

Saivite Virtue

Introduction

The transmutation of the creative forces is likened to the boiling of water into steam to give a greater power. As you progress in self-mastery, the importance of the transmutation of the creative forces will become apparent to you, subconsciously as well as consciously.



We are very proud that you are interested in brahmachariya, the path to perfection of your instinctive, intellectual and intuitive states of mind. The study of this book will prove to be a big step forward in your spiritual life. Brahmachariya is in the broadest sense the harnessing of the instinctive mind, including the sexual nature. In Hindu culture, brahmachariya is often accompanied by the taking of a *vrata*, or vow, of celibacy. Brahmachariya is transmutation. The goal of brahmachariya is not to repress the sexual energy, but to transmute it.

RAJA YOGA

HOW TO USE THESE LESSONS

Please study these daily lessons over and over again for several months. There is a short do-it-yourself test at the end of the book. You may wish to quiz yourself by taking it.

You should allot one-half hour, preferably at the same time each day, for your study. But if something happens that prevents you from spending the full thirty minutes, don't let that prevent you from spending as much time as you can, even if it is only ten or fifteen minutes.

Before you begin your study each day, bathe and dress in clean, white clothing. Then sit quietly for a few moments before your home shrine. Perform a simple arati to Lord Ganesha, Lord Muruga and our Supreme God, Siva. Pray for inner guidance from them to complement your study. After the arati and prayers, remain seated comfortably with your back in a straight line, top to bottom, the head balanced at the top of the spine. Consciously relax every part of your physical body. Then breathe deeply and diaphragmatically. Let go of any tensions in your solar plexus. Control the breath. Breathing as a baby breathes--not by moving the chest up and down, but by allowing the diaphragm to lower and expand naturally, moving the abdomen out and in. Think of the action of a bellows, which when expanded creates a vacuum and allows air to enter. Do not force the breath.

When your body is relaxed, quiet your thinking mind. Try to quiet each thought as it enters your mind. If your mind thinks irrelevant or disturbing thoughts, do not let them affect you. Neither hold on to them nor force them away. Let them pass. In time you will be able to control your thinking mind. Become aware of the harmony awakening within you. Feel every part of your body in harmony with every other part by running your awareness through your arms, legs, head, neck and torso. Feel that your entire external being is in harmony with your Inner Being. Then read your lesson of the day. When you finish reading sit for a few moments and absorb the contents.

It is important to at least try to establish this vibration of harmony within yourself, even though you may not be successful, especially at first. Because you are in this peaceful but dynamic state of mind, the words you read will stimulate your own inner knowing. Words are only symbols to convey concepts and ideas from one person to another. The amount of knowledge conveyed or awakened depends largely on the receptivity and quality of the mind of the listener or reader. Absorbed deliberately and thoughtfully into a quiet mind, these word-symbols and their meaning will penetrate deeply and awaken understanding within your mind. This is the way we would like you to approach the study of your lessons on brahmachariya.

TO INTENSIFY YOUR SADHANA

After you have studied this course for some time and have taken the brahmachariya vrata, you may wish to intensify your brahmachariya sadhana. If so, here is a suggested procedure for personal daily vigil. Arise early in the morning, bathe and dress. Arrive in your shrine room precisely at your appointed time.

Then begin a 45-minute period of worship, study and meditation as follows:

1) Arati and Pranayama (10 minutes)

Perform a simple arati to Lord Ganesha, Lord Muruga and our Supreme God, Siva. Pray for inner guidance for your study and meditation. During your puja, mentally call the devas to assist you in your meditation. Then perform the pranayama technique described in lesson 22.

2) Reading and Study (20 minutes)

Read the lesson of the day. Read it slowly and study well the contents.

3) Meditation (15 minutes)

Meditate on what you have read.

If you oversleep or for some other reason miss your appointed time, make it a point to spend as much time as you can later on in the day, even if it is only ten or fifteen minutes. Study these lessons over and over again until you feel that you have fully absorbed the contents. There should be no rush to "get through" the course. The longer and more patiently you study, the more benefits you will gain. A six-month period of consistent sadhana based on these lessons will benefit you more than you know.

BLESSINGS FROM THE DEVALOKA

Try to always begin your vigil on time and end on time. Should you have to change your vigil to another time, send a note to the priest at the Kadavul Hindu Temple to be burned in the sacred homa fire to let the devas know about your new time. This should preferably be done three days in advance of the change. (Write "notes to the devas" on the outside of the envelope.)

The devas will be there to assist you at your appointed time in unbroken continuity if you make an appointment with them. They always arrive at the vigil area first, before you do, to prepare the vibration to sustain your meditation. They generate energy in one concentrated place as a thrust to be given to you precisely at the appointed time that your meditation begins. This is why you should begin your meditation at the exact same time each day. If you are late for your meditation, you miss out in receiving this thrust of energy.

While studying this course, you should send regular notes to Lord Muruga praying for His help and blessings. Mail your prayers to the priest at the Kadavul Hindu Temple, and they will be burned in the sacred homa fire, to reappear in the inner world.

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CHAPTER ONE

BRAHMACHARIYA

Transmutation: Energy Transformed

Brahmachariya is transmutation--the changing of a grosser form or force into a finer one, and can be likened to the boiling of water into steam to give a greater power. As the fluids are reabsorbed by the bloodstream, the actinic force of them feeds each of the seven chakras in turn. Transmutation of the sacred fluids does not mean to suppress, repress or inhibit.

Just lift your arm. It took energy to lift it. If you were tired, it took even more energy than usual. This energy does not come from a power plant outside you. It comes from within you, of course. Your stamina, the actinic glow in your eyes, the radiance of your personality--these are all manifestations of energy, of your creative life force. And so are the male and female reproductive fluids. They comprise passive and aggressive forces drawn from the ida and the pingala currents within the soul body. They are sparked with pure spiritual force from the door of Brahm, the sahasrara chakra. When correctly channeled, the subtler forms of this creative energy are the essence of artistic, intellectual and spiritual expression.

Those who practice transmutation awaken many latent talents from within. It becomes second nature to create and express, being in tune with the essence of creative energy.

GURUDEVA'S "RAJA YOGA"

A GOAL AND A PRACTICE

The goal of perfect brahmachariya (literally "Godly conduct") is the continual re-channeling of sexual desire. This is also the practice, for one does not suddenly reach a point where desire goes away. Desire is life. Desire can be directed according to the personal will. Living life according to basic spiritual principles is your sadhana. Through sadhana you can gain mastery over all the forces of your mind and body.

As man leaves his instinctive-intellectual nature and unfolds spiritually, the forces of that nature must be brought under his conscious control.

RAJA YOGA

REVIEW

1. The successful practice of brahmachariya creates a deva-like person.
2. Desire is life. It can be channeled according to choice.

3. Brahmachariya is essential to spiritual culture.

Learn While You Sleep

We hope that you have been able to set aside a half-hour, or at least fifteen minutes a day, for your study of these lessons. If not, don't be discouraged. Keep trying. If nothing more, please try to read a little from your daily lesson each night before you go to sleep. These holy teachings will then draw you naturally into the more spiritual areas of the Devaloka when you are asleep. You are not alone in your study and desire for spiritual unfoldment. Many inner-plane people are there to help you as you sleep.

It is known by all mystically minded people that "As we think, so we become." Thinking of the great Mahadevas and Deities of high evolution stimulates our own evolution. Our spiritual unfoldment is hastened.

INNER-PLANE STUDY

Each night you are taught many wonderful things on the inner plane during sleep. You may not realize this or even remember what you have learned upon awakening. This is because the astral brain functions at a much higher rate of vibration than the physical brain. Most nights you probably spend several hours learning from gurus and guides in Saivite schools within the spiritual areas of the Devaloka, the astral world. Sometimes dozens, even hundreds, of devotees with similar interests gather together to learn. They are all in their astral bodies, on the astral plane, while their physical bodies are asleep. When one is firm in the practice of brahmachariya, it is possible to remain for long periods of time in inner plane schools and absorb much more of the teaching being given there. Those who are not strong in brahmachariya are often seen appearing and then disappearing from among the group as they are drawn back to their physical bodies by emotions and desires.

Remember, your own soul knows the reasons why you were born in this life. It knows what you need to accomplish in this birth. As a soul you know what obstacles and challenges you need to face and overcome to grow stronger and conquer past karmic patterns through fulfilling your chosen dharma. These and other matters are examined by you and your teachers in the Devaloka schools while your physical body sleeps. The more fully established you are in brahmachariya, the more religious you become and the more able to face the world with a positive mental attitude.

Review

1. Read from your lesson before sleep and attend inner-plane schools.
2. Your soul knows the challenges you need to meet in this life.

The Guru-Sishiya Relationship

Before books were invented, the traditional way of conveying information was through the spoken word. This is called *sampradaya*. Sampradaya, verbal teaching, was the method that all Sat Gurus used. A Sat Guru can only give his sishiya as much as he can hold in his mind at any one time. If the sishiya comes with an empty cup, the cup is filled by the guru. But if the sishiya comes with a cup that is already full, nothing more can be added by the guru.

Many Sat Gurus work with their devotees in unseen ways. They have the ability to tune into the vibration of a devotee anywhere his physical body might be on the planet, feel how he is feeling and send blessings of protection and guidance. The guru-sishiya system of training is personal and direct. Much is unspoken between them, so close is the mental attunement. The traditional practice of brahmachariya helps to stabilize this relationship.

An advanced sishiya is one whose intuition is in absolute harmony with that of his Sat Guru. This harmony does not occur in the beginning stages, however, when the devotee is probing the subject matter of the guru's teachings for answers. Only after he has conquered the fluctuating patterns of the thinking mind does an inner flow of harmony begin to become apparent to both guru and sishiya.

The sishiya is expected to cultivate his inner life as well as his outer life. The more sincere and consistent he is with his inner work and his inner friends--God, Gods and guru--the more safe and secure and blessed he will be. Your relationship with your guru is growing stronger even now as you come to better know yourself and proceed in your study of these daily lessons.

***Blessed are the worshipful devotees,
for theirs are the refreshing Feet of the Lord.***

SIVA YOGASWAMI

REVIEW

1. Sat Gurus help their sishiya in unseen ways.
2. Cultivate your relationship with your guru. Be a good sishiya.
3. Cultivate your relationship with God and the Gods.

Making a Personal Vow

To best observe brahmachariya, a *vrata* (vow) must be taken. When you feel that you have understood brahmachariya and are ready, you may take your brahmachariya vrata. This can be done as a simple ceremony and vow-giving before parents, elders, or a temple priest. In your vow, specify its duration,

whether you are taking it until marriage, for one year or for two, or for some other length of time. If your vrata expires, you may renew it again through another formal vow-giving.

The fact that you have taken a vrata and are now a brahmachari or brahmacharini should be made public knowledge and not kept a secret. Then everyone will understand and respect your intentions. You may indicate this in your name as well. Men append the title "Brahmachari," before their name, and ladies, "Brahmacharini." This is traditional in Hindu culture, but it is not mandatory.

Before you take your vrata and begin the practice of brahmachariya, you should understand the process, and that is the purpose of these lessons. The benefits of brahmachariya are many. Brahmachariya will help you to continually advance in life and improve yourself. It will awaken within you the ability to throw all of your energies into your work, studies and religious pursuits. The practice of brahmachariya will also deepen your religiousness. Saivism will take on greater and deeper meaning for you. This is because the vital energies, life forces, creative forces, of your physical and astral bodies are preserved and transmuted to a higher and deeper expression.

THE BRAHMACHARIYA CORD

A simple white cord which has been blessed in the temple is worn around the waist by the brahmachari and the brahmacharini as a constant reminder to keep the mind centered above the waist in thought, word and deed. When you feel you are ready to take your vrata, do so. You can obtain a brahmachariya cord from a Himalayan Academy temple or make one yourself and have it blessed in your local temple. After taking your sacred vrata tie the cord around your waist. When time comes to renew your vrata, obtain a new cord and repeat the process.

REVIEW

1. The vrata aids you in brahmachariya, which is the transmutation of your energies into positive endeavors.
2. The brahmachariya cord is a reminder to keep awareness centered in the chakras above the waist.

A Brahmachariya Vrata

I, (your name), seek the blessings of God, Gods and guru as I declare of my own volition my firm intention to live a pure and virtuous life and now take this brahmachariya vrata.

I vow to value and protect purity in thought, word and deed, and chastity in body, to sublimate and transmute the sexual energies and the instinctive impulses of anger, jealousy, greed, hatred and selfishness.

I promise to remain chaste and pure (state here the duration of your vow--for example, "until marriage") and wear this sacred brahmachariya cord around my waist to betoken this solemn oath. At such time that I marry, I promise to marry a Saivite Hindu virgin by arrangement of both families and with the blessings of my guru.

BENEFITS OF THE VRATA

Once a brahmachariya vrata has been taken, a new energy is released within the individual. Then the devotee finds the mind free to study, study, study--free from the temptations of the instinctive world. The vrata has the effect of actually cutting one off from the instinctive world of the lower nature.

If the sacred seed is retained, life does not ebb; great strength, energy, intelligence and alertness: all these are attained.

TIRUMANTIRAM: VERSE 1948

Once the vrata is taken, you will no longer be as inclined to become emotionally attached to those of the opposite sex. You will also avoid many unnecessary distracting karmic entanglements and much unhappiness and emotional duress. If you have already had a mental-emotional love affair, you know exactly the energy used, anxiety experienced and perhaps heartache finally felt. Once it was over you would have had to agree that it consumed a great deal of time and precious vital energy.

REVIEW

1. Your brahmachariya vrata helps free you from instinctive drives.
2. Your brahmachariya vrata helps you avoid karmic entanglements.

Lord Ganesha Welcomes You!

You have truly come to the Holy Feet of Lord Ganesha by seeking knowledge about brahmachariya. Did you know that the elephant is one of the most intelligent creatures on the planet? No wonder that the great Mahadeva Lord Ganesha works through the etheric form of the elephant--so wise, so charming, so humble, yet so grand and powerful. It is Lord Ganesha who is guardian on the path of dharma, who with His millions of helpers guides and protects those who worship Him and pray for clarity of mind and divine grace. During your time as a brahmachari you will come to know Him personally. This may sound beyond your ability, but it is not.

Oh Divine Beings of all three worlds, let us bring our minds to rest in the darshan of Him Who has one tusk. Let us meditate upon Him Who has the form of an elephant with a curved trunk. May He guide us always along the right path.

COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE VEILS

Though you may not see Him, you will feel His mind guiding you, protecting you. You will feel His comforting spiritual vibration. He and His devas can see you and will respond quite readily to your prayerful thoughts. We can assure you of this. Faith is a necessary ingredient to beginning brahmachariya by taking the vrata--faith strong enough to waylay discouraging onslaughts of doubt and uncertainty. Perhaps you are not sure that you have the faith needed to penetrate the veils of ignorance and discover the Truth of life for yourself. But you do have enough faith in yourself to know that you can at least try to experience right thought, deed and action. Even if you fail to live up to your vrata to your highest ideals, you have the faith right now that you will have learned a good lesson from the failure and will begin again.

Open yourself to Lord Ganesha and let your loving thoughts blend with His. Let your problems dissolve in His Love. Mentally pour out your heart to Him. He will hear you. Think of Him as a friend, one of your closest friends. A more wise, magnanimous and kindly being you will never find.

REVIEW

1. Lord Ganesha is the guardian of dharma.
2. Communicate with him through prayer.
3. Think of Him as the closest of friends.

Set Positive Goals for Your Life

You are living this life to fulfill certain goals that you have set for yourself in lives gone by. Among these goals are:

inner growth and advancement,

becoming a better and more religious person,

fulfilling your brahmachariya vow,

devoting your vital energies, as a brahmachari or brahmacharini, toward your chosen vocation and major personal aspirations.

Without such goals, you would not be reading this lesson today. This course is meant to help you fulfill your goals and make the best choices as you exercise your power of decision from day to day. Therefore, don't neglect these daily

lessons. And don't end your study of the course until you have fully understood and mentally digested all the subject matter within it.

***Brahmachariya, or spotless chastity, is the best of all penances.
Such a celibate is God indeed."***

ADI SANKARACHARIYA

Brahmachariya is transmutation. The goal of brahmachariya is not to repress the sexual energy, but to transmute it.

***A perfect brahmachari shines like a noonday sun in
all spheres of life.***

SWAMI NARAYANANDA

CELIBACY IN PERSPECTIVE

It may interest you to know that nearly all religions teach their young to follow the practice of remaining virgin until marriage. Only in the past 30 years have ideas about "free sex" or freedom without responsibility become so widespread.

Review

1. Try to cognize your goals for this incarnation.
2. Brahmachariya is transmutation, which gives power to the higher nature.

Personal Challenges for Chapter One

when completed Discipline

1. Visit a Ganesha temple or shrine and sit before the Deity for twenty minutes or more. Strive to tune into His comforting, motherly shakti. Open yourself to His love.
2. Write down your personal goals in life. Keep a copy for yourself, and send a copy to the devas through the homa at Kadavul Hindu Temple with a note asking them to help you fulfill these aspirations.
3. Lift your arm and feel energy, as explained in lesson 1. Then feel the same energy within your spine.
4. On two occasions consciously work to place yourself in an inner plane school by reading your lessons before sleep. In the morning, see if you can recall the results.

5. Visit your guru, or if you don't have a guru, visit any holy person. Before your visit, consciously empty your mind of preconceptions. Try to become an empty vessel, ready to receive the grace and blessings the soul has for you.

6. Once you have prepared yourself, take the brahmachariya vrata.

CHAPTER TWO

WILL AND WISDOM

Prepare for a Rewarding Life Ahead

Brahmachariya allows the individual to use his vital energies as an adolescent, or young adult, to prepare for a rewarding life, to develop his mind and talents for his chosen vocation. Brahmachariya is a traditional practice in Saivite Hinduism. The first of the four stages, or ashramas, of life is actually called the "brahmachariya ashrama."

