

CHAKRAS AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

INTRODUCER: This is a satsang with Gururaj Ananda Yogi. USA 1981, number 37, recorded at Techny Towers in Illinois.

GURURAJ: Good. Shall we meditate for a few moments? What shall we talk about tonight?

VOICE: Nirmala has a question for us.

GURURAJ: Oh, that's going to be a profound one, I'm sure. [Laughter] Ah! yes.

NIRMALA: It's a question in two parts, Guruji....

GURURAJ: Umm hummm.

NIRMALA: About chakras and the nadi is the first part. Last summer you said there were many more chakras than the well known seven at least twelve and more. I read a book which lists twelve chakras, plus the master chakra at the top of the head. The author attributes a specific power or quality to each chakra and says we can activate at will whichever power residing in each chakra we feel the need for. Do you agree with this theory? That's the first part.

Second: What are the spiritual practices for? Are they to open up the nadi? And if so, is it for the first time, or were the nadi once open and have clogged up? What exactly are the nadi? Are they the nerves of the subtle body and are they therefore physical? I'm vague about all these matters of nadis and chakras. Perhaps you can help clarify this vagueness.

GURURAJ: Well, your question has been answered by yourself and my answer is "yes." Next question. [Laughter] Good.

Now, Eastern psychologists have worked out this chakric system, and apart from the seven major chakras there are other minor ones which are twelve as you say, but the totality of chakras are 700. You have 700 chakras in you. What are chakras? Are they really chakras? Now this is the myth these so called yogis have been perpetrating on the Western public. I tell you why I say this. We know that there are certain complexes of energies throughout the body, and I can also tell you that the spinal cord is a continuation of the brain. It is not apart, it is a continuation of the brain. So if you do

look at a picture of the brain through the medulla and the spinal column coming down, it is a continuation. So when man's brain contains twelve billion cells, all those cells in the spinal cord are included.

Now, why is it necessary for the brain to extend itself so that through the medium of the spinal cord the brain can be in contact with the various physical organs: a direct line a contact is made from the various physical organs to the brain via the spinal cord which is also part of the brain. Yes. So, chakras have been put there you have a heart chakra, anahata, the manipura, and the swadhishtana, and the muladhara and the vishuddha here, and the ajna and the sahasrara. Now, this was put for a certain purpose, and the main purpose there was to allow man to concentrate so that he could give the entirety of his attention on a particular part of his body by saying that the anahata chakra is centered near the heart area. And of course these are not only physical organs but the endocranial glands as well, and the manipura chakra which is situated in the area of the navel and we do know the solar complex is a whole bundle of nerves. But, the thing that has to be remembered, and where the myth really takes place is this, that they are separate entities while I say that they are just various energies in the brain.

Now, the brain weighs about three and a half pounds, and contained within this three and a half pounds there are twelve billion cells, and we use only one millionth part of the twelve billion cells. So spiritual practices are aimed at activating those dormant cells of the brain. Now, in order to activate the dormant cells of the brain, and a yogi, knowing where the person's trouble mainly lies or which energy of the brain has been clogged, blocked or whatever, a certain area is given to the student whereby practicing on that area which is named a chakra he could stimulate the nervous complex.

Now, the brain is the most sensitive organ in the human being. But that is not enough. It is just an organ like any other organ you possess. But behind that the controlling factor is the mind. Now there is a great difference between brain and mind and people confuse mind with the brain. The brain is an organ while the mind is a subtle energy, and this subtle energy which is universal which we might call the universal mind, is omnipresent. So man's mind contains within himself the entirety of the knowledge of the universe, for reaching the stage of man you have gone through the process of evolution covering everything from the smallest subatomic structure to the amoeba, to the various kingdoms plant, animal, man. And it contains within himself the potentiality of god man or the universal being. So, where do we start? Now for a balanced person whose energies of the brain described by the yogis in chakric terms, if they are totally balanced... now, they will tell you in kundalini yoga I made a long talk on this, I gave a long talk on this which covers two full tapes in England, and I'd advise you to listen to that. Good, fine.

