for human, “mind-preponderant,” “self-establishing” beings. The Svadhistana level of mind corresponds to the “liquid factor” of unified energy. This “liquid” energy is a unified field of waves that collapse and crystallize into the material world, the solid factor. The liquid factor is more a world of “waves” than a world of “particles.” Conceptual awareness is greater and we can comprehend our relationship with the natural and social worlds. This subtle, moral awareness is encompassed within these 10 universal

principles. They help keep our external mental projections from reacting, from clashing and bouncing back against the real, living, conscious universe, which is the Macrocosmic Mind of Brahma. To go against the Tao, the cosmic order, will always cause reactions or deformations in the unified field of the liquid factor. The universe always re-adjusts itself from its deformations and we therefore are always experiencing our reactions. “As you think, so you become,”

Tantric yogis realized that in order for a human being to properly develop personally and socially to the degree where they are capable of practicing sadhana, it is necessary to have a moral code of conduct as a friendly guide. All societies teach norms and customs that ideally should help orient its members toward proper conduct so that there is harmony in that society. In contemporary society there is less and less wisdom that parents teach their children. The values people often learn through the media and in society in general teach superficiality, domination, selfishness, and materialism. Very few people have the notion that they live in a live universe where there really exist certain moral laws of harmony and balance. So often, those that speak of morality use it as a fearful

force to control the behavior of others instead of using moral wisdom to free the mind from distorted ideas. Religious and ethical systems often give one a “rationale,” a pattern of how to behave. What they often lack is how to create the conditions to help one realize moral discernment. Yama and Niyama isn’t about being a good sheep that follows all of the rules like a cog in the system. This world is relative and there are no hard and fast, inviolable laws that apply to every person in every situation. The universality of Yama and Niyama consists in the openness of these concepts that the spirit of the idea pervades all possible situations. For example, ahimsa, the first and most important ethical principle of yama, is not absolute non-violence where the moral law says you can’t kill a mosquito or accidentally step on a bug. Instead, ahimsa is the spirit of not having violent intentions toward any entity. Ahimsa attitude that one carries into every situation, remembering that Shiva is behind all life. Perhaps this principle doesn’t give you the exact manner to respond to every given situation, but does suggest the spirit of interaction. If it did tell you exactly what to do, then what would be the value of discernment? What is important is that one understands violence in all aspects and sincerely tries to never inflict this unconscious destruction upon others. The basic idea of Yama and Niyama is that all beings are sentient and have an existential purpose. All beings need intelligent culture and compassionate nurture. All of the principles of Yama and Niyama lead to universal love. All beings are ultimately Shiva, but need a little care and nourishment to realize this. Yama and Niyama helps inspire this universal sentiment.

The 10 principles of Yama and Niyama are just and very universal spiritual values that are really applicable to all societies in that they are practical values based on dharma, based on our essential nature. The

principles of Yama and Niyama would be the simple, natural goodness of a realized being, a Bodhisattva. They give us a working model of morality, of how a sadhaka, or practitioner of sadhana should behave so as to protect their spirit. Their understanding helps the individual not just to adapt to society, but to help one understand the deep truth and purpose of morality. Yama and Niyama aren’t so much divine commandments as they are practical guides to conduct. For the Svadhistana mind to develop properly in a secure social environment and with self confidence, Yama and Niyama are indispensable. They keep the mind free of complexes generated by ignorant and selfish impulses that make sadhana impossible. What enforces and inspires morality isn’t the threat of punishment so much as the understanding of action and reaction. Good moral education cultivates the discerning intellect so that the physical desires aren’t just repressed but properly understood. When one sees that suffering and alienation are the result of selfish, unconscious actions, then one truly wants to find a path of

activity that purifies and liberates instead of enslaving one to unwholesome desires. The 5 principles of Yama teach balance in social behavior, while the 5 principles of Niyama orient one toward basic spiritual discipline. They are as follows:

Yama: Social practices

- 1.Ahim'sa: Not to inflict pain or hurt on anybody with intention by thought, word or action,
- 2.Satya: The benevolent use of mind and words with compassionate truthfulness.
- 3.Asteya: To renounce the desire to acquire the wealth or qualities of others.
- 4.Brahmacarya: To keep the mind always absorbed in Brahma and see all beings as Brahma's expression.
- 5.Aparigraha: Live simply and avoid material excess.

Niyama: Personal practices

- 1.Shaoca: Purity of the body, mind, and environment.
- 2.Santos'a: Mental equipoise and peace of mind.
- 3.Tapah: To undergo hardship for the welfare of others through selfless service.
- 4.Sva'dhya'ya: The study and proper understanding of spiritual scriptures and philosophical books.
- 5.ishvara pran'idha'na: To take shelter or meditate on ishvara, the Supreme Consciousness.

For a more complete and very lucid, modern and socially applicable understanding of Yama and Niyama, I refer the reader to the book of Ananadamurti, "A Guide To Human Conduct."

The Manipura Vortex

The Svadhistana Vortex's main function is to secure the emerging sense of identity from the womb of unconsciousness and blind instinct, which characterize the pre-conscious and pre-human mind at the Muladhara, Sensory Mind. Once a secure base for the personality is established in a balanced Svadhistana Vortex, the personality can begin to expand and encounter new qualities and experiences. Here we see the continued expansion of artha vritti and the effort to expand the Conceptual Mind so as to acquire a greater degree of meaningful psychological development. The higher expressions of artha are unable to express themselves completely in the Svadhistana due to the primary activity of maintaining and securing the psychological grounding of the identity. Once there is a stable emotional foundation the personality can flourish and expand.

The literal meaning of the Sanskrit word artha is relief or alleviation. It refers to the relief one gets after the struggle to find the name of an object whose name is unknown. This unknowing creates a tension in the mind that impels the mind to seek equilibrium by finding the meaning of something in order to give classification to that which is not understood. When the meaning or definition is found there is a sense of relief as the mental equilibrium is restored. In other words, artha is the willful endeavor of the intellect to acquire form and meaning for both the self and its world, an activity not quite possible for the second vortex due to its occupation with primary self-establishment. The fundamental need at the Manipura Vortex is the need for novel, creative self-definition. This need is directed toward social and creative activities instead of being occupied with basic emotional and existential security.

The path toward self-definition begins to qualify the growth and development of artha. The Aham intelligence of the personality is confronted with new challenges that force the mind to seek creative and resourceful ways to face these challenges. Development is not though contracted, defensive emotional instincts as with the Svadhistana. The Manipura mind desires qualities and has conceptual capacities beyond the mundane Conceptual Mind and self. In the 2nd vortex there is a drive toward basic, psychological self-preservation, while with the Manipura there is a vigorous outward, drive toward self-definition and expansion. The second vortex utilizes the Conceptual Mind, while the Manipura refines this basic conceptual power with the qualities of creativity and innovation. The Aham grows by internalizing and digesting more and more of its desires for the objective, external world. It is at this stage that the Aham begins to have more control over the chitta as it attempts to manipulate and maneuver the external world with its creative intellect. In this process the personality acquires more clarity of experience and with this knowledge is capable of even further expansion.

Here it is important to mention the relationship between the vrttis embedded in their respective vortexes and the layers of mind associated with their respective vortexes. The expressions of the vrttis correspond perfectly with the functions of the mind of that level. The cognitive aspects of the vortexes can't stand apart from the emotive ones. A mind trying to establish itself in the world of the Conceptual Mind needs stout emotive tendencies to hold it's ground. And it is quite necessary for a mind that reaches the dynamic creative layer to have powerful attractions and drives toward that realm. This relationship between the propensities and the mental layers, or between emotive and cognitive factors, is a constant relation on all mental levels.

The creative mental layer, or Atimanasa Kosa, is the level of mind that perceives the emanation of form from the "luminous factor." The luminous factor is an invisible form field, or "morphogenic field," that imposes a certain order and form on the material world. Form is something mental and spiritual that manifests physically. All things that exist have a subtle form field upholding their physical being. Just as there is a unified field of "liquid" energy behind matter, there is a "luminous" form field behind both the liquid and solid factors. At the creative mental level the Aham itself is a form, with a ideal form of a person embedded deep within. The forms in the mind are archetypes of creativity for the Aham that are guided by the Macrocosmic Mind. Recall that Macrocosmic Mind has always guided the evolution of the microcosmic mind. It has guided the evolution of physical instincts in the first vortex and the primal thought forms of the Conceptual Mind at the second vortex. The creative intellect begins to perceive these archetypal, creative impulses and find ways to express them in its person. These forms resonate with the mind and guide it in a particular cognitive and emotive direction. At this stage of mental evolution, Aham is struggling to arise out of the mundane Conceptual Mind and trying to enlighten itself with a creative and conceptual understanding of form. "Without vision a people perish," states the Bible. The Manipura needs a deep vision and outlook to be fully functioning, otherwise it is like a sick organ. Only broad, universal ideas keep the Creative Mind out of trouble. Any ideology or vision of life that isn't based on universal principles that promote universal love will block the vigorous expansion of the Manipura. By nature, desire for expansion will always be egocentric, but it is possible for the ego to be aware of this and try to convert selfishness into selflessness. Such is the path to human happiness. Slowly, the binding, impulsive remnants of animal life begin to be transmuted into conscious awareness. The creative layer of the mind guides us to the illumination of things once dark and obscure.

When these fundamental needs of the Creative Mind are not fulfilled, then the emotive vrttis attempt to force and impose meaning and form for the struggling, unfulfilled ego. The luminous, fiery element of the Manipura gives this vortex its fiery, impassioned ability to psychologically enlighten

inner, conceptual forms. The Manipura has tremendous power and creativity but also tremendous capacity for conflict and even destruction when the person hasn't found their own vision and instead seeks substitute gratification in mundane forms. Manipura literally translates to the 'city of jewels'.

The creative Manipura mind is a whole new faculty for the evolving, Conceptual Mind. Gradually, the basic concepts of the Svadhistana acquire more elaborate color and form at the Manipura. A strong, developed Manipura has learned and accomplished many things and therefore has a little practical knowledge of existence and more self-confidence and definition. A less developed Manipura will be frustrated, ambitious, fearful and feel compelled to follow the superficial forms of social convention instead of one's own creative, innovative desires. The consumptive and ambitious tendencies of the weak Manipura Vortex are concerned more with the attempt to acquire externally rather than to actually realize the true meaning of self. This emerging personality in the Manipura blindly fixates on selfish attachments and ambitions. Therefore, the outward and vigorous development of the Manipura is not just expanding toward something greater, but is compensating for the psychological inferiority and limitations of the Svadhistana. Here we see how the active and passionate qualities of the Manipura Vortex compensate for the entropy, dullness and lethargy of the Svadhistana. Due to the nature of these drives the mind is driven more toward external form rather than inner, spiritual symbols. It may grasp an intimation of infinity with the understanding of subtle ideas but still projects its infinite desires into the material world. The propensities that distort the Manipura, Creative Mind must be purified by the cognitive abilities of the Creative Mind for the Aham to develop. A balanced Manipura Vortex gives one a vital and very refined Creative Mind that can perceive itself much deeper and resolve in a creative manner its limitations and challenges. Such a person has a healthy passion for life, is active in pursuing his/her desires, is in constant need for new and meaningful experiences, and is incessantly working at self-improvement and transformation. Such a well-balanced person will naturally resonate with positive, expansive thought forms and will have an authentic, sincere vision of life. The Manipura mind shines with brilliant gems. If we go after a few particular gems, we lose site of the whole. To conceptually comprehend the great purpose of one's existence and have the confidence and heart to follow it is the greatest gift of the Manipura, Creative Mind. This is not the realization of the Self as Shiva, but rather the realization of

the Aham's particular purpose as a human being in a human world. It is a stage in the journey as only a sturdy, confident ego can let go of its limitations and begin to peer into the Infinite window within.

The 10 Manipura Vortexes

1. Shame

Shame bears a resemblance to the vritti, lack of confidence, in the second vortex. The difference between them is that with lack of confidence there is a generalized, pervasive inferiority regarding one's fundamental self-concept. Shame is a contraction of the expanding Manipura personality due to a disruption in one's self-image. The punitive and oppressive feeling of blame and the corresponding self and/or social judgment of the ego being inferior, a failure, unworthy, ill, base, sinful, etc. are due to activities and interactions of the ego that have transgressed social forms or boundaries or have failed to meet the expectations of the social environment. Shame is an ugly image of all of the negative judgments and transgressions from others that one has identified with. They begin to overpower and convince the ego. One's very own Aham suffers the imposition of others but this affected Aham continues imposing the same negative judgments upon itself with shame as the result. For example, most victims of racism must somehow believe that he/she is inferior to actually feel shame. An external thought form has been internalized and painfully felt due to the inability to deflect it and not accept it internally. The Aham begins to live by a negative form of another that imposes on the weak self-image. Shame is also generated internally by failing to meet one's own expectations. The Manipura mind lives by an image, whether one's own image or a socially imposed one. If one falls short or transgresses one's own values and beliefs, then the mind is no longer nourished and inspired by the positive image. There is a rift between the real self and the ideal form of self. Shame enters and one feels an emptiness, lack of meaning and a distinct sense that one is ineffective in life.

Shame, whether generated from within or without, is essentially the failure of the ego's activities to meet the demands of its ideal form or pattern of behavior, its conscience. Initially conscience is an imposed guiding pattern of behavior determined by external, social forces, but as the ego develops conscience becomes more of a thought form that guides the self towards greater realization of its potentialities in accordance with certain psychological and spiritual ideals. Shame can be induced by a transgression of the personal, subjective conscience as well.

Shame functions in few positive ways. It can be a compensatory system of checks and balances for antisocial behavior or behavior that goes against one's own

ideals. The feeling of blame and transgression and their effect of inhibiting the negative activities can actually keep one from persevering with such harmful behavior.

While shame can serve a positive purpose by keeping impulsive behavior in check, most often it has a crippling effect on the motivational powers. This is especially limiting when the social conscience is very rigid, strict and punitive, thereby making it very difficult for the individual to meet those imposing expectations. It is the same with self-judgment within the

individual as well. All too often it is the rigid subjective conscience of the individual that perpetuates its own sense of shame by setting up unreal expectations for him/herself that can't possibly be met. Whether induced from within or without, they both lead to an entropy and contraction of the evolving personality.

Shame is often the great demon behind the monstrous face of a really negative personality. When one feels unworthy and base, then the mind will naturally gravitate toward what is low and base. Nobody wants to feel the weakness of shame and to feel empowered one may use manipulative and aggressive means that aren't necessarily helpful. One may resent the positive qualities of others because of their own sense of inferiority and can become aggressive, competitive, invidious, and hateful. Or perhaps narcissism and vanity will try to cover up one's self-disgust. Looking behind all of the masks of the negative aspects of the ego the demon of shame projects and controls the negative self-image.

The shame complex, like any other complex, is resolved when one finds a true form and meaning for the personality. Instead of feeling bad, low, and unworthy, one must find a vital, creative and healthy self-image to put one back on the path of balanced growth.

2. Slander

It has already been mentioned that the Manipura Vortex directs the vigorous outward expansion of the mind. Here the will endeavors to acquire a certain power and mastery over the objective world. When there is some sort of frustration to this power drive the mind seeks a way to overcome the obstruction in order to make the will stronger than the impediment. Slander is the attempt to negate the fear, doubt, and insecurity caused within the subject by the force (another person or group of persons in most cases) that obstructs the connection of the subjective will to the objective environment. This negation takes the form of berating and belittling the self-created "enemy" in an attempt to psychologically weaken the impact that this enemy actually has on the ego. In this process the fear evoked from others is distorted and projected. While the will is attempting to

overpower the crippling effect of the offending parties, the slandering ego feels that by defaming another that they are actually negating and weakening them.

With this tendency the mind is still very deeply entrenched in a very marked and dualistic self/other dialogue. The slanderer derives a mental momentum and empowerment from its slander by feeding off the negation of the other. This negation functions as a defense mechanism to keep the dynamism and power of the will and self-confidence intact. However, the potential for positive expansion out of strife and conflict with others is hampered. The ego is basing itself upon a negation of others. This cycle of conflict continues until the Creative Mind seeks refuge in a higher order of intelligence and insight. This perspective isn't reached until this marked dualism is overcome with judicious discernment at the Anahata level. It is not just this particular vritti of the Manipura that keeps one confined and bounded to the world of external form. Rather, all of the vrittis of the Manipura with their willful ego-oriented power drives are associated with a weak ego image. An effort of will guided by a very positive idea is needed to overcome these weaknesses and fears that cause conflict with other egos.

3. Jealousy

Jealousy is always related to shame. Behind jealousy is the belief that one's own qualities, abilities, performance, etc. are inferior to those of others. If one were to simply notice the positive qualities of others without thinking of them in the context of one's own desires, then there would simply be a recognition of another's qualities and abilities. But because the mind at this level of development is so preoccupied with its own ambitious tendencies it makes a comparison to itself. Seeing oneself as lacking these desirous qualities, one desires them for oneself. Instead of creating a novel self-image, the weak Manipura Vortex with jealousy derives its significance by emulating the image of another.

This vritti is related to and can induce so many other tendencies. In many cases a latent lack of confidence (second vortex) affects the thought processes in such a way that one's thinking is always about what one doesn't have. It is this lack of self-worth that very often makes one susceptible to jealousy. Jealousy affects and activates other tendencies of the Manipura as well. Jealousy is so often responsible for hatred, fear, and slander. Once the feeling of jealousy arises in the mind it is all too easy to begin to passionately hate the adversary that you've self-constructed, and who is there better to slander than those you hate? And does not this negativity and sense of comparison and competition with another induce even more fear as well? Perhaps you won't ever match up to the other. And

perhaps an underlying sense of fear was responsible for the jealousy in the first place.

The jealous, invidious mind must find the strength to value and respect its own qualities and process of growth. With jealousy one is completely disregarding oneself as a creative process. The person is a microcosm with a definite plan and purpose, evolving in the path toward union with the Macrocosm. Within the person are all of the latent qualities and forms of intelligence to help find a sense of dignity and self-respect.

