

isha

# FOREST FLOWER

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## NIRGUN

As there is nothing that  
I truly call as mine,  
neither this Body nor Anybody,  
neither this World nor the Other  
Neither Friends nor Foes belong.  
No fear of Losing, no anticipation of Gain.  
Here i am a Transparence without Substance.  
A Presence without Persona.  
A Being without Self.

Hence activity has become Stillness  
The Din of the world my Silence  
The very Cosmos my Being.

Grace & Blessings

*Sadhguru*

Dear Readers,

We certainly don't mean to scare you, but the amount of imprints all of us carry in our system may well be far larger than we can possibly imagine. In "Body Memories," Sadhguru explains why, and points out different ways to cleanse ourselves from them. An imprint of the positive kind, one that leads to ultimate wellbeing, is subject of the article "The Deepest Intimacy," that is the Guru-disciple relationship.

Having the best of intentions, but just can't get yourself to leave the comfort of your bed, take a cold shower, and start your hatha yoga practice in the morning? Or trying to give friends, family, or colleagues an understanding of yoga that goes beyond that of physical exercise? We have a piece of inspiration by Sadhguru for you: "Hatha Yoga – A Path to Liberation?" When it comes to the question of "Can Yoga Reverse the Aging Process?", allow us to anticipate Sadhguru's answer – Yes. Find out which practices are particularly beneficial in this context.

Indian fashion designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee took a break from his hectic schedule to participate in this year's Yaksha and Mahashivaratri celebrations at the Isha Yoga Center. He also grasped the opportunity to meet with Sadhguru for a conversation on a topic that is naturally close to his heart – "What is Beauty?" Read how the designer and the Mystic answer this question, from their individual points of view.

Also in this edition: Highlights of "Sadhguru's Recent US Tour" in pictures; "Getting High" – an excerpt from Sadhguru Spot on ecstasy without drugs; "Karna – Doomed from Birth" about the unfortunate circumstances that determined this great warrior's whole life and death; and our recipe this month: light, quick, and tasty "Spinach Tortillas with Mango Salsa."

The Editorial Team

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## *Sabyasachi Mukherjee in Conversation with Sadhguru*

***During his stay at the Isha Yoga Center on the days of Yaksha and Mahashivaratri 2016, acclaimed fashion designer Sabyasachi Mukherjee met with Sadhguru for a conversation on beauty, design, fashion, and yoga. Here is the first excerpt of their exchange of thoughts, moderated by poet and Isha meditator Arundhathi Subramaniam.***

**Moderator Arundhathi Subramaniam:** What is beauty to you?

**Sabyasachi Mukherjee:** Many things have been written about beauty, but I have always felt that beauty actually stems from acceptance of yourself, and from your comfort levels. The moment you are comfortable about who you are, you feel beautiful. I would say style is if a woman who is five-foot-one wears flats to a party, rather than heels. I think when you accept yourself, your confidence level attracts other people to you, and that is probably what true beauty is.

**Arundhathi:** And what is the beauty for a man?

**Sabyasachi:** I think it is comfort too. You see what happens with all of us in today's world. I will give you a small example. I don't practice yoga and I have not really been very kind to my body either, because of the pressures of the job. Now I was sitting at the Dhyanalina until the

bell rang – these were fifteen minutes I have spent with myself in a very long time. And I think most of us don't feel beautiful because we don't listen to ourselves – which is one of the reasons we always use clothing, brands, fashion, as a security blanket to feel good, without even knowing if it is really doing anything for us. On the contrary, it actually robs us of our confidence over time. So, whether it is a man or a woman, I think beauty starts with comfort.

**Arundhathi:** Sadhguru, what is beauty?

**Sadhguru:** If one has an eye for it, anything – whether it is a machine, an ant, a grasshopper, a human being, clothes, or a building – that fits and flows with the least amount of friction always seems beautiful. Right from my childhood, I spent a lot of time paying attention to every kind of creature, and I found how fabulously designed even a tiny insect is, in terms of color, geometry, and variety of activity. If you look at any kind of

creature, you will see how beautifully nature and evolution have perfected the design. Not only a large phenomenon like a sunrise or sunset – even the smallest creatures are very beautifully made.

If you measure how much activity, let's say, an insect performs compared to its size and the energy it consumes, obviously it is geometrically perfect, and functioning with the least amount of friction. Anything that is well-made has always excited me – whether it is a machine, a building, an insect, an animal, or a human being. When it comes to human beings – when they are joyful and exuberant, everybody's face is beautiful. To keep the body beautiful takes a little work. A lot of people are trying to take the shape of the planet. When I was growing up, almost all of us were skinny, because we were physically very active. Today, a large percentage of school children are overweight.

