

Shakti-Yoga Verbatim: Course Guide and Reader in Spiritual Practice

Olga Louchakova

olouchakova@itp.edu

[[This is the second version of the manuscript on the concentration based spiritual practices. In the first, the practices were organized as separate lessons. It is a guide in spiritual practices research at the institute of Transpersonal Psychology, and can be used as an manual of alternative therapeutic techniques. Needs some editing. I plan to include it as a chapter into the upcoming book on spiritual emergence and the embodied self. Please cite the URL for the current page. **In using these descriptions for your own practice, keep in mind, that these practices can cause Kundalini rising, - use them at your own risk .**]]

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Introduction

This compilation of the body-oriented concentration based spiritual practices unites the major groups of practices developed within the traditions of psychosomatic mysticism (Louchakova & Warner, 2003). Methodology used for the analysis of the body of practices is eclectic, including the studies with traditional teachers, critical analysis of the texts, interviews with active practitioners, clinical case studies of people in the process of spiritual awakening associated with Kundalini energy etc., etc. The treasury of transformative methods, accumulated by spiritual traditions over thousands years of practice, is immense, so after the 20 years of study, this research is still in its initial stage. Therefore within every group of practices, references are given to the sources of knowledge, and, where possible, to the actual observations which allowed to group the practices together.

The other important aspect of this study is the cultural specific of the practice. In the process of putting together this collection, the author and her teachers tried, intentionally or not, to explicate the universal transformative essence of the practice, and strip off the cultural contexts. This kind of analysis of spiritual practices was started, among the known teachers, by G. Gurdjieff (Ouspenski, P. D., 1949/1976), and continued by Vladimir Antonov, the successor of Gurdjieffs direct successors in Russia (ref). However, the comparisons of the personality related effects of practice between Russian and American practitioners over the period of seven years allow suggesting that the characterological transformation, resulting from the practice, varies in relation to cultural context. This requires further research.

The mythological origins of the body related spiritual practices could be tracked in the apocryphal body of literature such as Kundalini Vidya (Harrigan, 2000), Babaji and the 18 Siddha Kriya Yoga Tradition (Govindan, 1991), Taoist yoga: Alchemy and Immortality (Yu, L. K., 1860/1973). These books are connected with the eclectic but uninterrupted oral tradition of Tantra (Bhattacharyya, 1999), which is alive and active in Russia (Antonov, personal communication, February 6, 1990), Turkey (Bobaroglu, personal communication, September 9, 2001), India, United States (Swami Chandrasekharanand, personal communication, March 15, 1996) and other countries. Then, there are a compilation of philosophical/spiritual fairy tales such as Yoga Vasishta (Venkatesananda, 1993) or *Periya Puranam*, and Agamas, Tantrik texts of India (Avalon, 1922/1974; Tirumular, 1991). There are similar texts in other traditions. These sources generally indicate that there is the group of primordial spiritual teachers of the human kind, existing on the subtle planes of creation. These teachers impart the sacred knowledge of human transformation on their favorite and worthy disciples through means such as dreams, vision, or the direct insight. Reducing this semi-poetic statement, one can make an assumption that the ontological hierarchies of consciousness (Rothberg, when?) include the hierarchy of praxis as well, and that there are ontologically determined, spiritually important activities which involve the higher levels of our being. As

such, they can be “revealed”, or recognized through noetic insight. For the purpose of this study, description of each group of practices contains information on the research process and information sources, which allowed to do single out this or that particular group of practices.

Understanding Spiritual Practice

Generally, the body of practice within every spiritual tradition can be subdivided into three larger categories, such as preliminary practices providing for the intra and inter personal harmony. This set of practices of this level may include behavioral injunctions, adopting the particular code of values, and various attitudinal principles. Common to this level will be principles of non-violence, truthfulness (integrity or congruence), non-possessiveness, reduction of attachments, right sexual conduct. Additional principles may include humility, forgiveness, restraint etc, as well as cleanliness of the body and abstaining from the use of intoxicants.

The next level includes the practices, which cause the qualitative change of the psyche and whole being of the practitioner. Experientially, this group is quite defined, however, the categorization principles are murky, and require more research. In traditional terms of Vedic or Tantrik psychology, these practices cause the *antahkarana suddhi* (Sanskrit), the purity or transparency of the “internal organ” of the practitioner, which allows to build up the qualifications necessary for the direct insight into the nature of consciousness. However, so do the practices of the lower level. The other definition, introduced by Goleman (1977), implies the use of the faculties of concentration and awareness. However, so do the practices of the lower and higher level.

Probably the best definition can be derived from the understanding of the spiritual development as an embodied process, which is accompanied by growing of the possibility of the direct apprehension of the interiority of consciousness. In metaphoric terms of Kundalini rising model, developed by Harrigan (2000) and Louchakova (Louchakova & Warner, 2003), this happens when the evolutionary Kundalini energy breaks through the threshold between the 3^d chakra *Manipura* (City of jewels, Sanskrit), and enters the 4th chakra *Anahata* (Primordial sound, Sanskrit). At this developmental stage, the practitioner becomes capable of introspection, withdrawal of cognitive focus into the “interior space of the body”. All practices of this level involve the focusing of attention in this “interior space of the body”. The practices of the first level continue being used, but as a background to the major activities of this level.

The practices of the next level include the procedures removing the ignorance of the universal nature of the Self, i.e. sponsor the ego-transcendence. They remain outside of the scope of this study.

Research of the transformative effects of introspective spiritual practices, besides transpersonal aspects, has the larger context as the unexamined side of spiritual traditions. *Praxis* as an activity of human being involving the use of the body (Cole, 1996), has never been examined in relation to religious matters. Cultural studies demonstrate that praxis is the necessary component of transformation, evolution and changes in the self in the particular socio-historical era (Cole, 1996; Cushman, 1995; Storey, 1996). Kippenberg (2003) states that human history is, in fact, the history of religions. Sacramental, religious and spiritual practices involving the human body are likely to play a role in mediating history, especially as related to the historical dynamics of the human self.

Defined as a body-involving activity, religious praxis includes spiritual exercises such as meditation (Goleman, 1977), internal rituals and visualization (Bhattacharyya, 1999; St. Simeon The New Theologian, 1995), complicated movements of attention such as orbits, psychosomatic forms of prayer etc., i.e. activities that cause psychospiritual transformation while engaging the human body. In the prior studies, the present author introduced the term “psychosomatic mysticism” that designates the dimension of religion that observes, utilizes, and focuses on the various forms of spiritual insight associated with the awareness of the lived body (Louchakova & Warner, 2003). Even though the awareness of the lived body

constitutes the very foundation of the self, the connections between body-based religious praxis, and the socio-cultural and historical self was not studied. The historicity of the body (Cohen, 1994) has never been acknowledged in regard to the religious praxis, neither was the religious praxis examined in its body-centeredness in the historical context. Research was done regarding the conceptualization of the body in religion, not regarding the actual participation of the bodily forms of awareness in religious consciousness. The ways by which spiritual practice, as a particular use of the body, provides for the transformation of the self and development of the religious function of the psyche, have not examined. How do religious practices originate in history, and what happens in the process of cross-religious transmission of practices, is not known. This creates a disturbing epistemological vacuum in contrast to the wide public use of multicultural body-centered spiritual practices such as yoga, Tantra, meditative running, focused mantra-japa etc.

As indicated lately by Kippenberg (2003), the comparative history of religions recognizes the historicity of the elements of human existence beyond the realm of rationality. The place of religious praxis in history, its dialectical and dialogical relation to a person has yet to be examined. Indian historians of religion such as **Bhattacharyya (1999)** developed approaches to understanding of the body-based praxis in the overall dynamic of religious traditions. Bhattacharyya, for example, separates the body-engaging religiosity as a “parallel” Tantrik tradition”, which provides the forms of religious knowing different from those in the dominant Vedic tradition. In western thought, the only research done in this direction has been within the interdisciplinary field of transpersonal studies (Goleman, 1977; Shapiro & Walsh, 2003). However, these works isolate the various forms of spiritual practice from the socio-historical context, and focus on perennial truths overlooking the self-praxis hermeneutic modalities. The current project is intended to fill the existing gap in knowledge, leading to series of publications both in the academic press and for public.

Traditional Requirements to the Spiritual Practitioner

During the course of this study, please sustain the healthy diet. For the development of the initial stages of practice, abstaining from the mind-altering substances, meat and poultry, as well as man-made chemical substances and tobacco is beneficial. Also, the life style should be as much as possible stress free. Cleanliness of the body, and wearing the comfortable, predominantly natural fiber clothing helps the development of the practice.

Relationships with the teacher are the important component of the practice. In different spiritual traditions, the mode of relationship differs. For example, in Shakta-Vedanta/Kundalini Yoga, the teacher is highly revered and seen as “God” incarnate. Mahayana Buddhism suggests more “horizontal”, less hierarchical relationship with the teacher as somebody who “walked the path” before you. Sufism introduces the notion of teacher as a friend. However, when one is developing his/her own spiritual practice outside of the context of immediate relationship with the teacher, the connection with the “interior” teacher acquires special importance. As emphasized by many contemporary teachers such as Ganga ji or Sri Ranjit Maharaj, the “guru” (remover of the darkness of ignorance in Sanskrit) is nothing other than your own higher Self.