4 and 5. Staticity and Melancholy

When the will projection of the ego at the Manipura level is unable to link itself to its environment and thereby sustain its psychological economy,

there is a devitalizing effect on the mind. The energy accustomed to moving outward loses its objects of desire, its chain of gratifying objects. Since the identity of the ego is so externalized on objective forms outside of itself, the loss of this object of desire and meaning (artha) for the ego is experienced as an actual loss of self. The causes of this are numerous- excessive stress, illness, other psychological issues disrupting balance and harmony in the mind, existential crisis, to name a few. All of these occurrences that create a rift in the economy between internal desire and external gratification, can lead to the feeling of inertia and staticity. In this state the mind lacks the vitality to seek its pleasure and happiness because of this split. This is staticity.

When this condition becomes more intensified or is prolonged melancholy ensues. Melancholy can be likened to psychic stupor in the 2nd vortex as they both are generated from the ego's inability to make a link with its environment. While psychic stupor is a reaction to a stressor that can uproot the entire psychological foundation, melancholy is a more refined expression of this in that the devitalizing of the mind is caused more by a loss of personal meaning. The mind at the Manipura is more refined and complex than at the Svadhistana and therefore the disruptance of the mind at that level is caused by the mental associations at that level and also respond with a reaction based on that level of cognitive and emotive functioning.

Melancholy, according to Kristeva, is asymbolia- the loss of meaningful symbols and forms that the personality has been attached to in order to define and orient itself. The depression is due to the fact that the ideas that have supported the personality are no longer functioning in the same ways. There remains only a void. This can be caused by a disruption in the environment or social world or by a change within the personality that makes it difficult to adjust in the customary

manner. In both ways is the personality is at a loss of how and where to reorient itself to a meaningful identity.

6. Cruelty

As mentioned previously, the psycho-evolutionary step toward the Manipura level of mind represents a much-heightened degree of self-consciousness by means of a more refined Creative Mind and a drive to expand it toward the external world. Here the psyche itself actually begins to be a somewhat conscious object for the intellect. We saw that in order to have shame, slander, jealousy, inertia, etc. it was necessary to think of the ego and its qualities as reference for the ego image. This concern is certainly present, however it is greatly obscured by the other ego-centered, impulsive and impassioned tendencies and therefore the pure and lucid contemplation of the personality is not yet possible. However, it is quite an

achievement for the mind to be making an indefatigable though impulsive effort to overcome the torpor of the Svadhistana.

With the propensity of sadism there is a very thorough but mostly unconscious recognition of the limitations of the ego along with a feeling of self-hatred and disgust. One unconsciously sees all of the limiting tendencies of the 2nd and 3rd vortexes and looks upon oneself as a pitiful nonentity. Instead of consciously recognizing these self-perceptions they are displaced and projected onto others who have these same complexes. Therefore, the complex that is so unconsciously despised within oneself is consciously recognized in another along with all of the corresponding self-hatred. With this defense mechanism the tension arising from self-disgust is directed toward another and that other thereby becomes the scapegoat for one's own shortcomings. Hence, the old maxim that one really hates most what one sees in oneself.

Sadism, this tendency to inflict harm upon another in order to protect oneself, is expressed in various ways ranging from violent, physical aggression to contemptuous remarks and teasing, to witch hunts and Auschwitz. Like slander it is a defense mechanism that feeds off of others in order to try to maintain a psychological equilibrium. It bears a deep resemblance to resentment at the Svadhistana but is a little more psychologically complex in that now the fiery Manipura tendencies add even more fuel to the fire of hate.

7. Blind Attachment

The propensity of blind attachment serves the same function of compulsion in the second vortex but at a higher stage of mental development. Again we see how the propensities recapitulate themselves in a higher, more consciously evolved form. At each successive stage of development there is a variation and evolution

on a psychological theme, a variation in the protection, sustaining, and expanding tendencies of mind in accordance with the increasingly refined and more conscious stages of development. This evolution of the mental structure arises not just through clash and cohesion in the mind but also due to an innate guiding faculty deeper within the mind. Ultimately, the all-attractive power of Consciousness leads all minds back into their Supreme Subjectivity.

Blind attachment gives an unquestionable and rigid sense of certainty to the Aham. Here the ego has moved into newly acquired territory that isn't thoroughly mastered and controlled. The social world with all of its complex ideas is a great challenge to the mind that was so previously immersed in its more native, primal instincts. In order to secure a niche in this more complex world of image and form without confusion and self doubt as to whether one has the vigor and fortitude to face the challenges of a higher order, the mind clings to either to its previous achievement or the ideal modes of being that it sets for itself. The name and form of the

ego or the ideals of the superego are rigidly, even fanatically upheld. But why must this be blind attachment instead of simply another lighter attachment. It must be blind so as to be unquestionable. The impulse is like a photon that after having been released through fusion in the sun's core bounces around in the body of the star colliding with other forces until, after millions of years, it finds its way to the surface where it is free to pursue its momentum in a vaster space with less hindrance. The birth of consciousness must move forward, never backward, and this blindness secures, at least for a while, this forward momentum. Again, viewing this tendency from a higher, calmer, discerning perspective makes it seem limiting, but blind attachment certainly has its place for the insecure ego. However, as we expand our creativity and awareness it is necessary to overcome our irrational insistence, demands, fanaticism, and manipulative tendencies that blind attachment fosters.

Although one may be blindly attached to another person or social group for a sense of security, in the end one is always attached to one's own image. Our own sense of identity and worth is still determined by being recognized by others. Blind attachment is not yet love, because it seeks out of desperation and takes more than it gives. However, everyone calls it "love." A good friend of mine once said "What is love but repressed hate?"

Any image casts a shadow. Shame and fear and suffering are in this shadow. And, in most cases, this image is sustained by a vague expectation how you think others should see you. So much fuss over what is not even your own! If one must hold to an image, then it must be as light as possible. Truly, one is free to live by

or create any image possibly conceived by the mind. The problem is that any image created in this microcosmic existence in time and space is that the finite image always bounces up against the eternal flow of your immortal existence. It is much better to flow with Tao, the cosmic moral order, than against it. You can't hide from your Self forever. At the base and essence, behind fear and trembling, we know it is all just a story and that we haven't yet begun this new, inner life. The life of the separated ego image is determined to receive reactions according to how one's image has shifted, metamorphosed, or distorted the natural flow of expanding human consciousness. There really are inner laws of harmony which we must learn not to transgress, but rather complement and further them. The vain ego image, because of its very nature and place of inception, will always suffer reactions and this shame will always bind one to the concept of a limited and mortal identity.

Fearlessness is the only path to wholeness. The wise who see beyond the limits of the Aham and into the Mahat are the only ones who could play the game of the image correctly. Without escaping life, they move right through it. The personal, spiritual self is but a name to the nameless, an image given to you to help you function in this world so as to eventually free yourself. "Time is a moving image of eternity" said Plato. Only within this relation to the infinite, eternal, nameless being, do we find our own true

name and nature within time. Spontaneous, natural and free, the inner, mental reflection of Self (your true image) flows really well with life because one could never presume upon it. Love and sincerity are much more real than any appearance to mask suffering by putting on a fine show exhibiting limited qualities. Being sustained and ensured by the Infinite, the realized soul puts fear and worry aside and lets life be lived care-free, as a joyful channel for the Infinite.

8. Ambition

Ambition is the continuous propulsion for the mind toward physical and mental forms for the purpose of expanding its arena of activity and understanding. The Sanskrit word for this vritti, trishna, literally means thirst. It is an insatiable thirst that underlies the ego's desire to be something greater. Ambition is the focus of will on desired goals and the unswerving dedication to realize them. Like shame, it is one of the few tendencies in the Manipura that can actually be growth promoting, even when viewed from a higher level of psychological development. Ambition wants to make what is outside inside, what is ideal real as the Aham acquires personal significance and social recognition by these achievements. For ambition not to be a force that consumes the Aham, it must be guided with a pure desire for growth and expansion that is not rooted in forcefulness and aggression.

Ambition is misplaced desire for expansion and purpose. One wants to build castles in the world by worldly means and completely ignores the vast potential of intelligence and meaning that is within. So often ambition takes one contrary to this path which is finally a path to liberation from suffering and delusion. Infinite desire is only satiated with an infinite object of pleasure, which obviously doesn't exist as a possibility of experience for the human mind at the Manipura. Our misplaced notion of infinite desire projected into the external world is actually a projection of infinity from within. Only that which is unstained and unmoved by any vibration is infinite, anything else is a finite wave with a beginning and end. It is only deep within the subjective witness of the mind that we find the ever-present Shiva. This Supreme Subjectivity is always present behind the mind and ever ready to take the mind back to its source of awareness and bliss. The mind must be prepared for this by following the path of dharma, or inner, psycho-spiritual movement. This is so hard for the ambitious, externalized, form-oriented Manipura consciousness to understand. It is only when we find a true and meaningful purpose that takes us toward a higher level of Self awareness that it begins to be possible to contemplate the infinite within and live within its joy, its ananda. The growth and understanding that helps substitute love and optimistic expansion for selfish ambition and manipulation is how the person begins to have a sacred reverence for his/her own existence and respect that same sacredness in all.

A friend of mine was once seated in front of Anandamurti. Anandamurti was mentally scanning his Manipura Vortex calling out the propensities one by one and saying "very good, no shame, slander," and so on until he mentioned "What is this, a little ambition?" He said that it was alright and that it could stay because he was channelizing this vritti with a lot of social service activities inspired by higher propensities. His lesson from this experience was that as long as their exists external desires it is possible to channelize them toward something really positive with the creative power of the Manipura Vortex guided by noble intentions from the higher vrittis. This way, one fulfills the wants of the propensity of ambition in the Manipura while at the same time transmutes the selfishness of the desire into a more conscious goodness that is shared with all. It is certainly not easy, but it is really the only way out of the hell of selfishness and greed that forever suffers a delusion of controlled and confined happiness. As such, ambition converts into true expansion, a tendency in the Anahata spiritual heart, and leads one toward unbounded yet tranquil happiness in this world as well as the next.

9. Hatred

Hatred resembles very closely the propensities of slander and sadism. The main difference between them, however, is that slander and sadism are active

aggressive expressions while hatred is more of a deep, seething hostile feeling toward another that doesn't necessarily have to express itself overtly but may stimulate these other these vrttis as well. It is a constant state of aggressive tension between the self and the other. It justifies all sorts of negative expressions in the personality toward another being that is constantly under one's negative evaluation. A little bit of hatred may be repressed or ignored or may escape through passive- aggressive gestures or comments. Intense hatred may lead to terrible altercations and even aggression. Very often hatred is a constant and general attitude toward a world considered hostile or unjust. Every situation or person that threatens the ego is hated. Hatred is an armed assassin always ready to do some dirty work.

In a poem of Byron it is written, "he knew not what to say so he swore." When the mind cannot assimilate a clash to the ego, the effect of the situation remains unprocessed and all of this raw, unprocessed mental tension remains inside, gnawing away. It is interesting to note that the vritti of hatred escapes outward from the center of the Manipura Vortex directly towards the liver. Any form of hatred must be understood creatively to catch its blindness. Very few people are educated about emotional life. Normally, one learns how to manage negative emotions only after they have become a serious problem that requires major changes due to crisis.

Hatred is a lack of the creative abilities of the Manipura. If the higher, conscious parts of the personality are not vigilant, then hatred as well as other negative propensities will worm their way in. Hatred is so often one of the key culprits in the shadow of the personality. It remains there because one doesn't know where else to put it. One tries to hide and suppress it, but it always finds a way out. Situations and people that provoke negativity will always exist, we can only change how we evaluate and react to them. One must learn to see the sequence of events, external as well as internal, that led up to the feeling of anger and reinterpret and channelize them in a different way. To begin overcoming hatred it is necessary to re-envision one's being in a more harmonious manner that isn't based on separation, fear, desperation and conflict. Hatred cannot exist well where there is love and understanding and all of the other mental alchemy that goes into the transcendent act of forgiveness. Hatred is often a reaction to a prior, unconscious interpretation of a difficult situation. This energy remains embedded in the mind perhaps an entire lifetime. Perhaps one still remembers insults from elementary school and while recalling them flushes crimson. Or perhaps one is frequently involved in imaginary arguments with a parent. And just imagine what happens if a real, present person moves into this imaginary space of projection! This person will receive the past hatred of the others history. The buried emotions

that have festered inside may be violently vomited out while the ego seeks to resolve this issue by blaming another for its malcontent.

10. Fear

Fear is certainly the most prominent feeling that pervades human life. Much that was said about fear of annihilation at the Svadhistana Vortex is relevant to this vritti in the 3rd vortex. Just as many of the foundational tendencies of the 2nd vortex are translated and transmuted into the expansive and vigorous tendencies of the 3rd, fear a more complex and conscious form of the pervasive fear of annihilation. Fear is not necessarily terror in such an unconscious and pervasive sense, but rather reaction to self doubt. One doubts the strength and ability of oneself to uphold the psychological projections, activities, and attachments that constitute the identity.

At this stage of development the mind has a clear degree of separation from the objective world (nature and culture) but instead of being motivated toward true transcendence of relative and finite bondages, it substitutes the potentially pure understanding and conception of form and idea with a limited and egocentric version that merely gratifies the ambitious and passionate appetites of the limited and separate self sense. Because the will enforces itself through blind attachment, craving, slander, etc., it is very unwilling (and yet incapable) to let go of its egocentricity. Behind all of these instincts for self expansion in the psychic and conceptual arena is the fear that the link between the internal, subjective will and its definitive external attachments will be severed. Fear is this perpetual concern over the loss of self, at least a self defined by its cravings and demands. Fear has many forms and many faces. At the most superficial level, there is fear about the acceptance of the social mask, or persona. Once we find a little more confidence, authenticity and individuality there will still be the fear if this acquired image can be sustained. Even in the highest degrees of development where one begins to have a notion of dharma and the sacrifice of the individual will for the collective welfare there will still be the fear that the lower propensities may hinder.

The Manipura level is the realm of the self and world that is defined by an impulsive and egocentric will. It is not until the propensities of the Anahata compensate for these limitations that the self begins to intuit that the world and self are not held together only by its own will, but is directed by a divine and moral order. The Manipura can capture this idea. This understanding is the only way to overcome the fear of losing the grasping, craving and defensive separate self. The only way for the Manipura to be strong and healthy is to serve a master greater than itself. Only through knowing Brahma is there an end to fear.

Of course, the spiritual Warrior archetype is what manifests in the Manipura mental level to guide one toward the spirituality in the Anahata Vortex. Under this influence, which is a co-mingling of Manipura with Anahata and Vishuddha propensities, the mind's selfish desires get transmuted into a greater effort to struggle to follow one's conscience. Any Warrior needs a master and the spiritual Warrior archetype is so closely connected to the guru archetype. The Manipura Vortex still can't let go of images of itself, so it is no surprise that the mind looks for an image or archetype for god. Instead of being lost in the heroic ego trying to free itself from lower worldly bondages, the mind seeks to understand a higher, internal meaning based on a nobler idea than those based on selfish desire, blind attachment and ambition.

In the Hindu epic, the Ramayana, the 10-headed demon Ravana is a symbol for the 10 propensities of the Manipura Vortex. The god Rama is the hero who slays this demon. The Creative Mind of the Manipura can grasp these ideals and put them into practice. The divine archetypes descend upon the mind according to time, place, and person. Although most people worship these internal ideas in the extroverted religious sense, the developed Manipura mind understands the true significance of these forms and that they have an archetypal, "guiding function" as Jung termed it. It is this deep understanding of conceptual forms that gives the creative, Manipura mind its genius.

When I was a boy I was very curious as to whether Christ really existed as a human being or was a deeper, more universal, spiritual archetype embedded in the human conscience. This curiosity disappeared as I began to meditate and understand that the divine grace is always present behind the tranquil mind. I understood that the divine was in the formless I-Witness of the mind. This is what yogis call the Atman. Words and concepts and even the highest philosophy cannot trap the infinite within their limits. What I longed for was this harmony and union instead of a standardized conception of "god" which always seems to go along with some kind of acceptance of religion, cult or tradition. Although I had so many dreams of my teacher Anandamurti in which He often told me very important things and even healed me, I could never allow my mind to get locked into concepts like "guru." Perhaps I could accept this authority on the inside, but when people started speaking of "guru" in the social context, it was so often based on other people's conceptions of what the guru is and not so much their own experience and deep realization. This is true in any form of spirituality: the masses follow set standards and concepts and don't put much energy into realization. However, it was in the height of my realizations of the formlessness of the divine that I had so many experiences of divine forms! Anandamurti, in dreams or meditation, always guided me toward the formless, actual presence of the Atman

and never said anything like “I am the only way.” These experiences always revealed what i saw as deep universal truths. My mind had connected with this particular form that revealed truths so far beyond form. There even once appeared to my physical eyes the luminous form of Christ after a deep meditation. I had no doubt there was a divine presence manifesting as a form. His form was translucent and the Quetzalcoatl serpent that I had seen in my first kundalini experiences was seen just behind his eyes at the level of the mid-brain of the Christ figure. The beauty of the figure reminded me of an icon of Andrei Rublev, only there was the jade serpent seen within this holographic figure. I clearly understood that it was a symbol of the union of heaven and earth and of god and humankind. The “serpent power” of the kundalini, the divine energy latent in the base of the spine, awakens into the brain and transforms us into something inconceivable for the Aham. This serpent at the mid-brain was completely tamed and within the beauty of the totality of the beautiful head of the Christ figure. I thought of how such an enlightened brain must have incorporated the so-called reptilian and mammalian brains into the mystical, yet to be realized potentials of the human neocortex that has evolved above and around them. Christ is a symbol of this yogic perfection, at least in my experience. The vision was more beautiful and meaningful than anything I ever saw in the Louvre or any other museum in the world. When I recall it I return to that state of ecstasy in the present. As time goes on I understand this as well as so many other visions of true form as deep spiritual truths that one cannot normally grasp without the help of the medium of form.

The Anahata Vortex

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. It was said previously that the Manipura Vortex 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 at the navel 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 vortex.” 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 Brahma.