This does not mean that a round person is not beautiful. You can look at anything as beautiful. But if we are talking about beauty in technical terms, I think it is mainly about geometrical perfection. When the system operates with the least amount of friction, the very way it functions is beautiful. That holds true for everything. The dome of the Dhyanalinga, for example, is standing because of geometric perfection, not because of the strength of the material. The same applies to other buildings in the ashram as well, like the Adiyogi Alayam with its curved beams. We always sought to design every construction to be geometrically perfect, so that we need less material.

The evolutionary process has always looked at geometry. The planet is sticking to its pathway because it has achieved a kind of geometric perfection. If it goes slightly off its orbit, it cannot come back again. The entire universe is geometric perfection. If I look at a tree, a cloud, a man, a woman, or anything else – for me, it is first of all about the geometry – everything else comes second. Any form in existence that does

not find some kind of geometric harmony will not last – no matter what it is. The entire yogic system is about aligning your body to the cosmic geometry, so that if you sit here for two days, it is still no issue, because you have understood the geometry of the body.

**Arundhathi:** It is interesting that both of you, in your responses, don't mention the aesthetic as a separate category. For many people, the notion is that the utilitarian and the aesthetic are separate in some way. Certainly, when you, Sabyasachi, talk of comfort, you talk about utility as aesthetics. And Sadhguru, you are doing that as well, more fundamentally. Can inefficiency be beautiful? I'm thinking of something like a flower that has no utilitarian value for anything but the plant. But for the onlooker, it is of extraordinary beauty because of its symmetry and geometry – is that what you are saying?

**Sadhguru:** A flower is such a fragile thing, but it manages to stay intact as long as it needs to be in order to fulfill its purpose. Fragile as it is in terms of material, if there was no geometrical harmony, this would not be possible. In fact, in nature, everything is in geometrical harmony, because the very forces are like that.



# Body Memories

Sadhguru on Ways to Cleanse the System of Past Impressions



**Questioner:** You mentioned that if you have intimate sexual relationships with different people, it can mess up your energies. I find myself in such a situation. I left one relationship and now I am in another one, but I feel guilty and confused about it.

**Sadhguru:** Whatever guilt and confusion you feel is in your mind. That can happen to you anyway, even without any physical contact. What I was referring to in this context was *runanubandha*, which is a certain kind of physical memory. The body has its own memory. Today, there is a lot of scientific research to prove some of these things. Let us say for example, your father, when he was a child, liked to play with round objects, round pebbles, and things like that, and he developed a certain level of involvement with them. As his child, without knowing why, you will tend to choose similar things. It is proven that these repetitions happen. This is simply because you carry a certain genetic material.

Runanubandha is the physical memory that you carry within you. This memory can be acquired due to blood relationships or sexual relationships. When it comes to sexual relationships, a woman's body has much more memory. When it comes to genetic material, a man's body has much more memory. Generally, over eighteen to twenty-one years of age, a woman's body carries less physical memory than a man's body. The main reason why nature has done this is because a woman has to bear a child from a man who is not genetically connected with her. For her to carry the child to term, it is very important that her genetic memory is less.

Many women can vouch for this – the moment you get pregnant, without knowing why, your emotions for your parents and other blood relatives will fade to some extent. At least in India, when you are pregnant, you go back to your mother to seek her support, for practical reasons. But the emotional connection will decrease dramatically. This is part of nature's system to enable a mother to comfortably accommodate the genetic material of the child's father within her system. Otherwise, if the mother's body has too much memory of her

own parentage, the unborn child, which carries different genetic material, will struggle.

Runanubandha cannot be equated with the genetic factors that are being transmitted from parent to child, It is a physical memory of where you came from – not necessarily in terms of color of your skin, shape of your nose, how you are built, and so on. It is just that even if you as much as hold somebody's hand, you develop runanubandha. This is why in India, people greet you with folded hands. They do not want to acquire runanubandha. The same applies for passing on certain substances, like salt, sesame seeds, or soil – people never take them from somebody else's hands, to avoid developing runanubandha. Since this culture is essentially orientated towards liberation, this awareness and these sensitivities are there not to build bondage in life, but to keep it only to the extent that is absolutely necessary.

The body remembers any kind of intimacy – not only with another physical body, but with any physical substance. Certain types of substances have more of an impact than others. Now, do not start doing this here, but you will see, before a yogi sits down somewhere, he walks up and down, looks here and there, feels different places, and then settles down in a particular place. You know dogs do this too – they walk here and there, smell this out and that; only then they decide where to sit, because they are sensitive to what is suitable for their system.

You will only be conscious about these things if you are working in a certain way with your system. Otherwise, if every day, you are eating all kinds of things that you have no control about, if you are travelling a lot, you cannot maintain all this. But earlier, for long periods of time, people did not move anywhere. Even just two generations ago, most people would be born, live, and die in the same house. Today, you come in touch with many more people and substances, and it has become all the more relevant to be conscious of not developing too much runanubandha.