Love (including sex) is one of the legitimate four goals of life according to our religion. Sex is not bad. Its place, however, is properly within the confines of a sanctified marriage. Nor are sex drives unnatural. The goal of the brahmachari and brahmacharini is not to become fearful of sex, but to understand sex and the sexual impulses in a balanced way. During the time of brahmachariya, the goal is to control the sex urges and transmute those vital energies into the brain to gain a great mental and spiritual strength. Yes, this vital life force must be focused on studies and spiritual pursuits. Brahmachariya maintained until marriage helps enable the devotee to merit a good wife or husband and a happy marriage. The *Hindu Catechism* explains,

When a young virgin man and woman marry and share physical intimacy with each other, their union is very strong and their marriage stable. This is due to the subtle, psychic forces of the human nerve system. Their psychic forces, or nadis, grow together and they form a one body and a one mind. This is the truest marriage and the strongest, seldom ending in separation or divorce. Conversely, if the man or woman have had intercourse before the marriage, the emotional/psychic closeness of the marriage will suffer, and this in proportion to the extent of promiscuity.

Most religions also provide a tradition of monastic life in which young men take lifetime vows of celibacy. The spiritual value of celibacy in the Hindu tradition has long been understood. Many of our greatest spiritual lights were celibate throughout their entire life, including Siva Yogaswami, Sankara and Swami Vivekananda. Others, such as Buddha, Gandhi and Aurobindo, became celibate after a period of marriage. For the individual preparing for monastic life, brahmachariya is essential in harnessing and transmuting the powerful sexual life energies into spiritual and religious concerns.

REVIEW

1. Sex is natural, not bad, but it is best confined to the sanctified marriage.
2. For monastic life, brahmachariya is essential.

A Creed for Saivite Hindus

We could compare the twelve beliefs of our Saivite Creed to the scientific laws governing the creation of molecules, upon which all life, all form, is constructed. Scientific laws express in a capsulated form the basic building blocks of the physical universe. Our twelve beliefs summarize metaphysical reality. Today, study beliefs one through six.

1. I believe Lord Siva is God, whose Absolute Being, Parasivam, transcends time, form and space.
2. I believe Lord Siva is God, whose immanent nature of love is the substratum or Primal Substance and Pure Consciousness flowing through all form.
3. I believe Lord Siva is God, whose immanent nature is the Primal Soul, Supreme Mahadeva, Siva/Sakti, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of all that exists.
4. I believe that each individual soul is created (through emanation) by Lord Siva and (its uncreated essence: Pure Consciousness and Absolute Being) is identical to Him, and that this identity can be and will be fully realized by all souls when the triple bondage of anava, karma and maya is removed through His Grace.
5. I believe in three worlds of existence: the First World (Bhuloka or gross plane), where souls take on physical bodies; the Second World (Devaloka or subtle plane), where souls take on astral or mental bodies; and the Third World (Sivaloka or causal plane), where soul bodies, Mahadevas, exist in their own self-effulgent form.
6. I believe in the Mahadeva Lord Ganesha, Son of Siva/Sakti, to whom I must first supplicate before beginning any worship or task.

REVIEW

1. Scientific laws describe the building blocks of the physical universe.
2. Our Creed summarizes metaphysical reality.

These Are the Beliefs of Your Soul

As you study these twelve beliefs do not mistake them for mere theory or one person's idea. They are the revelations of countless realized souls. They are the beliefs of your own soul. As you begin to understand and practice brahmachariya, new light will be shed upon these beliefs, because brahmachariya helps to open the inner mind. And the inner mind is the home of pure intelligence.

7. I believe in the Mahadeva Lord Muruga, Son of Siva/Sakti, whose Vel of Grace dissolves the bondages of ignorance.

8. I believe that religion is the harmonious working together of the three worlds and that this harmony can be created through temple worship, wherein the three worlds become open to one another, and the beings within them are able to communicate.

9. I believe in the Law of Karma--that one must personally reap the effects of all actions he has caused--and that each soul will continue to reincarnate until all karmas are resolved and Moksha, Liberation, is attained.

10. I believe that there is no intrinsic evil.

11. I believe that the performance of Chariya (virtuous and moral living), Kriya (temple worship) and Yoga (internalized worship and union with Parasivam through Grace of the living Sat Guru) is absolutely necessary to bring forth the state of Jnana.

12. I believe in the Panchakshara Mantram, the five sacred syllables "Na Ma Si Va Ya," as the foremost and essential mantram of Saivism.

REVIEW

1. Study the 12 beliefs daily with renewed interest.
2. Knowledge from within is experiential knowledge.

You Are On the Sadhana Marga

My Sat Guru, Siva Yogaswami, spoke of Saivism as the "Sadhana Marga," "the path of striving," explaining that it is a religion not only to be studied but also to be lived. He taught that much knowledge comes through learning to interpret and understand the experiences of life. Brahmachariya helps us open up the inner faculties so that divine knowledge flows easily and we are blessed with valuable insights.

***See God everywhere. This is practice.
First do it intellectually.
Then you will know it.***

SIVA YOGASWAMI

To avoid the Sadhana Marga is to avoid understanding the challenges of life. We must not fail to realize that each challenge is brought to us by our own actions of the past. Yes, our actions in the past are our life's experiences today. All Hindus

accept karma and reincarnation intellectually, but the concepts are not active in their lives until they accept the responsibilities of their own actions and the experiences that follow. In doing so, no blame can fall upon another. It is all our own doing. This is the Sadhana Marga--the path to perfection.

Read quickly through each of the twelve beliefs each day during the time you are studying this course. By doing so you will begin to open the great book of knowledge within yourself. This inner book is unlike any you have ever read. It is sacred and it is within you in the akasha of your superconscious mind. Each day, pray to Lord Muruga to unfold the mysteries of your deep, inner intelligence. Lord Muruga is the God that helps the brahmachari on his way to perfection. He will protect you from temptation and inspire you onward and upward.

CONCENTRATE YOUR STUDY

Let this wonderful teaching about brahmachariya enter your mind in its fullness day by day as you perform the sadhana of these daily lessons.

REVIEW

1. Avoid conflicting teachings and allow these lessons to impress your mind deeply.
2. Our religion is a Sadhana Marga.

Life Is a Classroom of Experience

Our creed tells us in belief nine: "I believe in the Law of Karma--that one must personally reap the effects of all actions he has caused--and that each soul will continue to reincarnate until all karmas are resolved and Moksha, Liberation, is attained." There is no getting away from our own karma. Eventually all past actions must be faced. The practice of bramachariya in thought, word and deed helps us attain the emotional stability to accomplish this.

LESSONS FROM LIFE TO LIFE

Each experience in life offers a challenge. The Siva bhaktar, through Lord Siva's constant grace, is never given a challenge that he is not able to meet and conquer. Always try to remember this. There is another thing that you should try to remember and that is that life, consciousness, goes on and on. We pass through "death" from this incarnation into the inner world, where we also are when we sleep at night. Then we take on a new physical body. This process repeats time and time again until all the lessons that life on the physical plane has to offer have been learned and Moksha has been attained. Moksha is freedom from rebirth in the physical body. One goes on living after that in the astral body and/or the body of the soul on the inner planes.

It is for this reason that we need a vibrant, experiential religion such as Saivism to help us get through all of the karmas, which are our own creation, and to artfully avoid creating more karmas and the many discomforts that come as a result. It is through applying the wisdom our religion offers that this can happen. The tenets of our religion hold true not only in this physical world but in the inner worlds of the Devaloka and Sivaloka, as well.

Each Saivite knows that it is up to him or her to understand and practice the religion properly. No one can do this for someone else. We know this. The practice of brahmachariya, along with a continuing study and deepening understanding of Saivism, will guide the brahmachari and brahmacharini around the boulders and away from the pitfalls of emotions. It will guide them safely along the edges of ravines and through the storms of their own karma as it manifests through others.

REVIEW

1. Life is a classroom of experience based on karma.
2. Our religion is the greatest aid in facing our challenges.

The Yamas and Niyamas, Introduction

Our religion teaches us how to become better people, how to live as spiritual beings on this earth. This happens through living virtuously, following the natural and essential guidelines of dharma. These guidelines are recorded in the yamas and niyamas, ancient scriptural injunctions for all aspects of human thought, attitude and behavior. Through following the yamas and niyamas we cultivate our refined, spiritual nature while keeping the instinctive nature in check. We lift ourselves into the consciousness of the higher chakras of love, compassion, intelligence and bliss and naturally invoke the powers and blessings of the divine devas and Mahadevas.

The yamas and niyamas are the most pervasive of Hindu ethical obligations and are thousands of years old. They are recorded in numerous Saivite scriptures, including Saint Tirumular's *Tirumantiram*, Sage Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*, Sri Gorakhnath's *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, the *Yogadarshana*, the *Sandilya Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda and the *Varuha Upanishad* of the Krishna Yajur Veda. All the texts mentioned cite ten yamas and ten niyamas with the exception of Sage Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*. Patanjali listed only five yamas and five niyamas, which are the ones often solely listed in modern books on yoga. The fullness of all twenty disciplines is a complete outline for Saivite religious life and the foundation for the practice of yoga.

Purity, compassion, frugal food and patience, forthrightness, truth and steadfastness--these he ardently cherishes. Killing, stealing and lusting he abhors. Thus stands with virtues ten the one who niyama's ways observes....Tapas, japa, serenity and faith in God, charity, vows in Saiva Way, Siddhanta learning, sacrifice, Siva puja and spiritual intelligence--with these ten, the one in niyama perfects his way.

TIRUMANTIRAM, VERSE 556-557

Yama means "to rein" or control. The yamas include such injunctions as non-injury (ahimsa), non-stealing (asteya) and moderation in eating (mitahara), which harness the base, instinctive nature. Niyama, literally "to unleash," indicates the release or expression of refined soul qualities through such disciplines as charity (dana), contentment (santosha) and incantation (japa). In tomorrow's lesson are listed the Sanskrit yamas and niyamas from the Upanishads, with translations & explanations.

REVIEW

1. The yamas and niyamas are the Hindu ethical "restraints and observances."
2. They harness the base, instinctive nature and cultivate the soul nature.

YAMAS: RESTRAINTS

1. Ahimsa: Noninjury

Do not harm others by thought, word or deed.

2. Satya: Truthfulness

Refrain from lying and betraying promises.

3. Asteya: Nonstealing

Neither steal nor covet nor enter into debt.

4. Brahmachariya: Sexual Purity

Control lust by remaining celibate when single and faithful in marriage.

5. Kshama: Patience

Restrain intolerance with people and impatience with circumstances.

6. Dhriti: Steadfastness

Overcome non-perseverance, fear, indecision and changeableness.

7. Daya: Compassion

Conquer callous, cruel and insensitive feelings toward all beings.

8. Arjava: Honesty

Renounce deception and wrongdoing.

9. Mitahara: Moderate Appetite

Neither eat too much nor consume meat, fish, fowl or eggs.

10. Saucha: Purity

Avoid impurity in body, mind and speech.

NIYAMAS: PRACTICES

1. Santosha: Contentment

Seek joy and serenity in life.

2. Tapaha: Austerity

Perform sadhana, penance, tapas and sacrifice.

3. Dana: Charity

Tithe and give creatively without thought of reward.

4. Astikya: Faith

Believe firmly in God, Gods, guru and the path to enlightenment.

5. Isvarapujana: Worship

Cultivate devotion through daily worship and meditation.

6. Mati: Cognition

Develop a spiritual will and intellect with a guru's guidance.

7. Siddhantasravana: Scriptural Study

Study the teachings and listen to the wise of your lineage.

8. Hri: Remorse

Be modest and show shame for misdeeds.

9. Japa: Recitation

Chant holy mantrams daily.

10. Vrata: Sacred Vows

Fulfill religious vows, rules and observances faithfully.

Personal Challenges for Chapter Two

when completed Discipline

1. Memorize the twelve beliefs of the Creed and then recite them to a family elder from memory.
 2. Memorize the yamas and niyamas and recite them to a family elder from memory.
 3. Go two full consecutive days without getting angry.
 4. Read the chapter in the *Hindu Catechism* "Marriage and Family Life."
 5. Spend ten minutes on three consecutive mornings praying intensely to Lord Muruga to unfold the mysteries of your inner intelligence.
 6. Look at yourself in the mirror and ponder the fact that you have had many bodies in your many incarnations on earth. Realize that you are not your body, your mind or your emotions, but the immortal soul.
 7. The next time you feel yourself getting depressed, call on your inner forces to lift yourself into an unburdened state of mind.
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CHAPTER THREE

VIRTUE

The Pancha Nitya Karmas

In addition to the yamas and niyamas, our religion provides us with a second group of guidelines to help us become better people. These are the pancha nitya karmas, "five constant duties." We could say that they are an amalgam of all the counsel of the *Vedas* and *Agamas* to guide daily and yearly religious life. These five obligatory religious practices are simple and applicable for all. Study them and put them into practice in your own life.

1. VIRTUOUS LIVING (Dharma)

Proper conduct follows the laws of dharma and includes observing the teachings of the *Holy Kural*, remaining celibate until marriage, obeying sthree dharma for women and purusha dharma for men. It is goodness in thought, word and deed.

2. WORSHIP (Upasana)

Personal worship in the home shrine includes performance of puja, sadhana, japa and religious study. Regular devotions in the home and temple bring forth love of God and prepare the mind for the practices of meditation.

3. HOLY DAYS (Utsava)

The observance of Saivite festivals in the home and temple, including guru puja days, brings deep communion with God during highly spiritual times of the year. This includes fasting and attending the temple on Fridays, the Hindu holy day.

4. PILGRIMAGE (Tirthayatrai)

At least once each year every Saivite must make a pilgrimage to a holy place, whether near or far. This is a time when all worldly matters are set aside and God becomes the central and singular focus of life.

5. SACRAMENTS (Samskaras)

Sacraments are special ceremonies which mark our passages in life and sanctify these experiences. They include the rites of birth, first feeding, learning, marriage, death, monastic vows for monks and more.

REVIEW

1. Our constant duties as Saivites are the pancha nitya karmas.

2. They are virtuous living, worship, holy days, pilgrimage and sacraments.

The Importance of Virtue

The Saivite religion, when properly practiced, brings the devotee close to the Holy Feet of supreme God Siva. The practice is outlined in the yamas and niyamas and the pancha nitya karmas. They should be followed ever more strictly by the brahmachari and brahmacharini. They are the foundation for spiritual life. To live an unvirtuous life while performing sadhana would be to waste time, as adharma brings the mind into crude states of consciousness.

An ascetic did penance for many years and gained great merit and spiritual power. An enemy plotted to destroy his power. The technique was simple. He made the ascetic frightfully angry. In that one fit of rage, the painstaking penance and hard work was dissipated.

There are many Saivites who have taken the brahmachariya vrata and eagerly look forward to learning "advanced" yoga techniques. They have mastered the difficult sadhana of the art of controlling and channeling the sexual energies of the body, emotions and the mind. The ascetic in our story had not accomplished this sadhana. He had not conquered anger, and it cost him the benefits of his austerities. As Chellachi Amman, a saintly lady who was a respected elder to my Sat Guru, Siva Yogaswami, once said, "The spiritual path is like a bridge of hair over a river of fire."

THREE GREAT PILLARS

The Saivite religion has three great pillars upon which it stands. These are the temples, the scriptures and the Sat Gurus. These three powerful increments form a perfectly balanced and natural vehicle for Truth to shine through on this planet. Like anything else, however, the Saivite Hindu religion must be used effectively by the individual who wishes to enjoy its lasting effects. Studying about it is not enough. Saivism is to be lived. Each member must put what has been learned into practice to the best of his ability. Use the temples for prayer and as places of worship. Read and heed the scriptures and apply their teachings to daily life. They are not mere theory. They are divine law. Obey your guru and reap the benefits.

REVIEW

1. Virtue is the one and only foundation for spiritual unfoldment.
2. You must use your religion if it is to help you.
3. Brahmachariya is control and channeling of your forces.

Control Your Dreams and Fantasies

Those who have resolved to follow the path of brahmachariya but are troubled by sexual fantasies and nightly encounters during their dream state should not despair. These are simply indications that their creative energies are not being used to capacity. They should work harder, mentally and physically, get up early in the morning and do sadhana, go to bed early and seek the more refined areas of consciousness during the dream states.

How can you seek these more refined areas during sleep? This is done through chanting and meditating before going to sleep, and through praying for guidance from Lord Ganesha.

To aid in the depolarization and transmutation of creative forces, certain mantrams are chanted. These logically concentrate the conscious mind and harmonize its subconscious. Mantrams draw the creative forces from the instinctive to the intellectual and superconscious regions. The mantram AUM aids the most in the depolarization and transmutation process. This mantram harmonizes the physical, mental and spiritual forces.

RAJA YOGA

HOW TO CHANT AUM

To chant the mantram AUM, intone A (pronounced ah) and center the sound in the solar plexus region of the body. Next intone U (pronounced oo) and center this sound through the throat area. Then intone M (pronounced mmm) and send this vibration through the cranium by placing the front teeth tightly together. In chanting the mantram A-U-M, first intone each sound separately, then blend the sounds together forming AUM, a steady hum or drone. The mantram AUM is the essence of sound itself. All sounds blended together intone AUM.

As you intone AUM, you are releasing your creative energy. This energy pours through your mental, emotional, and physical bodies, opening a new world for you.

REVIEW

1. Sexual dreams and fantasies indicate energies are not being utilized.
2. Learn to chant AUM to unleash and sublimate your creative energies.