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 and the 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 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 is then able to reflect more upon the nature of itself. There is therefore a much greater manifestation of the I-feeling or Mahat 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 or Mahat 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 Mahat’s 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).

The 12 Anahata Vortexes

1. 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, 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 vrttis 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 Brahma, the Supreme Self.

2. Worry

While hope gives one the secure conviction that their own welfare is dear to Brahma 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.

3. Endeavor

Endeavor is the effort to unfold enfolded or dormant qualities of the personality. We see that with the intuitive, Vijinanamaya Kosa 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 there was still the impulsive hunger for expanding the mind in relation to its external conceptual world. With the vrtti 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 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 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 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 vritti 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 vrittis of vanity, selfishness, duplicity, and argumentativeness as these tendencies reveal an incomplete integration of lower vrittis into the self-reflective, intuitive, and magnanimous potentialities of the Anahata Vortex.

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 to the Manipura, then the entropic vrittis 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 vrittis will complicate and confound the autocratic Manipura vrittis. 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 vrittis or cluster of vrittis that constituted the former personality at the Manipura become the shadow.

4. Affection

The affection of one sentient being for another as expressed through this tendency at the Anahata Vortex 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 Vortex 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 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 many places, who moves through infinite love behind all our faces.

5. Vanity

So it is now clear that the mind and personality affected by the propensities of the Anahata Vortex are deeply self-conscious, self-reflective tendencies that lead the person to a more abstract yet 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 intuitive. The personality is informed by the deep and abstracted thoughts of "who am I essentially, unconditioned by my environment and what do really think and 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 Aham secures a niche for itself in its own qualities, abilities, achievements, 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 Aham 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 own, as its fundamental identity. It is more than the confusion of the subject with the object however, as the sense of doer-ship (ego or Aham) is alienated and encapsulated from the rest of the mental being.

Here the Aham 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 energy generates all of the qualities for that Subject. With vanity there is the confusion of the subject with objective qualities. The Aham 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. Its easy for one to mistaken 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 vrttis of the Svadhistana and Manipura 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 assuages 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 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 ego image that usurps the focus of awareness.

The liberation of the spiritual identity from the mortal coil is the supreme good, the summum bonum of human life. This realization of the inner "I" is not the denial of the body nor the senses nor the outside world. Finding a pure "I" deeper within helps one to live in balance with the desires of the ego that one is

transforming. Most of us are somewhere in-between; realizing that we have a internal identity separated from world and body but are still attaching this subtle notion of I with the objective qualities of world and body. Under these dimly-lit conscious conditions we are bound to the limited, imaginary notions of “me and mine.”

6. Conscience

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 vrttis usurp the intelligence of the higher.

The propensity of conscience or discrimination 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.

Conscience, 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.

7. Emptiness

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 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.

8. Ego, Self-Identity

Aham-vrtti does not refer to egotism or the vrtti 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 vrtti 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 vrtti. 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 vrtti 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 Brahma, 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.

9. 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 vritti 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 ones 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.

10. Duplicity

Whenever the personality makes a jump from one vortex 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 vortex 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 vortex, 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 its 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? Its 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 complete purification of this vritti of duplicity “opens” 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 vritti 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.

11. Argumentation

When a person encounters doubt either about an aspect of himself or herself or an opinion or view of the world, a sure and certain way of

sustaining one’s view or opinion is to defy the opposition with an argumentative stance. This propensity is a refinement of slander at the Manipura. Instead of this vritti viciously preserving the outward drives of the ego it instead preserves and justifies the intellectual projections and self-concepts of an individual.

There are of course times when contention has its place, such as making a stand against wrong actions. Most often, however, this propensity serves the function of maintaining the status quo of an uncertain and insecure ego by resisting outside thoughts that run contrary to its own system. One argues not so much to convince another of one's views but rather to convince oneself. If by argument a person can convince another of his views, then the fact that another has succumbed to his intellect and will is a proof that the intellect and will are robust. This sense of intellectual prowess gives confidence to the uncertain ego.

Most people go through life with many prickly spines. The ego is still an incomplete entity and it must struggle and contend with its environment as well as with itself. As the sense of attachment to outside forms and images diminish via the cultivation of character. There is correspondingly less of a need for the ego to struggle to have to justify and preserve itself in the mental and social worlds. Within conscience is the certainty and justification for all aspects of life. Once conscience begins to express itself one's actions as well as thoughts are rooted in essential being instead of a vacillating ego with its tenuous attachments. The more one is established in this discriminative conscience the less one is disturbed by outside thought forces. Here one may exist as a whole, complete in itself and not defined and conditioned by the self-other dialogue. Conscience, as defined earlier, is the representative of Consciousness in mind and is therefore rooted in transcendence, beyond the self-other dialectic. Conscience is the fine thread that leads the mind out of duality into a unity of thought, feeling, and activity with the Macrocosmic Mind. When thought and feeling pour forth from this essential being and the will acts in accord with this truth, one's actions are merged in the activity of the Macrocosmic will. "Where there is another, there is fear," says an Upanishad. If one can exist in this unity with conscience and act with this sense of certainty, then there is never a need for argumentation, even if one is in the right. Here one's microcosmic activity has merged into that of the Macrocosm and bears its stamp of certainty, as if approved by letter and seal.

12. Regret, Compunction

When discussing shame at the Manipura it was discussed how shame is a result of the negative consequences of activity in the light of a punitive conscience or super ego. Here one has transgressed the boundaries of one's externally constructed social conscience. Regret is the feeling experienced when one goes against one's inner, moral conscience, viveka.

It is an inwardly induced feeling of guilt rather than an externally imposed feeling of shame. The feeling of regret can help one to integrate the disparate parts of the personality. Vanity, selfishness, duplicity, and argumentativeness may cause

these incongruities. With regret, there is recognition of the incongruity or egoistic defense systems that keep the personality from being fully integrated with the positive vrttis of hope, endeavor, and discrimination.

The whole idea of action and reaction, or karma and samskara, is understood when the balance between discriminative, judicious action and the reactions in the form of guilt or regret are finely balanced. The law of karma and samskara is extremely subtle and can only be understood when these two tendencies (conscience and regret) are fully manifest. Conscience comes about in its deepest sense when one begins to understand the moral or dharmic order of the universe. Regret, at least in its deepest sense, helps one to recognize how one has moved against the grain and course of this order. Of course, the law of action and reaction applies to all actions. Every vritti in the human mind is compensated and equilibrated for by another. However, it is only at the Anahata Vortex and intuitive layer of mind that the recognition that one is constantly creating their own reality in the form of choices made and the natural consequences to those choices. Once this is deeply realized one can intervene in this process of continually constructing limited boundaries for the personality and having to undergo the reactions and compensations for those activities.

It is the self-enclosure of the egoistic state of consciousness and the perpetuation of that state by ego-centered actions and reactions that prevent the self from understanding its higher nature and experiencing reality as a deeper whole. Instead, the mind is constantly vacillating between its ever-changing thoughts and sentiments that are rooted in its separateness from its Self, Shiva. Even the well-integrated personality is a fragmentation of consciousness in that there is still a sense of separateness from the infinite and eternal Self.

In its deepest sense, regret is the feeling of guilt at being a separate entity. This is not the lack of confidence of the 2nd vortex or shame of the 3rd, but a much deeper existential recognition of the transience and impermanence of the phenomenal self: the self that is rooted in the mind that is an “functional, ever-changing, and relative entity.” It is only when the mind realizes that there is a greater whole that encompasses its existence that it can seek to find that integration and wholeness. Regret, therefore, can serve not just the purpose of congruently integrating the personality but also have a transcendent function.

This transcendent function of regret arises when one sees the phenomenal self or personality as a “system of compensations.” As Emerson put it, “Human life is but a system of compensations.” With existential regret, one understands the dynamics of the cravings, blind attachments, vanity, selfishness, and duplicity that held the personality together. For so long, over so many lifetimes, the fabric

of the personality has been threaded together by such defenses. These defenses only came about because of the underlying fear of existence and the corresponding urge for self-preservation. Even the positive qualities at the Anahata Vortex are compensations for negative tendencies. They are therefore still in some way connected to them in that there is still a feeling of separateness from the purest grounds of Self.

Once one realizes that there is a deeper purpose to life than maintaining the relative and phenomenal ego structure and that perhaps there really is a god inside waiting to be born, then can one begin to let go of one's bondages. Therefore, the feeling of regret at having for so long struggled with infinite resolve to maintain an illusory, finite, and tenuous separateness can actually inspire the blissful feelings of self-transcendence. Here one can let go of all forms of fear: the primal fear of annihilation at the Svadhistana, the fear of competition at the Manipura, and the existential anxiety of the Anahata. And yet again another system of compensations opens up: a compensation to transmute all existential separateness into the united life with pure Spirit. This indeed begins at the Anahata but continues ever so deeper at the Vishuddha Vortex.

The Vishuddha Vortex

At humanity's present stage of evolution, it is very rare to find individuals, much less societies, functioning at the level of the Vishuddha Vortex. In fact, it is rare to find individuals that have assimilated the tendencies of the Anahata Vortex.

However, there are concepts for such states of mind for these individuals such as "self-actualizing" or "well-adjusted" people. Although human society is still far from fully integrating the Anahata propensities, there are a few individuals within that society who have made this leap.

The case of an individual assimilating the Vishuddha tendencies is even rarer. The literal translation of Vishuddha means "especially pure." Certainly, many people have a notion of the spiritual and saintly person, but it is very uncommon to find such a person except in stories of times past. There are a few notable exceptions, such as a handful of humble, noble souls who live in harmony and union with their higher Self.

The vrttis of the Vishuddha Vortex are purely selfless tendencies. They represent a mind that is no longer bounded by the notion of a separate and isolated self, a self that is involved in sustaining its egoistic thought constructs and emotional attachments. Instead, the tendencies of the Vishuddha compensate for the limitations of an abstract self concept by replacing the notion of a separated identity with one that is deeply and intimately connected with the Shiva within and the entire manifested creation without.

The Vishuddha Vortex is connected to the ethereal factor and the Causal Mind (Vijinanamaya Kosa). The Causal Mind, as you will recall from part 2, is the Causal Matrix of all creation. All creation is rooted and has its first subtle expressions at the Causal mental level. Creation, or involution, is the process of analysis: the One becomes the many. Evolution is the return journey where the manifold expressions again become One. Just as all things proceeded from the unity of the Causal Mind, again do they return to it.

A main difference between the microcosmic or unit mind and Macrocosmic Mind is that the unit mind has many purposes. It is guided by so many various vrttis. The Macrocosmic Mind has only one purpose and that is to guide all created beings (unit minds) back into unity with itself. The Causal level of the unit mind and the Vishuddha Vortex are intimately linked to the Macrocosmic Mind. To understand how this is so, recall from part how the layers of the unit mind (kosas) during its evolution retrace their steps by participating in the pre-existing realms within the Cosmic Mind (lokas).

Because the Vishuddha Vortex is connected to this Causal layer, we would expect to see cognitive thought patterns that parallel and correspond to the function of

the Causal Mind. In addition, we would expect to see emotive tendencies that reflect this subtle unity by embracing the entire creation.

Due to the very occult and esoteric nature of the first eight propensities of the Vishuddha Vortex, they will be discussed following the descriptions of the latter eight. It would indeed be difficult to explain these tendencies without first having a general notion of the nature of the other Vishuddha propensities.

The propensities of the Vishuddha are an extension of the activity of the Cosmic or Causal Mind. These propensities are the reflection of Macrocosmic activity within the microcosm. Because they express this Macrocosmic activity their function and purpose is to guide not just the individual microcosm toward its salvation, but the entire creation as well.

The first eight propensities of the Vishuddha reflect the creative power of the Macrocosmic Mind to imagine an aspect of creation into an objective reality. Because of the exalted nature of a mind functioning at the Vishuddha Vortex, it is able to co-create the universe as an extension and reflection of the Causal Mind. This is the reason for their esoteric nature. The latter eight propensities are concerned with how such an exalted unit mind orients its activity toward the Macrocosm. They are not necessarily causal tendencies like the first eight propensities, but rather the more personal tendencies of a noble mind.

The last 8 Vishuddha Vortexes

9. “Humm,” The Awakening of the Kundalini

The ninth vritti in the Vishuddha is the propensity to awaken the kundaliini, or sleeping divinity. The concept of the awakening of the kundaliini is central to the practice of Tantric meditation. Essentially, the kundaliini is the force of Shakti as it functions within the human body. Kundaliini is not the manifest energies of Shakti in the form of the gunas (sentient, mutative, and static forces) that qualify Shiva to bring creation into being. Rather, kundaliini is the pure and unmanifested Shakti resting within the human body. Because of its exalted state, it has the ability to control and regulate all of the various expressions of energy within the body and mind.

The kundaliini is a sleeping divinity in that in most people it lies as a dormant energy in the Muladhara Vortex. Many people familiar with the notion of kundaliini are under the misguided notion that the kundaliini is a force that is “sleeping” in all states of being except when one is doing the spiritual practices to awaken it. Rather than being an energy that is only activated by spiritual practitioners of Tantra, kundaliini is the driving force behind all human evolution. It is the unseen force that is the root of all energetic expression that is constantly guiding the

mind toward union with the supreme. It was the force of Shakti that caused involution and fragmentation of the Shiva. It is also Shakti in the form of kundaliini that

guides the mind back into union with Shiva. It was the fundamental energy behind the evolution from the first to second vortexes, the second to third, the third to forth, and so on.

The spiritual practitioner, if his/her mind is developed enough, gains the ability to awaken this energy through meditative techniques. Its awakening within the spiritual aspirant furthers their psychic evolution as well as brings a feeling of exaltation to the mind at the moment of awakening. When awakened, it travels upward through a channel called the shushumna. This shushumna is a subtle energy current that runs upward, through all of the vortexes, from the Muladhara at the base of the spine to the Sahasrara at the crown of the head. As it crosses the different vortexes, it causes the mind to resonate with the corresponding layers of mind that a particular vortex is associated with. Because its awakening leads one toward a higher state of mental functioning, it is experienced as a form of ecstasy and trance. This state is termed samadhi. There are several states of samadhi. These stages range from the cruder states associated with the lower vortexes to the highest of spiritual realizations, nirvikalpa samadhi. In nirvikalpa samadhi, the kundaliini rises all of the way to the crown or Sahasrara Vortex in absolute union with the Shiva.

Much more will be said about this important and very subtle concept in the last chapter on spiritual practice. For now, it is sufficient to know that it is a force that can be intentionally awakened by spiritual discipline or by the subtle ideas of a very developed mind. Again, kundaliini is not only a force active in spiritual practice. Even after it is awakened by one's concentration it continues to be active as the primordial force behind the unfolding of all of the vrttis, and, therefore, the entire evolution of mind. The speed of mental development is thereby heightened when it is awakened through concentration rather than only active as an unconscious force.

When the kundaliini awakens the sound "hummm" will rapidly and unintentionally sound out of one's mouth. This is due to the upward pulsation of energy that is associated with its awakening that rapidly expels all of the air out of the lungs.

10. Congruence

We saw that that with the Anahata Vortex and intuitive layer of mind it was possible for the mind to think very deeply about the nature of its existence. However, due to the unincorporated vrttis of the lower vortexes it was not always able to discover and then put these ideas into practice. It was also established

that this incomplete assimilation of the blind, unconscious tendencies with the more subtle and self conscious tendencies of the Anahata lead the mind to express itself in fretful, vain, selfish, argumentative, and duplicitous ways. The mind at the Anahata could grasp the flow of dharma and act in accord with it. However, it could also act

according to its own impulses. This is the so-called free will of the mind at the Anahata Vortex. Dharma was not completely the essence of the mind here. Instead, dharma was indeed something that could be understood and potentially realized as one's deeper nature, but was still a potential.

With the Vishuddha Vortex and Causal Mind, however, the mind's essence is an outpouring of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness of the Macrocosmic Mind. The notion of the true and the good is now not a concept separate from oneself, but is one's very own nature. Goodness is no longer something to be cultivated. Instead, it spontaneously and synchronistically pours forth from the ground of one's being. The *vrtti* of congruence represents this sublime activity in that the noble ideas that the mind is able to grasp through its discriminative ability are indeed acted upon. The tendencies of duplicity and argumentativeness are therefore integrated by this ability to put an idea into practice.

With duplicity (in the Anahata), the mind could vacillate back and forth between two choices, between two aspects of its being: the impulsive or the conscious. With argumentativeness, the personality was not integrated enough to confirm its ideas without aggressively asserting them through contention. What power or force is it that gives the personality the ability to surmount such incongruities? It is possible only because the mind at the Vishuddha Vortex is connected with the causal power of the Macrocosmic Mind. It was stated earlier that whatever the Macrocosm thinks becomes an objective, ontological reality, whereas the thought of the microcosm remained only in their mind. The Vishuddha is the blending of the microcosm into the macrocosm. And with this blending is the profound ability for thought to bring something into ontological being. The power of thinking becomes so constant and unwaveringly robust that any incongruous thoughts dissolve in this determination. This level of personal integrity clearly indicates the process of how Brahma has the capacity to transform everything back into its own eminent and transcendent essence.

This also represents how the human can manifest the divine; of how the impersonal macrocosm uses the personality of the microcosm to manifest its resplendent glory. Practition, as well as other Vishuddha tendencies, make manifest within the human expression the divine activities that nurture and guide

the universe. Furthermore, this divine expression gives utterance and name, a humanized expression, to what is essentially Nameless.

11 and 12. Cultivation of Mundane and Supra-Mundane Knowledge

The greatest obstacle to the cultivation of knowledge, whether in the crude or subtle realms, is the time factor. By their very nature as beings existing in the realm of time, all things are constantly in flux and change. At the Anahata, there was the realization of the archetypal form of created

things as they exist in the realm of ideas beyond physical manifestation. However, this knowledge is not completely beyond the factor of time and relative change. There are still the vacillations of thought pulses in the aerial factor that creates the sense of time and change. The Vishuddha Vortex is beyond the time factor altogether. It associates with the Causal Mind that generates all things that come into being in time and relativity. Because the mind here is not associated with the fluctuations of time and is rooted in the causal level, it can know the essence of things beyond time. That is, it can know the past present, and future.