There are certain festivals like Pongal or Bhogi that are about clearing up your mental baggage,

your emotional baggage, and your runanubandha. At Linga Bhairavi, we are doing *Klesha Nashana Kriya*. You could consider it as a ritual fire wash, which you can make use of if a regular shower is not sufficient to get you clean. Klesha Nashana Kriya is a way of burning physical memories that you have picked up – not necessarily because of relationships. Just by coming in touch with people, situations, atmospheres, so many things, the body picks up memory.

When your body picks up physical memory from other human beings or substances beyond a certain point, it will cause a certain level of confusion, which is not mental but physical in nature. If the body is confused, it cannot be at ease. You may have noticed that on certain days, wherever you are, whatever you do – you somehow feel uncomfortable; your body seems to be confused. That is why we created various systems to cleanse the system from these types of memories.

There is fire wash, air wash, and of course, water wash every day. At the time in my life when I was into a lot of sadhana, I would have somewhere between five and seven showers a day, because your system becomes so sensitive. For example, you sit on a particular cushion, and you are conscious what this cushion is doing to you, so you want to wash it off by at least letting water run over your body. I did not calculate that I must take a shower five or seven times a day – I just took one when I felt like it. Most yogis have bath at least twice a day, at the minimum. Usually, it is a dip in the river – you dip in flowing water so that you are washed clean.

During certain seasons, like the shift of the Sun from the Southern Hemisphere to the Northern Hemisphere, and again, from north to south, the winds are strong on the Indian subcontinent. One simple process is to go and stand in the wind so that you get a proper air wash. It will do wonders to you. Try this – when there is a strong breeze, just wear something loose and simply stand there for half an hour, with your eyes closed, being conscious of it, turn both ways, so that the breeze flows over you from front and back. You will feel so much lighter and better.



In many ways, you pick up runanubandha, but sexual relationships have maximum impact in terms of the amount of memory that they leave, compared to any other kind of touch, or any substance you come in touch with. Even today, in the ashram, all the brahmacharis wash their clothes separately. This is because all of them are doing sadhana and everyone has their own specific characteristic – we do not want it all mixed up. Another way to prevent a mix-up is to coat the clothes with soil in every wash.

Sadhus and sanyasis always use finely sieved red earth to dye their clothes. The clothes are originally white, but because they are constantly washed with filtered earth, they turn mud color. Similarly, the buildings in the ashram are painted with soil and a certain adhesive for it to stick like paint. Those who are doing intense sadhana must either wash separately, or coat your clothes with some soil material every time you wash them, so that the only runanubandha that you have is with the earth – not with people or things around you. Apart from that, if you wear clothes that are dipped in red earth, in some way, it is a reminder for the body as to where it comes from and where it will go. Another way of doing it is to have a mud bath, like we do at the Rejuvenation Center. The idea of a mud bath is to clear everything.

Whatever you come in contact with will leave a certain memory in the body. If you do not distance

yourself from it, it will lead to physical discomfort, which, over a period of time, can destroy your ability to be exuberant. When the exuberance is gone, you cannot laugh fully, you cannot cry fully – in a way, you become a veteran of life. You should not become a veteran before you die. “Oh, I have seen this before,” this lack of freshness and spontaneity comes from excessive runanubandha, which is a result of physical contact.

There is sadhana to wash away the runanubandha. Another option would be to take to chanting to create a certain reverberation in the body, or as mentioned, you could get a fire wash done. This is not a question of guilt or ridding yourself of guilt. Guilt is a social phenomenon. What you feel guilty about essentially depends upon what people around you have told you is right and wrong in whatever society you live. Something you feel guilty about in one society, you would not feel guilty about in another society.

This is not about social conditioning – we are only looking at the existential aspects of life. Existentially, physical memory can cause confusion. When physical memory overlaps upon itself, it causes a physical level of confusion, which leads to a certain level of discomfort, lack of exuberance, and lack of involvement. You become less alive to everything around you. That is what I am concerned about – that you become less alive. But, as you see, there are many ways to fix this.



## PART 29

# Hatha Yoga – A Path to Liberation?

**Questioner:** Namaskaram, Sadhguru. Is there a connection between meditation and hatha yoga? And you said hatha yoga is a path by itself – can you elaborate on that?

**Sadhguru:** There are many dimensions to hatha yoga. One fundamental aspect of it is to knead the body. You know, if you make bread or chapati, you need to knead the dough well for it to turn out well. Similarly, the quality of your meditation depends on how well-kneaded you are, not only through hatha yoga or asanas but by life itself. Anyway, life is kneading you in so many ways. You can either enjoy it or suffer it. You can either mature and blossom, or get crushed by the process. This is the choice you have.

Hatha yoga is a kind of kneading – not just of the muscle but of every aspect of who you are. What you refer to as karma is embedded in every cell of the body and in every aspect of your energy. This becomes apparent when in the same process or activity, the energies of different individuals behave

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**What you refer to as karma is embedded in every cell of the body and in every aspect of your energy.**

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differently, depending on the type of memory their energy system carries. Kneading means trying to make your system so malleable that it has no power to influence you. You are taking charge of your life through the body.