So, the various centers that are there are only for the purpose of awakening dormant brain cells. And by awakening those dormant brain cells, we can allow the mind to filter through more and more. And when the mind filters through more and more, your awareness expands. That is the whole purpose of it. So, the chakras are nothing but part of the brain. All

these diseases we find in the world, such as schizophrenia and other mental illnesses and physical illnesses because all physical illnesses stem from the brain, from the mind. So, where there are imbalances in the flow of these energies, the various chakras are being activated. In other words, a certain kind of energy is not flowing properly or is dormant or slow, lagging, and does not have force. Then with these practices of concentration.... like in our system we use our vibration. The mantra that is specifically given to you is your vibration. In other words, and I've said this many times before, that if there was some device with which the mind, body, and the spiritual self of man could be transformed into sound, then the sound that would be heard would be your mantra. So here we use that sound, we use that vibration, and mentally direct it to the place where the energies are sluggish. And that is what all the chakras are about: mental energies, and not all these things loaded upon people under the name of kundalini yoga kundalini, serpent coiled in the muladhara chakra and which through intense concentration would rise up to the sahasrara chakra which is also described as the thousand petal lotus.

Now, what is meant by the thousand petal lotus is nothing else but the brain because the spinal cord does not contain as many cells as the brain would contain. So the brain containing all the nearly twelve billion cells naturally is described poetically as a thousand petal rose. There are no roses with a thousand petals, we know that I'd like to see one. Good. But it is a poetic description of the brain cells that are in the brain. Good. Now we all know that the world's greatest genius like Einstein for example he only used about 8 to 10 percent of the brain. The rest was dormant. But one thing is sure: that one could activate those brain cells and get greater awareness where you do not even have to read books for information or knowledge inner knowledge of the mind with the expansion of awareness it is just there. And what I say is of personal experience. Therefore I never prepare lectures, I wait on questions and flow from there. Because if enough of your brain's cells are activated, the more your mind is concentrated and the more the brain is awakened, so to say, the greater your awareness, and you have the knowledge of everything that exists. And then you have reached totality, for your knowledge then would embrace the totality of all existence of the entire universe.

So, these things are for a purpose but what I can't understand is this, that why have they made it so mystical and mysterious when it is so plain, open and clear. So now, coming back to the mind. The mind is as vast as the universe. Now, what do we mean by individual mind? In reality there is only one mind: the universal mind. So, what do we mean by an individual mind? An individual mind means how much of that force, how much of that mental energy, how much of that universal energy we can allow to filter through our brains so that we become conscious of it. So the whole process is the development of consciousness and nothing else. The Western psychologists call it altered states of consciousness which is not a totally true statement because consciousness does not alter. Consciousness is consciousness and consciousness is universal. When we say altered states of consciousness, it actually means that more of your brain cells

have been awakened so you look at something else from a wider perspective or from a different perspective. And that is what is really meant by altered states of consciousness.

Now, by doing practices such as tratak, by that, focuses all your mental energies to a point. In other words, it becomes pinpointed like a laser beam. And yet you become a concentrated person; you concentrate all your mental energies without even trying to concentrate. It happens naturally. It happens naturally through the practice of tratak. Now, for this to happen naturally one also needs the support of meditation, for when the mind is at a calmer level, more of that consciousness can flow through. For the cells of the brain can become activated through the quietness. It requires that time of quietness for those buds to blossom, for the lotus petals to open, as the yogis would say, as the Indian metaphysicians would say. Right. So, through meditation a deeper level of calmness is reached and that calmness does not only lead to the conscious mind, but it penetrates through the subconscious layers of the mind which is the repository of all the experiences that we have accumulated throughout lifetimes and lifetimes and lifetimes, and reaches the superconscious level which is the universal mind.

Now, to recap on this point which is very important, there is only one mind – the universal mind. Fine, which we can even call the personal God that we spoke about this week. Right. Now, individual mind means your awareness – how much you are aware, and how much you can allow those energies to flow through. Now, different people have different levels, so therefore we call it individual levels. The word individual mind is a wrong phrase. Call it individual levels. Now, to come back to those yogis. We all know and science has proved, neurologists, neuro physiologists have proved that there are certain centers in the brain, and by activating them, certain results are produced. They use a very wrong method today of which they know nothing, absolutely nothing, and that is shock treatment. They take chances. Touch and go, I think that is the expression. They know nothing of the function of those minds, yet many people are subjected through those severe shocks put through the brain, and sometimes by chance those waves just knock up against certain cells of the brain and create a balance. But they know not what they do. It is experimental.

The other way works in a much subtler form. Because the universal mind is nothing else but energy, we can, through spiritual practices, grasp those energies and direct them consciously to the area of trouble, to the area where the problem lies. And by using those subtle forms of energy and attacking the area of the problem, the awakening can come about, and when they are awakened a greater and greater balance comes about. And when that balance comes about – for which we are all seeking – it means integration. And an integrated person becomes a self-realized person because then he will start viewing himself not as that individual self where the ego operates – and the ego, too, is because of this mental energy being filtered – this very process of filtration through the limited area of some of the cells that are awake. That is the basis of the ego. That forms the idea – that "I am" "I" dea. That is where individuality comes in.