Structure of the Practice

The average time for one set of practice is about 1 hour, or 30 minutes for the experienced practitioners. Do not try to do many exercises at once. It is better to be slow but thorough. Initiate every session with a small ritual, including short invocation, prayer or introductory meditation. This interrupts the habitual current of thoughts, calms the mind, establishes the attitude of self-acceptance and pacifies the energies of the space where one practices. It also establishes the non-egoic attitude to the process of practice. Below are the variants of Tantrik/Vedic invocation, ancient Christian prayer or non-denominational ENTRANCE meditation suitable to begin the practice session.

Alternative Variants of Rituals Initiating the Practice:

A. Tantrik/Vedic Invocation of the Preceptor [repeat 4 times] (at least 3000 years old)

OM Namō Bhagavate Dakshinamurtae, Mayam Sriyam Pragnyam Priaccha Swaha

[Prostrations to blessed Dakshinamurti, the first spiritual teacher. Please grant me abundant well-being and knowledge of the Supreme Self]

B. Christian Prayer to the Holy Spirit (has pre-Christian origins)

O heavenly King (Queen), the Comforter, Spirit of Truth and Giver of Life,
Treasury of All Good Things, Who art everywhere dwellest and fillest all things,
Come and dwell in us, and purify all impurities,
And save our souls, Oh Good One

C. Entrance Meditation (generic to the large cross-traditional similar forms of meditation)

Following meditation provides the initial refinement of the subtle body energy counteracts the affects of anger and hate and neutralizes obstacles, which might arise in practice. When practiced regularly in the evening time, this meditation improves night sleep.

Vajrasana, the kneeling pose, is best for this type of meditation. Sit on your heels with the knees slightly apart. Toes are directed backwards, slightly touching each other). Spine should be straight, back relaxed, buttocks pulled slightly backwards: in fact, you are sitting on the upper part of your hips. If this pose is difficult, take any comfortable sitting position with the spine straight (e.g. cross-legged). Eyes are closed; eyelids relaxed; hands are relaxed and resting on the thighs. For a couple of minutes observe the natural flow of your respiration, notice it without any effort to change it. Then direct your attention to the sensations of the physical body, and feel the posture. Do not force yourself to sustain the ideal pose, but rather stay with your breath softly flowing through the body. Adjust the position of the body during meditation, if necessary.

Then, focus attention in the chest. With every exhale, with every inhale your breath takes you deeper and deeper into the inner space of the chest. Imagine that inside your chest there is a powerful source of light, a projector. Turn on the light in this device, and send the beam forward, silently repeating the message: “May all the beings be peaceful! May all the beings be calm and quiet! May all the beings be blissful!” With every sentence, send waves of love and friendliness from your chest through the beam. Attain every mentioned state (peace, calmness, and bliss) within yourself, and then expand it beyond the boundaries of the physical body. Then, turn the projector to the left, back, right, up and down, and repeat sending the message in all directions. Then, bring attention back to your inner space. Observe the changes in your state after the entrance meditation.

After the entrance ritual, the practice session unfolds from more physical to more and more subtle and introspective exercises. The approximate structure of the session is as following:

- Entrance meditation
- Preliminary part – about 30 minutes
 - Stretching, relaxing, warming up
 - Pranayama

- Purification of the energy channels and centers
 - Relaxation poses
- Main part:
- Concentration training
 - Refinement of energy and awareness exercises
 - Kriyas (dynamic depth focusing techniques)
- Shavasana

Dependent on the state of your mind-body, you may add the following exercises in the beginning of the practice session. This increases the length of the session to approximately two hours. The exercises below help to reduce stress and transition from the hectic life activities to spiritual practice by opening and balancing the subtle energy flow, which Tantra considers to be responsible for all functioning of the mind-body system. Techniques below can be added in the beginning of every practice session.

Relaxation Techniques

The following exercises improve the conductivity of the meridians and introduce the first elementary skills of concentration. Emphasize the volitional relaxation of the muscles, pay attention to the elasticity of the muscles and tendons, and increase the flexibility of the spine. These qualities are important for future work. The exercises should not be tiring. Do every one long enough to feel its rhythm and the joy of the movement. It is necessary to sustain a positive emotional state throughout the whole lesson, especially during the physical exercises. This is the best guarantee for the success of the training.

Arms

Hold your left wrist by your right hand; lift it all the way above the head. The left arm is completely relaxed during this movement, like a hanging rope. After lifting your passive left arm, drop it and let it fall down. It has to fall freely, without any muscle resistance. Notice if you are trying to control this movement, and try to get rid of any muscle tension. Repeat the exercise a couple of times, achieving full relaxation. Repeat this movement with the other arm.

Legs

Put your weight onto the one-foot. Flex the other leg and pull the foot as close as possible to the lower belly. Grasp the foot underneath with both hands. If it is difficult, just hold the lower calf. Hold it close to the body. Let the leg hang freely. Relax it. Then drop the leg the way you did with the arms. The leg has to drop freely, without any muscle resistance. Repeat this exercise with both legs.

Shoulders and Arms

Stand straight. Bend a little bit forward, so that your right arm hangs from the shoulder without touching the body. Relax your shoulder muscles. Visualize your arm as a rope with a stone bound to its end. Flex your legs a little bit, and using springing movements of the body start swinging the arm, increasing the amplitude. As the movements become stronger let this rope-arm, rotate around the shoulder. The muscles of the arm do not participate in this movement. They stay fully relaxed.

Torso

Now visualize your body as if made of elastic material, like an elastic balloon. Start pumping air into this elastic hollow body. The body becomes as if inflated, tense and big. Finally, when you feel that this elastic body-balloon is full of air, let out the pressure. The upper part of the body drops and hangs freely down from the waist. Arms, neck muscles, shoulders, and torso are fully relaxed. Stress causes involuntary tightness of the physical muscles. Likewise, decreasing tension in the body will diminish psychological tension and the level of stress.

The following cycle of exercises must be performed with a focused concentration in the moving part of the body. The concentration skills develop in the following way: first, learn how to maintain attention in the moving part of the body. Keep approximately 75% of attention in the moving part of the body, and spread the other 25% throughout the body. Then discriminate the sensations in the skin, muscles and tendons, differentiate sensations originating in the blood vessels and moving bones. Learn to discern the heat appearing in the joints and muscles as they move.

Then, start visualizing light in the working joint. Beginning with visualization you will proceed to seeing naturally appearing inner luminosity. With the energy purification and development of concentration, practitioners start seeing more and more light inside. This light, at first reddish or golden, later becomes more intense and golden-white.

The correct concentration skills should be developed from the very beginning. Your concentration should be focused yet relaxed. If you tighten too much, you lose energy and will be unable to develop steadfastness. But if you do not make any effort, your mind will continue flickering. So stay relaxed, yet focused in a working part of the body.

Head and Neck

Stand straight. Move your attention to the neck, and start the cycle of exercises for the neck and head muscles. Keep your attention in the neck area for the whole cycle. Keeping the attention inside the neck, roll your head over the shoulders. Change the direction. Bend the neck forward- backward, left right. Moves the straight neck forward - backward, left - right without bending it, roll it over the imaginary plane under the chin. Shoulders stay still.

Upper and Middle Spine

Lift your arms; hold hands above the head. Flex the body forward backward, left and right in the upper part only. Concentrate in the upper spine. The waist portion of the spine remains immovable as much as possible.

Concentrate in the middle spine. Flex the body selectively in the waist. All other parts stay still. Bend forwards backward and left right.

Lower Spine

Put the feet parallel at shoulder distance. Flex the knees a little bit; move your attention to the lower part of the spine; feel the tailbone. Start rotating the tailbone and the lower 1/3 of the spine, keeping the shoulders, the upper part of the body and the legs still. Learn to move the pelvic area left right, forward - backward keeping the rest of the body still and the muscles relaxed. While performing these movements keep your attention focused in the moving part of the body. This is the key element for all these exercises.

Ankle rotation

Sit down in the cross-legged position. Hold your right leg with your right arm by placing your upper right arm under your right calf and lifting the calf to your chest. Right leg should be resting in the crook of your right arm so that you are “embracing” your leg. Hold your right toes with your left hand. Relax the muscles of your leg, so that it is just hanging, supported by your arm. The left hand rotates the right foot, as you fully relax the muscles around the ankle.

As with previous exercises, direct attention into the moving joint. “Look” there with your inner gaze; “listen” to it with your inner hearing. Try to see or visualize the light, golden or white, which appears in the joint; feel the warmth. Light is “lubricating” the joint, as motor oil facilitates the movement of an engine.

Knee Rotation

Take a sitting cross-legged pose. Bring your right thigh to the chest with your right arm, putting it from the outside under the knee. The crook of your arm should be adjusted to the bend in your knee, and support it. Take your right ankle with your left hand, palm facing upward. With concentration in the knee, and muscles around the knee completely relaxed, rotate the knee with your left arm. Rotate once to the left, then to the right. Repeat three to four times.

Leg Extension

In the cross-legged sitting pose, hold the right foot with both hands. Bring the foot towards the forehead. Continuing to hold it with the right hand, release the heel, extend the right leg, and arm up as fully as possible. Repeat this movement from forehead to full extension three to four times.

Repeat the knee rotation and leg extension exercises with the left leg.

Asanas

Half Turtle

Take the kneeling pose with toes directed backwards, and buttocks resting on the back of the thighs. Move the knees aside. Bending forward, put the forehead on the floor with arms stretched forward, palms facing down. Relax both body and mind. Allow the relaxation to deepen, and observe how the pose is getting more and more relaxed with the belly hanging down between the knees more and more. This is a very good exercise for physical and mental rest. Remain in this posture for about 10 minutes.

Crocodile Pose I

This is one more relaxation asana. Lie down on your stomach, put your elbows on the floor in front of you, and support your chin with your palms. Push the elbows as far forward as you can. Relax the muscles of the body. Light tension might remain the back muscles holding the body.