There are different ways to take charge of your life – one way is through the body. Physically, it may be a little harder, but it is a sure path, because you immediately know what works and what does not. If you try to take charge of your life through the mind, you do not know whether you are going forward or backward. You do not know whether you are becoming malleable or crusty. You may think you are doing well, but people around you may say otherwise.

The body never lies – that is a good thing about it. The mind tells you all kinds of lies, all the time. People who do not trust the mind start off with the body. Hatha yoga can be an ultimate path, because body, mind, energies, and being are not separate entities. You can approach the same thing from different ends. The physical entry is a sure way, but a longer one. It is not even harder, except you practice hatha yoga only every now and then. If you only do it once in a way, then bending may be a problem. If you do it every day, you will see sadhana is not hard at all.

Hatha yoga is just one more doorway to ultimate



liberation, but it is physical in nature. If you are in a good physical condition, it is effortless and a beautiful way to go. If you have *asana siddhi*, which means you can stay in a posture comfortably and stably for long periods of time, meditation will be effortless. If you struggle with meditation, it is because certain parts of the body and certain aspects of the mind do not cooperate as they should.

The problem is you have not trained your body and mind to remain in one posture or point. Sitting down on the floor, you realize in what state your body is. Hatha yoga means keeping everything in the system flowing. If you do the right kind of hatha yoga, you will live long, because you do not allow death to crop up in your system. Otherwise, rigor mortis is slowly creeping in – slowly, the body is becoming stiff.

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**Hatha yoga can make meditation a joy.**

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Hatha yoga can make meditation a joy. Likewise, if you train your mind to stay focused on something, meditation will be effortless. If both your body and your mind are well-trained, meditation will not be difficult. Hatha yoga *can* lead to *asana siddhi*. If you attain to *asana siddhi*, your body becomes still. You can simply sit there, and you will naturally become conscious.

Stillness is of many different levels. If you become totally still, you are in meditation, without any effort. The only effort is managing to sit in one place and to keep your mind where you want it

to be. Right now, both the body and the mind are not listening to you – they are hopping all over the place. If I make you sit here for one-and-a-half hours, your legs will be telling their own story. If I make you sit for two hours or more, your bladder will be telling its own story. You will not care about heaven or enlightenment anymore – there will be only one place you want to go. For some people, it is food; for others, it is sexuality or some other physical compulsion that rules their lives. Once these compulsions come up, everything else get obliterated. There are many ways to fix this.

Once, a young woman was in a cinema. While the movie was on, she went to the bathroom. When she came back, she tapped a man who was sitting at the end of the row on the shoulder and asked him, “Did I step on your toes when I left?” He said, “Yes,” thinking she wants to apologize. She said, “Well, then this is my row.” People display compulsions in so many different ways. When you have a body, some compulsions are there – you have to eat, sleep, go to the bathroom, and things like that – but that should not determine the direction of your life.

One meaning of the word *hatha* is being adamant. No matter if your body, mind, emotions, or your family like it or not, you get up in the morning and do your hatha yoga. It takes a certain adamancy to break the compulsiveness of your physical body. The body has a million years of evolutionary history behind it. It has its own tendencies, intentions, and compulsions. It will not give in easily. Generally, there are two meals a day in the ashram. Between

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**What you are trying to work through are the compulsive cycles of karma.**

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the first meal at ten o'clock in the morning and the second one at seven o'clock in the evening, people get hungry. You come and sit in the Bhiksha Hall for dinner. The volunteers who are serving are taking their own time. Then the food is in front of you; you want to eat. The volunteers are doing the

invocation slowly, but you wait until they are done.

All this is part of hatha yoga. You are adamant about not only keeping the body aware but the mind too. The physical needs of the body are still there, but you slowly overcome the compulsiveness. If there is no compulsiveness in your system and you sit here, without the need for instructions, you are in meditation. What you are trying to work through are the compulsive cycles of karma. If you break all compulsiveness by using your body alone, it may take a certain amount of time and effort, but it is a fantastic thing to do.

Hatha yoga is not just about bending and twisting the body. Essentially, it is about consciously working towards eliminating all that is compulsive in us – compulsions that we have carried on over

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**The essence of being human is the possibility to move from compulsiveness to consciousness.**

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millions of years of evolution. What distinguishes human beings and animals, or, in other words, the essence of being human is the possibility to move from compulsiveness to consciousness. Only if you transcend your compulsiveness completely, are you a full-fledged human. Otherwise, you are not a human being, you are a human becoming. We could call it “Project Human.”