Be Pure in Thought, Word and Deed

Purity is the natural state of the soul. It is clarity and clearness in all dimensions of being. One who is successful in the sustained practice of brahmachariya and the performance of sadhana radiates this purity as the sun radiates warmth and light.

Brahmachariya may be thought of as wisdom in handling the forces of the mind and body, most especially the sexual impulses. In this sadhana, the innate purity of the soul shines forth. Striving for this purity is the practice of brahmachariya. As a brahmachari or brahmacharini you must attune yourself to the inner worlds, the Second and Third Worlds. You must strive to live the contemplative life. You must associate with other Hindu devotees, seeking the company of good and holy men and women. You must be pure in your thoughts, never allowing your mind to indulge in sexual fantasies. You must speak pure words that reflect the purity of your thought. Never use harsh, angered or indecent language.

Do not harbor any harmful thoughts. Discard anger and jealousy. Be modest, disciplined and happy, and you will reach the top. Know thy Self by thy self.

SIVA YOGASWAMI

The too great loss of [the reproductive fluids] soon produces the effects, . . . such as weakness, dejection of mind, debility, and pusillanimity, together with all that mental timidity which exaggerates the least dangers and succumbs under the most trivial apprehensions.

JOHN DAVENPORT, CURIOSITIES OF EROTIC PHYSIOLOGY

IMPORTANCE IN CULTURE

The observance of brahmachariya is perhaps the most essential aspect of a sound, spiritual culture. This is why in Saivism, boys and girls are taught the importance of remaining celibate until they are married. This creates healthy individuals, physically, emotionally and spiritually, generation after generation.

REVIEW

1. Strive for purity in thought, word and deed.
2. Preservation of the sacred seed gives strength.
3. Its loss is the dissipation of life force.

Guide and Protect Your Awareness

How should you regard members of the opposite sex? Do not look at members of the opposite sex with any idea of sex or lust in mind. Do not indulge in admiring

those of the opposite sex, or seeing one as more beautiful than another. Boys must foster the inner attitude that all young women are their sisters and all older women are their mother. Girls must foster the inner attitude that all young men are their brothers and all older men are their father. Do not attend movies that depict the base instincts of humans, nor read books or magazines of this nature. To be successful in brahmachariya, one naturally wants to avoid arousing the sex instincts.

Purity is but freedom from desire and that is achieved by desiring to know Truth."

HOLY KURAL, VERSE 364

GOOD COMPANY, EXERCISE AND WORSHIP

Be very careful to mix with good company--those who think and speak properly--so that the mind or emotions are not led astray and vital energies needed for study used up. Get plenty of physical exercise. This is very important because exercise sublimates your own instinctive drives and directs excess energy and the flow of blood into all parts of the body.

Morning, noon and evening we will chant with joyful hearts the blessed name of Siva. We will sever in our minds the root of all desire and lust and, sweetly as we please, we will abide where night is not nor day. If you always offer worship to the Almighty's holy feet, then you will have peace. That will make you rule the mind, which treads the senses' path.

SIVA YOGASWAMI

In the *Tirumantiram*, the 10th book of the *Tirumurai*, Saint Tirumular speaks of the values of brahmachariya. He insists that it is very important that the brahmachari and brahmacharini strive to keep awareness in the refined areas of the mind so that beneficial, constructive thoughts can be created. Then the energies are properly employed so that spiritual unfoldment can be experienced in this and future lives.

REVIEW

1. Do not view others through the veil of lust.
2. Keep good company, get plenty of exercise and worship God.

Explain the Life Force to Your Children

Every Hindu mother and father must explain to their boys and girls the basic principles we are describing here. It is the parents' duty to provide a sound education in the use and misuse of the life forces and teach their children how to control the forces within them as they grow into adulthood. Only in this way will

they have the knowledge required to face the challenges of their own instinctive/intellectual nature. If you have chosen family life, here are some helpful suggestions to put into practice when you have children.

PRANA AND THE CHAKRAS

There are a two main areas that parents can feel free to speak with their boys and girls about as they are growing up from a very young age. These are prana and the chakras. Once your children have a clear idea of what prana actually is and what the chakras actually are, they will be confident in lifting up the pranas into the higher chakras when puberty is upon them.

Explain it in this way: "You are a person with a great deal of energy, and this energy is called prana. This prana will increase within your physical body until you are about forty years of age. After that the prana increases in power within the mental body until you are about the age of seventy. Then the prana continues to increase within the spiritual body of the soul." Carefully explain time and time again to your children that it is up to them to control their prana, their life force, which is the total energy of their body. Until forty years of age this is done through education, exercise and hard work. After forty until seventy, this is done through study, caring for those younger than themselves, community service and additional education. After seventy this is done through worship, sadhana, tapas and deep meditation.

The Lord who not a whit is separated from you, those of impure mind can never see. The mind is a temple; the soul is its lamp. Meditate, meditate! The truth will dawn for you.

SIVA YOGASWAMI

REVIEW

1. Teach children about prana and the chakras to equip them to control their sexuality when it awakens.
2. Through life's stages, prana increases and feeds first the physical body, then the mental body and then the body of the soul.

Nourishing the Chakras

Children have an abundance of energy, and sometimes it can make them rather wild. How should this be controlled by the parents? When children run around excitedly, refer to their energy as Siva's prana within them. Congratulate them each time they exercise control over it, but don't punish them when they don't. Instead, explain that it is important that they learn to control and use their energies in positive ways. Have them sit with you and breathe deeply. Teach them to feel energy. Go into the shrine room and sit quietly with them until their

pranas become quiet, and then help them observe the difference. To hit them or to yell at them when they are rowdy is only sending more prana into them from you. Another technique is to withdraw your prana from them and pretend to be hurt by their actions. Put on a sour face. Gradually, by teaching about energy in this way you pave the way for a positive outlook on sex that will remain with them throughout their life. They will see the sexual energies, when they begin to awaken, as increased creative life force. And they will have the tools to transmute this force into the higher chakras.

CHAKRAS ARE LIKE LOVELY FLOWERS

When explaining the chakras to your children, refer to these force centers as lovely flowers within them that need to be fed by their vital energies. Teach them to breathe deeply and lift the energy from the lower chakras to the higher ones and hold it there, as if to feed and water these flowers. Teach them that chakras are also rooms of consciousness, and energy we put into the chakras awakens this consciousness and makes us very alert and intelligent.

In other words, as soon as your children can understand you, you can begin teaching them about their energies. In this way you give them the tools to handle their sexual nature so that their forces do not run away with their mind during puberty. In this way, you will open channels to talk freely with them about sex when the time comes. Many parents give absolutely no guidance in this area to their children, who then have to learn from other children about this natural function of their life. So, be a wise parent and begin early. Remember, there are only two areas to cover: prana and chakras. Your own intuition will guide you as to how to proceed.

REVIEW

1. Do not punish rowdy children, but guide them gently and teach about energy.
2. Teach children that the chakras are like flowers within them which they feed and water by lifting their pranas.

Personal Challenges for Chapter Three

when completed Discipline

1. Memorize the pancha nitya karmas and their meanings.
 2. Work on your preparation for sleep. Resolve on three separate occasions before sleep that you will be true to your highest ideals even during sleep. Each morning upon awakening, observe the results.
 3. Chant the mantram AUM for a 15 minute period and observe the change this brings about in your consciousness.
 4. Practice speaking more kindly to others than you usually do. For two days, surpass your normal standards for relating with others and observe the reaction in your mind and the minds of your family, friends and acquaintances.
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CHAPTER FOUR

Energy, Life, Procreation

VIRTUE

Pranayama: Harnessing Life Force

Seated in the lotus position, the brahmachari and brahmacharini who have taken their vrata may perform pranayama in the following way while sitting with spine erect, head gently balanced on top of the spine, both eyes closed, looking at the nose, then rolled back into the head, gently stimulating the nerve currents of the inner eye.

To perform this pranayama, place the thumb of your right hand on your right nostril and your middle finger upon your left nostril. Without closing either nostril, simply breathe evenly for a few moments until your breathing is completely relaxed. Then close the left nostril, by gently pressing on the side of your nose with your middle finger, and breathe in through the right nostril. Slowly mentally repeat "AUM, AUM, AUM, AUM, AUM." Then press the thumb on the right nostril and breathe out through the left nostril to the count of five heartbeats, mentally repeating "AUM, AUM, AUM, AUM, AUM." Then breathe in through the left nostril, again to five heartbeats, while repeating AUM. Then close the left nostril and expel the breath through the right nostril. Inhale next through the same nostril, and so on, chanting AUM to five heartbeats each time you inhale or exhale. Perform pranayama in this way for ten to fifteen minutes and feel the pranic power begin to rise within you. The devotee seated thusly in meditation becomes strong and unshakable.

Later, after you have adjusted the physical body to breathing in this way and it is no longer an effort or strain, you may perform the next phase of this pranayama. This is the holding of the breath for five counts, mentally repeating Aum five times before you exhale. While you retain the breath these five counts, hold the two nostrils closed with your thumb and middle finger gently pressing upon them both. A lovely rhythm will be attained as awareness becomes centered in the inner mind.

Consciously relax your physical body. Breathe deeply and diaphragmatically. Let go of tensions in your solar plexus. Breathe as a baby breathes, not by moving the chest up and down, but by allowing the diaphragm to lower and expand naturally, moving the abdomen out and in. Think of the action of a bellows, which when expanded creates a vacuum and allows air to enter.

REVIEW

1. Perform the alternate nostril pranayama for greater balance of your energies.
2. Work to be relaxed and breath diaphragmatically during pranayama.

Mental Maintenance

Regular introspection and religious study can be thought of as "mental maintenance." It is the setting aside of a period of time each day for making small adjustments, as well as for working through major difficulties--a time in which we face our present mental condition and apply our knowledge to keep the mechanism running smoothly. Regular mental maintenance assures good mental health. Mental health is a positive frame of mind in which all problems are regarded as challenges and are faced and handled on a day-to-day basis with the help of God, Gods and guru.

The body is a temple, the controlled mind the acolyte. Love is the puja. Know that! Through this device you'll find that naught is lacking. That is what the Vedas all declare. SIVA YOGASWAMI

INNER KNOWING

You will find that knowledge awakened from within you is quite different from surface intellectual knowledge. It is more useful, for it is your own. You have earned it through controlling your mind and developing a sensitive nature. Knowledge awakened from within you is experiential knowledge. One such inner knowing is to realize from within yourself that Brahmachariya is the conduct by which one may attain prolonged experiences of Satchidananda, the all-pervasive presence of God Siva.

HELP FROM THE DEVAS

During your vigil each day, you are keeping an inner appointment with the devas. You are not alone. Often the devas hover around you and give you psychic protection through chanting "OM NAMASIVAYA" and sending colorful rays of blessing. Their service to you is to help you grow and advance spiritually, and in turn they, too, grow and advance themselves. They will lend more help and assistance if they are asked, in the same way that you are more inclined to lend your assistance to a friend in this physical world if he asks for your help. If he does not, you would assume that he is managing quite well on his own. Your prayerful thoughts are the permission the devas require to help you in more specific ways. The further along one is in brahmachariya, the easier it is for the devas to read his thought messages.

REVIEW

1. Daily mental maintenance is essential to peace of mind.

2. The devas want to help you, and will if you request their aid.

Choosing Your Path in Life

It is essential that each devotee make a firm decision as to which of the two paths he or she will follow in life. As you know, the two paths are that of the grihastha and that of the monastic. Both are secure dharmas, or patterns of life, within our Saivite tradition. When firmly grounded within one or the other, the individual is guided along through traditional training, pressures and responsibilities.

CHALLENGE IS THE GRIST OF THE MILL

Occasionally a devotee will try to remain between the two paths, unwilling or afraid to submit to the responsibilities and challenges that will have to be faced. Those who understand the laws of dharma, however, know that these inherent challenges are the grist of the mill of life which helps each devotee to grow and evolve spiritually, emotionally and intellectually.

By avoiding the choice of dharmas, one only delays his progress and makes it difficult for the community of devotees to respond to him in the proper way. In addition, he denies himself many of the joys of a traditional life within the secure confines of one of the two paths. This is not to say that the devotee should rush headlong into a decision. But generally a direction should be set in early years so that the proper training can be obtained. As our *Catechism* states:

Most will choose married life, and they should be schooled-- the boys in technical skills and education and the girls in household arts and culture. If a young boy expresses a desire to become a monastic, the parents should not discourage that inclination. It is a great blessing for the family to have a son become a Saivite monastic.

If you are interested in monastic life, write to me, and together we will determine if it is your proper dharma to enter a Saivite monastery to serve Lord Siva and continue your spiritual unfoldment, having settled the patterns of your karma with your family and friends. Monastic life is an essential part of Hinduism, today as it always has been and always will be.

REVIEW

1. To make spiritual progress, following one of the two paths is essential.
2. Each dharma, monastic and householder, guides the individual along through traditional training, pressures and responsibilities.

Arranging a Happy Marriage

Saivites have always recommended arranged marriages over any other kind. Arranged marriages are not old-fashioned, they are wise ways of mating people

for long-term happiness and healthy, happy, intelligent children. In every country today, arranged marriages are found to be the best in the long term and free from many problems when arranged properly. Anyone who is going to follow the householder path should know that this is the proper way to proceed.

ASSURING COMPATIBILITY

Hindu Vedic astrology plays the most important part in arranging a marriage. The horoscopes of both the boy and girl have to be compatible. Both families also are involved. For a proper marriage, with the necessary support group to see it through the hard times, the blessings of both families are essential. A marriage is often looked at as a marriage of two families. The potential bride and groom must realize this and know that if they go against their parents' wishes, or if the two families do not accept each other and blend as one, the couple will be on their own to swim together or sink together. If one match is not agreeable, another should be sought. Another important factor is that both must be of the same religious sect for long life and a happy marriage. This may not seem important if both are not religiously active, but this may change in future years and can lead to separation and divorce.

The first and the last important factor in a good marriage is that both the boy and girl must be comfortable with each other. Love marriages that are not arranged by the parents are fully acceptable if the astrology is excellent and the parents on both sides agree and both the girl and the boy are of the same religious denomination. This seems a lot to ask or even hope for in this modern, fast-moving world, but it is the ideal. Most families begin early in finding the proper mate for their children from among the children of other families that they know. They consult astrologers regularly until a match is found. Sometimes the boy and girl are allowed to get to know each other long before they are aware that a marriage is being arranged for them. Of course, if they do not get along well, the matter is dropped and the search is on again.

REVIEW

1. Marriages wisely arranged are generally the most successful.
2. Compatibility of nature, astrology and religion is essential.
3. Most important is a natural affinity between the partners.

Secrets of Life and Procreation

It is said that when man first killed a kinsman that great strength came into the nerve system of the animal body of all upon this planet. Normal, seasonal cycles of mating turned into promiscuity. The population increased and is increasing

even now with this intensification of kundalini fire through the sexual nature of men and women.

Through the ancient traditions of Saivite monasticism, the inner laws of brahmachariya have been preserved down through the centuries to help guide humanity through the Kali Yuga.

This knowledge records the methods of how to preserve the vital energy within the body of men and women so that Saivism, the remembrance of Siva and His crystal clear shakti, can be passed through the darkness of the Kali Yuga in unbroken continuity. For only through the power of the tapas of brahmachariya can His shakti be passed on from one to another until the individual's shakti finally accrues enough intensity so that the brahmachari becomes as Lord Siva Himself.

Brahmachariya is holding the power of the divine within the core of the individual spine so that, as Lord Siva sends His power through the five great winds of the astral body within the physical body, the winds adjust among themselves and emanate a shakti strong enough to adjust the five great psychic fluids within everyone around. This power of brahmachariya is disseminated through sublimation then transmutation of the sexual force.

Transmutation occurs automatically through regular daily sadhana, the rigors of positive living and adherence to the ceremonial customs of our religion. It is when fear pervades a country or the planet that the impulses of the animal nerve system cause desires for mating to occur for the prolongation of the species. During intercourse, the astral bodies of the man and woman merge together and conception may occur, as a person in the Devaloka gains a body from the woman to enter this world.

REVIEW

1. The intensification of kundalini fire through the animal nature gives rise to fear and intensity in the sexual instincts of the population.
2. Brahmachariya is holding the power of the divine within the spine.
3. This same force, through conception, brings a soul into physical birth.

The Metaphysics of Brahmachariya

The connection formed between a man and a woman during intercourse makes a psychic, astral, umbilical cord-like tube in the lower astral plane world which lasts for twelve years or more. Providing no other connection with the same or other individual occurred in the meantime, the tube would slowly wear away during the ensuing years. This is provided that, at the same time, sadhana or

tapas is performed and regular pilgrimages and visits to Saivite temples are made.

Brahmachariya sadhana begins once a vrata is taken by the virgin boy or girl. For others, brahmachariya sadhana begins after the last sexual encounter with a member of the opposite sex has occurred and when a conscious decision is made to begin the practice of brahmachariya.

All the energy of the body becomes directed in the channel of sex when the consciousness is coupled or coordinated with the will to release or dissipate this energy. The mental processes then become slow and sluggish, as does the body, if carried to excess. A remedy to this is the reverse. The mind will then become awakened, and the body will begin to glow.

RAJA YOGA

ASTRAL MAGNETISM AND TEMPTATION

While in the process of brahmachariya, those who have had sexual encounters with one or more members of the opposite sex experience times of trial. Great temptation may occur on the physical plane as the astral matter of the animal nerve system and systems of fluids and odors that attract the opposite sex store up in great abundance.

This causes a magnetism which attracts those of the opposite sex. Especially attracted will be those of a similar nature and deportment as those of past encounters.