Visualize yourself lying on a beach. Mild, caressing sunbeams warm your back. Feel their warmth in your spine; visualize it being filled by sunlight. Keep this state for 10-15 minutes.

Crocodile Pose II

Lie down on your stomach. Lift the upper body, supporting it with elbows and lower arms on the floor in front of your chest. Palms hold the elbows. Then, hold the upper body mainly by the static effort of the muscles of the upper back and neck; the pressure on the elbows is nearly absent. Concentration stays in the spinal meridian. The pose, sustained for 10 - 20 minutes, eliminates stooping by habituating the muscles of the upper back.

Tadasana (Energizing Asana)

This exercise elevates the energy, and is recommended in case practitioner feels tired and cannot access the energy resource necessary for successful practice. However, *Tadasana* will increase the busyness of the mind, therefore should be used only when mind is relatively quiet. Practice is with discernment. It is good to use it before the exercises in concentration, which take energy, as well as when feeling fatigued, sleepy or tired. Do not do it if you are feeling anxiety, hyperactivity, irritation, and anger or suffer cardiovascular disease and/or high blood pressure.

Stand up, put your feet together, inhale deeply and start rapidly tightening the muscles from the toes up, like wave of tightening running up the body. Pay special attention to the perineum, anus, belly and chest muscles. As the wave of tightness goes up, lift your arms, connect palms above the head, and finish the effort by pressing palms against one another. You will feel warmth through your entire body, increasing alertness and the desire to move. Hold the pose for a couple of seconds and gently release.

As the result of this exercise blood is pressed out of the inner organs towards the skin, energy is moved upward, and the power center, solar plexus *chakra* is activated. All of the above contributes to the energizing effect of the exercise.

Poses for Sitting Meditation.

Meditation poses in this approach should be sustained without any mental or physical tension. This is achieved only through training. The position of the body is intimately connected with the state of the mind. Thus, if the pose is negligent, it is very difficult to sustain attention, especially in concentration meditation. That is why the correct meditation pose is essential for success in meditation. Please do not confuse it with the necessity for fitness of the body or hatha yoga physical requirements. The motivation to have a good meditative pose in Shakti-yoga is entirely different. Asana helps to sustain the mental discipline. Some people naturally can sustain good sitting pose, and in the Hindu tradition it is considered special gift from God. Otherwise, the good pose is gradually attained through training.

Student's Pose

The first position is called the “student’s pose”, or *Vajrasana*, which means “the adamant pose”. It is simply a kneeling position with the back straight, sitting on the heels. This pose was described above as the best for the entrance meditation. It is more comfortable to be in this pose, if heels contact the back of the thighs rather than the buttocks. Rest hands on the thighs.

Crossed-Legged Pose

Sitting cross-legged keeps the back straight, gaze directed down and forward. Use cushions to facilitate the postures in the beginning; place them either under the ankles (student’s pose) or under the buttocks and knees (cross-legged pose).

Meridian activation poses

Front Meridian

Lie on your stomach. Put your hands near your chest and push your body up, supporting it by the palms and toes. The body is stretched so that it presents an even slope. Focus your awareness in the front meridian. The following visualization can enhance your concentration: feel and see (with your inner gaze) yourself as if lying on the branch of a tree. Your body is freely hanging on this branch, which is contacting your body only in the area of the front meridian. Visualize light streaming down your front meridian. When performed properly, the pose induces the feeling of warmth in the front meridian area.

Keep the pose as long as your body allows you (usually about sixty sec). Do not push yourself. The sustaining of the pose does not depend on your level of fitness. When the concentration is properly established, your body posture will follow the mind. When tired, rest on your stomach.

Spinal meridian

Turn over; lie on your back. Sit down, then push your body up into support stand on your hands and heels, and back down. As the body is stretched, it forms a flat slope. Do not tighten your shoulders. Focus in your spinal meridian. The rest is the same as in the previous pose.

Exercises in Mind/Breath Control

Stopping the Thought Current

The next exercise helps to stop inner dialogue. The usual mind has the constant flow of thoughts. Sometimes people find themselves engaged in an uninterrupted discussion with an inner opponent, and are unable to stop the discussion, even if they want to.

To stop the dialogue lie down on your back, take a couple of deep breaths, then exhale and hold the breath on the exhale. Keep the attention focused on your heartbeat or on the spontaneous movements of the chest. Tell yourself: “I don’t want to breathe!” Do not worry about suffocating; this cannot happen. As soon as you feel a strong desire to breathe, inhale. Right after the inhale, you will feel your mind liberated from the domineering thoughts and negative emotions. It will now be possible to switch your attention onto something useful. This exercise is not recommended for systematic use. It is performed only when you need to stop uncontrolled thoughts.

One of the practical ways to quit the inner dialogue and to stop negative thoughts, learned through the work with chakras, is to move your awareness from the head chakra into the lower chakras.

Shavasana

This important exercise helps to refine energy and attain gradual purification of the deep layers of the mind. While performed correctly and daily, it is a wonderful remedy against low blood pressure.

Lie down on your back. Be sure that you are comfortable so that nothing distracts your attention. Relax the entire body, starting from the toes. Visualize a plane under your feet perpendicular to the axis of the body (you might use the image of the shimmering silver, foggy plane). Move the plane through the body from the toes to the head; when the plane passes through parts of the body, they are instantly dissolved. It is as if the body below the plane stops to exist. If sensation in one of the “dissolved” parts of the body returns, pass the plane through it again. After the plane passes through the head, you might experience the following states: a) you might discover yourself in a state between dreaming and your

usual awakened state. The usual body-consciousness spontaneously returns after 18-20 minutes. These 20 minutes are equivalent to a long, deep sleep. Afterwards you feel fully refreshed. Do not be in a hurry to stand up; explore this state; b) you stay “present”, but experience complete inner peace. Try to look through your body with your “inner gaze”. Enter the “inner space” of the body. You could see light and dark regions. Gray and dark colors reveal disorders in one of the energy planes of the body corresponding to active or still hidden diseases. Try to “collect” all the darkness and drain it out of the body into the earth, either through the base of the head or through your tailbone. This variant is good for developing the ability to concentrate. In fact, you are experiencing the layers of your subtle body. Depending on its content, your experiences might vary. Sometime people experience spontaneously rising memories, out-of-body journeys, energy rising phenomena etc. Do not try to control it, let it rise and subside on its own.

Practice *Shavasana* at the end of every complex of physical exercises. Besides rest, it provides the opportunity for the body to get rid of undesirable energy gradients, which might arise after the exercises because of yet, unreleased energy blocks. If you have difficulty falling asleep, you might practice *Shavasana* while in bed, proceeding directly into your night’s sleep. Otherwise, it is better to perform this asana while lying on the floor.

Pranayama

Pranayama means, “Calming down the prana”. These are the exercises, which develop the skills of controlling energy through breath. They deepen the concentration, help to access awareness of energy, and effectively cleanse energy meridians. Before proceeding to *Pranayama* it is necessary to establish correct breathing skills.

Breath Awareness

Take a relaxed standing pose, breath naturally, and notice where the breath is going in your body. You will discover that you habitually breathe into the upper or lower section of lungs (chest or belly breath). Then position your palms onto the chest and belly and try to breath, focusing the inhale in your upper chest. This activates the upper lung breath.

Next, position the palms of your hands on your ribs, under the breasts. Breathe so that your palms move up and down with every inhale. This is the mid-section of the lungs. Again, position one palm on the chest, the other on the belly. Train yourself to inhale into the belly, so that your diaphragm moves down during the inhale. Your diaphragm should always be loose during breathing. Correct breathing in *Pranayama* always involves the diaphragm.

Pranayama Exercises

Pranayama exercises must be performed with very active emphasis on energy sensations. In the beginning, intense *Pranayama* exercises may cause some physical discomfort or even emotional release, but as the energy system gets refined, diet becomes pure, and emotional conflicts in life become harmonized, these unpleasant sensations will cease.

Take a standing pose. Move approximately 75% of your body weight onto the right leg and bend your right leg slightly, so that your right arm hangs freely from the shoulder without touching the body. Feel your arm all the way down, from the shoulder to the fingertips. Visualize your arm as a white, empty elastic hose, connected to a “pump”, which are lungs. The visualized tube is as wide as the arm itself. Next, visualize air/ light circulating through the “hose”, which is the arm, with every breath cycle. Breathe it in higher and higher with every breath until it starts getting directly into the “pump” “within one inhale. Pay special attention to the exhale (it is more difficult to sustain concentration during the exhale). Get distinct, clear sensations of air (light) circulating through the “hose”? If you feel hindrances obscuring this passage, visualize them as sand, little stones, or just dark energy, and “exhale” “them into the earth. Keep your breath quiet, do not snore.

Repeat this exercise with the other arm, and with each leg, driving the air passage through the corresponding part of the body.

While performing this exercise you might feel different or unusual sensations of energy streaming through your body, or feel that, the extremities are “elongating” during the exhale, and “shortening” during the inhale.

Work with Emotions

A. Concentration on the Light Within

Take the kneeling pose for the next purification exercise. Visualize the sun above the head, pouring light down. Focus awareness on feeling the energy current. With the movement of your arms, help this light descend into your body, as if you are filling it with light. Visualize your head opening as a lid, and the liquid light pouring down into your hollow body as water into a cup. Let it fill the body exactly the same way water is filling a cup, and then start whirling the light counterclockwise, if looking from above, as if you are stirring water with a spoon. Feel the energy washing your body from inside like a vessel. Pay special attention to the areas where you see darkness or feel discomfort.