**For dates and details of Isha Hatha Yoga programs, visit [www.ishahathayoga.com](http://www.ishahathayoga.com).**




## Hatha Yoga Teacher Training Program


19 July – 13 December 2016

This 21-week program, devised by Sadhguru, is a wonderful opportunity to receive training in classical Hatha Yoga. Participants will be trained to teach Upa-yoga, Angamardhana, Surya Kriya, Yogasanas, Bhuta Shuddhi, and more.



Upon successful completion of the training, participants will be able to teach in a variety of settings including their own studio, workshops, and private Hatha Yoga lessons.

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## PART 19

# mahabharat

## Karna - Doomed from Birth

As a young girl, Kunti once pleased the sage Durvasa with her hospitality, and as a token of appreciation, he gave her a mantra with which she could call any god she wanted. One day, she wanted to try it out. She went outside, saw the sun coming up gloriously, and spontaneously said, "I want the Sun God." The Sun God came and impregnated her, and she bore a child. Being an unwed mother of fourteen years of age, she did not know how to face the social situation. She put the child in a wooden box and let him float in the river, not knowing what his fate would be. She struggled with that, but she was a woman with a sense of purpose. Once she was clear about the purpose, she would do anything. Everything was warm about her, except her heart.

Adhiratha, a charioteer in Dhritarashtra's palace, who happened to be at the riverside, noticed this ornate box, picked it up, and opened it. When he saw the little infant, he was delighted. He was childless and considered this as God's gift to him. He took the box with the baby to his wife Radha. Both of them were overjoyed. Looking at the nature of the box, they knew it could not be from an ordinary home, that a queen or king must have abandoned this baby. They did not know who, but they were too glad they got this child, who filled their childless life.

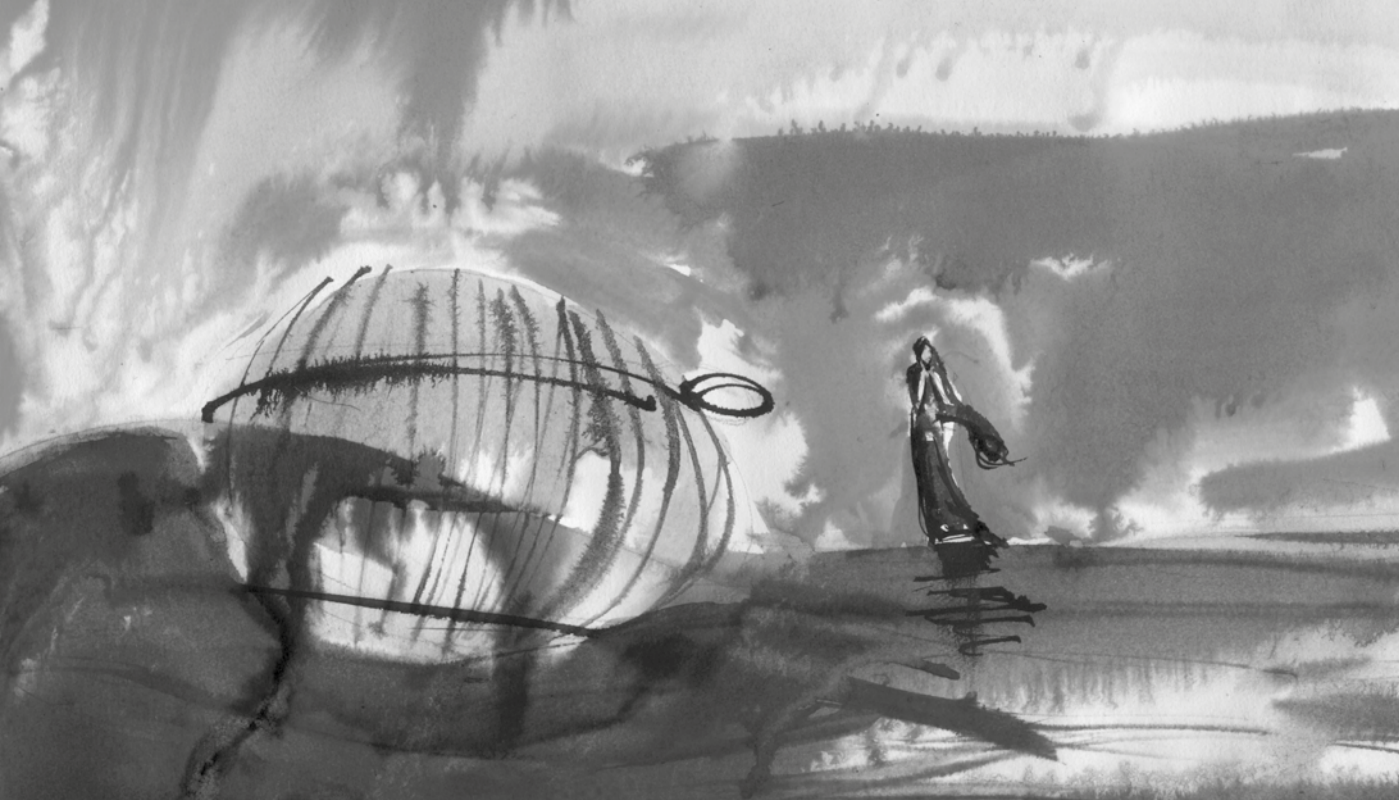
Karna, as he came to be known, was a child of destiny, and that too, an extraordinary one. As an infant, he already had golden earrings and a kind of a natural armor around his chest. He looked phenomenal. Radha brought him up with utmost love. Being a charioteer, Adhiratha wanted to teach him how to drive a chariot, but Karna was burning to