REVIEW

1. Intercourse between a man and woman creates a psychic connecting tube in the astral world which lasts for twelve years.
2. The requisites for formal brahmachariya practice are the start of celibacy, knowledge of brahmachariya, and the performance of sadhana.
3. Those beginning brahmachariya may experience strong temptation because of magnetism and past habit patterns.

Energy is Harnessed in a Sanctified Marriage

The force of kundalini flows as a river through men and women. Sexual intercourse gives that river an outlet, creates a channel, a psychic astral tube between their muladhara chakras. After the first intercourse, awareness is turned outward into the external world and the man or woman is more vulnerable to the forces of desire. The ramification of the intellect can now be experienced more than ever before. If the force is contained within the marriage covenant with blessings from the Devaloka and Sivaloka, rays similar to the astral tube

established between the couple are established between each of them through the higher chakras with the Mahadevas and devas. A holy state of matrimony has been entered into. The *Hindu Catechism* states,

When a young virgin man and woman marry and share physical intimacy with each other, their union is very strong and their marriage stable. This is due to the subtle, psychic forces of the human nerve system. Their psychic forces, or nadis, grow together and they form a one body and a one mind. This is the truest marriage and the strongest, seldom ending in separation or divorce. Conversely, if the man or woman have had intercourse before the marriage, the emotional/psychic closeness of the marriage will suffer, and this in proportion to the extent of promiscuity. Through marriage a man and a woman each fulfill their dharma. A man and a woman are physically, emotionally and spiritually complete in marriage. He needs her tenderness, companionship and encouragement, while she needs his strength, love and understanding.

HIGHER RAYS AND LOWER ASTRAL TUBES

Higher rays and the lower astral-psychic tubes that are created between husband and wife can contain the forces of desire within them. They also control the instinctive curiosities of the intellect, allowing its full power to manifest and create a productive and abundant life for the family which has continuity and consistency. A life of dharma can be lived.

REVIEW

1. Sexual intercourse creates a psychic, energy channel.
2. These energies are contained and guided within a sanctified marriage.

Personal Challenges for Chapter Four

when completed Discipline

1. Send a prayer to Lord Muruga at the Kadavul Hindu Temple on two occasions, requesting His aid and blessings in your brahmachariya practice.
 2. Learn the pranayama practice in lesson 23.
 3. Try to feel and inwardly observe the exchange of energies that occurs when you are speaking with a member of the opposite sex.
 4. Go one week without engaging in lustfully watching any member of the opposite sex.
 5. Inwardly observe a happily married couple and try to discern the quality of oneness and psychic protection which surrounds them.
 6. Ponder one or two marriage matches that you know of and see if your conclusions agree with those of lesson 25.
 7. Think deeply about your choice of dharmas for this life and if you have not already made this decision, take at least one small step closer to it in your mind.
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CHAPTER FIVE

PSYCHIC TIES

Channels of Thought and Feeling

The release of the sacred seed into the woman during sexual intercourse establishes, through the first chakra, a connecting psychic astral tube which can be clearly seen on the astral plane. It is through this psychic tube that desires, feelings and even telepathic messages can be passed from one to another. This connecting tube is generally about six inches in diameter.

A man and woman touching in other ways--kissing, embracing--also establishes a temporary connecting link of astral matter which penetrates their auras and completely covers their forms. This is sometimes called the great magnetism, for it appears in the Second World as a psychic mass connecting the two of them as wide as the length of their bodies. This astral matter is created from the diverse expulsion of emotional energies, blending their auras together.

This psychic channel is magnetic enough to repeatedly pull them back together or cause emotional pain if they are separated. But unless the encounter is repeated, the astral matter will wear away in three or four days, a month at the most. In this way, touching or caressing someone of the opposite sex causes an abundant release of magnetic force to occur.

Now, because of promiscuity, masses of people are connected one to another in this way. A great bed of astral matter envelops them as they go from one to another. This causes the forces of intense fear to persist. From an inner perspective, their soul bodies are obscured by this astral matter and it is most difficult for those living in the Devaloka to contact anyone on the earth plane who is thus involved. Such individuals must fend for themselves without protection from the Devaloka or the Sivaloka, as do the animals who do not have benefit of the intellect to guide their actions.

It is the brahmachari's duty to be the channel of the three worlds. In this way he can help stabilize humanity through the Kali Yuga so that the forces of promiscuous desire do not blot out our culture, creativity and all connection with the Sivaloka. This is why the sadhana of brahmachariya is so extremely important for each unmarried Saivite to understand and observe.

REVIEW

1. The connections among the population appear as a great web on the astral plane.
2. The brahmachari's duty is to be a channel for spiritual energies.

Align Yourself With the Inner Worlds

As a brahmachari or brahmacharini you must endeavor to hold the force of the Sivaloka and the Devaloka in line with the higher forces of the Bhuloka, the earth plane. This happens naturally through the transmutation process and living a contemplative life. Regular personal sadhana and non-involvement in the emotional nature of others is the practice to be observed.

A great aid to the accomplishment of this is to invoke Lord Siva daily. Then the higher chakras open within your psychic body. Peace of mind comes unbidden and bliss flows forth from your aura for all to feel.

Regular puja invoking the assistance of Lord Muruga will also greatly aid in a premature banishing of connections with the external world and in severing the tubular connections with inhabitants in it. When Lord Muruga is reached through your puja, He will also give wisdom and the divine understanding of the transmutation process.

THE ORIGINAL 'STATE OF BRAHM'

Each person is born in a full state of brahmachariya. Upon reaching puberty, those boys and girls who remain virgins maintain the inherent state of brahmachariya. They are able to ward off, and may not even notice, many emotional and sexual temptations that would be troublesome to the non-virgin. This is because the psychic shield surrounding the virgin's aura has never been penetrated.

They are the ones "who walk in the rain without getting wet, sit long in the sun without getting burned." They are the ones for whom reading about worldly experiences nurtures only their curiosity, whereas had they established psychic tubular connections with a member of the opposite sex, the reading would nurture a much deeper sexual desire. It is the virgins performing brahmachariya sadhana since puberty who can, if they persist, live in "Brahm," or God, consciousness most of the time, even without performing intense sadhanas. This is because they have never consciously entered into world consciousness. Instead they look out into it as if through a veil.

REVIEW

1. The virgin is far less vulnerable to the tugs and pulls of worldliness.
2. Brahmachariya is returning to, or remaining in, the "Brahm" state.

The Sacred Fluids of Procreation

An occasional loss of the reproductive fluids does not "break" or interrupt brahmachariya sadhana, though this should be avoided and is minimal when the

brahmachariya sadhana takes hold. If one does have a "wet dream," this should not cause undue concern. Rather, this should be regarded as simply the natural release of excess energy. The brahmachari or brahmacharini should simultaneously resolve to work more diligently in guiding the flow of thought through the day.

It is only sexual intercourse between a man and a woman that breaks brahmachariya sadhana, causing an astral umbilical-like psychic cord about six to twelve inches wide to form in the inner ether between them. It is within this psychic tube that the forces of energy and desire flow from one to another. These are the same forces between mother and father which culminate in the birth of a child and surround and protect him or her through earthly consciousness until age twenty-five.

CONNECTION WITH THE PARENTS

The psychic connection between mother and father emotionally stabilizes all children of the family. But if there are other tubes involved due to pre-marital promiscuity or new ones being created with members of the opposite sex outside of the home, the children suffer emotionally while growing up. The unleashed forces of instinctiveness may often cause them to be disturbed or frustrated.

As a child grows to maturity, he detaches himself year by year from the connection between his father and mother. The detachment is complete by the age of twenty-five. But if the son (or daughter) develops a psychic/astral tube with a member of the opposite sex before this age, he disconnects from his father and mother immediately. From that time onward he no longer relates to them in the same way as he once did. Through the sexual act, he now has "left home" and entered the world. The mother and father can feel the difference and so can the son.

REVIEW

1. The ties between husband and wife create the psychic environment of the home, giving rise to children and influencing their growing up.
2. A child's primary psychic connection with parents generally wears away by age 25.

Walk Away From Temptation

Virgins also have strong temptations with the opposite sex from time to time, especially if they meet former spouses from past lives. Unless a strict understanding of brahmachariya is observed, these encounters with past-life lovers may move their fluids and emotions to the point of intercourse.

Each parent should explain to their children at an early age the importance of remaining virgin brahmachariya until married. They must be taught that the elations and the depressions that follow from disciplining oneself are a part of life on this planet. They can be gently but firmly taught the practice of mentally and physically "walking away" from temptation.

In most cultures, from primitive to advanced, young people are taught to postpone sexual fulfillment for some time. During this waiting time, sexual tension increases and when it does not get released, it gets transformed into a more complex social awareness which has been awakened by the desire.
THE NEW CELIBACY, GABRIELLE BROWN PH.D.

Learning to walk away from a situation in dignity is more effective than almost anything else in protecting the brahmachari and the brahmacharini from the overpowering temptation to allow their sacred power to flow out to those of the opposite sex. Walking away from temptation, mentally, emotionally and physically, is so easy to remember, so easy to practice. Teach it to the children. Practice it yourself. And through the grace of Lord Siva a new generation of knowledgeable people will walk the path to His Holy Feet.

To consciously understand the functions of the physical body as against an educated subconscious knowing of the emotional unit, coupled with a subsuperconscious cognition of the mind as an object, is the result of transmutation--the essence of raja yoga.

RAJA YOGA

REVIEW

1. Virgins also experience temptation & should be clearly taught the value of chastity.
2. The technique of "walking away" is a simple key to overcoming temptation that anyone can practice.

Be True to Your Higher Self

If you are having trouble staying out of astral situations with members of the opposite sex at night during sleep, ask yourself where you keep your awareness through the day. For example, if you are watching TV and a provocative scene comes on the screen, what is your reaction? Are you unwittingly programming your subconscious to seek sexually stimulating input? Boys: do you view all young women as sisters and older women as mothers? Girls: do you view all young men as brothers and older men as fathers?

It may surprise you to know that sex is primarily mental. From impressions in the conscious or subconscious, subtle desires arise in the mind through imagination.

Imagination gives rise to excitement. Then, from the mental images follow sexual irritation, sexual craving. The path to controlling the sexual nature, therefore, is the control of the mind or control of desire. Desire is the force that drives humanity onward and through all phases of the mind. By changing our desires, we change our life. By changing our life, we change those around us.

BE FIRM BY KNOWING WHAT YOU REALLY WANT

It is when a devotee allows himself to go against his vrata that his forces begin to become congested. This is because it is difficult to lift awareness out of the denser areas of consciousness once entered, they are so magnetic. It takes far less effort and mental pain if one does not enter into them in the first place. Naturally, you must be strong and firm-minded. Strength of mind comes from knowing what YOU want. It comes from taking charge of your forces rather than letting them take charge of you. There are many helpful practices:

REVIEW

1. Be patient and diligent in your brahmachariya sadhana.
2. Be honest with yourself.

A Transmutation Technique

Occasionally during meditation or at other times, you may find that awareness tends to drift to the area of the sex organs, and sexual arousal may be experienced. Do not be alarmed if this occurs. Remain relaxed. Do not think that this is in any way wrong or unhealthy. In fact, sexual excitation and sexual fantasies are to be expected occasionally during the early stages of meditation.

DRAW THE ENERGY UPWARD

If this occurs, begin repeating AUM in an easy, rhythmical way. Feel the body from within, then bring the attention gently to rest at the center of sexual excitation at the base of the spine. Breathe in gradually, and as you breathe in, move awareness slowly and steadily up the length of the spine to the base of the skull and into the head. Visualize white energy being drawn up the spine as you inhale.

Exhale gently; smoothly moving awareness down the front of the forehead, down the chest and stomach to a spot about two inches behind and slightly below the navel. When the exhalation is complete, contract the diaphragm slightly further, pulling it up and back as if you were expelling the last bit of air from the lungs. Then return awareness to the base of the spine and repeat the process, inhaling while drawing awareness up the spine and exhaling as you move awareness downwards.

See the energy moving upward as you inhale. As you exhale, allow that energy to remain in the head. With each new breath, bring more energy up into the spine and head. Repeat this procedure several times. This is a practice which you can perform not only during meditation, but anytime sexual arousal occurs. It is a wonderful way of consciously transmuting the vital energies.

But remember, consistency is the key. Do not indulge in sexual fantasies or lustfully watching members of the opposite sex. If you do, you are only teasing the instinctive mind and making your brahmachariya sadhana more difficult for yourself. Keep the mind fully occupied with your studies and religious work.

REVIEW

1. Avert sexual thoughts with divine thoughts.
2. Follow the simple transmutation technique when arousal occurs.

The Kundalini Force

Realize that the powerful life energy being expressed through sexual arousal is the same life energy or kundalini which will propel you inward during meditation into refined and blissful states of consciousness. When used wisely, it becomes the essence of artistry, intellectual discovery, creativity and spiritual awakening. When abused it brings attachment, confusion and lethargy. It is a pure form of energy, there to be directed as is your will.

When one becomes steadfast in abstention from incontinence, one acquires spiritual energy.

THE YOGA SUTRAS, PATANJALI

When channeled into sexual union, this potent force lends its power to procreation, to the bearing and raising of children. It is very magnetic and generates in a man and a woman the power to not only have children but to rear and provide for them. When directed inward through brahmachariya, this same power awakens inner faculties and gives birth to a deeply religious and spiritual life. It gives greater energy to creative ideas and expression than ever before.

The kundalini energy within the body must flow. It flows either outward toward external objects or inward through the more refined states of consciousness. These energies must be systematically rechanneled from outer to more subtle expression. The secret lies in conscious and subconscious redirection or transmutation. Then, instead of being dissipated, the sacred reproductive fluids can be reabsorbed into the bloodstream and their energy drawn up the spine. As these fluids are reabsorbed into the bloodstream, their concentrated force feeds the seven chakras, bringing a more creative and abundant life. This is accomplished through following the tenets of our religion and performing

sadhana on a regular basis as described in this course. The secret is in physical and mental control. The understanding of these laws of brahmachariya and transmutation is a tremendous control, in and of itself.

REVIEW

1. Sexual arousal is an expression of the pure energy within you.
2. This energy is available to use as your will directs.
3. Preserving and concentrating this force promises a fuller and more abundant life.

Personal Challenges for Chapter Five

when completed Discipline

1. Learn and practice the transmutation technique described in lesson 34.
 2. If you have a sexual fantasy, stop yourself and redirect your awareness to positive areas that are in line with your chosen discipline.
 3. Look at the list of helpful practices in lesson 33 and see how many you currently follow. Pick one that you are weak on and work to strengthen it in your life.
 4. Practice the discipline of "walking away from temptation" on two different occasions and observe the power that you can exercise over your mind simply by withdrawing awareness from a particular area at will.
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CHAPTER SIX

HEALTHY BODY, HEALTHY MIND

Hinduism: The Way of Gentleness

Some people who are unaware of our scriptural heritage will say that Hinduism is bereft of ethical guidelines. How erroneous this is may be seen by the Hindu ethic that one must not cheat or harm another, even in one's dreams. Denying ethics gives excuse to deceit and even lying to one's guru to advance in position and life. But a scan of Hindu scripture reveals that creeds of conduct exist in the historical canons of every Hindu sect. And every great Hindu thinker, from King Janaka to Sankara, Manikkavasagar and Jnanesvara to Mahatma Gandhi and Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, offers primacy to ethics as the bedrock of social and spiritual progress.

Ethics begins with the keepers of the home and family. The *Vedas* list five primary duties of the householder: study of and teaching the Vedas; daily worship of the Gods through rituals; bestowing honor upon ancestors; being kind to domestic animals; extending hospitality to guests and the impoverished. In the *Taittiriya Upanishad* is given one of the most eloquent and sweet-voiced creeds. It became the traditional farewell advice from guru to pupil:

Speak the truth. Practice dharma. Do not neglect the study of the Vedas. Do not neglect your duties to the Gods and ancestors. Treat your mother and father as God. Treat your teacher as God. Treat your guest as God.

THE PRIMARY ETHIC: AHIMSA

Primary among Hindu ethics is *ahimsa*, "non-injury or non-violence." From *ahimsa* Hinduism imparted to the world the practice of vegetarianism. When Hinduism and Buddhism migrated out of India, much of Asia became vegetarian. The American Dietetic Association states, "Most of mankind for most of human history has lived on vegetarian or near-vegetarian diets."

Hindus are vegetarian because they revere all animal/fish bodies as vehicles for various astral and soul beings, and know that diet can either heighten or lower one's consciousness. Exposure to Christian schooling by many Hindus has distorted this paramount knowledge.

REVIEW

1. In every Hindu sect, ethics are the bedrock of social and spiritual progress.
2. Hindu ethics means honoring, serving and respecting others.

We Are Not Carnivores

Hindu scripture speaks clearly and forcefully on vegetarianism. In the ancient *Rig Veda*, we read: "O' vegetable, be succulent, wholesome, strengthening; and

thus, body, be fully grown." The *Yajur Veda* summarily dictates: "Do not injure the beings living on the earth, in the air and in the water." The beautiful *Tirukural*, a widely-read 2,000-year-old masterpiece of ethics, speaks of conscience: "When a man realizes that meat is the butchered flesh of another creature, he must abstain from eating it." In the yoga-infused verses of the *Tirumantiram*, warning is given of how meat-eating holds the mind in gross, adharmic states: "The ignoble ones who eat flesh, death's agents bind them fast and push them quick into the fiery jaws of hell [lower consciousness]."

Having well considered the origin of flesh and the cruelty of fettering and slaying of corporeal beings, let one entirely abstain from eating flesh. When the diet is pure, the mind and heart are pure.

THE MANU SAMHITA

Vegetarianism today is practiced by nearly a billion people, including 10 million Americans and 1.6 million Britons. Most people become vegetarian by conscience. European geniuses--Leonardo Da Vinci, Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein--were vegetarian by conscience.