After finishing this purification, bend forward and pour the light liquid into the earth. Repeat 2-3 times.

Complimentary exercises to this class might include other types of *Pranayama* and/or Chi-gong breathing exercises. Do it so that you can feel the body effects of the energy purification afterwards but not to the degree of getting serious body discomfort. These exercises help to switch to the clear diet by increasing the awareness of the process, which happen in the body due to activation of the subtle energy system in meditation. The practitioner should also be aware of the connection between breath, energy and possible activation of emotions and subconscious patterns during the subtle energy work.

B. Awakening-Giving-Reconciliation Cycle

These and similar exercises were used in the systems of T. Aivanhov, a.k.a. Om Ram, in Vladimir Antonov's system in Russia, and by G. Gurdjieff.

Awakening

Take a standing meditation pose. Feel as if you are waking up from a long, heavy sleep of isolation, ego concealment from harmony, beauty and openness of the world (while standing lift the arms up and stretch as if after sleep). Moving your arms down, invite inside everything clean, light, and alive. Feel how the flow of invigorating morning freshness enters the inner space of the body from above. Stay with this current. Help it to enter the body by the movements of arms, lifting them and lowering them to the shoulders, as if promoting the movement of this current of freshness inward.

Giving

Arms are opening in a broad movement from the chest forward and to the sides: we share the energy we have received before. By emptying the energy structures, we make them ready to be filled with new, clean energy. Those who do not give from themselves and do not "empty" themselves cannot renew and grow. It is like a lake - to be alive it has to have both incoming and outgoing streams. Let us repeat the exercise again and again, pouring out and giving freely, without any desire for compensation. Give away everything good, that you have managed to save. Notice, as you give, the current of incoming energy instantly becomes stronger.

In the future this exercise can be repeated with a variety of different visualizations - trust your imagination.

Reconciliation

Raise the right arm above the head, your concentration in your right palm. Fluently moves the arm down in front of the body, "drawing" in the space a wide vertical wave. The palm is directed with its edge forward. Feel the space through which your hand moves as an energy field, and generate in it the new characteristics of peace, harmony, and calmness. Repeat it for the four directions, for the inner space of the body, and for the whole space of the room. This simple and powerful visualization helps to change the energy in many conflict situations, even if you perform it only mentally.

C. Climbing In

In a standing pose, make a wide, stroking movement with your arms, as if hatching out of a cocoon? Stroke after stroke, starting from above your head and moving your arms down through your sides, fly out of the coarse shell and become more and more clean and light. Rise closer and closer to the source of

light and life - to the sun... And the sun is getting larger and larger, a couple more strokes, and you reach it... You are flowing into the space of pure and subtlest light, and enjoy being there... Dance in the sun, letting the light enter the body and saturates it.

Now you are coming back to the earth with the sun inside the chest. Coming down, sinking, very slowly... And after you come down completely, start radiating light on all sentient beings...

D. Spontaneous Dancing

After completing the previous exercise start this one. Again, the sun is above your head. It is sending down the “waterfalls” of light. Allow them to come into the body, and stay as under the waterfall of grace.

Feel the fragrance of flowers and the twittering of birds around... Absolute harmony... Then merge with this harmony... The bodily boundaries disappear... No effort is needed, just surrender into this harmony, dissolve into it. The body starts swaying, like seaweed in the warm ocean, giving itself up completely to the waves of the tide... The movements are becoming more and more intense, reminiscent of the shaman dance. Lift your arms, liberate the muscles from any tension and allow them to follow the rhythm of the surrounding space...

Liberate the spine, legs... Do not plan the movements, do not program them - just observe them happening. The body is synchronized with this blissful space, and is not controlled by a domineering mind. It cannot stay still, dancing movements rise spontaneously... Allow the body to dance.

This spontaneous dancing can be used instead of relaxation and warming up exercises (duration approx 20 min).

In the beginning, it might be difficult for some people to enter the spontaneous dancing. If this is so, start with the stretching and warming up cycle, but do not stop between the movements and do it in uninterrupted succession. Every movement arises and fades by itself without any participation of the mind. Do not wait for the movements, because the thought of expectation will inhibit the movement. In the beginning program some kind of “carrying” rhythm and then forget about it. Let the body do its dance. Focus more on the streams of light, passing through the body.

E. Breaking the Shell

The following exercise has a strong psychological effect, helping to overcome the barriers of ego isolation. Perform it very emotionally; invest considerable physical and psychological effort.

Take the student’s pose. Concentrate in the space inside the body. Look from the inside outward and visualize the membrane between the body and the surrounding space. Try to break it, the way the newborn chick breaks the eggshell... If some parts of this cover are resisting your effort, use imaginary tools - scissors, knives, handsaw... Be sure that you remove the shell all over the body and that even the remnants of it are thrown away and consumed by the earth...

This exercise can take a lot of effort, but the freedom that is felt afterwards is very rewarding! Visualize and feel the touch of wind, sunlight and the expanse of the natural open spaces.

The Feast

Take a sitting pose. Visualize you touching, smelling, tasting, chewing and swallowing the tasty organic vegetarian food. Prior to consuming this imaginary food, feed your friends. Focus on the sensations rising in your mouth, esophagus and stomach. Focus on the changes of energy in the body.

Perform the similar exercise with the imaginary drinks and sweets.

Interiority of Consciousness

[Note here on interiority of consciousness]

Dancing in the Sun

Standing, visualize the sun above your head, and the bright blue sky. Early spring, just stopped raining, and the air is clean and fresh. Look at the sky, the sun, the branches of the trees with the young leaves and trembling drops of rainwater. Touch these drops with your lips, taste the raindrops.

Lift your arms, look up into the sky, feel the sunbeams with your fingertips. Start “reeling” them onto your wrists. The elastic, luminous fibers of the sunlight start pulling you up, away from the earth, into the air. Find yourself pulled away from the wet lawn, attracted to the sun... Fly up!

Bathe in the tender light of the sun... Then fly closer, the gravity of the sun starts pulling you inside it. Fall into the sun, piercing its cover. Find yourself inside the sun, carried away by the currents of light. The body become weightless and empty like a dry leaf, driven away by a powerful river. The body dances in the solar winds! Then feel how the body is getting harder; being saturated by the energy of the sun like a sponge. The heavy light-containing body starts sinking down from the sun to the earth. Like a small independent source of light, the body keeps shining on everything around. (Music for this meditation - “Solar winds” by David Hume).

Land in a standing meditation pose. Right above your heads there is a condensing sunlight, the cloud of golden energy, very subtle, tender, loving...Let it gather more above your head...It wants to pour itself into your body! Feel its pressure...Open yourself to this energy. Totally surrender your mind-body to this descending current of light.

Feel the energy pouring into the head, through the body, into the earth...Discover the joy, resulting from joining this energy - the alive, loving, grace giving force of the sun....

The meditations like this one are extremely important for the right development of the emotional sphere, to develop the capacity of emotions of loving kindness and love, essential for the meditations of the higher order.

Entering the Inner Space

Take a standing meditation pose. Allow the awareness to sink down into the body. Relax the body, so that only the muscles, which sustain the pose, are working. Notice the way your breath is going in the body... let it flow freely, reaching all the hidden corners of the body... let the circulation of the breath induce the swinging motion in the body. Remove any mental control of your movements.

Visualize the sun above your head. It is pouring down waterfall of light rays, washing away from the body dust, tiredness and cleansing the skin. Then allow the light to enter the inner space, let it stream down the “inner surface” of the body, washing from inside the head, neck, shoulders. It runs down the inner surface of the back, and further down, cleansing away all the stuck energies. Follow the current down, through the bottom of your feet into the earth.

Visualize all the pores of the body opening. The whole body turns into a sort of a filter, and the stream of sunlight goes through this filter, completely unobstructed. As this current is going through the body, it drives away and casts out all darkness and heaviness, all the energies, which are interfering with the flow of light in the body. It fills the body with the Beauty, Purity, and Love! When the light becomes pure, it forms an aura around the body, which should be reabsorbed back inward.

Chakra Awareness Practices

According to yoga, chakras (wheels, Sanskrit) are the interior structures of embodied consciousness. They are recognized as clusters or domains of particular thoughts, emotions and types of perception, actualized in the process of psychospiritual development (Louchakova & Warner, 2003; [Yung on Kundalini Yoga](#)). Alchemical systems of yoga attribute to chakras the following functions: a) serving as the areas of concentration in the body schema where the attention can access the interiority of consciousness, i.e. subtle planes; b) being the regions of the energy body, where the bioenergy is undergoing the process of internal transformation from gross to subtle; c) being the body-oriented structural facets of the psyche (Antonov, personal [communication, date](#)). There are seven major, i.e. performing these three functions, chakras, accessed through the focusing in the particular areas of the body.

[Install Igor's schema here](#)

Before developing the awareness of chakras, Tantra recommends to develop the awareness of the main energy passage in the human body - the spinal meridian, Sushumna. Though the main work with *Sushumna* is described in the separate section of this Guide, the preliminary *Sushumna* exercise, necessary for the work with chakra, is described below.

Spinal Meridian Exercise Preceding the Work with Chakras

Assume the “Students pose”. Move awareness into the tailbone area. Visualize a bright light in the tailbone, and start moving this light (and the physical tailbone) forward - backward, left -right, clockwise and counterclockwise, as if drawing in the air. Perform every movement 9 times. Then dissolve the image and stay aware of the sensations in your tailbone.