Many people, at some time in their lives, have or will experience a precognitive event. To know a thing before it happens signifies knowledge independent of linear time. This knowledge often comes about through a dream that prefigures a future event, a strong and lucid feeling that something very significant will happen, or when the mind is concentrated in states such as meditation or reverie. In certain states of dreaming the sensory and conceptual layers of mind may be dormant, permitting the mind to resonate with the unconscious layers of mind: the creative, intuitive, and causal layers of mind. The deep knowledge from these states will then percolate down into the Conceptual Mind in the form of a prophetic dream.

All things originate in the Causal Mind. In actuality, it is a layer of mind closer to our essence than our limited, mental awareness. However, due to our preoccupation with our being as it exists in the relative sphere, we are closed off from this knowledge. At times, when something really important is about to occur to us, we get an intimation of this knowledge before it actually occurs. This precognition occurs because this higher layer of mind really does belong to us and we are never really separated from it. Therefore, when something very significant is about to happen, a little of this knowledge from the Causal Mind may trickle down and inform the ego of what is to come. It is as if the intensity of the pending event stirring in the ethereal firmament overcomes our limited cognitive barriers and forces its way into our awareness.

For the practitioner of Tantra, as well as anybody with a spiritually disciplined mind, events such as prophetic dreams and precognitive events are much more

regular. A spiritual aspirant has a much greater degree of access to these higher kosas because the mind can more readily be stilled and quieted. The greater degree of mental development the more is one able to have access to this higher knowledge. The less emotional disturbance and cognitive distortion of a mind attached to the phenomenal self and world, the more will this knowledge manifest. Therefore, those that can regulate the vrttis and layers of mind associated with the lower vortexes will dwell within and be constantly informed by the subtle worlds.

Human beings will always be fascinated with psychic knowledge as well as psychic abilities. Most people, however, want to know of the future in order to sustain and fulfill their desires in the material, phenomenal

world. Such is the reason for the popularity of TV and telephone psychics, palm-readers, and other occultists. However, this desire to use the higher worlds in order to serve the desires and attachments of the ego is precisely what prevents knowledge of these higher worlds. How is it possible for a mind that is preoccupied with externalities to know what is so deeply internal? Only a pure and spiritually cultivated mind can truly know the higher kosas. Certainly there are people such as our previously mentioned psychics who display some degree of subtle knowledge for material gain. However, this knowledge is still very much on the superficial level and is often distorted by their thought projections.

This knowledge beyond time at the Vishuddha is not simply being able to know the future. As it is a level beyond time, the mind can know the true essence of all created things, as they exist in the mind of Brahma. With this knowledge one can comprehend the divine sequence of events and be able to offer this knowledge to humanity in the spirit of universal welfare.

In the words of Rilke's ninth elegy: "Perhaps we are here in order to say: house, bridge, fountain, gate, fruit tree...But to say them, you must understand, oh to say them more intensely than the Things themselves ever dreamed of existing...Here is the time of the sayable, here is its homeland. Speak and bear witness how happy a Thing can be, how innocent and ours,...And these things, which live by perishing, know you are praising them; transient, they look to us for deliverance: us, the most transient of all."

This higher knowledge can be either a higher perspective of the mundane world, or the knowledge of the subtle world itself. A very good example of using this subtle knowledge to understand the mundane world is the work of Rudolph Steiner, especially with his contribution of Bio- dynamic Agriculture. Instead of approaching the mundane practice of agriculture with a materialistic outlook, Steiner used his intuitive knowledge of the higher kosas to more comprehensively

understand the life process. Steiner saw the phenomenal, material world as the result of subtle spiritual forces. Only a mind functioning at the intuitive and causal levels can gain access to how these forces effect the phenomenal, material world.

Knowledge of the subtle world is not knowledge for the sake of knowledge but is an expression of infinite compassion and a desire to further the progress of all creation. An example of knowledge of the subtle worlds would be the teachings of the great Tantric preceptors and their works. Their knowledge of the subtle kosas teaches other beings how to obtain the same realizations. This is done by the cultivation of a spiritual outlook, practice, and way of living that was exemplified and taught by such a preceptor.

13. Compassion

Love and compassion is an outpouring from the wellsprings of the infinite. One whose mind is very near to the Shiva cannot help but feel an immense love for all, as his/her mind is overflowing with the bliss of divine rapture. One who feels so deeply loved and protected is freed from personal needs and wants and can thereby love all the more.

Love only becomes partial and limited when it is bifurcated into egoistic awareness. Here it develops its personal likes and dislikes and ones feeling of love becomes partial to one's own near and dear or to a particular social or cultural group. If one purifies this feeling of love one

inevitably finds that this feeling has its roots in something far greater than the individual personality. Love was always an intimation and calling of the Infinite. Brahma teaches universal love through first loving those near to us. As this love and feeling of welfare for others expands it gradually takes on more universal aspects.

The closer one becomes to Brahma and realizes that Brahma's only purpose is to deliver all from bondage, the more does one share in this divine longing. "To know Brahma is to become Brahma." This is true in not just our transcendental essence but divine activity as well.

It is especially through this desire for universal welfare that we can understand how the Vishuddha Vortex manifests in human beings the qualities of the Cosmic Mind. In fact, the tendencies of the Vishuddha Vortex are propensities of the Cosmic Mind. Because the microcosm has developed to such a high degree, it can re-unite with the mind that created it. Recall from the chapters of evolution and involution how the microcosm is an embodied reflection of the macrocosm. The only difference between the two lies in the objective sphere of the mind. The objective sphere of the microcosm is associated with the senses and physical

body, whereas the Macrocosmic objective chamber projects the entire creation. With these thoughts in mind, we can see how this pious resolve toward universal compassion is not just a mere sentiment, but a metaphysical process. Instead of a mind being associated with its own objectivity in the form of its own thoughts, feelings, experiences, attachments, its objective is now much greater. With universal and unconditional love, one transcends one's exclusive self-concern. Due to this, the object of the mind becomes the entire macrocosm in that this universal feeling extends to all reaches of the universe. Now that the object of the unit mind is the same as that of the cosmic mind, there is indeed a unity between them. The only thing separating them was the objective sphere of the mind, both of which are now identical. Since the subjective chambers of mind have always been the same, the subjective identity of the microcosm becomes that of the macrocosm. This process can continue until it is totally complete, like the proverbial drop that merges into the ocean.

Corresponding with this desire for universal welfare is a deep sense of justice. The mind in union with the Causal Mind understands the Way in which all things unfold in accordance with the cosmic unfolding of events. The sense of dharma becomes the base of ethics and the object of the mind becomes the entire macrocosm in that this universal feeling extends to all reaches of the universe. Such a person not only acts in accordance with truth, but inspires others to do so as well. Not only this, but he/she has the understanding and strength to take a stand against injustice.

14. Surrender, Devotion

When the person finally realizes that their mind is not a permanent entity, but a vehicle for the Infinite, then one begins to devote all of one's thought, feeling, and will toward the understanding of one's immutable essence.

Broadly speaking, there are two orientations of the unit mind for its relation to the Shiva. The first is the common dualistic notion of the mind and its processes being separate from a deity or guru that acts upon it from "above." Within this spiritual orientation are definite concepts, disciplines, and systems of thought that help to engage the Aham-intellect in its march toward the realization of its essence. The psychological outlook here is one of a relation to a loving deity that can behave as if pleased or displeased with the aspirant depending on his/her actions. When good comes it's the grace of god. When something bad happens, god is scolding one.

Related to this approach is the devotional-sentimental approach. With this relation, there is still the dualistic conception of the devotee-deity dialogue. It is rooted in the Aham-intellect but uses sentiment and feeling as a force propelling

mind toward the beloved. Here, the true devotee desires none other than to please the deity and do as he/she wishes. All of one's emotional energy is directed toward and transmuted into love for the Supreme. Although there is still a dualistic relation of person to Shiva, there lies such tremendous capacity for transmuting all limitations into unbounded love for god. Just as how pious resolve transmutes one's personal love into universal love, a loving attachment to a conception of a deity also heightens the mental objective. Instead of always thinking of how to satisfy needs, one desires only to please god. For this approach to work one must be already free of many clinging tendencies of the ego. Otherwise, this type of devotion takes on a muddled quality in which one's own conceptual projections and desires are projected onto the deity. A common error in all religious and spiritual traditions is to project either a matriarchal or a patriarchal ideal onto the concept of god. The Infinite thereby ends up becoming a Divine Father or Mother. In this confusion, the devotee does not understand that the form and image of the deity are a vehicle for the Formless Consciousness. Rather, he/she insists that their particular conception is in essence what god actually is. Having such a conception for the Absolute is only veracious if one understands that the concept of god as a loving Father or Mother is but a metaphor to name the nameless. At the Vishuddha Vortex it becomes possible to understand what the nature of the Shiva is without anthropomorphic projections like the Divine Father or Mother. Such conceptions are natural for the kosas at and beneath the Intuitive Mind (Anahata Vortex), but at the causal Vishuddha the idea of "Our Father" becomes a little too binding, fixed and ponderous. Instead, one is able to relate to Consciousness unmediated, as it exists in itself independent of conceptual projections. The Absolute becomes the root of one's notion of "I", the Eternal Witness of the mind. Nonetheless,

even the greatest of teachers have used the popular conceptions to help give people a preliminary notion of the Infinite One. The second previously mentioned approach is a refinement to the previous. It centers on the Mahat-intuitive portion of the mind instead of the Aham's intellectual and emotional faculties. Mind is still relating to spirit, but with its intuitive faculty instead of the intellect. While genuine intuition does pour down into the conceptual, dualistic dialogue with spirit, with the non-dual, intuitive approach there is not the clinging, conventional, readily available concepts of the personal, loving father or guru who instructs, guides, loves, and punishes his progeny. Instead, the mind and its processes are seen as a coordinated unity with spirit. The processes of mind are perfectly governed by psychic laws (karma and samskara) with their actions and reactions and a complete system of compensations that guide the mind toward pure spirit. The intellectual concepts of a god acting from "above" or "without" are replaced with the view of one's own becoming as shaped entirely from karma

and samskara. Similarly, the emotional propulsions have been transmuted from their mawkish singularity into pure devotion: an unswerving and ever-blissful ideas that Shiva is the only goal in life. Pure devotion is the perfect synthesis between thought and feeling; the realization that the entire mental identity is rooted in, and is the object of the eternal “I.” Somebody once asked the sage, Ramana Maharshi, if the paths of love (bhakti) and knowledge (jnana) were contradictory. His response was “how can one know the Self without loving It, and love the Self without knowing It.”

Just because the notion of a dualistic god is overcome doesn't imply that the Absolute has no part in our becoming in the field of karma and samskara. Recall that the existence of all depends on the Shiva and that no Macrocosmic action is possible without Shiva's Consciousness as the ground of Being. Mahat, the deepest portion of the subjective chamber of mind, is the primal and therefore closest creation to the unmanifest Spirit. When the mind is functioning from here the ego is an object instead of a subject. One sees the harmonious and perfectly equilibrated system of the play of vrttis whose surreptitious guiding function is to lead the mind into union with Shiva. Here the mind is not at all separate from Spirit. It is an essential outpouring from the blissful essence of pure Spirit. Even the mind's personal and idiosyncratic qualities are the object and possession of the Supreme Subject.

One who relates with the Absolute from this vantage point can never confuse the Absolute with a construct of the intellect or engage in 3rd vortex dogmatic debates over whether a particular incarnation or guru that manifested itself in the relative was the true and only teacher or not. Concepts have boundaries and are distinct from one another, at least from the view of the intellect. With intuition the mind is ensconced within the “I” and its simplicity and receptivity permit the in-pouring of an infinite radiance that can never be captured and bounded by Aham-intellectual concepts.

15. Repulsion

The selfless nature of the vrttis at the Vishuddha compensate for the ego-bounded vrttis of the Anahata. However, because these vrttis compensate for the ones beneath them, they are related to them. Just as the Anahata vrttis recapitulated, transmuted, and integrated the Manipura vrttis, the Vishuddha performs the same incorporation with the Anahata vrttis. Although half of the Anahata vrttis are positive, the other half are negative. Due to the noble tendencies of the Vishuddha, the mind at this level may feel repulsed at the tendencies beneath it. Although repulsion is a negative expression in which there is a movement away from something, at least it is a movement away from

something limiting and binding. A mind with a deep spiritual understanding of the Self will not want to be held back by a tendency relating to the ego.

Repulsion at the Vishuddha Vortex is a rejection of something unwholesome not just to the individual, but toward something that goes against dharma, or the essential nature of humanity. Spiritual discernment must be firmly established in the personality for the tendencies of the Vishuddha to manifest themselves. This vritti of repulsion is a result of discernment. Maybe one gets upset or gets caught up in some conflict, but at least there is a just reason. The deep nature of the causal, Vishuddha mind simply rejects all forms of lies and self-deceptions of the ego. It is better to have a little repulsion than to have to tolerate what one truly knows is illusion and therefore loaded with suffering.

Repulsion is the only tendency in the Vishuddha Vortex that actually needs to be transmuted into something higher. It still holds on to remnants of duality. The rest of the tendencies can be expressed by a mind in union with the Macrocosmic Mind. However, it is quite a useful tendency in that it gives one a bitter taste for any form of egotism. It is only a real obstacle when it takes on a form of condemnation. Recall how slander at the Manipura helped the mind to negate an obstacle. Argumentativeness served the same function at the Anahata, albeit in a more subtle fashion. Repulsion is but a further refinement of these two prior tendencies and serves a similar function at still a higher level.

16. Grace

The expressions emanating from a mind purified by the activation of the Vishuddha Vortex are full of benevolence and grace. It is this benevolence that helps one to overcome the last obstacle of repulsion. Such a person will always think, speak, and act for the welfare of others. He/she will reflect a divine resplendence even in their outward behavior. It

is because this gracefulness comes from unity with the ever-blissful Brahma that such a person will have such a trans-formative effect on others. The thought waves of such a being will elevate and spiritualize the minds of others. Such beings express some of the first 8 occult vrittis of the Vishudha Vortex. It is said that only the Causal Mind possesses all of the eight occult powers. This is the great difference between the microcosm and the Macrocosm. Not even the greatest of saints can obtain all of the occult powers.

The Vishuddha is a conduit of the Causal Mind that is the causal matrix of the entire creation. Everything is within the mind of Brahma. Therefore, a mind united with Brahma sees the entire universe as an expression of their own mind. The benevolent thoughts emanating from such a mind are not at all encased in a compartmentalized, separated mind. These thought originate from a causal level,

and thereby profoundly effect what is thought and felt upon. All phenomenal, manifested expressions have their origin in Macrocosmic thought. Furthermore, the Cosmic Mind continues to guide and nurture all things as the “prime mover.” One who thinks and exists at this level becomes a co-creator, a vehicle for the cognitive force of Brahma. Such a great heart also sustains and furthers the development of all beings.

Meister Eckhart exclaimed: “All creatures convey themselves into my mind in order that they should exist mentally within me. I alone prepare creatures for God. Just think what you are all doing!”

The First 8 Vishuddha Vortexes

Now that it is understood how the vrttis of the Vishuddha have an extra-personal character that has a causal effect on the entire creation, it is now possible to explain the nature of the first eight propensities. The second eight vrttis were mostly personal expressions of a universal nature. They also had an occult quality in which they causally effected other beings. However, first eight tendencies are not so much personal expressions as they are occult powers.

There are various types of occult powers. The ones discussed here are the highest category of occult powers. The “lower” powers such as clairvoyance, clairsaudience, telepathy, etc. are more associated with the Manipura and Anahata Vortexes and their corresponding kosas. The emanation of form at the creative layer can give one a sense of the essence of a thing in a refined way. This conception deepens further at the intuitive layer. Finally, at the Causal Mind there is a unity with the object thought upon. It is this unity that gives the mind functioning at the Vishuddha- causal level the ability to control objective creation. It is not the case that

the mind that reaches the Vishuddha becomes omnipotent and shares all of the causal power with Brahma. Instead, a portion of that infinite power may be partitioned out to certain microcosms in accordance to the needs of furthering human social, personal, and spiritual progress.

One can strive after and even attain the lower occult powers. However, this is not at all advisable as the ensuing attachments to such “extraordinary abilities” almost always brings a spiritual downfall. However, the powers associated with the Vishuddha Vortex cannot be acquired through ambitious effort. They are only expressed through the purest and noble souls whose minds have merged with Brahma. Because there is very little, if any, feeling of separation from Brahma, the mind expressing these abilities will maintain its equilibrium without succumbing to egotism and ambition. For such a mind to be able to express these causal tendencies it must have first have purified its heart at the Anahata. Then, and

only then, can a union with the Causal Mind and expression of these powers come to be. So there is a great cosmic barrier to such higher powers. Just imagine if it were possible for the ambitious capitalist to have such abilities!

As mentioned earlier, these powers are not so much personal expressions as they are causal tendencies of the Macrocosm expressed through the microcosm. One could call them Macrocosmic vrttis. Because of the esoteric and very subtle nature of these vrttis, it is not appropriate for anybody who understands these qualities to discuss them in great detail. The secret is known only to the “Great Magician” and his retinue, as Anandamurti has expressed.

All that can be said about them is that they are powers that help one to understand the deepest nature of the minds of all beings. They effect minds with a higher psychic understanding and an elevated spiritual vibration in order to guide all back into unity with Brahma. They may be expressed overtly, in behavior, but most of the time they act as an unseen and furtive force that may act upon one without he/she ever really knowing it. Many of these powers effect the activation or deactivation of propensities in the minds of others. Such subtle changes in the thoughts and feelings may be noticed by sensitive, refined minds. When they effect the collective mind, there is a definite, albeit unnoticed change. People just begin to express themselves differently as their vrttis have been manipulated in a subtle manner.