become an archer. In those times, only Kshatriyas, members of the fighting class, were entitled to receive training in martial arts and weapons. This was a simple way of protecting the power of the king. If everyone learnt how to use weapons, there would be no control over their usage. Not being a Kshatriya, Karna was not accepted by any teacher.

Prior to handing over his *astras* to Drona, Parashurama put the condition that Drona should never teach a Kshatriya anything about these powerful weapons. Drona promised him this but went straight to Hastinapur and sought employment with the king to teach the Kshatriyas how to use these weapons. That is how he was – an ambitious man; principled but unscrupulous. He knew all the dharma, shastras, rules, and scriptures, but he had absolutely no scruples. A great teacher, but a crooked and greedy human being.

Before Drona came to Hastinapur, both the Pandavas and the Kauravas were trained by Kripacharya in martial arts. One day, the boys were playing ball. In those times, balls were not made of rubber, leather, or plastic – they were usually made of weeds that were rolled up tightly. The ball accidentally fell into a well. They saw it floating in the well but no one had a clue how to get it out, because the well was deep and did not have steps.

Drona came by, looked at the situation, and asked, "Are you not Kshatriyas?" They said, "Yes, we are." "Then don't any of you know archery?" Arjuna said, "Yes, I am archer, and I want to be the greatest archer in the world." Drona sized him up and replied, "If you are an archer, why can't you get this ball out?" They asked, "How can we get a ball out from a well with archery?" He said, "I will show you." He took a stiff blade of grass and shot it into the ball. It stuck out from the ball, and he shot a succession of blades into each other, so that they formed a kind of rod with which he could pull out the ball. The boys were amazed at his skill – it almost seemed like magic. They asked him to teach them how he did it. Drona said he would not, unless they accept him as their guru. The boys took him to Bhishma. Bhishma immediately



recognized Drona – he knew who he was and he appreciated his competence. He employed him as the Rajaguru, which is a teacher of future kings.

The training under Dronacharya started, and with it, the competition between the Pandavas and the Kauravas. After a few years of training, they all grew to become great warriors. With the lance or the spear, Yudhishtira was the best. With the mace, Bhima and Duryodhana were equal. They would fight themselves to exhaustion without one being able to beat the other. When it came to archery, Arjuna stood out. In swordsmanship and horse riding, Nakula and Sahadeva dominated.

In his desire to become a great archer, Karna went to Drona, but the latter rejected him, calling him a *suta putra*, which literally means “son of a charioteer” and implied that he was low-born. This vilification stung Karna deeply. The constant discrimination and insults he was facing turned a very honest and forthright man into an extremely mean one. With every time he heard someone call him *suta putra*, his meanness rose, to levels that were uncharacteristic of his original nature. Since Drona rejected him for not being a Kshatriya, Karna decided to go to Parashurama, who was the greatest martial arts teacher.

In those times, martial arts included not only hand-to-hand combat but all kinds of weapon training, with a particular emphasis on archery. Karna knew Parashurama would accept only Brahmanas as disciples. In his eagerness to learn, he put on a fake sacred thread, went to Parashurama, and pretended to be a Brahmana. Parashurama took him as a disciple and taught him everything he knew. Karna learnt extremely fast. No other disciple had that kind of natural skill and competence. Parashurama was greatly pleased with him.

At that time, Parashurama was already old. One day, when they were training in the forest, he felt very tired and faint. He told Karna that he needed to lie down. Karna sat down so that Parashurama could put his head on Karna's lap, and Parashurama dozed off. A blood-sucking worm crawled into Karna's lap and started sucking on his thigh. He was in great pain and bleeding, but he could not remove the worm without disturbing his guru's sleep, which he did not want to do. Slowly, the blood started to reach Parashurama's ear, and this sensation woke him up. He opened his eyes and saw that he was full of blood. “Whose blood is this?” he asked. Karna said, “It is mine.”

Then Parashurama noticed the open wound on Karna's thigh, with the blood-sucking worm biting deep into the muscle, and still, this boy just sat there, unmoving. Parashurama looked at him and said, "You cannot be a Brahmana – if you were, you would have screamed – even for a mosquito bite, you would scream. You must be a Kshatriya to bear this kind of pain and not even wince or move." Karna said, "Yes, I am not a Brahmana. Please don't be angry with me." Parashurama flew into a rage, "You idiot, you think you can come here, wear a false sacred thread and deceive me to get all this out of me? I will curse you." Karna begged, "Please – I am not a Brahmana, but I am not a Kshatriya either. I am a suta putra, so it was only half a lie."