Next, expand awareness into the lower back portion of the spine. Perform the same set of movements, visualizing light entering the “activated” segment of your spine. After completing the set, dissolve the image and stay aware of the sensations in the spine. Attention has to be completely focused in the working part of the spine; not “on” the spine but “in” it. Perform the same set of the movements for the seven segments of the spine: sacrum, lower back, waist, chest, base of the neck, neck, base of the skull.

Follow-up Exercise

Sit down on your buttocks. Bring the knees to the chest, flexing the legs. Embrace the legs, and roll forward backward on the back, “uniting” through this rolling the seven mentioned above segments of the spine.

Vishuddha/Anahata Visualization Practice

Take the standing meditation pose. The standing meditation pose was used especially in Christian yoga. It provides better possibilities of developing awareness of the lower energy centers, heightens one-pointedness of mind, and enhances circulation of energy.

Visualize yourself walking on a forest trail in the early spring, when the snow is already melting, and your footsteps imprint in the wet soil. Remember sensory impressions of spring: bright, sunny day, blue sky shining through the wet fir-tree branches, the cracks of remaining snow under your feet.

Remember listening to the sounds of streams in a melting snow, the smell of the naked damp earth ... Lift your face so that the sunbeams touch your skin. A drop of melted waterfalls onto your face cools your cheek and runs down over the skin of your throat.

On the branches above your head, see the bird singing its first spring song. Look at its throat vibrating with sounds. Its feathers are shining brightly in the sunlight!

It is singing the joy of life, the song of Nature, waking up in the spring!

Notice the vibration in your throat and chest. The specific feeling arising there is connected with the work of the throat chakra, *Vishuddha*, and the heart chakra, *Anahata*.

Then feel you jogging lightly, breathing full chest. Visualize bright sun, blue sky above, and lift your face... Feel the breeze touching your chest.

Start practicing contemplation of the subtle states in nature. This is one of the ways to refine your emotions and energy.

Mantras for the Chakras

Certain combinations of sound, called “seed” or “bijou” (*Sanskrit*) mantras, can produce the resonance vibration in chakras and enhance their development.

1. Root chakra (*Muladhara*) - LAM
2. Sexual chakra (*Swadhisthana*) - VAM
3. Solar plexus chakra (*Manipura*) - RAM
4. Heart chakra (*Anahata*) - YAM
5. Throat chakra (*Vishuddha*) - HAM
6. Head chakra (*Ajna*) - VOM
7. Crown chakra (*Sahasrara*) - AM

Take the standing pose. When practicing in a group, it is better to form a circle facing each other, the teacher being inside the circle. Though the Kundalini rising process is directed from the root to the crown chakra, it is easier in the beginning to sing the mantras starting from the crown chakra. Sing the mantras in a high pitch, gentle voices. Simultaneously focus your awareness in the corresponding chakras. When you refocus from chakra to chakra, enter them from the back, as if penetrating into the cell or niche. Repeat all the cycle a few times. Attain the clear feeling of the vibrations in all the chakras.

For example, feel yourself as if approaching your body from the back, and entering the crown chakra area as if you are entering a room. Being inside this area, sing the mantra AM. The vibration should be felt inside the chakra. It should sound as if comes out from the chakra, and not from your mouth. Then move backward into the space of the spinal meridian, as if you are entering an elevator. Move down to the level of the head chakra, enter the chakra, and sing the mantra VOM.

In singing mantras, your focused awareness should occupy the following areas of the body:

- for the root chakra - the whole segment of the body between the tailbone and the pubic bone;
- for the sexual chakra - the whole lower belly, below the navel;
- for the solar plexus chakra - the space above the navel, below the diaphragm;
- for the heart chakra - above the diaphragm, below the collarbones;
- for the throat chakra - from the collarbones up including the lower jaw to the corners of your mouth, the whole neck area;
- for the head chakra - from the corners of your mouth up to the imaginary plane 1 inch down from the top of the head, including the whole of your brain except for the very top part;
- For the crown chakra - top of the head (that which was not included into the head chakra area), and the space above it, opening upwards.

Also, use the following self-checking technique. Put your palm in front of the body about 10 inches away from the front of the activated chakra. You should feel a local current of vibrations coming from your body when you sing the mantra. If you move your hand towards the areas of other chakras, this current should be absent.

One can sing mantras, for example, while taking a shower. After learning to sing mantras vocally, sing them mentally, but only after establishing the proper concentration skills (not “on” but “in” the chakra).

Crown Chakra Development Exercise

In the standing meditation, pose focus in the space of the spinal meridian. Visualize a luminous flower stem growing through the spinal meridian. Place yourself on top of this growing light stem, as if

sitting in the calyx of the flower. Let it grow up approximately 1 yard above your head with yourself in it. Keep the concentration above your head. Be aware of yourself located above your head. Look around - everything is as if you are looking through a periscope. Look down at your body. Contemplate difficult situations in your life. Disturbing circumstances and people will seem less significant. The exercise helps to establish the feeling of self-reliance.

Train your capacity for easy entrance into this space above your head while sitting and walking. In the beginning, this exercise might be accompanied by dizziness, a light headache, or by loss of body balance. This is evidence of some impurities present in the crown chakra. The unpleasant symptoms will disappear after a while. Mastering of concentration in the crown chakra helps it to develop. Development of the crown chakra brings about significant psychological results: the ability to grasp the perspective of a situation, to see a goal, to make fewer mistakes.

Pyramids

Take a standing meditation pose. Visualize a hollow pyramid made of shining sunlight with the side of 7 to 10 inches. Place this pyramid inside the crown chakra with the top directed up, spinning it counterclockwise if looking from inside the body, from underneath the pyramid. After some initial difficulty, the rotation will become rapid, effortless. This happens due to the refinement of the chakra energy and opening your awareness to the new spaces in the chakra, which were not available before.

After the rotation becomes smooth, dissolve the image of the pyramid into light and let this light be absorbed by the chakra. Repeat it for all other chakras, placing the pyramids horizontally, with tops looking forward through the chakra windows. Rotate the visualized pyramid counter clockwise around the horizontal axes, looking from the back.

For the root chakra - place the pyramid upside down, with the top looking down. Rotate it counterclockwise around the vertical axes looking from the body. "Blowing" the corresponding mantra into the chakra helps to perform the exercise.

Head Chakra Exercise (the Slope)

Take a standing meditation pose. Keeping your eyes half-open, eye muscles relaxed, and your gaze slightly out of focus, concentrates your awareness inside the head behind your eyeballs and eyebrows. Feel the energy quality of this state. Then slide your awareness backwards, to the area of medulla oblongata (the base of the skull inside the head). Feel the energy there. Perform multiple (10-20 times) relocation of your concentrated awareness between these two zones.

Second variant of the exercise helps to establish proper concentration. Visualize a ball of light inside your head at eyebrows level. Roll it back down to the area of medulla. The rest of the exercise is the same as above. These second variant of this exercise works better for people with developed ability of visualization. There is no preference of one variant of the exercise over the other.

Concentration in the front provides a heavy, unpleasant, rigid state. Concentration at the back gives a soft, expanded, subtle state. This is a very good way to give rest to tired eyes. Feel clearly the difference between the states in those two areas. The energy of the medulla area is much subtler. If you are not getting this impression, you might be dealing with the psychosomatic block of the back of your head and neck. In this case, it is advisable to purify the area using breathing techniques.

Music Meditation for Chakras

Many of the following tapes can be ordered through "Sounds True" Catalog.
Muladhara (root chakra) - African group "Pili-pili". Bryan Eno on Land.

Swadhisthana (second chakra) - the chant Ganesh Sharanam from "Jai Shiva Kirtan for Shivaratri", tapes of Sri Ram Orphanage founded by Baba Hari Das - contact Sri Rama Publishing, P.O.Box 2550, Santa Cruz, CA 95063, or call Mnt.Madonna Center Bookstore, 445 Summit Rd. in Watsonville, CA 95076 at (408)847-0406.

Manipura (solar plexus chakra) - Olatunji: Drums of passion. Also the album Serenity of the group "Culture beat".

Anahata (fourth chakra) - Crystal Sun album by Will Nolan, the disciple of Srii Srii Ananda Murti, contact the author/singer at 590 sixth Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, tel. (415) 364-3207.

Hara center - The Gyoto Monks freedom chants. 1989 RYKODISC.
Longing in the *Anahata* chakra - some of the Mevlevi hymns.

Spiritual heart center (hrid padma) - Rosa Mystica.. Songs by Therese Schroeder-Sheker. 1990 Celestial Harmonies.

Vishudha (throat chakra) - Vivaldi. The Four Seasons - spring. 1989 EMI Records Limited.

Sahasrara (crown chakra) - some Eastern orthodox chants from the album "Sacred Music of the West".

All chakra sounds - tapes from Chidvilas (Osho Rajneesh organization in Colorado), P.O.Box 17550, Boulder, CO 80308.

Chakra Drawing

This meditation can be practiced in both sitting and standing poses, but your spine should always be straight. For beginners, the standing meditation pose proves to work best.

Enter the heart chakra. Then, enter the entire chakras one after another, starting from the crown chakra, and entering them from the back. In every chakra, you will find yourself in a room-like space. Try to look around and "evaluate" the quality of this space: whether it is small or large, spacious or tight, dark or luminous, comfortable, unpleasant, calming, cozy, trance, sleepy, present etc. Notice, if there are any dark ingredients inside the chakra. Sometimes, while entering the chakra for the first time, you can experience the explosion of colors, images, emotions or feelings. Do not "follow" or manipulate in any way the content of the chakra. Remain a relaxed presence, sustaining concentration with the chakra for a couple of minutes.