Microvita and the Vishuddha Vortex

Very closely associated with these occult powers are the entities that Anandamurti termed microvita. There are many kinds and classes of microvita. They range from entities that effect the crudest atomic levels in matter to entities that effect the propensities within the mind. What all of these various kinds of microvita have in common are that they are all physically non-manifest entities that are intermediaries involved in the

transformation of thought into objective reality. For example, an atom, or any other particle of matter, is essentially the grossest manifestation of a thought projection of the Cosmic Mind. The atom itself is manifested as solid factor, but there are still the previous, subtler factors and layers of mind that went into its creation before its final manifestation in the solid factor. In the Causal Mind, the atom exists in the form of a causal idea that eventually cascades down, through the subsequently cruder elemental factors, until it becomes a solid entity. Therefore, there exist three other intermediary layers of mind and elements between the subtlest causal level and the gross material level. Microvita exist and function within the causal and intermediary levels.

Since this is a book on the psycho-spiritual processes within the human mind, the explanation of microvita will be in the context of the human mind and how they effect the human mind. In fact, microvita are, like human minds, microcosmic minds. They are physically disembodied minds that once existed in human form. Instead of having a physical body with the 5 fundamental factors, they have a “body” with only the 3 subtlest factors: luminous, aerial, and ethereal.

When these minds existed in physical form they were minds with an exceptional degree of development. In fact, these beings had reached the Vishuddha Vortex and manifested varying levels of its potentiality. Instead of transcending the Causal Mind with further spiritual development, these minds had certain attachments that continued to bind them to either the causal layer or layers beneath it. Due to their high degree of mental development, when these beings departed their physical bodies they merged with the Causal Mind. They were not able to transcend it because of a particular attachment. Instead, the remaining samskaras of these minds are utilized by the Cosmic Mind to serve the creation. It is in this way that the pending samskaras of that particular highly developed mind are exhausted.

These beings do not have an entirely independent existence. They do in fact have a degree of liberation from the physical world, but they are bound to serve it as vehicles of the Cosmic Mind. When their personal samskaras that held them back from liberation from the Causal Mind are exhausted they may again take physical re-birth to finish their spiritual evolution.

When most minds depart their physical bodies their minds remain dormant within the higher kosas while they are awaiting re-birth into another physical body and environment that conforms with their past samskaras. However, the highly developed minds that have to some degree reached the Causal Mind and Vishuddha Vortex are not dormant during their interval between death and re-birth. Because they have manifested in varying degrees the potential of the Causal Mind, that power can be utilized to help them exhaust their pending samskaras between birth and re-birth. Recall, that the Causal Mind thinks things into being. These minds that become disembodied microvita work in the intuitive realms of thought within the higher kosas by means of their own causal power. Therefore, the causal force that they have gained through their spiritual development becomes the medium for them to exhaust the personal samskaras that are still binding them.

It was mentioned earlier that these disembodied minds manifested in varying degrees the potential of the Causal Mind. This variation depended upon the level of the attachment to previous levels of mind and/or propensity of mind (vritti). The

more powerful the attachment to something below the causal, Vishuddha level, the less causal force that could be expressed. It is this variation that creates the hierarchical classification of the disembodied minds, or microvita.

A microvita is a being that has at some level attained siddhi, or perfection with some causal activity. However, their level of mastery at one particular activity has bound their mind to that particular activity; they have become attached to it. They identify with that particular activity instead of continuing to develop further and manifest other potentials. So it is this attachment that is the cause for their being bound into the state of disembodied mind instead of transcending the Causal Mind altogether. At their physical death, all of the mental energy and samskaric momentum is fused with the process that they are attached to. They lose their freedom of lateral movement as all of their mental potential is focused on the exhaustion of their binding samskara. Thus, they continue to function until that binding momentum is exhausted. They are now a part and parcel of that causal function. Due to this, they are able to use their narrowed, pinnacled thought force to help manifest these causal potentials in embodied minds. They therefore aid in the development of other minds by helping to infuse their particular vibrational quality into the minds of others. Instead of the disembodied mind using their potential with a sense of personal attachment that they once had, they are now using their ability in the service of others, thus ultimately purifying their minds.

The subtlest category of microvita is the siddha. These are the most highly developed unit minds whose only limitation was their identification with and attachment to their occult powers. These were very great and noble souls with many selfless tendencies that instead of wanting to transcend their remaining limitations, sought to acquire more occult powers. Therefore, they must exist as microvita for a period of time corresponding to the intensity of their attachment to this desire and identification with it. Because they exist on the subtlest realms of mind, they can aid those who seek to understand true spirituality. For example, a person's mind may be struggling to concentrate on their meditation. All of the sudden, a spontaneous feeling of peace and spiritual exaltation overwhelms them so that their mind is lightened and can understand very deep spiritual ideations. This is the work of the siddhas. Since their minds have merged with the deepest causal ideas, those whose minds are attempting to understand these ideas may be aided by the siddhas. They

open up to other beings the realm that they are merged into so as to help guide them through it. Therefore, we see that with the siddha, as with other disembodied minds as well, they are not little floating angels with an

anthropomorphic form. Instead they are minds that have temporarily merged with a certain divine function, or causal program.

Another example of a function of a disembodied mind is with the classification of microvita known as a ghandarva. Ghandarvas were spiritually developed minds who still had an attachment to music or other fine arts. Due to this attachment, they have to exhaust this samskara by providing intuitional inspirations to artists and musicians. The gandarvas are the muses that inspire deep, aesthetic reflection and creation.

A developed mind can become a disembodied microvita for any number of reasons and due to any number of lingering attachments. What all classes of microvita have in common is that they exist as causal intermediaries in the process of bringing Macrocosmic creation into ontological, objective being.

There are also negative classifications of microvita. These are entities that propel the mind outwardly, toward material desire. Negative ideas and vrttis attract these parasitic entities that only feed and fester on such negativity. Only a mind that becomes powerful in nefarious ways becomes such a negative kind of disembodied mind. Because of their bad actions, they have to equalize them by inflicting negativity on others. In short, microvita work with and are attracted by our thoughts, whether positive or negative.

A mind that is able to manifest the tendencies of the Vishuddha Vortex is able to use positive microvita to elevate the collective mind. The use of the occult powers of the Causal Mind is very much linked with the activities of microvita.

The Ajina Vortex

The Ajina Vortex is beyond the effects of the Causal Mind. Above the eternal activity of generating, operating, and dissolving the universe, the Mind of Brahma knows itself as pure Mind. Although there is still the presence of mind, the mind is governed by the deepest part of its subjective chamber, the Mahat. When the mind is free of the eternal activity of the Causal Mind, it can then further introvert itself and focus on its fundamental identity. The Ajina Vortex is the stage in which the mind is totally free from relative objects and can truly understand its nature. The more the feeling of Mahat or “I” dominates the mind, the closer it is to the pure and unconditioned Self, or Shiva. The Ajina Vortex has only two propensities, para and apara. Para is knowledge of Spirit. Apara is knowledge of the objective creation.

1. Subjective Knowledge - Para

Para vritti is the entirely complete and pinnacled direction of the mind toward Brahman, the unmanifest consciousness. With para vritti the mind turns entirely away from Brahma’s creation under the influence of Shakti’s creative forces. Here the mind is internally focused, or subjectivized to the extent that it can not just comprehend the nature of Consciousness, but actually dissolves itself into it. Para vritti is, therefore, the propensity that leads to the absolute dissolution of mind into Consciousness.

Mental evolution began in the process of converting the objective chamber of mind, the chitta, into subjectivity. Initially this conversion of the objective propensities was a conversion into the Aham portion of the subjective mind. Aham is the intellectual and active chamber of mind that gives one a sense of doer-ship and an identity connected with its external activities. The chapters up to the Anahata have described the characteristics of the Aham-dominated mind and how it is defined by the various propensities. The vrittis in the objective chamber of mind did not act independently of the subjective chamber of mind as they would in animal life. Instead, the human being’s sense of Aham, “I am”, is qualified by the tendencies within the objective mind. Although there is the sense of Aham at the second and third vortexes, the personality is still directed by propulsive forces acting beneath the level of conscious awareness. One has an ego, a sense of “I am”, but doesn’t really know why such an intuition is present or have the freedom to define itself. Self identity is constructed and defined by social roles and experiential conditioning along with the innate propulsive vrittis of the 2nd and 3rd vortexes. However, because the mind potentially has a sense of doer-ship and intellect, it can eventually guide and direct the propensities of the objective mind.

This does not come about very clearly until the Anahata Vortex. Here one can reflect upon the

mind as an object instead of simply being driven by its compulsions and urges. This represents the stage where the objective mind can be under the guidance of the ego or Aham. Here, the intelligence of the ego is vast enough to redirect and restructure the propensities of mind, at least to some degree. When the mind reaches the Vishuddha the Mahat's intuition manifests itself to the point where the sense of ego becomes almost transparent. One's sense of being rests in the witnessing feeling of "I" instead of separate ego activity. It is here that a pure and unmediated inquiry into the nature of Consciousness begins.

What all of the kosas or layers of mind have in common is that there is always a notion of "I", whether its bounded into the senses, the intellect, or intuition. Para is the summation of this evolution of the "I-feeling." At the Ajina one realizes that the "I" has an independent and unchanging existence that is not dependent upon the variegated states of mind. This realization can only come about because the mind is no longer bounded into objectively oriented vrttis. Beyond all of the fluctuations of the "functional, relative, and ever-changing entity" that is the mind, is the eternal knowledge of subjective existence. There has never been bondage for this Supreme Subjectivity. Everything thought, felt, desired, or experienced was done with the mind.

The Ajina Vortex, like all others, compensates and incorporates the vrttis of the vortex beneath it. There remains a semblance of duality at the Vishuddha that para vrtti swallows up. Whenever the mind feel bounded to a relative identity, it only has to inquire into the nature of the "I." "Who is it that is experiencing this?" "Who is it that is feeling this pleasure or pain?" At the Ajina Vortex one simply has to ask this question: "Who am I?" The Shiva is so very close to the Mahat-dominated mind that this sort of inquiry directs the question of identity back to the hub of identity, the Shiva as the Supreme Subjectivity. One begins to understand that the Self can never undergo time, change, death, or suffering. Bodies may come and go, mind may change and transform incessantly, but Consciousness never changes. While it is true that states of consciousness and the objects of consciousness are impermanent, Consciousness as the subjective essence never changes. Just because Consciousness witnesses the ever fluctuating mind does not mean that Consciousness changes with it. One must not confuse the process of consciousness with the essence of Consciousness, as many Buddhists have done. Does the mirror change with what it reflects? It has only been a great dream that the "I" has been anything other than its eternal and infinite essence as Being, Consciousness, and Bliss, the Sacchidananda of the Upanishads.

But is this Shiva a Self in the sense of a person with divine attributes? By its very nature as pure and unconditioned Consciousness it is oneness and singular, “a pure and limpid unity.” Any qualities ascribed to the Absolute must reside in Mind. It is only in mind that the qualities of Brahma as good and just come into being. These, as well as other Macrocosmic and

even microcosmic qualities are an adornment for the eternal Self, an objective definition.

The Self is a supra-personal being. It can't quite correctly be termed impersonal because it is the root of all personality. It is not personal because in itself it has no qualities. Only in conjunction with the created objectivity that Shakti has spun into being does the Nameless have a name for itself. Perhaps in this idea lies the secret reason for creation: for the supra-personal to become a person, for the infinite to manifest in the finite. Without us, the Self is no-thing, but an unqualified and unmanifest essence. Only through Mind can personality come into being. And what a wonderful and mysterious phenomenon is Character when considered that it is the attempt for the Infinite to manifest itself in the finite. So furtively are the forms and images of character the harbingers of the infinite mystery. It is through the evolution of Character that the Infinite reveals itself as a Person to other persons. When one comes across a truly great personality one cannot help but believe that their attributes are rooted in and are a vehicle for the transcendent. The attributes of such a Person bear the mark of the human enough for others to recognize them, while at the same time reveal something of a subtle mystery that allures and attracts the understanding to probe deeper into the mystery of such a Person. Their serenity and blissful demeanor reflect this infinite mystery beyond, but through the medium of the sensibly comprehended and human. Such enlightened beings are the greatest gift to humanity as they represent what each human is capable of becoming.

This process of becoming is fully manifest at the Ajina. Here the human personality unifies with the divine and thereby becomes a divine personality. This potential is within all. Recall that the only difference between the microcosm and macrocosm is within the objective chamber of mind. Nature is so perfectly designed that all of the processes within the mind ultimately lead to the unification of the microcosm with the macrocosm. This process is not just within human beings; all minds from the protozoan to the human are within this evolutionary process. Perhaps it is after millions of successively advanced re-births and cycles of becoming that a mind finally re-unites with the everlasting essence.

2. Objective Knowledge- Apra

We see that because there is still the existence of Mind, there is still a relation to objectivity. This relation to objectivity is *apara vrtti*. It is the knowledge that all objective expressions are Brahma. What is one's deepest essence within is the essence of the objective worlds. "All comes from bliss, is sustained by bliss, and returns to bliss," as an Upanishad says. Or in the words of Novalis: "the soul is where the inner and outer worlds meet; and where they meet is at every point of the overlap." Because the mind is above the entire Causal Mind, it can gaze down upon the entire

creation as its internal object. Nothing is outside of Mind. It can therefore know all things. At this stage the mind becomes omniscient. There is no longer any identity separate from the Cosmic Mind. It is because of this non-duality that the propensities of the microcosm are totally ensconced in the Macrocosmic Mind. In other words, there is only the Macrocosmic Mind. The mind at this stage is no longer even a vehicle for the Macrocosmic Mind as it was at the Vishuddha. It has entirely become the Cosmic Mind. It is in this state of awareness that one realizes that it is the Infinite that has become all things, that nothing exists apart from It. The mind at the Vishuddha knew that the Shiva was the hub of the mind and entire universe. All of its tendencies flowed toward its nucleus in process of the Macrocosm reclaiming its objective, microcosmic creation. This process is completed at the Ajina Vortex like a river that merges into the ocean. There is no longer a separation.

The spiritually aspiring mind that orients itself inward toward the Supreme Subjectivity will some day find oneness or parallelism with Shiva, the Supreme Subjectivity. The Macrocosmic mind is always a pulsation, a created entity within the domain of Shakti's objective creation. When mind, the object of Consciousness, or Shiva, tries to say "I am This," all of its potential objective faculties get channeled inward and all of these mental waves get concentrated on this fundamental, intuitive idea at the Ajina Vortex. The mind has no other purpose or activity, it is one-pointed in its Subject and lost like an arrow in its target. One feels and hears the cerebro- spinal fluid entering and concentrating in the brain. One can feel the kundalini rising into the mid-brain, like an electric fish swimming in this current of cerebro-spinal fluid and illuminating the brain where it enters. This of course affects the glands and neurotransmitters in such a fine way that the conscious, sub-conscious, and even unconscious activities of the brain subside. It is here that the microcosmic mind begins to lose itself in the Macrocosmic mind. The fundamental binary movement of the mind's centripetal-centrifugal, inward-outward interplay parallels the fundamental centripetal-centrifugal interplay of Shiva and Shakti.

The Macrosomic mind is a mimicry of this centripetal-centrifugal interplay of Shiva and Shakti in this primordial, unexpressed Shiva-Shakti godhead. The microcosmic mind is a further mimicry of the fundamental movement of the Macrocosmic mind. When it is free of even the divine-like vrttis of the Vishuddha Vortex and is no longer assisting in maintaining the cosmic flow of creation, then the mind can turn more inward and liberate itself even from the Causal Mind of Vishuddha. Here, in the Ajina Vortex, there is both centripetal and centrifugal movement. One is ensconced in Shiva but if the Macrocosm wills it as such, then the mind can go outward with the force of Shakti's centrifugal force. It is here that the influence of Shiva and Shakti through their Macrocosmic mind may directly influence the activity of the microcosmic mind. It is said that the microcosm gradually becomes omniscient when the Ajina Vortex is more fully developed, or "opened." This explains the extraordinary mental abilities of great yogis like Anandamurti, Lahiri Mahasaya, or Milarepa. They came closer to completing this infinite path of Self-Realization and simply expressed more of the divine, Macrocosmic mind. "Ajina" means a little bit of Consciousness. Beings at this state have developed the Ajina Vortex and can therefore regulate and perfect the vrttis of the Vishuddha Vortex.

Entering the stream of enlightenment, or the loosening of the fetters of the separate microcosm, begins in the Vishuddha Causal Mind. It is a long school that requires many incarnations to master. Knowledge of the Self is complete here, there is only continued development because the quantity of cosmic force from the Causal Mind is infinite. A mind continues with full awareness of the essential liberty of Shiva, one's inner self, but may continue developing these "divine" qualities as per the necessity of the planet in which one lives. It is a very rare occurrence in these times that one is fully liberated before doing something great and noble for the planet first. After that is done, one takes refuge in the Ajina discerning the subtle vibrational flow of the essential mind until the mind is completely still and omniscient and then ready for complete emancipation at the Sahasrara crown above.

The Sahasrara Vortex

In Tantra Maya there is only one vortex. It is what corresponds to the Sahasrara Chakra in Indian Tantras. It is called Hunab Ku, and is considered the center of the creation. All of the other vortexes located along the spine are but worlds of vibration, of concentric circles that orbit the cosmic nucleus of Hunab Ku. All things come from this cosmic nucleus, just as all comes from the Shiva-Shakti godhead in Tantra. Sahasrara means a “thousand-petaled lotus.” There are 50 vrttis in the microcosmic mind. They can express themselves in 2 ways; internally and externally. These two movements are the 2 petals of the Ajina Vortex, which is really a part of the Sahasrara Vortex. This is another good reason to remember how all vortexes are sub-vortexes of the higher ones. These 100 distinct vibrations are the causal fields behind the 5 sensory and 5 motor organs. ($100 \times 10 = 1000$). There are therefore 1000 petals or vrttis that govern the microcosmic mind. The Sahasrara lotus is the matrix where all vrttis come from. It is where the microcosm unites in the Macrocosm. The 2 propensities at the Ajina Vortex are related to the microcosm, but are of the Macrocosm. Here, there are no propensities of the microcosm, just the Macrocosmic mental matrix that controls them. In Tantra Yoga, the Sahasrara Vortex is considered the abode of Shiva, where Shakti, as kundalini, has subsided her activities of Generating, Operating, and Destroying the universe. The Sahasrara, therefore, is a divine center that is capable of controlling the entire mind with its 1000 “cosmic vrttis.” They are “cosmic” in the sense that these very fine “strings” are played only by the devas, or “gods” that regulate the entire cosmological order. So, the Tantra Maya concept of Hunab Ku seems to correspond with the Tantric notion of the Sahasrara Vortex being a vehicle for the Macrocosmic Mind of Brahma to govern the microcosmic mind.