Now, to repeat again because these things are important, that with spiritual practices we develop far greater awareness and that awareness is so much developed that every man has the potential to contact the universal mind and become one with the universal mind and feel that I am the universal mind, and know that I am the universal mind: I and my Father are one. The personal God. Brahmasmi: I am Brahma. Then what you have actually done, that sitting in your room, you have conquered the universe for the universe is you: the entire universe is contained in those twelve billion cells. You see the potential man has. Man is essentially divine. He is divine in the sense of his universal self, and it is a delusion not to believe that man is universal. But because of the conditioning, the patterning of his mind, by the blocking off of those universal mental energies that we find ourselves as mere individual, poor, suffering beings. And yet I would tell you this too, that within the confines of the universal mind, all joys, all pains, all pleasures they're all there. They have to be there or else the universal mind which is also the physical universal the finer aspect of the physical universal mind for mind, too, is matter in a very subtle form.

Now, through spiritual practices it is this very subtlety that we bring to the fore, that we draw upon. And that subtlety there in that area is the Kingdom of Heaven within. So, the kingdom is so vast the kingdom is the entire universe. And why we cannot reach the kingdom that is within because we are not prepared to awaken those cells that are lying in the brain box.

Eastern yogis disregard the brain. But we know today that the brain is just as vital. The brain is the vehicle and the vehicle is just as vital as that universal mind. So the chakric system with all their paraphernalia and all their mythical and mystical interpretations of it is nothing else but your brain. And the brain is situated along the spinal column to the thousand petalled. Now, the object of these yogis is to raise that energy to the sahasrara to the thousand petal rose which only means one thing: that you have now opened up and brought to awareness or awakened the dormant cells. And as we said a moment ago, even Einstein only operated on less than 10 percent of those brain cells.

There was a chap who was giving a lecture on Einstein's Theory of Relativity. So this fellow went on and on and he tortured and twisted the subject for about an hour and a half to two hours, and then one person after the speaker had finished speaking got up and said, "Sir, that was very fine. But we know by statistics that only 12 people in the world understood Einstein, but you must be far greater than none of us can understand you."

So, the modern trend in the East with their mystical mumbo jumbo and the modern trend of the Western fumbling bumbling (that's nice) is to bring greater and greater confusion. What we are trying to do in our organization is to bring all that complexity into a simplicity so that everyone can understand where he is at, and with the understanding, the spiritual practices are directed to awaken the mind. The potential is there. It is all there but unused and unawakened. Fine. Now, when it comes to the question of nadis, nadis is nothing else but nerve complexes. The nervous system those are the

nadis. Now, as the physical body has its own grosser nervous system, the subtle body, too, has its nervous system. And the nervous system of the subtle body, or the mental body that can be understood better also has its nerve complexes. Now, what happens in spiritual practices is this, that the nerve complexes and there are over 700 nadis, too, and I think acupuncture is based upon those nadis where they have those 700 meridian points. So, spiritual practices activate and create

a smoother flow create a smoother flow of energy in the nadis, in the subtle nervous system, and by creating a smoother flow in the subtle nervous system it got to have its organic or grosser reflection, grosser counterpart. So when the subtle nervous system is activated into a smoother and smoother flow, so the outer nervous system benefits by it. And that, too, gets enlivened and awakened.

The Eastern boys say that you have two main nerves: the Ida and the Pingala. The one is situated on the left side and the other on the right side. Now, the object is this, according to their system, is by pranayama by the breathing to draw energy from the environment, from the universe. Now, breathing is a very grosser counterpart [gross?] expression of that vital force which we call prana. Pranayama means the control of the vital force prana. Pranayama means to control prana. Now this can be consciously done. Now, the other myth is this, that these two nerve channels that we have you breathe in the vital force through one channel and breathe it out through the other channel. And by that you clear away the dirt. That's what they maintain. Now, the further step is this, is after clearing those two nerve channels the ida and the pingala, you try and make those nerve forces enter the central one central channel, which they call sushumna. And as this energy flows up the sushumna, all those chakras which are described as lotuses at first they are drooping. This is very symbolic, actually, it's metaphorically said, poetically said, fine. Now, as that energy rises up the Sushumna but the problem is to get those energies into the Sushumna because it is blocked. Now, as that energy or that serpent rises up the sushumna, all those drooping lotuses wake up until it reaches the sahasrara and then you are enlightened. An easier way is to take a mallet: plunk!