You might like to do sketches of the content of every chakra. It is good to use big pieces of paper, so that you "portray" all of your chakras and they form the energy imprint of the body. Use "Prisma color" pencils or colored chalk. The technique of meditation is the following: enter the chakra, sing the appropriate mantra, stay there for about 60 seconds, and then proceed to drawing, as if the energy of the chakra is "flowing" through the hand and pencil onto the paper. Drawing is not the traditional Shakti-yoga technique, yet provides fast growth of awareness of the deep layers of chakra. It helps to get in touch with the latent impressions, bringing them to resolution. It also makes the mind "transparent", so that the reality of its substance gradually starts coming through. This substance is pure Consciousness, and the direct recognition of it is the sacred goal of Yoga.

Psychological work makes us accustomed to speak about the content of our subconscious. Dream work, imagery etc. are the variants of this dialog. The yogi in meditation becomes directly aware of the energy content of the deep layers of the mind. You do not need the interface of symbols for this work - it must be the direct experience instead of interpreted experience. Therefore, do not look for images or symbols. Be aware of the actual content of chakra, the taste, flavor, color, texture and quality of its energy in general; experience its emotional mood. Use your senses, directed inward, and let the actual sensory impression appear reflected in your drawing. Of course, if images appear, do not deny them. Let them be in your drawing. Later the dialog with your subconscious will be replaced by the direct experience.

The drawing of one chakra takes about 10 minutes. The whole cycle is about 75 minutes. Play calm music resonating in the appropriate chakra to support the concentration and frequently reenter the chakra. This exercise does not require any drawing skills, and is usually easy for the students.

Fan

Visualize the image of a working fan made of light behind every chakra at a 5-7 inch distance. The direction of rotation is clockwise if one were to look from the back. Let it blow the light-wind into every chakra one after another, so that the dark ingredients from the inner space of the chakra, if any, are blown away or dissolved by this flow.

Looking through the Chakras

Enter all the chakras one after another from the *Sushumna* place your inner eyes inside the chakras and look from them. While looking through the chakras, position the palm against your chest, and try to see the palm lines from your heart chakra.

Light Vortexes

Visualize the sunlight coming from above and entering the crown chakra from the back. Let it then rotate in the chakra counter clockwise, if looking from above. Thoroughly wash all the walls, “ceiling” and “floor” of the chakra. Wash away all the visible impurities. The earth absorbs pour the light out through the chakra window and let it.

Bring the light down through the *Sushumna* and repeat the Kriya with all the chakras. This Kriya is recommended for daily repetition. Either go through all the chakras, or work with one of them. You might like to work through all of them in an established succession, but the order really does not matter. You will be naturally first attracted to the chakra, which requires purification. This can be practiced during any mild daily activity, which does not require your full attention.

Double Chakra Concentrations

Establish concentration simultaneously in the *Anahata* and *Sahasrara*, connecting chakras through the *Sushumna* with an arch of light. Look through the *Anahata* and *Sahasrara* simultaneously. This concentration a) develops the correct “team” functioning of the energy centers b) is especially useful during communication with large groups of people e.g. during public presentations or teaching. You can visualize yourself directing the beams of light from both centers over the heads of the audience to the people in the back.

Enter the *Anahata*. Feel the inner state of the chakra. Then enter the *Swadhisthana*, and again feel its state. Then concentrate simultaneously in both the chakras and connect their energies through the central meridian. These meridian goes through the very center of the body, piercing all the chakras (see the human energy system chapter). Feel the state, resulting from this concentration.

Repeat this exercise with the other pairs of chakras, which frequently work together: *Anahata* and *Vushuddha*, then *Anahata* and *Sahasrara*.

Spiritual Heart Related Practices

Gaze from the Heart

Let us now move the focus of “inner vision”, in fact your “inner eyes”, from the medulla through the *Sushumna* (spinal meridian) into the heart chakra, *Anahata*.

Look forward from the heart chakra. The feeling is as if your ability to see is located in two places - your physical eyes and *Anahata*. It is as if you “enter” the heart chakra, or “become “your heart chakra. Looking at the *Anahata* instead of being in it is a mistake. Still, if you experience considerable difficulty doing this exercise, even this is progress. Our usual predominant centering, the feeling of individual “I”, is located in the *Ajna* chakra, or in both *Ajna and Manipura*. This exercise breaks habitual fixation of your “individual I-feeling” in the head, and brings it to where it belongs, originates from - to the heart. The value of this exercise can be fully appreciated only when the seeker starts self-enquiry and becomes familiar with Samadhi practice.

Practice this concentration whenever possible - during communication with relatives, friends, colleagues, walking, driving (when safe), etc. You will start experiencing wonderful changes in your relationships with the world. *Anahata* vision influences not only your perception and interpretation of phenomena, but also modifies positively the responses you are getting from the world. Our mood and, consequently, our influence on other people depend on from what chakra we are looking at the world, where are we centered. *Ajna-Manipura fixation* brings about the persistent current of negative emotions, resulting in conflicts with the surrounding world.

If this refocusing is difficult, try another variant of this exercise. Drop the whole of your head into the heart chakra, as if your mouth, eyes and nose are sitting in the chest. Try moving those lips, opening those eyes, and breathing that nose.

Now let us make a circle and after tuning in with harmony and empathy, let us look at each other from *Anahata*. Try to discern the feeling of subtle joy, brought about by this exercise.

Heart Chakra Release Exercise

Finish the cycle of Psychophysical exercises in a standing meditation pose, meditating on descending currents of light. Settle down on the floor with support for the back. The pose has to enhance the concentration in the front part of the heart chakra.

Front part of the heart chakra might carry the emotional blocks like a sense of loneliness, sadness or sorrow associated with corresponding thinking patterns. Regular cleansing of this area took place within the early Christian practice of confession, where the emotional release was accompanied by energy changes in the heart chakra. Of course, fundamentalist Christian tradition itself did not acknowledge the energy effects of this Christian rite. This observation belongs to the Christian yogis, the so-called Hesychasts. They also worked with this area through the method called Prayer of the Heart.

Bringing your concentration into the front part of *Anahata* activates the above mentioned emotional patterns. The patterns become available to awareness, and might be released or purified. It is recommended to play music, resonating in this area. (E.g. “Salve Sancta Parens” - Chants to Virgin Mary - from “Sacred Music of the West” collection). Do not express or control them, just abide with the emotion, bringing light into this area of the heart, until the negative emotions resolve into the feeling of bliss. If you are in a group. The teacher should guide this contemplation. The psychological atmosphere in the group should be that of total safety and full acceptance. The guided meditation should emphasize forgiveness, changing self-limiting thinking patterns, and harmonizing the relationship with the Divine.

Sushumna Practices

Ball of Light

In a standing or sitting meditation pose, **breathe** up and down through your spine. Then visualize your spinal meridian as a passage or a tube going from the root to the crown chakra. It is as wide as your fist. Visualize the ball of light of the same width at the bottom of the spine, in the lower part of *Sushumna*, and move it up and down through the meridian like a round brush. Cleanse away all the hindrances. Your concentration should move up and down through *Sushumna*, do not let it get “stuck” or spread through the meridian. Try to keep it focused and moving smoothly. Then dissolve the image of light-ball and just work with your concentration, feeling how it is moving through the spinal meridian.

Sushumna Mantra (“M- mantra”)

Learn to use the mantra “Mm-m-m...” for the purification of the spinal meridian.

Slightly tighten the muscles of your spine, place the concentration into the *Sushumna*, and sing the sound “M-m-m-MM.” so that it resonates in the spinal meridian. “Become” your spine. This might be enhanced by standing with your back towards the wall, feeling the touch of the wall with your back, and keeping your arms straight stretched to the sides from the shoulders. In the standing meditation pose raise, your arms to the sides to the shoulder level, palms turned forward.

Energy Current Through Sushumna

Take a standing meditation pose. Visualize sunlight flowing from the sky into your spinal meridian. Let it go down through *Sushumna*, washing away all the impurities. Accompany it by the light wave-like movements on all the levels of the spine. You can even imagine a funnel put into the top of the *Sushumna*. Hear the murmuring current go through it. Dissolve the image after finishing the exercise.

Fill the whole *Sushumna passage* with light. Move focused awareness down the *Sushumna* towards the *Muladhara*. Let the light enter the chakra and illumine the interior. While in the chakra, look upward, so that you can see the lower *Sushumna entrance*. This is very important, because that is where you direct the awakened current of energy.

Then discern the luminosity at the bottom of the chakra; or, if you are not in touch with it, just visualize a lake of light there. One can discern different degrees of subtlety in the energy, filling the cavity of the root chakra. *Kundalini is subtlest of all*. So inside this lake there is an even brighter, white-golden lump of energy like a tight spiral. It is possible to feel the condensed power in this curved snake-like spiral.

Rock the energy in the “lake”, awakening *Kundalini*. Awakened energy unfolds a soft, clear and intense light aura, which appears around the terser central core. This powerful energy is susceptible to control through your will-effort, or intention.

Put your imaginary hands under the unfolding energy, and start warming and “massaging” it from underneath. The radiance increases, filling the whole space of the *Muladhara*. When the chakra is filled with energy, direct the current into *Sushumna* through the entrance found before. Again, this is important. Energy has to go through the spinal meridian. If it flows all over the body, your *pranas* might become misbalanced and it can cause the activation of unreleased emotional patterns.