PHYSIOLOGY

As the health and ecological sciences have recently discovered, vegetarianism is man's best and natural diet. The intestinal length of carnivores (meat-eating animals) is three times the body length to allow for quick removal of flesh wastes that putrefy in the intestines. Man's intestinal length, like other herbivores, is six times his body length and is designed for digesting vegetables, grains and fruits. Carnivores don't chew their food. Herbivores, including man, chew their food and have a similar pH value in their saliva. Our digestive system is closest to fruit-eating primates.

REVIEW

1. The noblest reason for vegetarianism is reverence for all beings.
2. Our digestive system is not suitable for digesting meat. It is closest to fruit-eating primates.

Be Healthy, Be a Vegetarian

The meat industry injects and feeds livestock with some 2,700 drugs to sustain and fatten them. Those drugs are passed to the meat-eater. Meat itself is directly linked to arterial and heart disease and cancer, man's major killers. Powerful hormonal secretions are released by livestock at the moment of slaughter. These are absorbed by meat-eaters and directly affect their mental and emotional tranquility. Conversely, medical evidence demonstrates that a balanced vegetarian diet provides all the right kinds of protein, minerals, amino acids and

nutrients that the body requires. In 1961, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* stated that 97% of heart disease can be prevented by vegetarianism. Current studies show the vegetarian diet as cancer-preventative. Brussels University proved vegetarians perform physical tests two to three times longer than non-vegetarians and recover from fatigue five times faster.

The World Health Organization states that 45 grams of protein eaten per day is ideal for tissue regeneration. This is easily acquired through grains, legumes, vegetables and dairy products. Meat-eaters ingest over 100 grams, an unhealthy overdose. Meat protein is poor quality. The Max Planck Institute reported that vegetables, fruits, seeds, nuts and grains are excellent sources of complete proteins and are easier to metabolize.

EARTH ECOLOGY

One quarter of the world's vital rain forests have been destroyed to create pasture for beef cattle. Deforestation is changing global weather and could lead to polar melting, desertification of the major food-producing regions and oxygen reduction. Meat-eating is the engine behind this environmental destruction. The rain forests could be gone early in the 21st century. Further, beef cattle are consuming 85-90% of the Western world's grain. The average meat-eater uses five times the food resources of a vegetarian because cattle require fifteen pounds of vegetable protein for every pound of flesh protein. An acre of grain produces five times as much protein as that of beef pasture; legumes & leafy vegetables from ten to fifteen times as much. The world hunger problem would be vastly improved by converting all pasture land to farming use.

REVIEW

1. A good, balanced vegetarian diet provides excellent nourishment for mind and body, including more than adequate amounts of protein.
2. Vegetarianism is good for our planet, while meat-eating is not.

Purity of Food

All foods can be roughly grouped into one of three categories, known by the Sanskrit words, *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*. These are three basic qualities or rates of vibration by which in the ancient Hindu science of Ayurveda all things are classified. Simply stated, the sattvic tendency is ascending, superconscious, and connotes orderliness and sublimity. The rajasic tendency is expanding, intellectual, and connotes activity and restlessness. The tamasic tendency is descending, instinctive, and connotes inertia and stagnation. Tamasic foods, such as meat, fermented or stale foods and overripe fruits, imbue the astral and physical body with heaviness and inertia and arouse the instinctive nature. Overeating is also tamasic.

Rajasic foods, such as hot or spicy foods, strong herbs, onions, garlic, coffee and tea, fish, eggs and salt, invigorate the heat of the physical and astral bodies. Too much rajasic food will over-stimulate the body and excite the passions, making the mind restless and uncontrollable. Eating in a hurry also creates a rajasic vibration in the body and mind. Sattvic foods, such as natural fruits and vegetables, help refine the astral and physical bodies, allowing the superconscious forces to flow and permeate and invigorate the entire being.

Especially as a brahmachari or a brahmacharini, it is best to try to eat plenty of sattvic foods, to be moderate in the intake of rajasic foods and avoid the tamasic ones. The traditional Saivite diet naturally provides this important balance and is based on these Ayurvedic principles.

TRANSITION TO VEGETARIANISM

But we also want to avoid becoming fanatical in diet. Those whose diets include meat should not necessarily become vegetarians all of a sudden. Any such changes, if desired, should be made gradually to allow the body to adjust slowly and without upsetting the family. The type of work that you do is also important to consider if you are thinking of adjusting the ratio of sattvic and rajasic foods in your diet. Those who do more physical types of work may need to eat more foods in the rajasic category.

REVIEW

1. Purity of food brings purity of mind.
2. Eat a balanced diet, relying mainly on sattvic foods.
3. Avoid becoming fanatical; blend transparently with the customs of your family.

Coping With Peer Pressure

The practice of celibacy until marriage is a natural part of a sublime culture. There is nothing odd about remaining celibate until marriage. In fact, nothing could be more traditional and wise. Yet, devotees are occasionally troubled from time to time by "peer pressure" from students or friends who make fun of their purity and call them old-fashioned or worse. My response is, "If you are secure within yourself, such idle criticism will not affect you. And when others see that their kidding or ostracism does not bother you, they will probably cease their harassment. Perhaps they will come to you for some good advice!"

EVERYONE FACES THE CHALLENGE OF SELF-CONTROL

Take heart in realizing that the challenges you face in your practice of brahmachariya are not in any way unique to you. To the contrary, control of the sexual instincts is something faced by everyone, even those not practicing

celibacy. The married person raising a family, too, must control and direct his or her energies, and this is part of the householder culture.

Throughout history, a universal idea has prevailed that sexual energy for non-procreative purposes can either be 'used up' in sexual activity or 'contained' for upholding the development of the body and the mind. This sex energy was seen as the fuel for opening these channels of experience, not only in the East but in the alchemy of the Europeans during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

THE NEW CELIBACY, GABRIELLE BROWN PH.D

You are progressing nicely in your understanding of brahmachariya. Certainly you are to be commended! Keep striving! Approaching this study with consistency will give a great firmness of purpose and make possible steady progress on the spiritual path to Lord Siva's Holy Feet. Some people merely scratch the surface of this study and never go deeper. But those with firm patterns of consistency like yourself sustain their effort and are able to plunge to the depths of the subject and discover the pearls of knowledge within it.

REVIEW

1. If you are secure in your self, you can face any criticism positively.
2. Through the ages, the most astute have known the laws of transmutation.

Your Mind is Your Own

Each brahmachari or brahmacharini faces a constant challenge of working with his or her nature, setting personal standards so that awareness actually lives two-thirds in the inner worlds and only one-third in the outer world of external consciousness. This means that the base or point of reference and security is within. What is external consciousness? Mental pictures, or thinking, or visualization, or fantasy--these are all directly related to the First World, and though devoid of emotion in themselves, they can stimulate emotion when concentrated upon.

DON'T DWELL ON FANTASIES

Pressures of the building force of brahmachariya may often take expression through intense mental visualizations of members of the opposite sex. Mental arguments may also occur while attempts at meditation are being made. The conscientious sishiya resists these impulses and works to subdue the sexual impulses and their corresponding fantasies. These visualizations are to be avoided. How? By just letting them go and not dwelling on them. This takes willpower based on firm resolve which is based on the desire to control the mind rather than be controlled by it. In your moments of quiet, let holy spiritual and

constructive thoughts prevail in your mind. Use your energies constructively to fulfill your personal goals.

Of all disciplines chastity is the foremost and fundamental, and all other disciplines will follow naturally if one practices this primary virtue. He who leads an unregulated life and thinks impure thoughts loses all powers and strength of mind. He is at the mercy of the passing desires and feverish cravings of the senses.

SWAMI SARADANANDA

After brahmachariya is practiced for an extended period of time, the energy is well-placed within the astral body and the mind is keenly alive. Do not dissipate this valuable mental energy by allowing yourself to day-dream it away.

REVIEW

1. Avoid mental fantasies. Simply let them go.
2. Brahmachariya builds a store of energy, but this can be dissipated through careless mental habits.
3. Good health and vitality instill pure, positive consciousness.

Hatha Yoga

Hatha yoga is an ancient Hindu system of exercise for health and vitality of mind and body, specifically designed as a preparation for meditation to balance the energies so the spiritual currents flow most strongly. On the following pages are drawings of hatha yoga postures. This is a very simple routine which can be performed in about 7 to 10 minutes and is designed to balance the energies of the body and thereby contribute to mental poise. Please try to perform the postures daily. Do them in the privacy of your own room, without drawing attention to yourself. Naturally, they should not be performed after eating.

You will notice that the postures, which are known as asanas, are organized into eight sets of three to be performed in series. In each position, sensitize yourself to feeling just when the body has been in the position long enough to tune the nerve currents involved. Then take a deeper breath and shift the body smoothly into the next asana. Once you have memorized and learned to correctly perform the postures of the simple system outlined here, just a few moments of practice will facilitate concentration almost effortlessly. You will automatically be concentrated because you will have no nerve strain to distract your mind or "bottle up" the pranas of the body. Needless to say, hatha yoga is a tremendous aid to transmutation of the vital forces.

FEEL ENERGY

As you perform the asanas, concentrate on feeling the energies within the nerve currents. Do not stretch unduly or force the body. Rather, relax into the poses as best you can. Do not worry if you can't perform the poses perfectly. In time, you will find the body becoming more flexible and supple. This suppleness is a reflection of the mind's condition of flexibility and alertness, and a subconscious free of repressions.

You may have already discovered that when mind tensions are released or resolved, tensions within the physical body are released as well. Likewise, when physical tensions are released through exercise and hatha yoga, mind tensions within the astral body are automatically dissolved. It is here that the tensions actually originate. Free the mind of thoughts and tensions. You will be more aware, more alive, more serene.

REVIEW

1. Make these asanas a part of your regular daily sadhana.
2. Hatha yoga is a great key in governing the forces of mind, body and emotions.

Personal Challenges for Chapter Six

when completed Discipline

1. Be especially kind to animals this week, striving to see them as divine beings just as are humans.
 2. Ponder the difference in consciousness between those who eat meat and those who don't. Discover something about the difference for yourself.
 3. Observe vegetarians and non-vegetarians, determine for yourself which group seems the most healthy.
 4. Examine your diet, including your eating habits, and evaluate it for yourself on the continuum of the gunas: sattva, raja and tamas. Resolve to make any adjustments you feel are needed.
 5. Look inside yourself and determine if you have secret doubts about the wisdom of celibacy. Know that such doubts will make you susceptible to the criticism of sceptics and consciously strive to strengthen your convictions in your brahmachariya sadhana.
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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE WORLD WITHIN YOUR MIND

The Moonlight Screen of Consciousness

Keep performing your pranayama each day during your vigil and deeply studying your lessons. Progress is being made. The path of each devotee is unique, as challenges and obstacles loom up to be faced and resolved.

The concentration of the true spiritual aspirant is attained through faith, energy, recollectedness, absorption and illumination.

THE YOGA SUTRAS, PATANJALI

Feel close to your guru and all will be well. The inner strength is beginning to build and the inner you will prevail over the instinctive/intellectual mind. When you begin to see the clear, moonlight screen as you look back into your head (as if looking through the back of your eyeballs), know that you are entering a new phase of your sadhana. This moonlight colored screen is clear and should remain clear as you look inward during meditation (with your eyes partially open). Do this by looking back into your head as if you had a second set of pupils on the other side of your eyes. This is the necessary state to attain in order to proceed onward.

VIEWING THE WITHIN AND THE WITHOUT

While viewing the white screen perpendicular to your eye level, you are simultaneously conscious of your breath and whatever you are looking at with your physical eyes. Therefore, you are seeing into two worlds simultaneously. Think over this concept carefully, for it is a key to controlling the mind and a necessary step to further inner unfoldments.

Remember, it is not wise to mentally fight with lustful, impure or antagonistic images, thoughts and feelings that you may experience while trying to attain the sight of this moonlight screen behind your eyes. It is best to simply let them pass. Should you be having experiences such as we have just described and we chance to meet, it would be well that we discuss them personally. Proceed with confidence. All will be well through the all-pervading grace of Lord Siva.

REVIEW

1. Be patient with your progress and face each challenge as it arises.
2. Learn to see the moonlight screen within.

3. Do not fight with lustful thoughts.

Entanglements in the First World

One must be very careful about lustful thoughts directed toward other people one sees in the First World. This also includes allowing mental and verbal argument with them to occur. When this does happen, a temporary psychic connection is made with them. Such connections, made through careless lustful thinking or mental bickerings are strong enough to recreate the image of the person in your sleep at night and continue the escapade. This is not dharma. It is creating unwanted karma which you will face in the future.

THE DEVAS ARE WELL AWARE

This kind of mental and emotional behavior may even go unnoticed by you for long periods of time. But the devas of the Devaloka observe your behavior during sleep and know that it is the result of careless management of your sadhana and awareness through the day. Your personal behavior, as one who has taken a brahmachariya vrata, does not go unnoticed by the devas, nor should it go unnoticed by you, for you are the one who has taken the vrata and who is bound by dharma to uphold it in your daily life. Should you allow this kind of loose living to persist ("girl-watching" or "boy-watching" as well as the other areas that have been mentioned), this indicates that new psychic pulls are developing toward beings within the First World.

Remain pure, true to your vrata, and proceed unhindered on the spiritual path.

My sweet one, dear as a parrot, arise awake, for 'tis dawn. With fresh flowers come to worship at the guru's feet. Adhere not to lust, anger or desire. Search not, pursue not. We are That, my dear, we are That.
SIVA YOGASWAMI

When you have gained your inner strength, you will be able to sit in meditation for at least a half hour every day and practice being the guardian of every thought and the ruler of every feeling within your body. If you do this, eventually you will realize That which is the center of your Being. You will be uplifted, elevated through the purification that you have brought to your mind.

REVIEW

1. Lustful thoughts toward others & mental argument create new psychic connections.
2. Such improper behavior during the day leads to its continuation during sleep.
3. The devas are aware of and disapprove of such behavior by the brahmachari.

The Price of Carelessness

If the situation described in yesterday's lesson applies to you, you will be experiencing a difficult time, depending on the degree of your involvement. Your meditations, or now feeble attempts at meditation, will suffer. And the resultant mental confusion will practically blot out the beautiful religious feelings once experienced. So rapid is this change that there will be great temptations welling up from within to "go out and have a fling." "Why not? Everyone else is doing it." Contention will rule the emotions of the day. Should this occur to you (which it probably will from time to time if your karma is rather heavy and you are not living around those who are performing the same kind of sadhana), be assured that this is only a temporary state which you are experiencing. It is a state of your own making.

It is easy for the mind to be torn by the desire to disagree with its findings out of habit. It is also easy for our awareness to be propelled by the emotional nature, thus falling into a state of confusion born of unqualified intellect.

RAJA YOGA

GETTING BACK ON TRACK

The fact that you regret that you have swerved from your chosen path shows that you have taken the first step toward correcting the difficulty. The fire of remorse helps to absolve the karma and turn you toward dharma. If you persist (and you must), the condition will pass away by your own efforts. Study the contents of this course which apply to your problem and revive your initial enthusiasm.

As you come out of this state, you will naturally feel a certain amount of suffering and self-condemnation. You will be sorry that you engaged in such sloppy mental behavior and thus became trapped in an uncomfortable strata of mind.

Experiences are not without their scars, which only heal through a systematic adherence to and eternal vigilance of mental purity. Go to the temple and place your penitent thoughts at the Feet of the Deity. The God will soothe your feelings and bring clarity to your mind. If you keep striving, a great lesson will have been learned.

REVIEW

1. An improper outer life disrupts the best intentions for a successful inner life.
2. Setbacks can be reconciled through penitence, vigilance and resolve.

Just Before Sleep Each Night

Another warning that would be wise to mention at this time is that quite often a brahmachari feels he is exempt from his daily disciplines just prior to sleep. He is

taking mental liberties and developing sexual thoughts. But, unbeknownst to him, through this practice he is deliberately opening the channel within his mental states to the area in the lower astral plane that he will enter when he drops off to sleep.

Naturally, taking these kinds of liberties, no matter how momentary, should be strictly avoided. If such lapses do occur, they should be corrected before dropping off to sleep by sitting up for a few moments and chanting AUM. For once asleep, you would continue in the lustful or morbid state for many hours. It is prayers to the devas and the chanting of the mantram to your personal Deity that should be the last thoughts and feelings prior to sleep. This, too, will open many inner doors--obviously, different ones than those opened through sexual fantasy.

Now you see that you are not alone on this inner path. Nevertheless, it is you who must master the skills that have been clearly outlined in this study, and in doing so build a strong, knowledgeable, spiritual foundation within yourself for your future life and that of your family. This is the path that lies ahead, of course, unless you renounce the world and go on into monastic life following the ancient path of the natha swamis.

This is bliss indeed to melt in love and realize forever the Being True, to rest in the calm of felicity, bereft of grief, and live always without fear of birth or death. You are not the five elements, nor the five senses. You are not the five sensations. Thou art Anima. May your life be an endless ecstasy of Being, illumined by the Truth that Anima is inseparable from Siva. Being in harmony, with mind subdued and serene. Restrain desire, anger and arrogance on earth. Be unattached like drops of water on the lotus leaf. Thus enlightened, may you live in tremulous awareness.

SIVA YOGASWAMI

REVIEW

1. The nature of your destination during sleep in the astral plane, whether wholesome or unwholesome, depends on your thoughts prior to sleep.
2. Prayers and chanting should be your preparation for sleep.

From Darkness Into Light

The mind of each individual tends either toward light or toward darkness. Depending upon the self-created condition of the mind, a person lives either within the light of the higher consciousness or outside of it, in the realms of darkness. What is it like to be in the light? It is as simple as sitting in a darkened room, closing the eyes in meditation and finding the entire inside of the cranium turning to light. At first, the experience of this light may only be a dim, pale

flicker, but eventually it becomes as bright and intense as the radiance of the noon-day sun. It all depends upon the makeup, or the composition, of the mind.

