

## KRIYA YOGA

Most of the systems of Yoga emphasize the importance of concentration as a means of withdrawing the consciousness from the outside surroundings and directing it into the innermost realms of the mind.

Kriya Yoga does not pre-suppose concentration or even withdrawal of your awareness from the outside surroundings. Kriya Yoga is more interested in awareness than concentration. Awareness means conscious attention of thoughts or of objects, either external or internal, without necessarily being one-pointed. The word implies a relationship between the activity of perception and the perceived.

Kriya Yoga does not insist on the withdrawal and concentration of mind on one point; on the contrary, it asks one to move his awareness, to rotate his consciousness from one point to another in a particular order. As such it is most suitable for most people today, since they are habituated to extroversion, and cannot concentrate, and their conscious perception constantly jumps from one point to another.

Kriya Yoga means activity or movement of awareness or consciousness. It is the preliminary practice which leads first to '*Dharna*' and then to the transcended state of '*Dhyana*' (Meditation) and finally to Yoga. It requires one to purposely create activity in one's consciousness. By this process, mental faculties are harmonized, and when developed to its fullest potential, brings about co-ordination between the nervous system and the brain.

Kriya Yoga is actually a combination of Mudras, Bandhas, Asanas, Pranayama and awareness. By practicing the techniques of Kriya Yoga, Kundalini, the vital Shakti, energy, which lies in the Mooladhara Chakra can be awakened. With this Kundalini energy, we can also awaken the different Chakras and with the functioning of these centers, we can directly operate upon the dormant areas of the brain.

Anyone who wants to learn Kriya Yoga will have to go through a lot of preparation, if he wants to gain the best results. Asanas, pranayama, and Hath Yoga cleansing techniques should be practiced. Breath consciousness and Ajapa must be perfected, the psychic passages must be discovered and the correct locations of the Chakras must be established. Preliminary Kriya exercises involving Mudras and Bandhas should also be practiced for Some time. The Mudras and Bandhas are methods of stimulating nerve plexuses and endocrinal secretions and for activating the Prana in the body.

There are no restrictions or barriers of age, diet, sex etc. in the practice of Kriya Yoga.