Kundalini has the natural tendency to stream up, so it is rising not by pulling it from above (this is useless), but by awakening it from underneath. The welcoming attitude of the mind provides the

possibility for it to go upward. In fact, the rising of Kundalini is a natural process, which is simply inhibited by the usual clinging, controlling mind, fears and ignorance.

Let Kundalini fill chakra after chakra, entering them through *Sushumna*, widening and nourishing them. If the process loses power, go again into the root chakra and carefully stimulate the energy from underneath. You might experience the whole spectrum of unusual intense sensations: warmth, exhalation, sexual feeling, vibrations etc. Do not get distracted and do not follow any of them. Trust, stay present, surrender and relate to Divine Mother with devotion. Kundalini might activate some latent impurities in chakras, but surrendering resistance takes care of it. The meditation results in a powerful boost of energy in the whole body.

Chitrini

AUM- Mantra meditation

Take a standing meditation pose. Drop awareness into the body, and then become aware of the space behind the body. See with your inner gaze and feel the half of the universe behind you. From the depth of this infinite space, from far behind, emerges the cosmic river *Pranava*, the vibration of the Life force, flowing through the universe. This is a light-sound vibration - current of mantra "AUM". With the eyes closed, sing this mantra in a high-pitch voice, allowing the waves of *Pranava*, the current of the subtle light-sound, to go through the body from the back forward. Be aware how the light-sound wave of this vibration rolls through the body, originating from far behind, and washes away all the gross energies. It leaves you in a state of tranquil silent harmony. Repeat mantra several times, letting the current go through the body, lighten it up, and change the emotional state. After you learn to sing the mantra vocally, in future it is possible to sing it silently.

Refining Awareness for Accessing *Chitrini* Meridian

Take a standing meditation pose. If practicing in a group, make a circle in the room, facing each other. Connect hands. Relax the body and the mind.

Visualize yourself somewhere on the Southern Pacific islands, where the sun is bright... the sky is blue... greenery is luxurious... the air is fragrant... and the foothills of the mountains are bathed in the warm ocean. You (the whole circle) are standing in the warm ocean water... it is so transparent, that you can see the lace of shadows on the sandy bottom, the sparkles of light in the water. The tide rises, and the water comes closer to your face. Feel the smell of the ocean, and the drops of salty water on your hot skin. The tide gently rocks your bodies, and the whole circle enters rhythmical movement, synchronized with the waves.

Feel the weightlessness, peace, harmony... White sea gulls crying in the blue space of the sky... The air is impregnated with sunlight, the space is so enticing, and it calls one to fly. Let us allow the longing to fly to lift us from the ocean, to become weightless and soar in the incredible luminous space. The physical body feels as if it is washed away, and just the subtle form, the transparent cloud, image of the body rises up into the sky. Joy... beauty... freedom!

The breeze carries our light cloudily forms to the mountains. The sunset illumines the green mesa, and the whole circle lands on it. The sky is changing its colors, adding more deep blues, and the stars appear above. They're gentle silver rays sounding with "AUM" descend from the sky and wash away the remnants of the body form. Body awareness fades, replaced by the awareness of the pure being. This uncovers behind your back the subtlest meridian of *Chitrini*, starting in the back of the crown chakra going behind the spine and ending in the root chakra.

Focusing in *Chitrini* Meridian

Keeping the attained state, let us start working with *Chitrini*. Enter the *Chitrini* from the crown chakra down. In fact, *Chitrini* starts above the upper edge of the occipital (low back of the head) bone, and goes down along the inner surface of the occipital bone inside the skull. However, to enter it you have to back up from everything that you are aware of in the body. Be sure that you are in *Chitrini*, and not in other spinal meridians that are located to the front of it. It is a movement of concentration back, so that there is

nothing behind, you cannot back up your concentration any more than that. Do not confuse *Chitin* with the grosser *Vajrini* meridian, located closer to the front (we do not work much with *Vajrini*, using it only for special purposes of sublimation of energy). Two states might result:

1) You find yourself in the extremely fine energy structure, filled with silver/blue luminosity. You are in the special space behind your own back. This is the continuum of clarity and detachment. In the beginning, abidance in *Chitrini* requires some effort. You might encounter some energy “plugs” in this area. In this case gently cleans them with the light of *Chitrini*, becoming aware of the emotional content possibly associated with them.

2) You find that *Chitrini* does not meet the usual” meridian” requirements. It does not seem to be like a passage, and the very notion of space is lost in indescribable presence, opening as the result of this “backing up” motion of the mind. *Chitrini* serves like a locus of transition from the usual 3-dimensional space-time continuum into the very substance of pure Awareness. This experience might appear in the very ripe seeker, and is, in fact, one of the stages of Savikalpa Samadhi (see “Drick- Trishya Viveka”). It is not advised to seek this experience prior to being acquainted with the major ideas of Advaita Vedanta, because it has to be properly understood in the light of Vedantic wisdom. Yet, if it is taking place spontaneously, enjoy the undeniable Grace of this state and seek the verification of this experience from an experienced teacher.

Remember: entering *Chitrini* always requires preliminary tuning in with the subtlest available positive emotional state.

***Chitrini* Plane in Chakras**

After completing the usual cycle of chakra kriyas, place concentration into the *Chitrini*. Then start expanding the plane of *Chitrini* into the space of the heart chakra by pushing the front wall of *Chitrini* forward into the *Anahata*. Repeat the same movement of concentration with all the chakras, opening the *Chitrini* plane in them. The chakras contain different levels of energy. It is necessary to condition your chakras to work on more and more subtle levels. This is accompanied, of course, by growing awareness of deep layers of mind. After you open the plane of *Chitrini* in all the chakras, get accustomed to be in that state. If during this meditation body enters the movements of spontaneous dancing, allow it. The spontaneous “discharging” of the deep latent vasanas through the movement, a kind of self-purification of the mind causes it.

Expand the *Chitrini* plane onto the whole body. Enjoy and remember this state.

***Chitrini* Pranayama**

In the standing meditation pose let us inhale through the upper end of *Chitrini* and exhale into all the chakras one after another. Learn to purify the chakras with a single exhale of *Chitrini* energy into them.

Front Meridian

This meridian connects the front areas of the chakras of the emotional center, and plays a significant role in energy refinement in the human body.

Preparation for the Work with the Front Meridian

Take a standing meditation pose. If practicing in a group, make a circle in the room, facing each other. Meditate on loving kindness towards one another, especially emphasizing the feeling of tenderness. Visualize sun above the face, let the sunlight flow down and “wash” the front areas of head, throat, and heart and solar plexus chakras. Help yourself with the movements of your body and hands.

It is advisable to listen meditatively to music, resonating in the front meridian. It is possible to use “I Want to Know You”, a song from the “Tender Mercies” album of the Hanuman fellowship choir

(available through Mnt. Madonna Center bookstore in Watsonville). The songs of the modern Hindu singer Nasiya Hasan cause the best resonance in the front meridian I have ever experienced. Her songs have the mood of joyous longing. Unfortunately, I was not able to find her albums in the US. Some ragas also give distinct resonance in the front meridian. It is not advisable, though, to use them in the beginning of this work, because they might be too subtle in comparison with the level of our energy work now. They work better when the front meridian is already open and familiar.

Front Meridian Meditation

At the peak of the attained emotional state, when longing is especially intense, feel the front meridian, connecting the front areas of all the chakras. This might be accompanied by intense emotional release.

Imagine the scent of fresh hay, or the smell of pines, warmed by the sun. These scents activate the front meridian. You can also use essential oil, like pine needle oil by “Tiferet Int’l” (tel. 503/344-7019). Inhale the fragrance into your front meridian, and purify the energy there by this scent.

Enter *Manipura* and send its energy up the front meridian. Enter *Muladhara*, lift its energy up *Sushumna* to the head and then direct it down the front meridian towards the two lower chakras.

Focus on the emotional content of the front meridian. Fill it with energy. If practicing in a group form the circle in the room and expand the energy of the front meridian so that you can touch the energies of the other people connecting in the center of the circle. Then start entering the circle one after another. Place yourself in the center and feel the tangible elastic energy of the front meridians of people in the group. It is possible to “lean” on it, to feel it as elastic bands in the space.

Let us break the circle and approach each other at the distance of 20- 30 feet, touching each other’s fields of the front meridians. You will experience a resonance in the energy structures, which may enhance the intensity of your emotional and energy experience. Quiet background music that resonates in the front meridian is advisable.

Microcosmic Orbit

This powerful basic kriya is known under the different names in Taoist alchemy, Tantric practices of Hinduism, and Vajrayana system of Buddhism. The energy of the lower centers of the human body is raised up through the system of spinal meridians, and moved down through the front meridian. This rotation of energy is repeated again and again. The orbit is the natural way the energy is processed in the human body. It flows up from the lower chakras and nourishes emotional and intellectual centers, which do not have an energy supply of their own. The remaining energy is recycled down the front meridian. Sometimes the orbit can flow in the opposite direction. For example, it happens during intense physical

workout. The direct flow of energy corresponds with the metabolic process of assimilation, and gaining weight, and the reverse - with dissimulation, losing weight. The meditative processing of the energy through the orbit enhances the natural flow, removes the psychosomatic blocks, increases vitality and enhances longevity.