THE LIGHT OF UNDERSTANDING

People speak of the "light of understanding." Before the bright light of spiritual perception is experienced, the light of understanding must be laid as a foundation of philosophical training and appreciation--learning to understand life, for instance, through action rather than reaction. The purified, integrated mind, so perfected in its own understanding, lives in close communion with the soul radiance so that light becomes the constant experience of the mind. It is this to which the yoga student aspires. Living in the light, everything that formerly was hidden becomes revealed. Answers to questions that you had been pondering for many years become instantaneously unraveled in the light of the superconscious. But the mind has a way, in its instinctive, intellectual nature, of casting shadows over the natural radiance of the inner light. What are some of these shadow qualities that bring anguish & suffering?

Attachment is at the root of much suffering, for attachment to material objects or people keeps the soul bound in a limited dimension, incapable of expressing itself in full freedom. People who are deeply attached are prone to resentment, for they are not able to cognize the various experiences which upset them as they occur.

Resentment burrows deeply into the mind, undermining much of a person's creative endeavor. The reactionary conditions resentment is capable of agitating are subconscious, and cast a shadow upon the light of the soul for long periods of time.

REVIEW

1. The purified mind is naturally filled with radiant light.
2. If the inner light cannot be seen, this means the instinctive/intellectual nature is casting shadows of negative thought and feeling.

Dispel the Shadows With Light

Jealousy is another shadow or character weakness which stems from inferiority, a limited view of one's real Self. With an increasing control of the mind, an expanded consciousness is born which frees the bound soul from the experience of jealousy.

Anger. When the mind is attached to static conditions, pressures of various sorts build up and the uncontrolled mind releases itself to the emotion of anger. Anger is a good example of a state of consciousness which renders one blind to the existence of light in any degree.

Fear is another quality which undermines or robs the mind of its essential sanity. Fear is the inability to face a critical moment, but fear is a protective process of the instinctive mind, since it allows a person, at least temporarily, to avoid what he must later face. We must remember that what we fear we will attract to eventually face.

Worry is primarily a subconscious state brought on by the conscious mind's irrational jumping from one subject to another, unable to centralize on any one point long enough to complete it, stimulating the imagination into the unresolved and anguished emotion of worry. Worry also provokes fear.

Doubt, another mind weakness, is the by-product of the intellect's inability to cope with light. When a person depends upon memory or reason for meaningful answers, the mind will break down in doubt. Only when the higher elucidation of the intuition is sought is doubt dispelled.

By becoming conscious of the way the mind operates, it is easy to replace the shadows with shafts of light. Then you are strong enough to be kind when you could have become angry. You are spiritual enough to be generous when you might have reacted selfishly. As you sit in meditation in a darkened room, practice directing your consciousness inward, to the center of your brain. If you are able to perceive light within your body, you are living in the light. But should darkness prevail, work diligently each day to clear out resentment, jealousy, fear, worry and doubt from your nature.

REVIEW

1. Jealousy, anger, fear, worry and doubt are shadows of the lower nature.
2. Understanding your mind will enable you to dispel dark areas.

Be Equal to Whatever You Meet!

How do we actually dispel the shadows of the mind and then keep them from being recreated? The answer lies in finding a better way to react to life. It is accomplished simply by meeting everything with understanding. If you feel that everything happening to you is a play of universal love and you are able to maintain that consciousness of universal love in yourself, then you are beyond the happenings of the world. Lifted in consciousness, you can see through and enjoy all the states of consciousness. The circumstances of your life will reflect this change.

Watch for those small incidents that gently "get under your skin" and create an eruption a few days later. Little things that do not contribute creatively to your life are an indication that there is some kind of subconscious disturbance that you have not resolved. Look your nature right in the face in meditation, without

squirming, and you will discover that the little disturbance is some issue over which you are rationalizing, a small resentment or worry that is keeping a part of your mind confused, and thus, necessarily, most of your circumstances confused.

OBSERVATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Concentrate your mind when you are feeling confused and you will bring peace to its disturbed states. Peace is control, and control is freedom. Are you able to assimilate and understand everything you put into your mind? Or do you carry experiences with you for days, mulling over the past? Some of the things that you see, hear, read about or think about impress you deeply. Other things do not. Turning our backs on everything that may be unpleasant to us is not the answer, but if you observe your reactions as they are taking place and then later the same day turn a calm, detached eye to your experience, you will re-enter understanding through the controlled state of your meditation. Do not wait for muddy waters of the mind to settle down in their own good time when you feel confused. Rather, hasten your evolution by making your mind silent and composed by using a dynamic willpower to restore order when you feel least disposed to do so.

REVIEW

1. Meeting with love and understanding all that comes to us is the key to keeping the mind free of the shadows of confusion.
2. When you become confused or upset, review experience and pinpoint the disturbance. View it with love and detachment to restore order.

Personal Challenges for Chapter Seven

when completed Discipline

1. Practice the discipline, described in lesson 43, of looking inward during meditation and strive to see the moonlight- colored screen.
2. Study in your own experience the concept, described in lesson 44, that thoughts or feelings directed to other people establish temporary channels of communication with them.
3. Go to a temple. Take with you any accumulated problems that you are carrying in your mind and place them at the feet of the Deity to be dissolved in rays of light.
4. Repeat aloud the lovely verse by Siva Yogaswami in lesson 46. Meditate on its contents.

5. Check this box when you are able to see light within your mind, as described in lesson 47, even if it is just a faint glow.
6. Study the five weaknesses described in lesson 48 and determine which present the greatest challenges to you. Make a resolution to dispel them diligently as they arise.
7. When feeling confused, resentful, angry or worried, sit down and follow the instructions in the last paragraph of lesson 49 and successfully regain your natural composure.

PERSONAL QUIZ

Test your knowledge and personal experience of brahmachariya by asking these questions of yourself. You may enjoy writing down the answers and then researching through the course to see how correct you were.

1. What is brahmachariya?
1. Why are the Saivite precepts essential for a brahmachari or brahmacharini?
2. What should the brahmachari and brahmacharini avoid and why?
3. What can you as a disciple do to strengthen your relationship with your guru?
4. What can you do to strengthen your relationship with God and the Gods?
5. What benefits can one hope to attain through the practice of brahmachariya?
6. What did Siva Yogaswami mean when he described Saivism as the "Sadhana Marga?"
7. What are the yamas and niyamas?
8. What are the three pillars of Saivism?
9. Why is virtue so important for spiritual unfoldment?
10. Gurudeva says the object is not to eliminate desire, but to channel and control it. Please explain what he means.
11. What is transmutation?
12. How is brahmachariya both a goal and a practice?

13. Why are the reproductive fluids so sacred? What happens if they are dissipated?
14. How can one prevent sexual fantasies and nightly encounters?
15. What did you experience as a result of regularly performing the pranayama technique described in the course?
16. What happens on a psychic/astral level as a result of sexual intercourse?
17. How is a virgin who is practicing brahmachariya different than the brahmachari who has had encounters with the opposite sex?
18. What are some of the various ways that psychic connections are made with other people?
19. What does sanctification by marriage mean from an inner perspective?
20. How does the practice of brahmachariya help preserve Saivism on the planet?
21. Describe the practice of "walking away."
22. What can happen if the brahmachari is not honest with himself in the handling of awareness in relation to his vrata?
23. Please list from memory eight helpful practices for the brahmachari and brahmacharini.
24. What is transmutation?
25. Please explain the inner effects of creating sexual fantasies on your mental screen.
26. What practices have you adopted to protect your awareness during sleep?
27. Please describe the effect of your hatha yoga practice on your total being.

REGISTRATION FORM

You have come to the end of this course on brahmachariya and are to be congratulated. You may refer back to these lessons any time in the years to come. The teachings will serve you well throughout your life.

Perhaps you are interested in pursuing further studies. If so, here are a few questions to help us to get to know you. Please write the questions and your

answers on a separate sheet of paper. Please include your name, birthdate, nakshatra and religious background.

1. What teachings within the course were the most helpful to you?
2. Did the study of this course and the practice of its disciplines improve the quality of your life? How?
3. Do you have a guru or spiritual teacher? What is his or her name?
4. Did you take the brahmachari vrata? What changes did you experience as a result?
5. Do you use the name brahmachari or brahmacharini before your name?
6. Are you planning to marry?
7. Are you interested in monastic life?
8. Would you like to be registered with Himalayan Academy as a devout brahmachari or brahmacharini?
9. Are you studying *The Master Course*? If not, would you like to?

GLOSSARY

adharmā: That which is "not dharma"-- thoughts, words and deeds which transgress God's divine laws and the natural conscience of the soul. Adharma creates negative karma and keeps the individual ego-centered, in a low instinctive/intellectual mind state.

ahimsa: "Noninjury." *Ahimsa* is refraining from causing harm to others, physically, mentally or emotionally. *Ahimsa* is the first and most important of the ten yamas of ashtanga yoga, the cardinal virtue upon which all others depend.

ākāsha: "Non-visible." Inner sky, or ether. A broad term referring to the "fifth element" of the physical plane (earth, air, fire, water and akasha), perceived as the rarified space or fluid plasma that pervades the universe. Even more subtly, *ākasha* names the inner mind or superconscious stratum. It is through psychic penetration into the akasha that great cosmic knowledge is gathered and the entire circle of time, past, present and future can be known.

all-pervasive: Diffused throughout, or existing in every part of the universe, said of God Siva.

anava: The ego, sense of "I" and "mine," ignorance; separation from God. Denotes a sense of finitude and individuality. Derived from the word "anu" meaning an atom or something exceedingly small. One of the three malas or bondages: anava, karma and maya. Anava is the cause of the soul's mistaken sense of separation from God Siva, and the last bond broken at union or Self-Realization.

anma: The Tamil equivalent of *atma* (Sanskrit), *anma* names the soul, including the individual soul body and its essence, Satchidananda and Parasivam, in contrast with the outer self of individuality and personality with which a person commonly identifies.

aparigraha: "Non-desiring." The spiritual practice of disciplining the instinctive qualities of desire and greed. *Aparigraha* is the fifth of five yamas, or ethical practices, listed by sage Patanjali in his 2,200-year-old *Yoga Sutras*. (Note that *aparigraha* is not among the ten yamas listed in other scriptures.)

arati: Flame, usually ghee, camphor or oil lamps, waved before a holy person or the temple Deity image at the height of a puja as a means of psychically catalyzing the flow of shakti. The lamp is then passed to all devotees present, each one passing his hands through the flame and bringing it to his eyes, thereby receiving

the blessings or shakti. Also refers to the performance of such rites. Arati may also constitute an abbreviated form of puja.

arjava: "Honesty." *Justness, firmness, and honesty* all describe the quality of *arjava*. It is the restraint, *yama*, of wrongdoing and deception.

asana: "Seat or posture." Positions or postures used in hatha yoga and meditation; the third stage of the ashtanga (eight-limbed) yoga system codified in Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras* and discussed in numerous other scriptures. Padmasana ("lotus" or cross-legged pose) is a famed example, though many other postures exist which balance the energies of mind and body, promoting both health and serenity. *Asana* may also refer to the mat or place on which one sits during meditation. An important dimension of Natha sadhana.

ascetic: A person who leads a life of contemplation and rigorous self-denial for religious purposes.

ashram: "A place of striving." Holy sanctuary; abode or residence of a sadhu, saint, ascetic or guru who is engaged in religious instruction. May be a simple place where a guru and his disciples reside, a monastery or a communal institution with schools, guest houses, publishing facilities, charitable enterprises, etc.

ashrama dharma: That dharma (way of righteousness) which expresses the natural unfoldment of the body, mind and emotions through four stages of life: student, householder, elder advisor and religious solitaire.

ashrama: Any of the four stages into which a person's life is divided according to Vedic teachings.

ashtanga yoga: "Eight-limbed union." The classical raja yoga system of eight progressive stages or steps as described in numerous Hindu scriptures including various Upanishads, the *Tirumantiram* by Saint Tirumular and the *Yoga Sutras* of Sage Patanjali. The eight limbs are: restraints (*yama*), observances (*niyama*), postures (*asana*), breath control (*pranayama*), sense withdrawal (*pratyahara*), concentration (*dharana*), meditation (*dhyana*) and contemplation (*samadhi*).

asteya: "Nonstealing." Neither stealing nor coveting nor entering into debt. Among the traditional yamas, *asteya* is restraint of avarice and greed.

astikya: "Faith." Among the traditional *niyamas*, or ethical practices, of ashtanga yoga, *astikya* is faith in God, Gods, guru and the path to enlightenment.

astral: "Of the stars." Belonging to the subtle, non-physical dimension of the Second World. "Astral forces" exist in the Second World but can be felt psychically in the First.

astral body: "Body of the stars." Sometimes known as the emotional body, the astral body is the third most dense of the five interpenetrating bodies or sheaths (known in Sanskrit as *koshas*), through which the soul functions. The five bodies are: physical (*annamayakosha*), pranic (*pranamayakosha*), astral (*manomayakosha*), mental (*vijnamayakosha*) and causal (*anandamayakosha*). The astral body functions in the astral plane or Second World (*Devaloka*).

astral plane: The subtle, non-physical plane or *Devaloka*, the second of three primary worlds, or *lokas*, which include the *Bhuloka* (First World, or physical plane) and the *Sivaloka* (Third World, or causal plane).

Aum: Mystic syllable of Hinduism, identified in the Upanishads as standing for the whole world and its parts, including past, present and future, as well as for Paramatma, the Self of all things. "Aum" is the seed sound, the one undifferentiated primal vibration from which all manifestation issues forth. Associated with Lord Ganesha. Pronounced: "ah" "oo" "mm."

aura: A subtle, luminous energy field radiating within and around the human body as far as 3-7 feet. That part of the aura which surrounds the head is often represented by artists as a nimbus or halo to depict saints and enlightened beings. Though awakened souls have more brilliant and pure auras, everyone has an aura. Seen psychically, the aura is filled with many colors which are reflections of the thoughts and emotions active in the nervous system and change according to the person's state of mind.

austerities: Practices of strict self-discipline & self-denial.

awareness: Individual consciousness, perception, knowing. In the teachings of Saiva Siddhanta Church, awareness describes the soul's ability to sense, see or know. When awareness is aware only of itself and of no object, it merges into Pure Consciousness, Satchidananda.

bhakta: A devotee (same as *bhaktar*).

bhakti: Devotion; the expression of love for and surrender to God.

Bhuloka: The physical world perceived through the five senses. Also called the First World.

brahmachari: An unmarried man and spiritual aspirant who practices continence, observes religious disciplines, including sadhana, devotion, service and teaching, and who may be under simple vows.

brahmacharini: An unmarried, female spiritual aspirant who practices continence, observes certain disciplines, often relating to devotion, service and teaching children, and who may be under simple vows.

brahmachariya: "Godly conduct." *Brahmachariya*, among the ethical restraints known as the *yamas*, means sexual purity--the restraint of lust and other aspects of the instinctive nature. In its strictest application, *brahmachariya* is celibacy, complete sexual abstinence, as practiced by monastics and advised for all persons prior to marriage. Thus, the first phase of life, until age twenty-five, is called the *brahmachariya ashrama*, a time of studentship and transmutation of sexual energies into intellectual and spiritual concerns. In a broader sense, householders practice the sexual purity of *brahmachariya* by remaining faithful in marriage.

Brahman: A name for God or Supreme Deity in the Vedas. Descriptions of Brahman include the Transcendent Absolute, the All-Pervading energy, as well as the Supreme Lord or Primal Soul. Brahman is thus equivalent to God Siva in one or all three perfections.

Buddhism: The religion based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, known as Buddha. He refuted the idea of man's having an immortal soul and did not preach of any Supreme Deity. Instead he taught that man should seek freedom from greed, hatred and delusion, and enlightenment through realizing the Four Noble Truths and following the Eightfold Path. The Four Noble Truths are: the fact of suffering, the origin of suffering, the annihilation of suffering, and the Eightfold Path. The Eightfold Path comprises: Right Views, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Meditation. Buddhism migrated out of India, the country of its origin, and now enjoys a following of roughly 300 million, mostly in Asia.

celibacy: Complete sexual abstinence. Also the state of a person who has vows to remain unmarried.

chakra: "Wheel." A center of force and consciousness located within the inner bodies of man. Nerve plexes, ganglia and glands corresponding to principle chakras are located in the physical body, situated along the spinal cord from the base into the cranial chamber. Seven principle chakras, psychically seen as colored and multi-petalled lotuses, are commonly described, though many more exist.

conscience: The inherent knowledge or sense of right and wrong. Our conscience is the innate wisdom of our soul, along with all we have learned from our past lives.

conscious: Aware, sentient, able to feel and think; the ordinary waking state.

conscious mind: The everyday, thinking state of mind. We function in the conscious mind during most of our waking hours. One of the five states of mind: conscious, subconscious, sub-subconscious, sub-superconscious & superconscious.

consciousness: Perception, awareness, apprehension. There are many layers or levels of consciousness ranging from the ordinary, every-day consciousness of our body and mind to omniscient states of superconsciousness. Consciousness aware only of itself is Pure Consciousness.

creed: An authoritative formulation of the beliefs of a religion, a community and, by extension, an individual. A creed is meant to summarize the specific teachings or articles of faith, to embody and thus protect and transmit the beliefs. Creeds have arisen historically when a religion was transplanted from its country or region of origin to a new culture. Saiva Siddhanta Church's creed has twelve beliefs and an Affirmation of Faith.

dana: "Giving." A traditional niyama, ethical practice, *dana* is charity, giving creatively without thought of reward, including tithing and feeding the poor.

daya: "Compassion." Among the traditional yamas, moral restraints, *daya* is conquering callous, cruel and insensitive feelings toward all beings.