Parashurama did not listen to him. The moment he saw the situation, he rightly presumed that Karna was a Kshatriya, and he said, "You have deceived me. You will enjoy what I have taught to you, but when it really matters, you will forget the mantras that you need, and that will be your end." Karna fell at his feet and begged, "Please don't do this. I am not a Kshatriya, and I had no intention of deceiving you. It is just that I have been dying to learn and no one else was willing to teach me. You were the only one who would allow a non-Kshatriya to learn."

Parashurama's temper cooled and he said, "But still, you lied. You should have explained the situation to me. You should have debated with me. But you should not have lied to me. I cannot take back the curse, but I see your longing is not for archery, kingdoms, or power – your longing is just for glory, and you shall have it. People will always remember you as a glorious warrior, but you will neither have power nor a kingdom, nor will you be known as the greatest archer. But your glory will live for always, and that is all you are longing for."

With this curse on him, Karna wandered on. He was glad he received this training, glad about his own talent – but where to express it? Only a Kshatriya could enter a battle or a competition. He could shoot anything blind, but he could not show off his skills. All he sought was glory, but it was denied to him. Despondent, he walked southeast and sat on the seashore, somewhere near Konark

in the present state of Odisha, at the spot where the sun's grace could be best received. Probably in his memory, the famous Sun Temple in Konark was built.

He started performing austerities and sat in meditation for days on end. There was nothing to eat, but in spite of that, he continued to sit and meditate. When he got very hungry, he caught a few crabs and ate them, which nourished him but only increased his hunger. After a few weeks of sadhana, his hunger was bigger than anything else. In this state, he noticed an animal moving in the bushes. He thought it must be a deer, took his bow and arrow, shot it blindly, and heard the arrow hit the mark. He pictured satisfying his hunger with venison. But when he went into the thicket, to his horror, he found it was a cow.

Killing a cow was considered the worst that an Arya could do. Horrified, he looked at the cow, and the cow looked back at him with a soft, gentle glance, before closing her eyes for good. He was distraught – he did not know what to do. Just then, a Brahmana came by, looked at the dead cow, and started wailing. He said, "You have killed my cow! May you be cursed. You look like a warrior, so I curse you that when you are in battle and it really matters, your chariot will sink into the earth so deeply that you cannot recover it anymore. And you will be killed when you are helpless, as you killed this helpless cow." Karna fell at his feet and begged, "Please – I was too hungry. I did not know it was a cow. If you want, I will give you a hundred cows instead." The Brahmana said, "This cow was not just an animal for me. She was dearer to me than anything else. For this offer to replace the irreplaceable, I curse you even more."

With double curse, Karna moved on, not knowing where to go. He could shoot a speck of dust with his arrows, but what was the use? He was not a Kshatriya – no one would let him join a contest, let alone a battle. He kept wandering around, aimlessly.

*To be continued*

# Can Yoga Reverse the Aging Process?

**Questioner:** Sadhguru, can you give us some tips on how to cope up with the aging process?

**Sadhguru:** One thing is – do not grow old. Years will roll by; some things about the body will change, but you do not have to grow old. There is an option to actually maintain and even reverse your cellular age. Though your chronological age increases, though your physical agility and certain other aspects may decrease, on another level, you do not have to age. If you do the *Shakti Chalana Kriya* every day, in about eighteen months of proper practice, it makes you five years younger than what you are right now, on a cellular level.

If you live to be eighty-four, or, in other words, once you have seen 1008 full moons, you must make space for the younger ones. By the time you are eighty-four and you are ready to die – hopefully sitting, consciously, not in the local hospital – you should feel like you are fifty, fifty-five, in spite of your chronological age. The simple practice of *Shakti Chalana Kriya* can do that. If you combine it with hatha yoga, you can remain reasonably agile on a physical level too. You will not be able to do the things you did when you were eighteen or twenty anymore, of course, but you will be well enough to move around without dragging yourself. Halting or even reversing one's cellular age is something everyone can do for oneself.

## The Deepest Intimacy

Sadhguru on the Guru-Disciple Relationship

**Questioner:** Namaskaram, Sadhguru. You have said that the Guru-disciple relationship is the most intimate of relationships. Can you explain?

**Sadhguru:** Unfortunately, in common language use, most people understand intimacy as two bodies coming together. Two bodies coming together is not real intimacy. It is muck coming together. The physical body is gathered from the earth. Right now, you may be identified with your body and attracted to another body. But if such a body is broken and lying on the street, or even if you open up the body, you will not find it great anymore. True intimacy means something within you touches something within someone else.