Yes, this inhalation and expiration exhalation.... You know this one chap was summoned to court and the magistrate, or what do you call him here in America, magistrate? Oh, judge. The judge said you have not renewed your dog license. So this fellow answers, "But your Honor, but, but..." He says, "No butts, no butts. You know your dog license has expired." So the man answers, "The dog is also expired." So, we must know that many of these ancient theories, although of very good and great intention, there has to come a time when they must too expire and a different understanding given to it for the modern world of today and of many thousand years to come. So we take the same ancient teachings and interpret it the way it should be interpreted for today's man and for future generations so that they could understand it.

Now, there is no Ida and Pingala running up and down your spine. That, too, was meant for allowing you to become one pointed where you visualize that one nerve current that is flowing through your system and flowing out through your system. And of course some of them say you close one nostril and breathe in and then you close the other one and breathe out from the other one. Mumbo jumbo. Why not breathe in through both nostrils, dammit! Why not? Because if that vital force from the universal atmosphere has to go in into your system, why not get a double supply by using both nostrils? You see? [Laughter]

Right, now pranayama is very important and that also forms one of our general practices. It is very important where there are vital forces and those vital forces are contained in your mind and your mind is universal. So you, for the purpose of concentration, you objectify that vital force and think it to be outside you when in reality it is inside you. Those mental energies are inside you, for the entire universe is inside you. And to repeat again, the individualization is the greatest illusion we have to get rid of by developing a far greater awareness.

Now, pranayama is very important. Proper breathing in pranayama or controlled breathing, regulates your entire system. It brings your entire system into a rhythm and all rhythms are meant to be harmonious and I'm not talking about the junk disco the youngsters are so involved in today. So, rhythm means harmony. Now, when the body is in harmony through breathing you develop a sense of well being, not only a sense of well being, but you are being well. So, it is important. Now, by bringing this rhythm into your particular system you become more and more attuned to the universal rhythm which is the same: 4 16 8. If you can stand outside this universe and watch this universe pulsating, it will be pulsating in that same rhythm: 4 16 8. All the time. There are other pranayama practices and they are made for specific purposes for specific imbalances in a person and they are prescribed whenever needed. But that is my department to write out the prescriptions.

So, pranayama contains this vital force which is all within you, for everything is within you. Therefore we say, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Heaven within, and all else shall be added unto thee." Now, we can achieve this very, very simply. So we can take out all the mysticism from these theories and view it logically to a great extent, and then when we see things happening within us, when we see this transformation... "trans" means across, am I right? To go across the present formation of your mind, the present patterning of your mind, the present limited patterning of your mind. And when we go across that, then we know what transformation is about. And every personality wherever he stands at can be transformed. And transformation means developing a far greater awareness. To develop this far greater awareness, what does it bring about? You become aware of Divinity. Very good. Become aware of Divinity. But becoming aware of Divinity is the gift you get. That is grace. That is grace what we normally call the grace of God. You cannot get it. You've got to prepare yourself for it by spiritual practices and that grace just descends upon you. How the sun and the air

has to prepare the sun with its heat to evaporate water so the same water could come down as rain to benefit man and beast and plant and all. In the same way in the same way, when we prepare ourselves and open up those dormant cells in the brain, and when it becomes fully activated greater and greater things dawn.

Now if you study the life stories of great men in the world take Edison, I'll mention some American names, Edison, Einstein because he became an American although he was born elsewhere take all these greatest people the greatest invention in the world was never brought about by thought. They never thought out these theories. They thought and they thought and applied various formulas, various formulas, and all that thinking was nothing but a preparation awakening those cells of the brain. And then in a quiet moment while they were doing something else, up pops the idea, "Ah! This is it!" So what is happening there is that without knowing, they had entered a state of meditation. That is what has actually happened. The mind was unclogged by all the various thinking, and in that quiet split second the idea pops. And this you will find in every worthwhile invention or discovery in the world. Now, why wait for chances for it to pop someday? We can prepare that so it'll keep on plopping there. I like the cartoon where a person gets an idea, you know, with a bulb shining. It's beautiful. The man that thought of that is a genius. Incidentally, there are only two types of people I know: geniuses and geniasses.