Deity: "God." Can refer to the image or murthi installed in a temple or to the Mahadeva whom the murthi represents.

deva: "Shining one." A Second World being living in the higher astral plane.

Devaloka: The higher Second World, wherein souls take on astral or mental bodies; deep within the First World.

devotee: A person strongly dedicated to something or someone, such as to a God or a guru. Often used interchangeably with disciple, though the latter term generally implies a deeper commitment.

dharma: Divine law; the law of being; defined broadly as the way of righteousness or "that which holds one's true nature." The fulfillment of an inherent nature or destiny. To "follow dharma" means to act in accordance with divine law.

dhriti: "Steadfastness, constancy." Among the traditional yamas, *dhriti* is overcoming non-perseverance, fear, indecision and changeableness, keeping the mind and emotions steady through all circumstances.

emanation: To "flow out from." In Saiva Siddhanta philosophy, God Siva creates and is His creation. Siva's creation of the world from Himself is described in scripture as being similar to "sparks issuing forth from fire" or "a web from a spider." This vision of cosmic creation contrasts with other views such as "creation out of nothing" (Judeo/Christian), or non-creation--a view in which reality is permanent and always existing (Meykandar Saiva Siddhanta and other dualist and pluralist schools).

ether: Word used most often to translate *akasha*. Most subtle of the five elements (earth, air, water, fire and ether) which make up the physical universe. Invisible essence which pervades all form and all other elements. In a broader sense etheric refers to the non-physical spheres (as in "inner ethers").

First World: The physical universe of gross or material substance in which phenomena are perceived by the five senses.

Ganesha: A Mahadeva or great God created by Lord Siva to assist souls in their evolution. The elephant-faced Patron of Art and Science, first Son of Siva, Remover of Obstacles.

Gods: Mahadevas, "Great Beings of Light." Extremely advanced beings existing in their self-effulgent soul bodies in the Sivaloka. Originally created by Siva, as all souls are, Gods have evolved to a constant superconsciousness as they govern, advance and assist all worlds. Gods are genderless, neither male nor female, but pure kundalini-energy beings.

grace: "Benevolence, love." Central religious concept denoting God's innate quality of giving and caring for creation. In Saiva Siddhanta, grace is both general and specific. In the general or cosmic sense, Siva's functions of veiling and revealing are termed grace--like a dutiful parent guiding the growth of a child, concealing that which the child is not prepared to face and revealing or teaching that which it needs to know to progress in life. In the specific or microcosmic sense, grace may be defined as receiving a gift from God, often as a result of spiritual striving or as a response to the devotee's love. It is bestowed upon those who are consistent in their spiritual discipline, bhakti and devotion, though what is attained by grace cannot be attained by any other means. For example, by his own efforts a yogi can obtain great control over his mind, but the final Self-Realization can only occur through the grace of the Guru.

grihastha: Householder; family man or woman. The period of human life after the brahmachariya ashram (studentship period) is over, the individual establishing a career, home and family.

gunas: "Qualities." Metaphysically, the gunas are fundamental cosmic qualities of nature. The three gunas are tamas (inertia, density, the force of contraction, resistance & dissolution), rajas (stimulative, restlessness, activity; the expansive energy of growth and movement) and sattva (quiescence, rarified, translucent, pervasive, reflecting the light of pure consciousness).

guru: "Remover of darkness;" guide. A teacher. Though it can connote a teacher of any subject, *guru* usually denotes a spiritual teacher or master.

Gurudeva: "The shining spiritual being who is the destroyer of darkness of ignorance." Part of the name of His Holiness Gurudeva Sivaya Subramuniyaswami. An affectionate, yet respectful term used to address the guru or spiritual master.

hatha yoga: "Sun/moon yoga." Ha and tha are the sun and moon nerves ending in the nasal region of the head. They correspond to the pingala and ida nadis--mental and emotional currents--flowing up, in a crisscross pattern, the sides of the *kundalini nadi: sushumna*. Through breath control--ha is inbreath, tha is outbreath--and the manipulation of the physical/ astral bodies through specific series of asanas (postures) and mudras (bodily positions), the ida and pingala currents are perfectly balanced and the yogi functions in his sushumna (kundalini) nadi. The yogi is then prepared for deep meditation, following raja yoga, or kundalini yoga under the guidance of a guru. Besides its spiritual benefits, hatha yoga results in purification of the subconscious mind and robust physiological health contributing towards longevity. Hatha yoga is an ancient Natha Sampradaya science--its first historical appearance being on the famous Pasupati seal from the 6,000 year-old Indus Valley empire. Hatha yoga is propounded in the Saiva Agamas, Tirumular's *Tirumantiram* and Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*. It was made famous by Gorakhnath of the Adinatha lineage in the 10th century C.E. From India, hatha yoga was exported to China and Tibet.

Hinduism: Often known as the Sanatana Dharma or eternal faith, or the Vaidika Dharma, the religion of the Vedas. The most ancient religion in the world; the only religion not founded by man. Encompasses a broad spectrum of religious philosophies ranging from pluralistic theism to absolute monism. There are three main sects: Saivism, Vaishnavism, Saktism--and liberal, non-sectarian forms, such as the Smarta Sampradaya.

Holy Kural: Another name for the ethical and moral scripture *Tirukural* ("Holy couplets"), written by Saint Tiruvalluvar on dried *ola* leaves over 2,000 years ago

near present-day Madras, South India. Saint Tiruvalluvar was a householder and a weaver by profession. His *Tirukural* or *Holy Kural*, written in the Tamil language, embodies a treasury of knowledge on conduct, human experience and Hindu dharma. In 1,330 verses, its advice ranges from household finance to affairs of state, from the bravery of warriors to the budding love of adolescents. Today the *Holy Kural* is widely studied as a guide to the practical application of religion in daily life. Acclaimed the "Tamil Dharma Shastra," it forms a cornerstone of virtuous living for millions of Hindus. It is a primary scripture of Saiva Siddhanta Church, whose members study it and refer to it often and apply its timeless wisdom to their lives.

homa: A ceremony dating from Vedic times in which oblations are offered into a fire built according to scriptural injunctions; a ritual to communicate with God, Gods and devas. Also called *yajna* or *havan*.

hri: "Remorse." One of the traditional niyamas of ashtanga yoga, *hri* is being modest and expressing shame upon committing a misdeed.

ida: Inner body nadi current, pink in color, that flows downward ending on the left side of the body. This current is feminine in nature, radiating a physical, emotional energy.

instinctive: In a religious context, instinctive and instinctiveness are used to describe the lower animal instincts of human nature--for example: greed, hatred, anger, fear, lust, and jealousy.

intellect: The ability to reason or understand; power of thought; mental acumen. An intellectual is a person who has great mental abilities and intelligence. Such persons usually have control over their instinctive nature, but may not be awakened to their higher intuitive nature.

Isvarapranidhana: "Devotion to God." Cultivating devotion through daily worship and meditation, the fifth of five niyamas listed by Sage Patanjali in his 2,200-year-old *Yoga Sutras*. *Isvarapranidhana* is essentially the equivalent of *Isvarapujana* (worship), the corresponding niyama listed in the *Sandilya Upanishad* and other texts which include ten niyamas rather than five.

Isvarapujana: "Worship of the Lord." *Isvarapujana* is worship, especially ritual worship known as puja in which devotion is expressed toward an image of the Deity. It is also internal worship, or meditation and is a traditional niyama of ashtanga yoga.

japa: "Recitation." Japa is the spiritual practice of devotedly repeating a mantram (sacred, mystic syllables), often while counting the repetitions on a mala, or rosary. Japa may be done silently or aloud. Sometimes known as

mantram yoga, it is one of the ten niyamas (spiritual practices) of ashtanga yoga, serving to quiet the mind prior to meditation.

Kadavul: An ancient Tamil name of Lord Siva; "He who is both immanent and transcendent."

Kali Yuga: "Dark Age." The Kali Yuga is the fourth age in the repetitive cycle of four phases of time the universe passes through. It is comparable to the darkest part of the night, as the forces of ignorance are in full power and many of the subtle faculties of the soul are obscured.

karma: Sanskrit word meaning "deed or act;" more broadly describing the principle of cause and effect. Also, the totality of our actions and their concomitant reactions in this and all previous lives.

kshama: "Patience." *Kshama* is the restraint of intolerance with people and impatience with circumstances. It is among the ten yamas.

kundalini: "Serpent power," the primordial cosmic energy in every individual which lies coiled like a serpent at the base of the spine and rises up the sushumna nadi. Through yoga it is awakened and made to rise up the chakras to the crown or sahasrara chakra.

Liberation: *Moksha*; release from samsara (the round of births and deaths).

loka: Habitat, region or plane of existence. A place of a particular level of vibration and associated beings, Gods, devas or men. Three primary lokas (*Bhuloka*, *Devaloka* and *Sivaloka*) and fourteen sub-classifications of the cosmos are designated in Hindu scripture.

Mahadeva: "Great Deva" or "Great Shining One." A name of Siva. Also used to denote any of the multitude of Gods--Ganesha, Muruga, etc.

Manikkavasagar: "He whose utterances are ruby-like." 9th century Tamil saint who contributed to the medieval Saivite renaissance. He gave up his position as prime minister to follow a renunciate life, recording his aspirations, pathos and yogic realizations in his poetic scripture, *Tiruvvasagam*.

mantra: A sacred mystic syllable, word or verse used in meditation and japa to quiet the mind, balance the inner bodies and attain other desired aims.

marga: "Path" or "way." Spiritual path.

mati: "Cognition, mind, will." *Mati* is the religious practice, niyama, of developing a spiritual will and intellect with a guru's guidance.

meditate: To think deeply and continuously. In yoga, meditation describes a quiet, alert, powerfully concentrated state wherein new knowledge and insights are awakened from within as awareness focuses one-pointedly on an object or specific line of thought. Meditation is the result of successful concentration; uninterrupted thought on a subject, leading to intuitive discovery. It is *dhyana*, the seventh of the eight limbs of ashtanga yoga.

metaphysics: "Beyond physics." The branch of philosophy that deals with first principles and seeks to explain the nature of reality and the origin and structure of the world. In recent times, metaphysics has come to include the study of phenomena such as reincarnation, astral travel, psychic people, chakras, auras, etc.

mitahara: "Little eating; moderate appetite." *Mitahara* is moderation in diet, avoiding over-indulgence. In the spirit of mitahara, one should not eat meat, fish, fowl or eggs, and avoid all foods which are not beneficial to physical, emotional and mental well-being. *Mitahara* is among the yamas, ethical restraints, of ashtanga yoga.

Moksha: Liberation from samsara, the round of births and deaths.

monastic: Monk or nun. Derives from the Greek word *monazein*, meaning "to be alone." Monasticism includes strict personal discipline and religious practice for the purposes of self-purification, unfoldment and service to others. This is a different word from monistic, the adjective form of monism (the doctrine that Reality is a one whole without independent parts).

muladhara chakra: The chakra located at the base of the spine and governing memory, time and space. The first of seven nerve plexes or centers of force and consciousness in the psychic nerve system of man, located along the spinal column from its base to the cranial chamber.

Muruga: "Beautiful one." A Mahadeva, Ganesha's younger brother, created by God Siva to assist souls in their evolution, especially through the practice of yoga.

nadi: Psychic nerve channel; the network, traditionally said to number 72,000, of subtle energy fibers that form the nervous system of the inner body. These nadis interconnect the chakras. The sushumna, ida and pingala are the three main nadis.

nakshatra: One of 27 principle asterisms (star clusters, also called Lunar Mansions) in the Hindu system of astrology. Usually refers to one's birthstar. In this sense, a person's nakshatra is determined by drawing a straight line from the earth through the moon at the exact time of birth and noting the group of stars

the line points toward. The nakshatra is an important factor in determining the characteristics of an individual.

Namasivaya: "Adoration (or homage) to Siva." The supreme mantra of Saivism, known as the Panchakshara or "the five letters." Embodying the essence of Saiva Siddhanta, it is found in the center of the central Veda (the *Yajur*) of the original three Vedas (*Rig*, *Yajur* and *Sama*). The meanings of the five letters are: *Na* is the Lord's veiling grace; *Ma* is the world; *Si* is Siva; *Va* is His revealing grace; *Ya* is the soul. Namasivaya is a mystic chant which should be given by an authorized teacher.

Natha Sampradaya: "Lineage of Masters." *Natha* means lord or master, one who has mastered the intricacies of his inner and outer bodies and realized Parasivam. *Sampradaya* means an established oral teaching tradition or lineage. The Natha Sampradaya is the oldest Saivite sampradaya existing today, currently consisting of two lineages: the Nandinatha lineage and the Adinatha lineage. Historically, the Natha Sampradaya first appears with Sat Guru Nandinatha and his disciples, including Tirumular, who powerfully articulated the Natha teachings in his *Tirumantiram*. Gurudeva Sivaya Subramuniaswami and his devotees are of this Nandinatha lineage of the Natha Sampradaya, the Siva Yogaswami Guru Paramparai being one stream of this ancient lineage.

niyama: "To unleash." The *niyamas* are ethical and religious practices which release or cultivate refined, soul qualities. These observances comprise the third limb of the ashtanga ("eight-limbed") yoga system codified in numerous Saivite scriptures including the *Sandilya* and *Varuha Upanishads*, *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* by Sri Gorakhnath, the *Tirumantiram* (circa 200 BCE) by Saint Tirumular and the *Yoga Sutras* (circa 200 BCE) of sage Patanjali. There are ten yamas and ten niyamas in all, though Patanjali listed only five yamas and five niyamas in his classic work, & these have become widely known. Along with the *yamas* (restraints), the *niyamas* provide guidelines for ethical, moral life and lay the foundation for yoga. The ten niyamas are: 1) *santosha* (contentment), 2) *tapaha* (austerity), 3) *dana* (charity), 4) *astikya* (faith), 5) *Isvarapujana* (worship), 6) *mati* (cognition), 7) *Siddhantasravana* (scriptural study), 8) *hri* (remorse), 9) *vrata* (sacred vows) and 10) *japa* (recitation). Note that Sage Patanjali's niyamas are *saucha* (purity, which other texts list as a yama), *santosha*, *tapaha*, *svadhaya* (scriptural study) and *Isvarapranidhana* (worship).

pancha nitya karmas: "Five constant duties." A traditional regimen of religious practice for all Hindus: 1) *dharma* (virtuous living), 2) *upasana* (worship), 3) *utsava* (observance of holy days), 4) *tirthayatrai* (pilgrimage) and 5) *samskaras* (observance of sacraments, known as *samskaras*, such as rites of birth, first feeding, marriage, etc.). While *dharma* and *upasana* are daily obligations, *utsava*, *tirthayatrai* and *samskaras* are periodic.

Panchakshara Mantram: "Five-lettered chant," the most sacred Saivite mantram, "Namasivaya."

Parasivam: "Transcendent Siva." Siva's Absolute Reality. That which transcends time, form and space and defies description; the Self-God.

Patanjali: A Saivite siddhar who codified the ancient practice of ashtanga yoga into the pithy and potent aphorisms of the *Yoga Sutras*. Lived around the 2nd century b.c.e.

penance: An act of devotion, self-denial or discipline undertaken to soften or nullify the reaction to one's past actions; "self-inflicted karma." Consciously relieving the karmic burden of wrongful actions by undergoing physical or mental hardships and challenges. Examples of penance are performing 108 prostrations in the temple, fasting and performing kavadi (carrying heavy and elaborate structures on shoulders for long distances).

pingala: Inner-body nadi current, blue in color, that flows upward, ending on the right side of the body. This current is masculine in nature, radiating an intellectual, mental energy.

prana: Vital energy or life principle; literally, "vital air," from the root *an*, "to breathe." Prana in the human body manifests further in five primary modifications, known as the *vayus* or "vital airs or winds:" *prana*, *apana*, *samana*, *udana* and *vyana*, each governing crucial bodily functions, and five auxiliary *vayus*: *naga*, *kurma*, *krkara*, *devadatta* and *dhananjaya*. Usually *prana* refers to the life principle, but it is sometimes used in a broader sense to mean energy, power or the animating force of the cosmos.

pranayama: "Life-force restraining." Science of controlling prana (life force or vital energy) through breathing techniques which dictate the lengths of inhalation, retention and exhalation; prepares the mind for deep meditation and develops psychic abilities. Fourth stage of ashtanga yoga.

pranic: Adjective form of prana, the vital energy which permeates the universe. Living forms are most charged with prana, but inanimate forms have their own low-level prana energies as well.

priest: A person whose function is to make sacrificial offerings and perform other religious rites for the benefit of devotees. In Hinduism, priests are servants of God and the Gods. They do not personally stand between God & the devotee.

psychic: "Of the soul or psyche." Non-physical, pertaining to the soul. Also the quality of being attuned to or adept at the more subtle psychic, or soul, faculties and energies. One who is so attuned, such as a medium or an accomplished yogi.