Like all vortexes, it is a construct in the chitta that has a correspondence with the physical body. The Ajina Vortex is related to the pituitary, “master gland.” The 2 petals of the Ajina control the pituitary gland, which controls all other glands below. The Sahasrara is related to the function of the pineal gland. It is only the pineal gland can control the pituitary gland directly. A nice dose of melatonin secreted by blissful meditation can really placate all of the activities of the pituitary. And if the pituitary is controlled directly, then all of the glands in the body are affected by the pineal gland. All desires are therefore controlled by ideating on Brahma through the practice of sadhana. I like using the model of one vortex because it follows in form the cascading effect of the higher glands over the lower. Chakras, like glands, are a hierarchical network that regulate our emotive and cognitive states of being. I think of them as one vortex in the crown with so many concentric circles within. Chakras are just the subtle counter-part in

the “quantum mechanical body,” or mental, subtle energetic level. Although yogis with concentrated chitta can find any

nerve cell in the physical brain, the subtle vortexes are used to regulate brain and endocrine function. While the shaman seeks to induce mystical states through the science of mystical plants, Tantrics can learn to induce even deeper states of awareness by ideating on Shiva as the I-Witness within the Sahasrara, and indirectly create a divine state of intoxication. Through Tantra sadhana one intuitively fine-tunes a very subtle neuro- endocrine balance. Besides being drunk with infinite joy, this fine-tuned brain will naturally be more alert, intelligent, sensitive and conscious due to these practical effects of sadhana.

Every layer of mind is dependent on the layers above and below it. The vrttis of a particular kosa compensate and integrate the vrttis of the kosa, or mental layer, beneath it. At the same time the mind is unconsciously being prepared, through the unfolding of new propensities, for the unfolding of still higher compensations and integrations with successively higher vrttis. No state of mind is permanent and stationary. Each kosa is part of the great design of the Cosmic Mind. It is a system of concentric circles, vortexes, or wheels of energy vrttis whose cosmic symphony is ultimately conducted by the I-Witness. The vortexes, the devas who control the vrttis, and the endocrine glands do not exist for themselves, but are links within a greater whole that serve a greater function. This function is the realization of the Infinite.

At the Ajina Vortex the mind realized that its essence isn't within mind itself, nor any of its cognitions. Free will may exist, but any notion of freedom within the mind will be conditioned by the Macrocosmic Mind which contains it. True freedom is deep within the Sahasrara in the I- Witness of Shiva. Recall that mind is a “functional, ever-changing, and relative entity.” At the Ajina, mind is understood as a functionary extension and creative outpouring of the infinite and eternal Shiva. At the Sahasrara Vortex the mind has reached this final destination. While with all of the other kosas there was a transmutation of the vrttis into successively more refined states of cognition and feeling, the move from the Ajina to the Sahasrara represents the complete dissolution of mind itself. It is not the case that the mind takes refuge in a higher order of mental functioning, like in the lower vortexes. Rather, it unifies with its fundamental essence and origin, Shiva. It is here that the binding forces of Shakti have relinquished the mind from created objectivity and that mind, the subtlest creation of Shakti, can merge back into Shiva.

This release of the binding forces of Shakti translates, in human terms, as the release of the “I” from any sort of bondage: pain and pleasure, birth and death,

loss and gain. The "I" has become the I-Witness. Mahat is converted into Shiva. Here one realizes that the Self is infinite, unchanging and eternal; it never underwent any changes or bondages. Actually, it is not even possible to think these thoughts here. Can the drop of water in the ocean speak of how it is one with the ocean? Is there still a drop that can say this or has it become the ocean? In Tantra this state is called Moksha: the complete emancipation from any bondage and the merging with Brahma or the unqualified Shiva-Shakti godhead. This is a state beyond existence, beyond the universe, and even beyond Brahma: the generator, operator, and destroyer of the universe. It is the eternal state of rest and refuge for those minds finished with the cycle of birth and re-birth.

Previously described was the eternal state merging with Brahma with no return. However, it is possible to temporarily suspend the mind in the Absolute and then return to the mind and body. This is not Moksha, because it is not everlasting. This experience of the temporary suspension with the Absolute is called nirvikalpa samadhi. Much more could be said about nirvikalpa and other forms of samadhi, but what is important to understand here is that the unconditioned and uncreated Brahma can be experienced without the death of the physical body and dissolution of mind. It is possible for the mind to come back down into a refined identity at the Ajina, while experiencing nirvikalpa regularly until the natural life of the body is over. At that time, one may attain Moksha and merge with Brahma in the Shiva- Shakti godhead.

Prana, the subtle energy that functions between the mental chitta and the physical nerve cells, gets suspended during nirvikalpa samadhi. The breath stops, the heart almost stops and the mind ceases to function without the pulsation of prana that always flows with the breath. During this phase before blissful oblivion one can tactually feel a warm glow around the pineal area in the brain vibrating Om at the tone of C-sharp. The blissful feeling also descends into the Anahata like a cool balm. All is sweet, one sees the immortal Self as it always has been. Memories of your past become memories that the Self had while diving down into your every unforgettable memory. The infinite being has always lived your life and sees your every memory from the eternal now of the I-Witness. It fully loves and accepts and absorbs you because you are It now. Then one forgets everything and realizes that one has not breathed nor been conscious of the body nor the outside world for perhaps several hours. I have known cases of yogis who suspended their breath in samadhi for 10 hours. This is experiential proof of nirvikalpa samadhi and of immortality the Self who is verily the great Brahma. In this experience first there is Om, the bliss, the the opening of Hunab Ku, and then the silence and breathlessness in union with the mystery of mysteries. In perfect equilibrium, the

entire entity of mind and thus the entire phenomenological identity is suspended in the Shiva-Shakti godhead.

When I had the great privilege of meeting the sage Chandranath that experienced nirvikalpa samadhi every time he sat for meditation. I asked him how it was possible to remain in physical form if one is constantly merging into the Formless. He told me that he makes a determination before the experience of samadhi that he will return to his mind and his body and continue to help others as long as his physical body endures. Thus, he created a samskara, or subtle desire that keeps the mind bound to

our world. It is this great and noble determination that kept him from attaining Moksha before his cycle of existence was complete. He will be remembered as the greatest sadhaka of Anandamurti.

Some beings that are liberated from their samskaras may choose not to completely dissolve their minds at death by attaining Moksha. Instead, they hold onto the determination to serve and help all beings find this liberation. This determination leads to re-birth, but a Bodhisattva birth without losing the spiritual liberation already attained. Such persons are born free and the only purpose of their birth is to help others out of bondage.

Part III: Sadhana- Spiritual Practice

Parts one and two gave a theoretical outline of the functioning of the human mind and its evolutionary status in relation to the cosmos. Its general structure, laws and dynamics were discussed in a theoretical manner. This section will deal with the practical approach to understanding the spiritual evolution of mind and personality. Rather than further explaining the theoretical structure of mind, this section will focus on the spiritual disciplines that facilitate the development of mind. In fact, Tantric meditation, as Anandamurti has stated, is 99% practice and 1% theory. The study of theoretical metaphysics and psychology in Tantra is but a preparation for the intuitive practice of Tantra. However, when seen as a preparatory tool to foster intuitive practice, theoretical study in fact becomes a practical exercise for the development of mind rather than mere abstract musing. The purpose of the pursuit of knowledge is to directly experience spiritual realities, rather than merely philosophizing about them. Tantra is therefore a “mystical empiricism”.

Rajadhiraja Yoga is traditional 8-fold yoga with Tantric techniques. Tantra Maya is Rajadhiraja Yoga with Tantra Maya techniques. The classic 8-Fold Yoga, or Astanga Yoga, are 8 steps in the practice of sadhana. They gradually direct the physical energy of the body into the intelligence of the mind. This mental dynamism is further transformed into spiritual cognition, or refined spiritual awareness. The lower of the 8 steps deal more with the lower kosas while the higher steps work with the higher kosas.

The 8 Steps of Yoga

1 and 2 - Yama and Niyama Anandamurti said that morality is the base of practice while sadhana is the way and the Life Divine is the goal. Yama and Niyama have already been explained in the Svadhistana chapter. The Sensory Mind must be purified by the understanding of Yama and Niyama. Morality is practical and makes the mind free of vices and bad habits. Such a mind can reflect upon the cause of suffering in the lower vrttis. A mind that understands its own “irrationality” with the lower vrttis becomes very strong in reason. By respecting the moral rights of others one learns compassion. The use of intellect in order to comprehend moral philosophy also strengthens the dynamism of the conceptual (Svadhistana) and creative (Manipura) minds. The development of these two layers of the mind help to disengage the mind from its entrainment in the Sensory Mind as well as prepare it for higher levels of thinking and feeling at the intuitive (Anahata) level.

3 - Asana Asanas are yoga “innercizes”. They are physical postures synchronized with deep breathing to bring a mindful caress of subtle prana into the body. They

keep the body fit and the mind balanced by fine-tuning the endocrine system. The contorted stretches actually massage and

stimulate the muscles and nerves around the endocrine glands so that nerve signals and blood flow aren't stagnant. The breathing is slow and deep and the mind studies its relationship with the body and understands how the mental vrttis express themselves bio-psychologically. One feels where the vrttis come from and has a more acute sensitivity to prana or subtle energy that flows within the body and in the environment. Such a calm mind is more able to focus on meditation.

4 - Pranayama Pranayama is literally the "control of prana." This is done by regulating the breath. The flow of subtle prana corresponds with the flow of physical air in respiration. When one breaths deeply the prana is calm and this calms the mind as well. Prana is mental energy. When it is not occupied with active states of body and mind it can concentrate deeply like a focused laser. All of the energy that escapes through the vrttis is prana and the control of prana regulates the expression of the vrttis. Without this expenditure of mental energy dissipated in excessive mental activity, this refined, potentialized energy can help focus the mind. Normally it is the prana that vibrates the chitta. Prana is an intermediary in the brain-mind relation. Normally, we only see how our minds vibrate with the sensory world, but with pranayama we can understand how the guided prana through pranayama begins to color and qualify the interior landscape of intuition. Pranayama gives one the concentrated mental energy necessary not just for deeper meditation, but for transforming the body and the mind. The internalization of prana begins to change the entire nervous and glandular system in ways that are still far away from being understood by our physical science.

5 - Pratyahara Pratyahara is sensory withdrawal. Once the mind is balanced by yama and niyama and begins to develop more rapidly through asanas and pranayama, sensory withdrawal becomes quite natural. The suspended, quieted prana due to pranayama allows the mind to be very calm and focused. The inner, subtle, intuitive faculties begin to awaken. An advanced yogi can see his/her own mind so deeply and study the relationship between mind and body. One can feel how the subtle body along with the nervous system create impressions in the chitta. One can see them arise and also see them dissolve. All feelings, thoughts, memories, and desires are gradually understood. By simply seeing these vrttis from a calm, neutral 'I' in the center of experience, one begins to see the processes that influence the unconscious conditioning, as well as the conceptual evaluations and judgments that go into our self-created, mind- born notion of "I am." The interesting question is who is seeing the mind these deep states? Ordinarily the ego doesn't process "reality" from such deep states of mind. Who

are you in-between thoughts, or when you are so calm and secure that you don't even need to waste energy thinking? These states of detachment from the Sensory Mind create deep states of joy because one isn't simply escaping the outside world but accessing the interior kingdoms of cosmic cognition. Here we can see how very balanced

practice of yoga naturally leads one to deep levels of philosophical and mystical, intuitive thinking.

6 - Dharana Dharana is concentration on an object. It is meditation on some form or concept that the mind can grasp. Meditating on the form and color of the vortexes is a form of dharana. Meditating on mandalas and geometric forms gives a certain focus and concentration to the mind so that it can begin to understand even deeper, formless ideas.

So often one thinks that there is a great difference between empirical, sensory experience and thought. However, when the power of thought is cultivated and pinnacled it attains a deeper level of intuitive experience that is in direct connection with the object of thought. For example, instead of thinking about a tree, the mind feels at one with a tree, feels it as a magnificent life force interacting with its environment. One understands that it has certain qualities that can be used for healing even without knowledge of medicine. This level of pinnacled thinking is much more unified with the object of thought than merely pondering abstractly in the same manner of the medieval philosophers that philosophized on the question of how many angels could dance on the tip of a needle. Through dharana one begins to see into the world of ideas and know how ideas and the vrttis that support them are but creations of the mind. By holding a thought form steady in the chitta, the Aham begins to see the essence so deeply that the feeling of "I am" becomes superfluous. One begins to perceive the universe spontaneously and intuitively. I have known yogis who could know discreet details of my past, things impossible for one to know except me, just by looking at my forehead.

7 - Dhyana Dhyana is internal attention on the I-Witness. It is important to remember that the practice of Tantra is ultimately not for the purpose of the attainment of objective understanding, as in Dharana. Dharana is a tool to help develop Dhyana. The ultimate aim of Tantric practice is to understand the inner, quiet, I-Witness and thereby liberate one from the vicissitudes of spiritual ignorance. Dhyana is a constant flow of mind. It is unperturbed by external thoughts or formations in the chitta. The mind is passive, "empty", as a Buddhist would say. It is not thinking on nothing, but rather thinking on "no thing." At this stage of intuition, one begins to feel the cognitive bearing or spiritual force of the

I-Witness upon the mind. Consciousness is the nucleus of the mind and by conceiving the existence of Shiva deep within the inner “I”, the mind naturally flows into the Supreme Subjectivity of Brahma. One can practice dharana on form, but its refinement is to recognize the fundamental Witness beyond the relative mediums of mind, of which form is a creation. Much purification is needed to transmute the obstacles that arise in the mind. Tantric meditation must also cultivate the emotional, affective life as well so that dhyana isn’t a dry, abstract process. Both thought and feeling, cognition and affection, are cultivated and elevated in a manner that guides the mind into deeper

interiority and Self awareness. Only when all of the vrttis that have been activated by one’s past mental flow are understood and processed, is Dhyana ultimately perfected.

8 - Samadhi As defined previously, samadhi is the experience of union with Shiva. The microcosm that has cultivated itself with the first 7 practical steps will eventually experience samadhi. Samadhi is the goal but it is also practice. There are many levels of samadhi, each one corresponding to the raising of the kundalini to a particular vortex. The kundalini or Kulkulkan is the energy of Shakti that dissolves all of the vrttis of the mind. She created them and now she dissolves them as kundalini. The kundalini is the force that ultimately “cleans” the vortexes by vivifying them with Shakti so that they resonate harmoniously with the rest of the mind. Without vrttis distorting the kosas creating thought dissipation and disintegration of the entire mind-vortex system, the mind feels unified, aligned, and congruent within itself and with the Macrocosmic Mind.

Samadhis at the lower vortexes give access to the corresponding worlds or lokas of the Macrocosm. Lokas are planes of being in the Macrocosm, just as kosas are planes of being within the microcosm. By purifying the kosas through samadhi, one sees into the lokas of the Macrocosm and learns their secrets. The succession of these samadhis depends on the degree to which Kulkulkan has risen into proximity with Hunab Ku, of how many concentric circles and vrttis this plumed serpent has devoured on his journey home. Kundalini is the “fundamental negativity”, as Anandamurti termed it. It is “negative” in the sense that it is a return force. Shakti always returns to Shiva. All things come from the Infinite, are sustained by It, and ultimately return to It, here and now. Nirvikalpa samadhi is when all of the vrttis are purified and the plumed serpent of Kulkulkan rises into the nucleus of Hunab Ku, or Sahasrara Vortex.

The practice of Rajadhiraja Yoga with its 8 steps varies in degrees according to the capacity of the initiate. One should begin with Yama and Niyama and Asanas. Once the mind and body are more finely tuned with these practices, one can

begin the others. Together they all convert physical energy into mental energy and then further convert mental energy into spiritual cognition. The practice should develop with the capacity to make these conversions. A person who doesn't understand Yama and Niyama will only harm himself with Asanas as they may give one too much unbridled mental energy. Many teachers of Asanas without an understanding of Yama and Niyama harm themselves and misguide others.

Similarly, even a balanced-minded beginner with a natural sense of ethics must advance in the intermediate steps before being capable of deep concentration that pratyahara, dharana and dhyana require. All of the steps gradually internalize the mind. With the internalization of the mind and the accompanying degrees of refined thought and feeling, the mind passes through progressively more subtle kosas, or closer concentric circles. While it is true that the ultimate aim of meditation is to understand who one ultimately is beyond these orbits around the nucleus, the mind has to pass through these various objective planes of mental being. The lokas which our kosas perceive were created by the involution of Shiva into creation and in evolution our work is to find a way through these orbits around the Hunab Ku as spiritually conscious microcosms guided intuitively by Brahma. Each one of the kosas orients the mind to newer, transcendent levels of being and then guides it to progressively higher levels until one eventually transcends all of mental vrttis connected with all of the mental levels. In this process of transcendence there is a continual transformation and therefore re-modification of the definition of a concept of individuality. One cannot intuit the presence of the Supreme Subjectivity when the mind is bound into the more external layers of mind. Instead, one feels that the objective layers of mind above their current level is one's subjective identity. For example, a mind at the Anahata level of development (Intuitive Mind), may not entirely conceive of its pure subjective being as Shiva, instead its subjective feeling is rooted in the objective layer of mind directly above it; in this case, the Vishuddha-Causal Mind. The Causal Mind is still an objective layer of mind, however it appears as a subjective being to the layers of mind beneath it. When one reaches the causal level, one will then understand that what once seemed as the ultimate subjective reality is now an objective reality. It is now objective because one now intuitively witnesses a layer of subjective being that witnesses even the Causal Mind. This progressive redefinition of the existential I- feeling continues until one arrives at the hub of the mind, the I-Witness, or Shiva. This process of successively redefining subjectivity according to progressively subtler levels of being that the mind operates on is termed manasphota- the "explosion" of mind into progressively higher levels of mind. When the mind is refined to the extent that it explodes into the original substance of Consciousness or Shiva, the process is termed cetanasphota.