Unfortunately, a very small amount of practitioners knows that this kriya could be performed on different levels of grossness-subtlety. Different meridians in the system of spinal meridians are responsible for the passage of the different types of energy: sexual, Kundalini, and other types of energy in the subtle body, used for various purposes. Only when the energy rotated through the orbit is subtle, do the spiritual outcomes of this Kriya become evident. It is a powerful vehicle for purification of the in-depth layers of mind. Kriya makes the mind silent, brings out the remarkable stability of the subtle body, reveals the high degrees of inner luminosity, and completely transforms the energy system. It is not connected directly with the experiences of Samadhi, but prepares the subjective experience of the yogi practicing Kriya on an ongoing basis is that of a “growing” subtle body. According to teachings of G. Gurdjieff, the subtle body, developed as the results of those practices, survives death. According to the teachings of Chi-gong master Vladimir Gerasimov ([personal communication, date?](#)), one turn of the orbit adds 1 minute of body life.

Preliminary Exercises

Eagle's Flight

In a standing meditation pose put your feet parallel at a shoulder distance, relax the shoulders; put arms down leaving some space under the armpits, elbows a little bit rounded. Hands are lifted slightly to the sides, the index finger and the thumb forming an arch. Bring attention to this arch, and tighten it up, so that your hands form the so called “tigers jaw” (the term comes from Chi-Gong). Turn the palms forward, and start lifting your arms through the sides. Your palms will turn towards the sky. Visualize energy streaming up your back, as your arms go up, as if you are pulling the energy “blanket” up your back. After your hands meet above your head place one over the other, turn the palms towards the body and start moving arms down along the front central meridian, as if you are pulling energy down it.

Inhale when you lift your arms, exhale when you move them down the front meridian. Keeping attention in the tight “tigers jaw” enhances the flow of energy. When the flow of energy up and down is established, visualize yourself as an eagle soaring in the sky and looking at the earth underneath. The movement and meditation provide the open, expanded and Free State, in which energy circulates naturally up the back and down the front of the body.

Pranayama

Take a sitting pose with your legs crossed. Let your hands rest under your belly, cupping one hand by the other, as if you are holding a potato. Keep your spine straight. Observe your breath, and then inhale through your spine and exhale down the front meridian, keeping mouth closed, and tongue touching the roof of the mouth. Make 20 - 30 breath cycles.

Enter the *Swadhisthana* chakra. Feel the energy of the chakra, see it as light. If this energy is not available immediately, bring the light from the sky through *Sushumna* and into the chakra. After the energy content of *Swadhisthana* becomes available, inhale the energy up the spinal meridian, feeling how it flows along the front wall of the *Sushumna* to the head chakra (through the *Vajrini* meridian). This pathway sublimates the sexual energy. When your head chakra feels saturated with the rising energy, let the remnant of it flow down to *Swadhisthana* through the front meridian. The rotation of energy might be accompanied by the distinct feeling of bliss. Gradually the current becomes incessant, and reveals intense luminosity in the sexual chakra. Then proceed to the major part of the exercise.

Microcosmic Orbit

Move the luminosity of the sexual chakra into the root chakra, filtering and pressing it through the membrane between the chakras. Then inhale the energy of the root chakra up the *Sushumna*, reach the

crown chakra, and let the energy go down the front meridian into the root chakra. Pay attention to the precision of your concentration, especially during the exhale.

The feeling of energy passing through the orbit should shift to the feeling of your self-circulating around your own body. The luminosity of the orbit should become an uninterrupted, continuous current of light. Do not overdo the orbit - if you feel tired, spaced out etc. - stop immediately. All the details of the orbit will become much clearer in future. In fact, microcosmic orbit is an energy-giving exercise, but in the beginning, you might find it tiring.

Alchemical Microcosmic Orbit

The experience of the microcosmic orbit gradually deepens and becomes subtler. For the reference, review the description of the preliminary exercises and the “mature” orbit below, as practiced by the experienced yogi. Do not try to imitate it, just compare whether you experience it in the same way, or differently.

Stage I. Check all the meridians: *Sushumna*, front meridian, *Vajrini*, *Chitrini*. If necessary, continue purification of the meridians. Attain the awareness of pure passages.

Stage II. Preliminary minor orbit (from the second to the sixth chakra).

Enter the *Manipura* chakra, gather the energy, move it down to the *Swadhisthana* chakra. Rotate the orbit from *Swadhisthana* (2nd chakra) to *Ajna* (6th chakra). Notice that the dense energy is becoming more and more subtle and flowing.

Refinement takes place in the front meridian, therefore pay special attention to putting energy through the front meridian. Practice thorough concentration in the front meridian.

Stage III. Microcosmic orbit itself.

Push the energy from the second to the first chakra. Move the energy from the first chakra up the spine, and through rotating the energy; develop clear awareness of the energy going up the spine, and the awareness of the energy going down the front meridian as the two separate concentrations.

Continuing circulation, develop awareness of the uninterrupted current of energy through the orbit. Concentrate in the whole orbit, filled with energy. It is like a snake, holding its tale. This stage appears spontaneously due to the deepening of concentration. When this stage of the orbit is attained, the practitioner experiences a shift into deeper stages of absorption. It is clearly perceived as an altered state of consciousness.

Stage 4. Awareness of light in the orbit appears spontaneously, accompanied by influx of grace. It might appear first like glimpses, later like a glow. All the unpleasant experiences (if there were any, like tiredness or fatigue) disappear at this point. The appearance of spontaneous luminosity signifies attainment of the balance of prana and break through inhibiting patterns (energy blocks, *vasanas*) associated previously with the orbit. It also signifies plunging into higher energy levels, not available during the ordinary state of consciousness. Continue the orbit to proceed into the next exercise.

Development of Chakras Using Microcosmic Orbit

Continue the orbit. The light of the orbit starts as if “carving” sparkles from the surrounding space. Those sparkles of light gather on the surface of the orbit, stick together and form the light sphere like a

little sun in front of the meditator. It radiates light and warmth. Feel this energy as alive and empathic. Move the light sphere into the sexual chakra, and let it be absorbed by the chakra.

Again, rotate the microcosmic orbit and collect the light into the next sphere. Place it into the root chakra, and let it be absorbed like the previous one. Continue rotating the orbit, and when the light gathers, place the suns into all the chakras one after another. The sequence does not matter. This exercise develops the awareness of chakras. This Kriya is recommended for awareness and purification of deep hidden impurities, which remained unreachable during usual chakra purification.

In future, use this exercise to generate light for the chakras, which are less developed. Pay special attention to placing light into the head chakra.

Chakra Purification Using the Microcosmic Orbit

Practicing this Kriya is, in fact, your small individual retreat. It might require up to 4 hours of time. Do not interrupt it; it has to be completed all in one sitting. Start in it approximately 1-2 hours later after the non-fat Sattvic meal. Fat-containing food interferes with the long-term concentration required for this exercise.

Take a sitting meditation pose. Enter the *Anahata*. Start whirling all the energy contained in the chakra counter clockwise. Your body might start following the movement of energy. Rotate the energy until you witness as if it started melting, and intense light appeared. The time required for attainment of this effect is different - up to 30 minutes in some cases. After some time from the beginning of "melting", chakra releases some amount of dark energy, which stays within the boundaries of the chakra. Repeat this process in all the chakras in any succession.

After you finish, get a little rest and look through the chakras. You will see them as if covered with the film of ash. "Blow away" the ash, visualize it falling onto the earth and being consumed by it.

In 2 -3 days after this exercise repeat the other kriyas known to you. (Psychophysical exercises, mantras, microcosmic orbit etc.). They will help to balance the energy and attain the purification of the residual *vasanas*.

Central Meridian

Preliminary exercises

Take a standing meditation pose. Relax, drop awareness into the body, and feel the chakras. Keeping the attained level of subtlety, visualize yourself standing in an old sanctuary, blessed by the invisible presence of many spiritual masters and seekers of the past. The sacred energies of the place calm down the mind and fill it with reverence and devotion.

Let us feel the front meridian. The luminosity coming from above flows down the front meridian, and down the Chitrini. It enters the body, opening the more and more subtle planes of the inner space. Visualize inside the big crystal bowl, placing it into the very center of the solar plexus, heart, and throat chakras. Like a chalice, the pure, transparent shining elixir, the unalloyed and immaculate “water of life”, is filling it. It is nearly full now, and the inner space is filled with bliss. Feel the presence of the chalice in your heart. Then direct attention towards your friends and share with them this elixir by pouring portions of it into their hearts.

Rest in *shavasana*

Practice microcosmic orbit. While practicing the orbit, pay special attention to concentration on the appearing light. When your mind stabilizes on this level of subtlety, you feel you do not lose it, or, at least, you can easily get back in case you “fall” onto a grosser layer. When this is attained, proceed to the next concentration exercise.

Central Meridian Exercise

Move down into the space under the body, and visualize a gentle light cloud underneath the root chakra. Feel the passage going through your body through the very core of all the chakras from the root to the crown chakra. Inhale the light from underneath through the root chakra up the central meridian, let it go all the way through to the crown chakra, and exhale it up. The light circulates on the plane, which is subtler than the membranes between the chakras, and it is easy for it to flow through this passage.

After you have established the light conductivity, visualize the constant current of light from the root chakra up. In the beginning, this Kriya is mainly visualization, but even then, it can be accompanied by intense positive emotional experiences.

At a certain level of absorption, you will find that the structure of the central meridian disappears and resolves into the subtle light of the surrounding space. Keep practicing as if “implosion “ into the more and more subtle planes in this spaces, looking for the entrances, windows into more and more subtle

and pure media. It is as if climbing into the space, discovering the increasing degrees of perfection. When you feel that you have reached the subtlest space available, drop the effort and let yourself to dissolve into it, like a crystal of salt dissolves into the ocean.

While practicing meditation in the central meridian you might encounter more deep and enticing experiences. They are addressed during the *Savikalpa*-Samadhi practices.

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