Psychic faculties include such extra-sensory perceptions as clairvoyance, clairaudience, precognition, psychometry and others.

puja: Agamic rite of worship performed to the murthi (home or temple image) to invoke the Deity and establish a psychic connection with Him in the inner worlds. During puja, the officiant (pujari) recites various chants praising the God and beseeching His blessings, while making numerous offerings in accordance with established traditions. These include water, sandalpaste, holy ash, flowers, unbroken rice, incense, light (the flame of oil, ghee or camphor lamps) and special food preparations. On special days additional offerings are made, and as part of the puja, *abhishekam* or ritual bathing of the Deity is often performed as well. The items blessed during the ceremony, known as *prasadam* or sacraments, are distributed to the attendant devotees after the rite. Puja is also performed to one's guru.

purusha: Male person in mundane usage, as in purusha dharma. When used metaphysically, however, purusha refers to the soul, neither male nor female.

purusha dharma: Man's proper pattern of conduct; observances, vocational and spiritual options available to a man that will most advance him in a given lifetime. The pattern for a woman is known as sthree dharma.

raja yoga: "Royal (or kingly) yoga." The eight-limbed ashtanga yoga as defined in Patanjali's *Yoga Sutras*.

rajasic: Having the quality of *rajas*, the second of the three *gunas* or fundamental cosmic qualities of nature as described in the Samkhya system--*tamas* (inertia), *rajas* (activity) and *sattva* (illumination, purity). The *rajaguna* is said to be the driving power animating the other two *gunas*. It is the stimulative, restless, expansive energy of growth and movement. (Literally, "sphere of mist or clouds," in the Veda distinguished from *sva*, "sphere of light.")

reincarnation: "Re-entering the flesh," describing the process of individual souls experiencing an orderly sequence of lives. Reincarnation provides the means for the soul to mature, and ends when all karmas have been resolved and Self-Realization has been attained. This is known as Moksha or Liberation.

Rig Veda: Oldest of the four Veda Samhitas (collections): *Rig*, *Sama*, *Yajur* and *Atharva*. Organized into ten mandalas (group patterns) of salutary and prayerful hymns, the Rig portrays a monistic Supreme Being-as-Cause-and-Lord-of-all cosmology, describes a pattern of dharma towards righteous and prosperous living in tune with the Gods. This scripture also details yogic disciplines leading to realization of the Absolute.

rishi: An old and venerated sage or seer, often a visionary who sees beyond the present time. Often refers to the sages, many of whom were householders, who codified dharma thousands of years ago in India.

sacrament: A rite that conveys a spiritual blessing. Used to translate *samskara*, any of the various temple or home ceremonies performed by a priest, such as name-giving, first feeding, beginning of formal study, marriage, death, etc. *Sacrament* also names the various sacred items passed out after a puja, such as holy ash, kumkum and holy water.

sadhana: "Effective, leading straight to the goal." The practice of spiritual disciplines such as meditation, japa, fasting, austerity, yoga and humble service. The goal of sadhana is to harness and transmute the instinctive/intellectual nature, allowing progressive unfoldment into the superconscious realizations and innate abilities of the soul.

sadhana marga: *Sadhana* means "leading straight to the goal," and *marga* means "path" or "way." Coined by Siva Yogaswami to describe the way he urged serious aspirants to follow--a path of intense effort, spiritual discipline and consistent inner transformation.

sahasrara: "Thousand-petals." Seventh chakra, located in the cranial chamber of the soul body. It is composed of 1,008 petals indicative of the God-powers of the Satchidananda state in which this chakra is awakened and fully functions.

Saivism: The name of the religion followed by those who worship the Hindu God Siva. One of the three primary sects of Hinduism, Saivism (the oldest of the three), is in turn divided into a number of distinct sects with diverse theologies. The primary goal of Saivism is Moksha, and the spiritual path of Saivism comprises four progressive stages of belief and practice called chariya, kriya, yoga and jnana.

Saivite: A follower of Saivism; also an adjective for *Saivism*.

Sakti: "Power, energy." Refers to the active power of Siva, popularly envisioned in the feminine form as a Goddess or devi--such as Parvati or Lakshmi. In Saiva Siddhanta, Siva's Divine Energy or Sakti is inseparable from Him. God Siva is perceived as a one Being, beyond yet encompassing the duality of male and female. When spelled Shakti, this term denotes impersonal forces such as *Iccha* (love), *Kriya* (action) and *Jnana* (wisdom), three Shaktis wielded by Siva.

sampradaya: "Tradition." *Sampradaya* can be understood in two ways. First, it refers to an oral tradition of teaching, such as a Guru of an established lineage verbally passing on eternal truths to his sishya. Second, it refers to an

established historical lineage, a living stream of tradition or theology within Hinduism.

samskara: "Impression." The imprint or traces left in the mind after an experience, whether in this or previous lives. Root impressions, especially from profound events, which mold character and guide actions. Also denotes ceremonial purification: one of a number of religious ceremonies performed at psychological moments through the Hindu's life, such as first-feeding, marriage, etc., and various ceremonies performed to restore something to its original purity.

Sankara: Also *Samkara* or *Shankara*. A name for Siva meaning "causing prosperity, auspicious, beneficent." Also the name of the 9th century monk, Adi Sankara, preeminent Guru of the Smarta Sampradaya. He is most noted for his non-dualistic Vedanta, for strengthening eclectic worship, ratifying 10 orders of sannyasins and writing prolific scriptural commentary.

Sanskrit: "Well-made, perfected." The classical sacerdotal or religious language of ancient India, considered an excellent vehicle of divine communication. Employed today as a religious, literary and scholarly language, but not generally used as a spoken language.

santoshā: "Contentment, peace." *Santoshā* names the practice, or *niyama*, of seeking joy and serenity in life, perceiving the perfect state of balance and perfection in God's creation.

Sat Guru: "True remover of darkness." A spiritual preceptor of the highest attainment, one who has realized the ultimate Truth and is able to lead others securely along the spiritual path.

Sat: Pure being or existence.

Satchidananda: "Truth, consciousness, bliss." Lord Siva's Divine Mind and simultaneously the superconscious mind of each individual soul. It is perfect love and omniscient, omnipotent consciousness, the fountainhead of all existence, yet containing and permeating all existence.

sattvic: "Of illumination, purity, truth." *Sattva* is the most subtle of the three *gunas* or fundamental cosmic qualities of nature as described in the Samkhya system--*tamas* (inertia), *rajas* (activity) and *sattva* (illumination, purity). The *sattvaguna* is rarified, translucent, pervasive, reflecting the light of pure consciousness.

satya: "Truthfulness." Among the traditional *yamas*, ethical restraints, *satya* means to refrain from lying, deception or betraying promises and confidences.

saucha: "Purity." *Saucha* means to avoid impurity in body, mind and speech, and is one of the traditional yamas, ethical restraints, of ashtanga yoga. (In Sage Patanjali's list of five yamas and five niyamas, *saucha* is among the niyamas.)

Self: Same as *Self-God* or *Parasivam*. The term *self* in lower case denotes the personal ego, one's individual identity or personality in contrast with the Divine Self.

Siddhantasravana: "Hearing the final conclusions; scriptural study." Among the niyamas of ashtanga yoga, *Siddhantasravana* is the practice of studying the scriptures and listening to the wise of one's lineage.

sishiya: A pupil or disciple, especially one who has proven himself and has formally accepted a Sat Guru as his guide in spiritual instruction.

Siva: "The Auspicious One." God Siva is all and in all, the one without a second, the Supreme Being and only Absolute Reality. He is both immanent and transcendent.

Sivaloka: Siva's "loka"--habitat, region or level of existence. Known as the causal plane or Third World, the Sivaloka is the abode of Siva, the Mahadevas and highly advanced souls. It exists deep within the Second World.

soul: The soul is an immortal and spiritual body of light, the essence of which is Satchidananda and Parasivam, eternal, uncreated and identical with God Siva. The soul animates life and reincarnates again and again until all necessary karmas are created and resolved and its essential unity with God Siva is realized. The soul is the atman of the Vedas.

sthree dharma: Conduct, observances, vocational and spiritual patterns that will most advance a woman in a given lifetime. The parallel pattern for a man is known as *purusha dharma*.

subconscious mind: The phase of mind beneath ordinary consciousness. Known as *chitta* in Sanskrit. The storehouse, the reflection of all previous experiences. All the past experiences of the soul (whether remembered consciously or not), unresolved karma and involuntary physiological processes lie in the subconscious mind. Negative areas of the subconscious mind can be detrimental to a person's spiritual and emotional well-being. Such can be discovered or resolved through meditation, penance, sadhana, temple worship, grace, etc.

superconscious mind: Satchidananda, the Divine Mind of God Siva and of all souls, for "there is only one mind." The superconscious mind is "the mind of light," of omniscient knowing, omnipresent awareness, pure consciousness, truth

and love. Within the individual, it is one of the five states of mind: conscious, subconscious, sub-subconscious, sub-superconscious and superconscious. The intuitive or knowing state of mind; "the mind of light." From another perspective, the superconscious is one of the three phases of the mind: instinctive, intellectual and superconscious.

svadhyaya: "Self-study." The study of truth, especially through religious scripture. The fourth of five *niyamas*, or ethical practices, listed by sage Patanjali in his 2,200-year-old *Yoga Sutras*. It is essentially the equivalent of *Siddhantasrava*, the corresponding practice listed in the *Sandilya Upanishad* and other texts which include ten *niyamas* rather than five.

swami: "He who knows himself." Title for a Hindu holy man, usually a *sannyasin*.

tamasic: "Of darkness or inertia." *Tamas* is the most crude of the three *gunas* or fundamental cosmic qualities of nature as described in the Samkhya system-- *tamas* (inertia), *rajas* (activity) and *sattva* (illumination, purity). The *tamaguna* is the quality of denseness, inertia, contraction, resistance and dissolution.

tapaha: The performance of purificatory spiritual disciplines, *sadhana*, penance, *tapas* and sacrifice; one of the *niyamas*, practices, in the *ashtanga yoga* system. *Tapaha* is from *tapas*, meaning "heat," or "fire," indicating the inner fire of transformation kindled by ascetic practices.

tapas: "Heat" or "fire." Denotes religious austerity, intense meditation, penance, bodily mortification or special observances. Connotes spiritual purification and transformation as a "fiery process" which "burns up" impurities, ego, illusions and past *karmas* that obstruct God-Realization.

temple: A place of worship of God or Gods. (An ancient Jewish term, later adopted by various religions.) Hindus revere their temples as sacred, magical places in which the three worlds most closely commune--special structures built according to *Agamic* specifications to channel the subtle spiritual energies of inner world beings. The temple's subtle or psychic atmosphere is maintained through regular worship ceremonies (*puja*) invoking the Deity who uses His installed image (*murthi*) as a temporary body and channel for His blessings. Also known as *koyil* (or *kovil*).

Third World: The causal plane or *Sivaloka*.

three pillars of Saivism: The guru, the temple and the sacred scriptures. Each of these is considered a distinct and necessary part of Saivite Hinduism.

tirthayatrai: "Traveling to a holy place." Pilgrimage. Among the pancha nitya karmas ("five constant duties") of Hindus, *tirthayatrai* is a devout journey to a temple or other sacred site, near or far. It is a time when spiritual matters are one's central concern, and worldly matters are set aside or placed before the Deity for assistance.

Tirukural: "Holy couplets." See: *Holy Kural*.

Tirumantiram: "Holy mantrams." The Natha Sampradaya's oldest Tamil scripture; written circa 200 B.C.E. Earliest of the *Tirumurai*, 12 essential canons of Saiva Siddhanta. Authored by Sivajnani Tirumular, the *Tirumantiram* comprises the essential teachings of the Saiva Agamas and is prized as a confluence of Siddhanta and Vedanta (meaning the original conclusions of the Vedas, not the later interpretation of Sankara's Mayavada Vedanta). It contains many esoteric teachings on kundalini yoga and spiritual unfoldment towards the enlightened state.

Tirumular: Siddhar, sage and yogi of the Natha Sampradaya who came from the Himalayas (circa 200 b.c.e.) to Tamil Nadu where he composed the 3,000-plus hymns of the *Tirumantiram*, tenth (but earliest) of the twelve *Tirumurai*. In this scripture he recorded the tenets of Saivism in concise and precise verse form, drawing upon his own realizations and the teachings of the *Saiva Agamas* and the Vedas.

Tirumurai: "Sacred (or holy) book." Twelve-book compendium of writings of Saivite saints. The first seven are known as *Devarams*. Of these, books 1-3 are the hymns of Saint Tirujnana Sambandar. Books 4-6 are hymns of Saint Appar. These latter two Saints lived in the 7th century. Book 7 contains the hymns of Saint Sundarar (9th century). The eighth book contains the two works of Saint Manikkavasagar (9th century): *Tiruvacagam* and *Tirukovaiyar*. Book 9 is the *Tiruvisaippa* and *Tiruppalandu*, which together comprise the works of nine saints. The *Tirumantiram* by Tirumular (200 b.c.e.) is the 10th book. The 11th book is a compilation of 10 saints. The 12th book is the *Periyapuram* by Saint Sekkilar (11th century).

transmutation: Changing a gross force into a finer one. Metaphysically, *transmutation* refers to changing or transforming the sexual/instinctive energies into intellectual and spiritual ones, and thereby bringing oneself into the higher nature.

unfoldment: A making known or laying open to view, especially in stages or little by little. Often used in the phrase "spiritual unfoldment" to mean the gradual uncovering of our soul or spiritual qualities through consistent religious practice, meditation and grace.

Upanishads: "Sitting near devotedly;" the name of the final portion of the Vedas; divinely revealed to rishis who thus expounded the ultimate nature of God, soul and world and answered the philosophical queries of devotees.

upasana: "Sitting near." Worship or contemplation of God. One of the pancha nitya karmas ("five constant duties") of Hindus. Upasana is to be performed daily without fail.

utsava: "Festivity." *Utsava* is the Sanskrit word for *religious festival* or *holy day*. It also names the discipline of observing holy days including festivals in the home and temple as part of one's yearly religious pattern. *Utsava* is one of the pancha nitya karmas.

Vedas: "Wisdom." Composed 1500-500 b.c.e., four companion scriptures--*Rig, Yajur, Sama, Atharva*--consisting of roughly 20,000 Sanskrit verses that form Hinduism's primary scripture (along with the Agamas). Transmitted to man from God Siva and the Gods through the superconscious faculties of the rishis, the Vedas are *sruti*, "that which is heard." Because the mystic knowledge described in the Vedas cannot be experienced through man's intellect, these scriptures are considered superconscious wisdom. Originally, the Vedas were passed down orally, only taking written form centuries after their inception. Each Veda is comprised of four sections: *Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas* and *Upanishads*. The *Samhitas* and *Brahmanas* detail a transcendent/immanent Supreme Being cosmology and a system of worship through fire ceremony and chanting to establish communication with the Gods. The *Aranyakas* and *Upanishads* outline the soul's evolutionary journey, provide yogic/philosophic training and propound a lofty, non-dual realization as the destiny of all souls.

vow: A solemn promise, oath or pledge, especially one made to God, dedicating oneself to an act, service or way of life. Hindus take vows, *vratas*, for many reasons, both mundane and divine.

vrata: "Vow." A religious oath. *Vratas* are personal promises to perform certain disciplines over a period of time, such as fasting, specific japa repetitions, worship or meditation, to enhance one's spirituality, establish self-discipline, invoke divine blessings and often to atone for misdeeds. Certain *vratas* are long-term, such as the *brahmachariya vrata*, the traditional promise to remain celibate until marriage or, in the case of the *sannyasin*, for life. As one of the traditional *niyamas* (practices) of *ashtanga yoga*, *vrata* means to fulfill religious vows, rules and observances faithfully.

Yajur Veda: "Wisdom of sacrifice." Second great Veda that contains, both in poetry and prose, the hymns and formulas chanted during ritual. This work is

divided into 40 chapters of 1,975 stanzas, about 30% of which are repetitions of the Rig Veda.

yama: "To rein, or restrain." The *yamas* are ethical restraints which check or curb the base, instinctive nature. These abstentions comprise the second limb of the ashtanga ("eight-limbed") yoga system codified in numerous Saivite scriptures including the *Sandilya* and *Varuha Upanishads*, *Hatha Yoga Pradipika* by Sri Gorakhnath, the *Tirumantiram* (circa 200 BCE) by Saint Tirumular and the *Yoga Sutras* (circa 200 BCE) of sage Patanjali. There are ten yamas and ten niyamas in all, though Patanjali listed only five yamas and five niyamas in his classic work, and these have become widely known. Along with the *niyamas*, ethical practices, the yamas provide guidelines for ethical, moral life and are the foundation for yoga. The ten yamas are 1) *ahimsa* (noninjury), 2) *satya* (truthfulness), 3) *asteya* (nonstealing), 4) *brahmachariya* (sexual purity), 5) *kshama* (patience), 6) *dhriti* (steadfastness), 7) *daya* (compassion), 8) *arjava* (honesty), 9) *mitahara* (moderate appetite) and 10) *saucha* (purity). Note that the yamas as listed by sage Patanjali's are *ahimsa*, *satya*, *asteya*, *brahmachariya* and *aparigraha*.

yoga: "To yoke or unite," connoting the process of yoking or fusing individual consciousness and awareness with superconscious awareness--the natural mind state of soul and God. This yoking process ultimately leads to a realization of identity, that our innermost consciousness and Absoluteness is and always has been that of God. Yoga is the third of the four successive stages (margas) of purification and enlightenment in Saiva Siddhanta--chariya, kriya, yoga and jnana. Yoga's culmination of samadhi in Parasivam, the Absolute, is the first step upon the jnana path. There are many legitimate forms of yoga--excluding bhakti and karma yogas which are preparatory practices--all of which lead the aspirant toward kundalini/raja yoga.

Yogaswami: "Master of yoga." Sri Lanka's most renowned spiritual master (1872-1964), Siva Yogaswami was a Sivajnani and Natha siddhar lauded by both Hindus and Buddhists. Trained in and practiced deep kundalini yoga under the guidance of his Sat Guru, Chellappaswami, who eventually gave him guru diksha, Yogaswami was in turn the Sat Guru of Sivaya Subramuniaswami, current Sat Guru of the Siva Yogaswami Guru Paramparai.

yuga: "Period, age." A time span, from tens of thousands to one million years, which is a single cycle within a four-yuga greater cycle. The four yugas are: Sat, Treta, Dwapara, Kali.