Manasphota and cetanasphota are the core processes involved in spiritual practice. Whether one is struggling to purify the heart or concentrating on one's higher cognitive faculties, these two processes of mental and consciousness expansion are occurring.

Nature has so perfectly designed the mind that via the unfolding of the vrttis mind is ultimately led beyond any form of bondage, into union with the godhead. Dharma, the moral order of the universe conspires with its natural laws to bring all orbiting microcosms back into the conscious center in the Eternal Now. Ultimately, Nature and Spirit are in coordinated harmony. Recall that Nature is the result of the co-mingling of Shiva and Shakti and encompasses all of creation, including Mind. Nature furthers all created beings by guiding them back into union with Shiva. While discussing the Anahata Vortex it was mentioned that human beings have acquired the level of Self awareness that endows them with free will and permits them to make independent choices. We can follow the spiritual and moral conscience nature has endowed us with. We are also free to follow the impulses propelling us toward blind instinct. It has already been

mentioned that our negative actions create samskaras or reactions because the mind has moved contrary to its natural course. However, is there a specific activity or practice one can adopt to conform one's life and actions with Dharma, with Conscience? Certainly, Nature is there to guide us every step of the way if we can only listen. But what about the times when we can't listen or if we haven't yet learned to listen to our inner voice? The human being that has reached the Anahata Vortex has an intuition of the Infinite but is certainly not yet established there. Therefore, the will is separate from the Cosmic will. The world still seems "out there;" there still seem to be factors outside of oneself that determine reality; there is still a cleavage between self and other. The world seems to be something one has to fear and contend with although one intuitively feels that there is a deeper harmony working to heal the conflicts between self and other, between inner and outer.

Sadhana is the use of all human resources- emotive, cognitive, and active- to conform the mind to the cosmic moral order that ultimately guides the mind beyond all bondages and suffering. Sadhana must therefore be the most refined human expression in that it serves as the link between the finite and the infinite. It must represent the apex of human intellect and intuition, the noblest emotions, and compassionate activity. In fact, sadhana is spiritual life itself. It is what makes one complete and fearless by providing the inspiration, wisdom and courage to struggle to transform one's lower nature and further comprehend one's deeper sense of being.

Sadhana should never be confused with, or degenerate to the level of religion, dogma, or social convention. Rather, sadhana should reflect the very laws and essence of spiritual life. The purpose of sadhana is not to provide a ready-made construction of the definition of spiritual life. Instead, spiritual practice offers rational tools to help the aspirant discover for oneself what his/her life means in relation to Spirit. The Tantric aspirant should have an approach similar to that of an open-minded scientist or investigator that enjoys his/her work and loves the pursuit of knowledge.

This is the essence of Tantric meditation: to provide an experiential practice in order to help the mind grow and develop. However, one should not confuse the technique with the entirety of sadhana itself. The Tantric techniques of the repetition of mantras, breathing practices, visualizations and so forth are merely functionary tools for the expansion of mind. It can be likened to the health practices for physical life. Jogging, walking, eating properly, etc. improve the quality of one's health, but the practices themselves don't constitute entirely the notion of healthy living. It is their practical benefits that improve the quality of life. Similarly, the act of meditation and yoga postures, while being joyful in themselves, do not constitute the entirety of spiritual life. The practices offer a medium to reach a pinnacled state of consciousness where one can experience oneself more fully and discover spiritual truths directly. When one comes close to the Infinite, all intermediaries fall away. This is not to negate the importance of spiritual practice, but rather to say it is a means to an end. Certainly, a virtuous and humble being can develop spiritually over several lifetimes within the flow of Macrocosmic evolution without actually sitting down and meditating, breathing in a prescribed manner, and assuming certain physical postures, etc. However, Tantric meditation quickens the process of spiritual evolution tenfold and provides a powerful and dynamic impetus for continued development.

The Essential Psycho-Spiritual Dynamics of Tantric Meditation

Meditation is the process of converting objectivity into subjectivity, or, transforming existential limitations and bondages into the pristine purity of Consciousness. This is indeed the Tantric definition of yoga: the union of the microcosmic consciousness with the Macrocosmic Consciousness. It is the gradual realization of our oneness with the Infinite. Within the chitta are the samskaras in the form of thoughts, feelings, actions, experiences, and sensations. The subjective sphere of mind is the Aham and Mahat. Recall that the Aham is the feeling of active doer-ship or ego- the part of the mind that has a subjective identification with the contents of the objective chitta. For example, if the chitta has constantly experienced the impressions of life in the United States- the

cultural norms and mores, the sense of national and cultural identity, a particular socio-economic class, etc. The subjective ego identifies itself with these impressions and feels that itself, a subject, is associated with its external experiences. However, the ego is a midpoint between objectivity and pure subjectivity in that the ego does not in itself constitute the subjective identity. The Mahat is the component of mind with the pure feeling that "I exist." It is not qualified by external impressions but simply gives the sense of subjective identity to the Aham. It is this deep feeling of existential identity that initially inspires the mind to discover what it truly is. When Mahat is manifest, one realizes that the "I" is not the ego, that there is a inner peace and purity that is not touched by thought or action. The Mahat is an inner, quiescent, and tranquil feeling of existence unperturbed by anything external or Aham-oriented. When the personality or Aham is aligned with the Mahat one is in an internal, spiritual flow. The Mahat itself is not the final subjective entity, however. The mind is "an ever-changing, functional, relative entity." Mind is impermanent, a creation under the influence of Shakti, as well as an entity destined to merge again with Shiva, thus losing its separate identity.

Shiva itself is the fundamental "I", the Knower of mind. Recall that Shiva is a singular entity and is the subjective Witness of the microcosm as well as the Macrocosm. Mahat is a near-perfect replica that serves as the link to Shiva. Consciousness is free and unconditioned by Mind, Shakti's creation. Therefore, the fundamental identity is not just beyond the microcosmic mind, but beyond the Macrocosmic Mind as well. The essence of a human being, and any other being for that matter, is so sublime that its subtlety rests beyond any vibration in this great and vast universe. Sadhana is this process of realizing the Infinite within ones own finite being. It is the process of discovering that there is an inner greatness and nobility to the human being in that our relative, created being is the progeny of the Infinite while our transcendental essence is the Infinite itself.

Shakti is a spectrum of energetic wave-lengths. This expressed energy is divided into 3 categories. The finest wave-lengths are subtle qualifications of Shiva. This is subtle energy. Dynamic energy is active and

in transformation. Static energy is more inert, stationary and dense. The Mahat, Aham, and chitta are a continuum in this spectrum of energy as well. In other words, the Aham is a refinement of chitta and Mahat a refinement of Aham. Mind evolves from the external to the internal kosas, from the objective to the subjective. Conceptual forms in the chitta are dominated by the static force of Shakti, the intelligence of the Aham by the mutative force, and the intuition of the Mahat by the subtle. Spiritual practice is the conversion of the static concepts of the lower mind into the dynamic intelligence of the Aham and further converting

this intelligence into a purer, intuitive form of cognition in the Mahat.

Corresponding with this subtle refinement of cognition is a transformation of the affective qualities. The egocentric, self-preservation qualities are enlightened by expansive, soulful qualities that lead the heart toward its liberation from all narrow sentiments. The practice of sadhana must begin, therefore, with the shift of cognitive and affective focus to the higher, newly awakened or dormant faculties of one's being.

With the initiation into Tantric meditation, the practitioner is directed by a process that enables them to direct their mental concentration in the higher centers (vortexes) of mind. Accompanied by this focus of the mind on a specific vortex, the initiate is given a certain mantra with instructions on how to repeat it internally and how to think or ideate on this sound.

The mantra is a composition of causal sounds emanating from the Macrocosmic Mind. By repeating the mantra during meditation the mind is heightened above the phenomenal and personal levels of consciousness (the lower kosas) and begins to resonate with the kosas closer to the Macrocosmic Mind. Also it carries a certain ideational quality that signifies that the microcosm is thinking of its essence; for example, "I am Brahma, or I am That." Ideational refers to the mindful practice of maintaining a spiritual idea constantly in mind. The repetition of the mantra with its transformative idea and causal vibration vibrates the objective chitta portion of mind, thus transforming and refining its essence. Instead of vibrating the chitta with the body and the senses with the enjoyment of the external world, the chitta is internally focused on an infinitesimal point during meditation. Here one ideates on Shiva with a mantra. Recall once more that the only difference between the micro and Macrocosmic minds is the objective chitta. If the mind's concentration is freed from externalities, one feels identical to Shiva within. Sadhana is when the microcosm attempts to make its personal ideation vibrate in harmony with the I- Witness. One tries to remember the I-Witness always in the present moment, the "eternal now." The repetition of mantra facilitates this process by pulverizing the gross objects in the chitta (baser samskaras and vrttis) with a higher vibrational frequency. Instead of thinking "I am useless" or "I am confused" or "I am so great," as in mundane mental activity, the sadhaka ideates on Shiva with optimism and clarity with the ideation of "I am That," "I am the Witness," and begins to feel that the I- Witness

is always present and guiding its dear microcosm toward ananda, eternal bliss.

A mantra is not an arbitrary collection of sounds, nor does it just signify a hopeful idea without a spiritually scientific purpose. It is a causal sound tailored to the mental vibration of the initiate. There are therefore different mantras for different

mental vibrations with their accompanying differences in personality traits, emotional and cognitive tendencies, etc. The teacher must therefore be able to feel the mind of the initiate to determine what mantra is appropriate for him/her or follow strictly a system given by a great preceptor. There are many public or popular mantras that are commonly chanted or meditated upon by many. These may elevate the mind to some extent, but a mantra learned from a qualified teacher has a vibrational quality specifically related and tailored to the mental qualities of the aspirant, and therefore has more of a profound effect on the transformation of mind.

An old Indian maxim states that “Brahma alone is the Guru.” A qualified teacher must therefore have traversed the relative microcosmic planes of being and have united his/her mind with Brahma. Only in this state of union is the knowledge and ability to teach meditation properly acquired.

Tantric meditation is the vigorous conversion of physical energy into psychic energy and psychic energy further into spiritual cognition. In this process the objective chitta is pulverized into progressively finer expressions, enabling more Aham and Mahat, or intellect and intuition, respectively, to express themselves. In this process, the lower vrttis and mental functioning on their respective cognitive planes (kosas) are converted into higher modes of expressions. Recall the 3 laws of psycho-spiritual development outlined in the Anahata chapter: recapitulation, transformation and integration. There are higher modes of expression have their roots in more basic vrttis. Before love there was blind attachment, before conscious expansion there was ambition. Before existential preoccupation was primal fear. All that is needed is the transformation of energy through spiritual ideation to manifest and integrate the higher faculties into the personality. By continually vibrating the chitta with spiritual ideations via sadhana, the psychic energy is consciously redirected into higher recapitulations. The lower mind is thus gradually transformed into the higher recapitulated expressions of the higher vrttis. These subtler expressions can be integrated into one's spiritual being much more harmoniously than the lower vrttis. Here we see how a sadhaka must have the vibrational and ideational force to garner these lower propensities with ideational insight. The mind and all of its vrttis must be traversed through sadhana.

The process of vibrating the chitta and infusing it with subtler vibrations that transmute lower vrttis into higher ones is brought about by very specific concentration techniques. As mentioned earlier, the initiate is

instructed as to how to withdraw the mind from the senses and physical body and concentrate it at one of the higher vortexes. The fact that the mind is

concentrated at a higher vortexes causes the prana or psychic energy to flow upward, thus ascending from its habitual haunts in the lower vortexes. This process alone causes a shift in the way the mental energy flows and thereby fosters the unfolding of higher vrttis in that the mental energy is now moving where it previously wasn't. In addition the initiate is repeating the pulsative rhythm of the causal sound of a mantra with every breath. Recall that the root of all of the vrttis is sound vibration. A mantra has the capacity to harmonize with and transmute the collective sonar vibration of the mind and its vrttis. The mantra is like a conductor who understands the qualities of each instrument (vrtti) in an orchestra (the mind) and knows how to guide it into harmony. Mantra literally means that which liberates the mind. The mantra carries a spiritual force that helps the mind focus on the essence of one's I-feeling. A mantra occupies the chitta and helps to keep it one-pointed and steady like a candle flame. When the chitta becomes like a small point, then it takes on no more forms nor impressions from the Sensory Mind. The mind is then free to explore internal, mental space of pure Consciousness. The spiritual ideation of the mantra always serves as a reference to the true Witness behind all mental phenomena. Vibrating the objective mind with the internal repetition of the mantra instills an ideation in which the becomes so light and pure. In this lightness one feels the awareness of the Infinite One gazing upon the mind who repeats the ideation "I am That." This is the perfection of mantra. The vibrations of the objective mind are entrained with the thought of the Supreme Subjectivity. The signifier, the mantra, corresponds ideationally with the signified, the Supreme Subjectivity.

The level of ideational frequency in the mantra corresponds with the minds essential intuitive abilities at the vortex where one is concentrating or meditating. For example, to truly meditate on Shiva the mind must be concentrated above the Anahata Vortex. The following diagram gives an example of an initiate whose mind is bound by complexes in the Manipura Vortex. All of the arrows point outwardly. His mental energy is dissipated through the vrttis. He has shame, slander, sadism, hatred, and fear as predominant tendencies in the Manipura, as well as anxiety, vanity, selfishness, and duplicity in the Anahata. These tendencies are signified by the arrows. The arrows are the flow of psychic energy being dissipated in the expression of these lower vrttis. The second diagram signifies the change in flow of prana via the vrttis while the mind is meditating or after having undergone a transformation due to the meditation. Of course, the practice is to bring about an overall evolutionary change in the mind structure and not just a temporary change while one is meditating. Note how the arrows flowing outward in the first diagram are now flowing inward in the second. The concentration in the Ajina Vortex has shifted the expression of vrttis from lower to higher expressions. Also, this heightened

energy has found new, positive outlets in the form of hope, expansion of mind, and conscience in the Anahata, putting an idea into practice and devotion at the Vishuddha, and the cultivation of spiritual knowledge at the Ajina. This growth process indeed occurs in healthy minds without meditation as it is the essential dharma of human beings. However, the conscious redirection of energy through sincere and dedicated spiritual practice expedites this evolutionary process. A spiritual practitioner must therefore be strong, vigorous and fearless in order to mentally digest these changes.

The desire for psychic and spiritual liberation can only come about once the mind has reached the Anahata level of thought feeling, and activity. Here one has an intimation that there is a higher spiritual order in the universe even though one may still be bound to the lower realms and their expressions. The beginning aspirant must therefore have tremendous determination to surmount the binding influences of the lower vrttis. Along with this determination must be the cultivation of mental vigor and discipline in order to have the awareness and vitality to convert lower psychic expressions into more refined ones. In Tantra this stage is termed the Warrior stage of sadhana. Warrior signifies energy and the need to cultivate it willfully. In this stage it is necessary to meditate regularly, study philosophy, engage in positive activity or service, and learn from those who are more spiritually advanced. All energy must be channelized into following the inspiration and guidance of the conscience. This takes tremendous effort as one is not yet fully established in their overall concentration on the spiritual ideal. In order to surmount the duplicity between the desires and conditioning of the lower ego and the intuitions of the conscience, all efforts must go into bringing about this congruence between the subjective ideal and the objectively real. Or in other words, the thought feeling and action must become in accord with dharmic conscience. Before this stage all of one's struggles were based on securing the phenomenal identity of the ego. One sought to establish oneself according to or against some sort of outer, social reality. The mind was sharply split into a duality between self and other, between self and world, between impulse and conscience, and between conditioning and self- cultivation. Because all of the psychic energy is in the ego, the "doer-I", it is necessary for spiritual practice at this stage to be rooted in the ego. Instead of the ego being a self-encapsulated end in itself, it is at this stage attempting to align itself with the Mahat, the inner conscience. Still, it is the medium of action but it is moving toward that which can guide and control it. In other words, the Warrior stage of sadhana is the attempt for the objective dominated ego to transform the crude chitta in order to align itself with the subjective conscience of the Mahat. The second diagram shows how the expression of the lower vrttis change with sadhana.