[END SIDE ONE]

So we are not going to be geniasses, let's become geniuses. For it is there. We are of that geni, the species, where all is there. We are it all! So we listen to these teachers, to these tantric teachers, to the exponents of kundalini yoga, that talk of all these various nadis and how these practices are given to activate. But in essence it is nothing but your own brain that is functioning. And to activate that brain for that is the only tangible tool you have. Mind is abstract, but this little organ called the brain is concrete and tangible. And by using the very forces of the brain themselves, one could activate greater and greater parts of the brain. I might have spoken about this before, that the brain has its left hemisphere and its right hemisphere. Now on the spiritual path, or to find greater awareness, we got to awaken both the hemispheres of the brain. Man, with logic and analysis and verbalization, uses only the left hemisphere. But there is this beautiful connection with the right hemisphere of the brain which is the intuitive part of the brain. So through meditation and other spiritual practices what you are doing is this, that you are calming that analytical thinking mind, the left hemisphere, so that you give a chance for the right hemisphere to function. And the right hemisphere of the brain has all the intuitive qualities. So I would like to tell the cartoonists that when they show that bulb of the idea, draw it on the right side, not on the left.

Because that is where it comes from. That is where it all comes from. All those ideas, they come from there. [Sound fades out]

When I sit and speak to you, my left hemisphere is dead. Yea. So all that intuitive ability that you draw upon from the universal mind comes through the right hemisphere and portrays itself through the left hemisphere. So what happens in meditation is that you not only quieten the analytical, logical, verbalizing section of the brain, but you are causing a greater electrical impulse synapses you know how neurons work where they take that leap and start firing in the left hemisphere so that intuitive quality within you, that knowingness within you, can be brought out in logical, tangible form in some way or the other. And yet bringing out in the logical, tangible form, you still might not be able to understand what really happens, but the understanding is not necessary.

You invite me for dinner and you make a beautiful soup. I might ask you what ingredients you have put in here, but I don't want to know how you did it and how you cut it up and what spices you put in it. I want to enjoy that soup. For analyzing that soup that you have made that tastes so beautiful is not going to help me in the least. Why must I know how many carrots went in there and how many pieces of whatever, you people know peas, or whatever. Enjoy. And then, when you enjoy, life is enjoyable. For essentially you are joy. Why not make use of it? Why be fish outside the ocean and still thirsty when all the water is there?

A little story from Ramakrishna which many of you might have read or heard. There was a whole lot of botanists. They went to this garden, a mango orchard. And some of them started counting the leaves and how many veins in the leaves, and how many branches, and how many roots and all this, but one fellow among them plucked a mango and went to sit in a corner and he was enjoying the mango. So why the leaves and why count all that, and that's what I tell all these yogis so called gurus that come to America for their business purposes. And they're doing good. Good luck to them. Prospering businesses they have. Oh, yes, that's what they do. Why not put it in plain facts that this is a function. That there is this universal mind and the only way this universal mind can be brought to the fore is by activating these brain cells to bring a coordination between the left hemisphere and the right hemisphere. And by doing that, the extension of the brain also gets activated with that energy, the vital force, that prana, so that that energy can flow to all the parts of your body and become alive and awake.

What time are we at? You see, these meditations also take the form of a kind of worship. Now I said during this week, I think, that you could do this not only by analyzing, but by worship, by prayer. There was this young man one Sunday evening walking down the road and he always used to pass the church, the vicarage. And this vicar saw this young man always passing there, and one day the vicar just happened to be outside and he says to the young man, he says, "Listen,

young man, do you ever go to a place of worship?" He says, "Yes, sir, every Sunday. As a matter of fact, I'm going to her now." [Laughter]

So let us go to that area of worship within us. Not only Sundays. Everyday. And it would become such a part and parcel of you that without effort but just spontaneously we are living in that area of worship which is joy and bliss, and then all these troubles, all this analysis, they just fade away, they just disappear, and we live, then we live. We are not living now, we are not. We're dead. We are dead to that universal consciousness. Partly aware, perhaps, but more dead than alive. So, we've done about an hour, did we? Good. Have we got something else here? I make notes of jokes you know. See if I've got another one. Oh, yes. Here's one.

The vicar lost his wife, the dear lady passed away. So of course he wrote to the bishop that my wife has just passed away, would you kindly send a substitute. [Laughter]

Well, Doug would know about that, because many times he's called upon to take the place of some parson. Oh, Doug, don't misunderstand me. We're not talking about substituting the wife, substituting the minister. Yea.

Ah, there's another experience Doug has had. Let me tell you about them. You see many times some pastor has to go away. I don't know where they go or why that's not our business and they call upon Doug to take over for the evening. So here he was giving such a beautiful sermon at this one church. And of course, he wears a hat now and then, he takes it with, I don't know if he wears it, but the hat is passed around for collection. People put in coins a collection. Well, the hat comes back, poor Doug looks at it, and on the little pillow there he empties it and there was not a single coin. So he says, "Oh Lord, thank you, at least I got my hat back." [Laughter]

Oh we can go on. Let's leave some for tomorrow.

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