The State of Mind Before Meditation

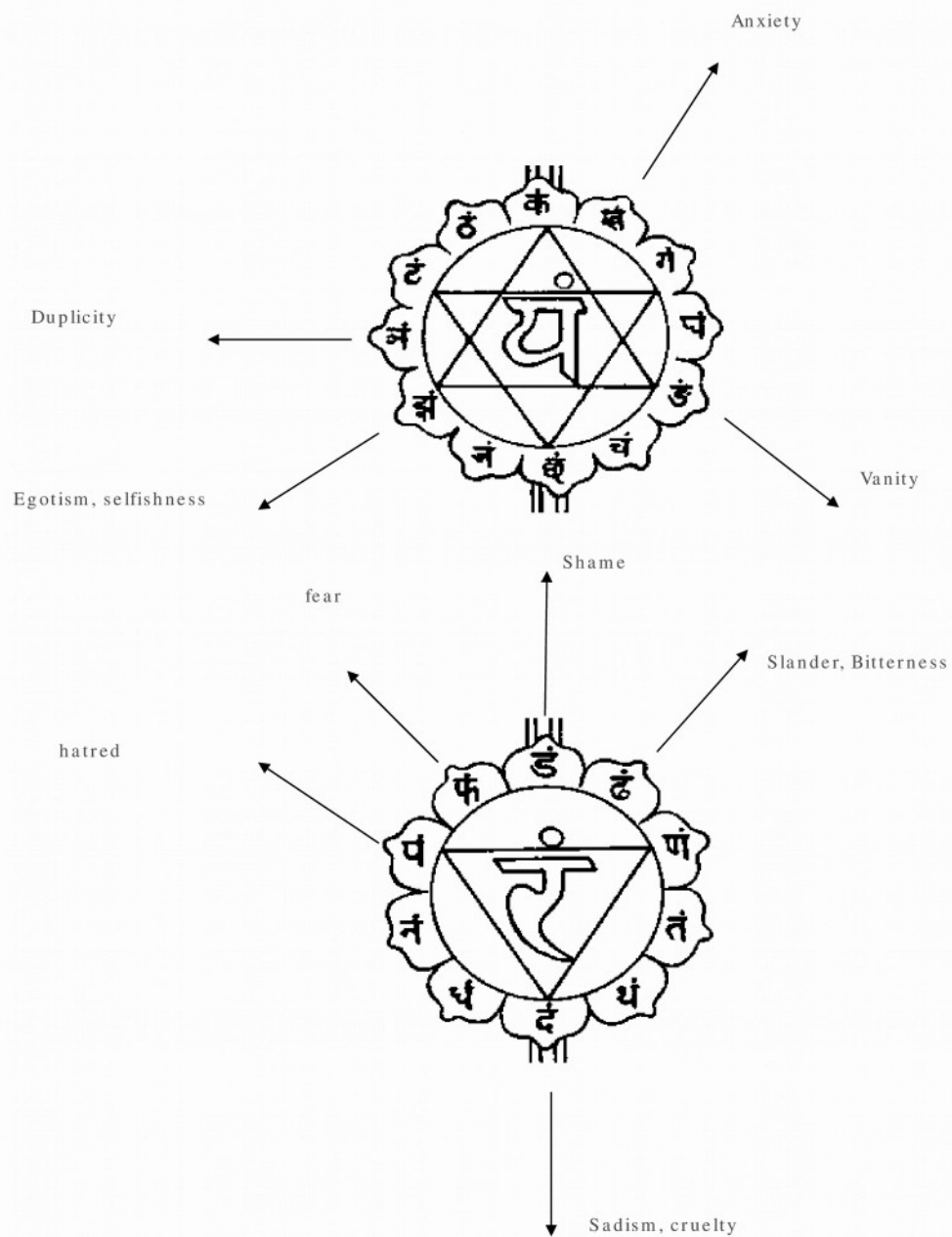
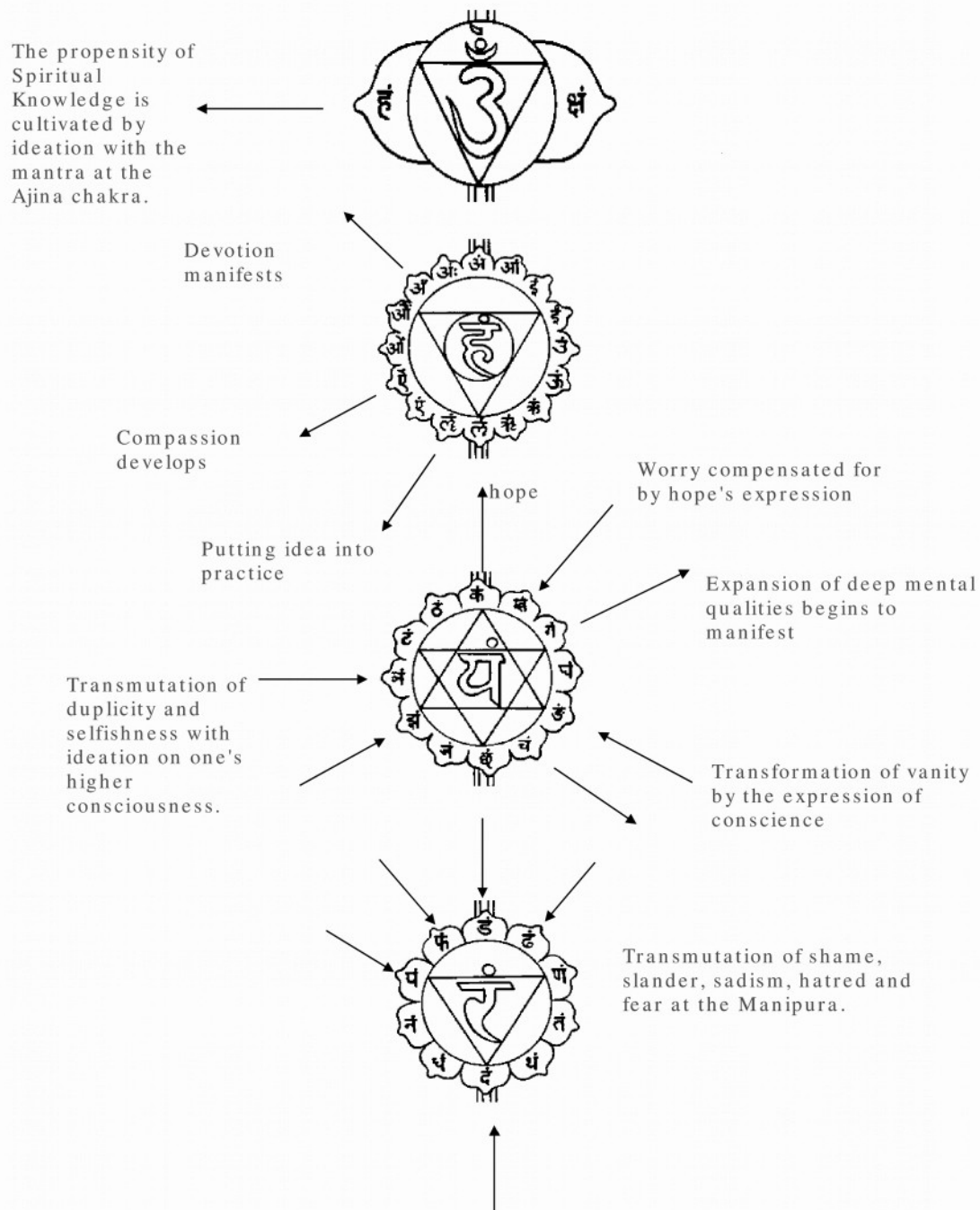


Diagram of vrtti manifestation with Meditation



There are many sub-stages in spiritual development. Spiritual life follows a Hegelian of dialectic in that the developing mind is always changing in response to new realities and their corresponding conflicts. Nothing in this relative world is permanent. Perhaps what we hold as a great truth today may become something very commonplace or even false tomorrow. Greater realizations lead to more subtle conflicts that continually propel one to find continually more subtle resolutions. An aspirant must accept this continuous cycle of clash and cohesion until one understands the impermanence of the mind. What we find as true at one stage may undergo changes later. A truth may evolve and undergo changes, thus requiring us to once again modify our concepts.

However, there comes a stage in spiritual life when one becomes established in one's conscience. Here the dualities between inner and outer, and impulse and conscience are more resolved. One has acquired the strength, stamina and wisdom to continually follow one's inner ideal. Previously, in the Warrior stage, the conception of the Supreme Conscious was by necessity dualistic; god was seen as an outside force that controls and guides a universe that I am separated from. One worships heroes like Krishna or Moses. In the second, Devotional stage, one becomes so completely ensconced in the Mahat that the life of the dualistic ego has been incorporated into the creative forces of the universe. One gradually becomes very close to the Macrocosmic Mind of Brahma and willful effort loses its necessity. One begins to flow with dharma, the moral order of the universe.

Human life reaches its apex at this stage. All of the evolutionary forces propelling one along the evolutionary path have flourished into a united life with Spirit. Virtue, justice, wisdom and goodness pour forth naturally and effortlessly from ones being. It is not the case that the personal relative identity is entirely dissolved, but rather that the microcosmic ego exists in harmony with the Macrocosm. The personality is an extension, a vehicle and mechanism for Brahma. In other words, Mahat is the faculty that guides the mind while Aham and chitta are the passive recipients to its inspiration. What need of there is effort at this stage? Does one still have to cling to the battered boat that took one across the turbulent sea of samskara? Brahma is one's very own and dear essence while the life of the seeking ego has become a distant memory. One has arrived at the destination. All one desires is to be in union with Brahma. As the Upanishad exclaims, "one must become altogether lost in Brahma, as an arrow in its target."

There is still the existence of the microcosm in the Warrior stage. The chitta, Aham and Mahat of the microcosm resonate with and are harmonized with the chitta, Aham, and Mahat of the Macrocosmic Mind. This is the stage of liberation, or Mukti. It is the stage of the savikalpa samadhis, where the microcosmic mind may suspend its separateness in the Macrocosmic Mind for a determined period of time. The mind at this stage may still hold its personal samskaras or be bound to subtle Macrocosmic samskaras (the propensities of the Vishuddha and Ajina Vortexs). It is these samskaras that determine the duration of the union with

Brahma in samadhi. The rise of vibrations in the chitta due to these subtle samskaras perpetuate the existence of the microcosm. Recall the descriptions of the Vishuddha, Ajina, and Sahasrara Vortexes in chapter 2. In these stages of evolution the microcosm is closely bound to the macrocosm. If such a being chooses, they may continue to exist in order to help other beings find liberation. This determination creates a samskara for them so that their mind may continue to have a momentum of continued existence in harmony with the Macrocosmic Mind.

However, recall that at the Sahasrara it is possible for the mind to entirely dissolve in Shiva. Instead of the chitta, Aham and Mahat resonating with the Macrocosm, they become entirely dissolved in the essential being of Shiva in the Shaeva stage. This is the stage of nirvikalpa samadhi, the samadhi of indeterminate absorption in Shiva. When nirvikalpa samadhi is of a permanent nature, it is termed emancipation, or Moksha.

The dissolution of mind corresponds exactly with the waning of the binding influence of Shakti over Shiva. Shakti's sentient, mutative, and static forces upheld the existences of the Mahat, Aham, and chitta, respectively. Now that mind is entirely dissolved in Consciousness, the activity of Shakti can no longer bind that particular mind, for there is no longer the existence of mind. The universe and creation no longer exist for that emancipated mind; there is only the oneness of the infinite and eternal Brahma.

In order to complete the cycle of creation, one must see the absolute oneness of Brahma, that even this physical creation is a manifestation of Spirit. Without this understanding we have not fulfilled our purpose in this creation. Has the Macrocosm created all of this only to show its essential nothingness, without purpose or reason? The illusionist, the spiritual nihilist, closes his eyes all through the day only waiting for the sleep of night. It is the same with all that resist Oneness. They seek an escape from how things really are and deny the essential spirituality of creation and fail to see that our being in this world is to give a name to the nameless, an expression of the inexpressible. As long as one resists the spiritual nature of creation there is no release from it. As Vivekananda once stated, we must leave our mark on this world before we go. True, all is intransient, vaporous, and incessantly passing away from us. But within this hazy mist is a definite theme and purpose for its every particle.

Mukti, or liberation of the mind, is when the memories of one's existence are no longer exclusively related to the experiences of the present body. The notion of life begins to extend into the life of the universe. The spiritually-oriented mind goes beyond the personal memories, the memories of one's lineage and culture, and begins to live within the memories of the human race. Slowly humanity is understood as the personal life is more deeply understood. All memories of your incarnation begin to merge into the eternal presence. What happened 30 years ago may begin to seem like it was yesterday. A memory of my childhood home makes me open my eyes from meditation to see if I really am there. Not having

an absolute definition of yourself is no longer a problem. Who is really living this life anyway? There is but one life and it is a good life. The more we merge our separateness in understanding and compassion, the more happy, the more liberated we are.

For this reason the knowers of the I-Witness live with an ever-new understanding of their place in the universe and can offer some real good to humanity through their variegated examples. Liberation is a long process that begins even before the awakening of the kundalini. The Infinite has always been calling us back to the cosmic nucleus of Hunab Ku; ever since we were amoebas. A human becomes conscious of this never-ending process of the liberation of the mind from the finite world with the awakening of the kundalini. This awakening and invigoration of the psycho- biological centers in the spinal column induce a recapitulation of Macrocosmic, planetary evolution within one's personal being. One begins to merge one's personal samskaras or memories with the Macrocosmic mind that sustains the *Gia*, our Earth Mother. One goes deeper into the life of the planet, into the life of the universe. The effort to liberate the mind via kundalini only ends when a life, a microcosmic evolution, is completely full and ripe. All things are made good within. Only when one has lived fully according to their conscience and has expressed a deep, spiritual intention toward life is one capable of attaining Moksha. Here, even these good memories of this microcosmic existence are wiped clean for ever as the mind itself has disintegrated in the supreme Shiva. If one desires this absolute union with the godhead, then one should only live the best life possible, a life full truth and union with the Supreme Consciousness and the expressed universe. The fundamental purpose of life always leads one first to liberation and later emancipation.

Microcosms are liberated one at a time. Because of this, the universe is eternal. The cycle of creation, *Brahma Chakra*, is continuous. Creation is pouring forth from the cosmic nucleus while at the same time creation is returning into union with the cosmic nucleus. While there are beings evolving toward emancipation, there is at the same time the generation of eternally new creation as the eternally active Shakti transforms the infinite Shiva. Due to this, creation is endless and eternal. *Brahma Chakra*, the Wheel of Creation, only comes to an end with the microcosm, never for the Macrocosm. Fragments of the Macrocosm (microcosms) are liberated, but never the Macrocosm as a whole. The Macrocosmic Mind has endless samskaras and is eternally Generator, Operator, and Destroyer.

In *Brahma*, the godhead, is the eternal emancipation, or Moksha. In this stage the kundalini, which is the manifestation of Shakti within the microcosm, has been elevated to the *Sahasrara*, the abode of Shiva. Shakti again takes its place beside Shiva in the state of eternal and infinite equipoise. Birth, death, creation and evolution are non-existent and illusory for the emancipated. There exists only pure Consciousness without an object. Shiva is aware only of itself, absorbed eternally in its blissful essence.

Glossary

Aham: Subjective identity or ego, the active, "doer-I". Self-concept. Ajina: Sixth vortex, "command" center of the mind.

Anahata: Fourth Chakra, literally "not holding or binding."

Anandamurti: Philosopher and spiritual teacher who lived from 1921 to 1990.

Artha: Fulfillment of mental desire, that which gives relief or meaning to the mind's inquiries. Psychological meaning.

Bodhisattva: A being liberated from personal bondage of samskaras. They may take rebirth only to help others. Bhakti: Devotional path to liberation.

Brahma: The Supreme Consciousness. The absolute union of Shiva and Shakti.

Cetanasphota: Disolution of the mind in pure Consciousness.

Chakra: "Wheel" or "Circle" Refers to the bio-psychological mental centers located along the spinal column.

Chitta: Objective chamber of mind that transmits sensory from the brain into the mind.

Deva: Emanation from the Supreme Consciousness, a "god" that controls vibrational expressions.

Dharma: Psycho-spiritual longing. Moral order and underlying purpose in life.

Ekagrata: One-pointed concentration on Brahma.

Godhead: "A pure and limpid unity" behind eternal activity of god, the Generator, Operator, and Destroyer. The state of union where Shakti doesn't qualify Shiva.

Guna: Binding quality of Shakti.

Hunab Ku: Mayan cosmological nucleus. Purusottama in Indian Tantra.

Ideation: The ideative practice of maintaining a spiritual idea constantly in mind. A mantra, for example is charged with spiritual "ideation." Jagat: That which is in constant movement; the universe.

Jnana: Spiritual knowledge, the yogic path to knowledge via mental discernment between relative and absolute being.

Kama: Physical desire.

Karma: Action, the path of liberated mental activity. Kosa: Microcosmic levels of mind.

Kulkulkan: Mayan concept of Kundalini.

Kundaliini: "Coiled Serpent Power." The divine energy of Shakti dormant in the first vortex.

Loka: Macrocosmic plane of existence.

Mahat: The most inner, subjective part of the mind that has only the quality of "I exist," the essential "I-feeling."

Manasphota: Explosion of objective mental structures into subjective structures.

Manipura: Third vortex. "The place of jewels".

Mantra: Causal sounds that help vibrate the mind inwardly.

Microvitum/Microvita: Mental entities without physical bodies that influence mind and matter.

Moksha: Complete emancipation of the mind. Mind merges into Shiva-Shakti godhead.

Muladhara: First vortex, "root" or "base" vortex.

Maya: Relative truth of creation, the cosmic trick that makes us see many instead of the One.

Nirguna Brahma: Consciousness without attributes where Shakti doesn't influence Shiva. Godhead

Nirvikalpa samadhi: Samadhi of absolute union where kundalini rises to the seventh or "crown" vortex.

Objective Chamber of Mind: Chitta or the mental plasm that takes on impressions from the senses.

Prana: Vital energy that functions between mind and body. Shakti:

The energy of Brahma. The Great Mother. Shiva: Consciousness of Brahma. The First Father. Rajaguna: Mutative, dynamic energy.

Sadhana: Spiritual practice.

Sadhaka: Spiritual practitioner.

Saguna Brahma: Consciousness with attributes. "God" as Generator, Operator, Destroyer.

Sahasrara: Seventh Chakra. "The thousand-petaled lotus."

Samadhi: The suspension of the microcosmic mind into Shiva Consciousness. Spiritual trance of divine union.

Samskara: Reactions to original actions that are embedded as seeds within the mind that seek to create new actions.

Sattvaguna: Subtle energy that makes the mind still and calm.

Savikalpa samadhi: "trance of determinate absorption." Union with Brahma through spiritual trance of a temporary nature.

Shushumna: Subtle energy channel and path for the kundalini located in the center of the spinal column.

Subjective Chamber of Mind: Inner, subjective portion of mind that has the notion of "I am" and "I exist."

Svadhista: Second vortex. Place for "Self-establishment" of the personality.

Tamaguna: Static, entropic energy that pulls the mind toward matter.

Tantra: The path of expansion from dullness, or spiritual ignorance.

Upanishad: Classic Indian spiritual treatises about the Vedas.

Vaishnava: The stage of sadhana where one starts to feel oneness with Brahma.

Vishuddha: Fifth vortex. "Especially pure."

Vritti: Vortexes or propensities of the mind.

Yoga: Union of the microcosmic mind with Brahma.