Thoughts, too, are muck that you gathered from the world. You and someone else may have similar thoughts at times, but they are coming from two sources of accumulation. They never can be intimate. Emotions may seem intimate

because they are juicy, compared to thoughts. But closeness of the body, closeness of thought, and closeness of emotion do not bring real intimacy. Intimacy will happen only when someone is able to touch something in you that is beyond the body, beyond the mind, and beyond emotions, something that you yourself did not know existed.

In that sense, there is a lot of intimacy in the Guru-shishya relationship. I may not know your name, but I am very intimate with you – more intimate than you have been with anyone in your life. Maybe, in terms of thoughts and emotions, you do not like me – that is good for me. I am not trying to be popular. But you cannot escape the intimacy on another level. If someone touches you while you are fast asleep, you will not know they touched you, unless you come awake at that moment. The Guru-disciple relationship is just like that. Anyway you are touched. If you come awake, you will know that you have been touched.



## Getting High

*Excerpt from Sadhguru Spot of 13 April 2016*

The marijuana enthusiasts out there often ask me if they can use weed or other drugs as a way to enlightenment. After all, Shiva has this image of a stoner. It has happened to me many times in the Himalayas and other place that some sadhus invited me to smoke weed with them, because they thought I smoke. If you look into my eyes, you will see I am always stoned, without taking any substance. Everything that you want to experience is already in your system.

Most chemicals that we put into the system to have some kind of experience only stimulate something within us. Now the question is, are you on self-start or push-start? If you know how, you can sit here in bliss without having to put any substance into your system. Shiva was always high – no question about that. But he was not such a cripple that he needed chemicals from outside. Shiva was not using substances – he is the substance. I can make that happen for you. If you can be with me in a certain way, I can have you all stoned, because the substance is not outside – the substance is within.

Those who want to emulate Shiva, can you do everything else that he did? First you must sit unmoving for three months – then maybe you

can smoke. The following happened when Adi Shankara crisscrossed India, from Kerala in the south to Badrinath in the north and back, from east to west, before he left at age thirty-two. In between, he produced thousands of pages of literature. He was walking briskly. A bunch of his disciples trotted behind him.

Then he saw a drink shop outside a village. A few people were hanging around there, drinking. Shankara looked at them in their inebriated condition. They looked at him. You know, drunkards tend to think they are having the best time and everyone else is missing it. They made some comments. Without a word, Shankara walked into the shop, took a potful of arrack, drank it, and walked away.

His disciples witnessed the scene. Shankara started walking briskly again. They were trotting behind him. Among themselves, a discussion came up – “When our Guru can drink, why can't we?” They just needed an excuse. He knew what was going on. When they came to the next village, there was a blacksmith at work. Shankara picked up a vessel with molten iron, drank it, and walked on. The disciples knew they did not want to drink that.



Shiva was always stoned for sure, but not with something as petty as weed. By smoking marijuana, all that is happening is you are feeling a little smoked out and hazy in the head. If getting hazy is spirituality, then I do not want to be spiritual. For me, the biggest thing is living in crystal clarity. Clarity can be intoxicating. When you do something for which you need to be super alert, there is a kind of intoxication in that. That is why people are jumping off airplanes or doing other incredibly risky things.

To some extent, you can achieve intoxication through physical activities. If you can stimulate a state of intoxication in you without any outside substance or activity, then there is an element of Shiva in you. If you can simply sit here and be so super alert that you are high, that is the way to do it, not by smoking weed. Leave the weeds for the cows. Human beings can do better things. Those who are smoking weed generally seem peaceful. When you are hazy, you are peaceful, but that peace is of no value. They will not be peaceful if you take away the substance.

Today it has become legal in many states in America, and major corporations are getting into this business. If some day, they bring Coca Smoka on the market, you should not be surprised. From selling drinks with carbon dioxide to selling products with marijuana – you may think that is an improvement. Your brains will shrink. Because you do not know how to handle your brain, which is not your making – it has evolved over so many generations to where it is now – you want to smoke it down, so that it feels peaceful. That is not the answer.

If you have not found any better use for your brain than freaking out, with marijuana, at least you will simply sit somewhere and not bother anyone. If you have found a better use for your brain, if you can do something worthwhile, creative, and useful with it, then smoking weed is not the way to go. There is nothing spiritual about any chemical.

## Substance Abuse

To be sober is dreary  
But inebriation takes you  
away from all that is reality

How to dwell in the empty  
room of dry lifeless logic.

Logic through the day and  
inebriation at the end of the day  
logic through the week and  
inebriation for the weekend  
logic at work and inebriation  
for the vacation. Say the compromisers

Come! I have a substance  
that leaves you in throes of ecstasy

And peak of alertness at once.  
No need for secrecy, no one  
will find us in our within.

Let us abuse the substance  
without dimension but within  
let us get super sober and stoned

Love & Grace,



# Sadhguru's Recent US Tour

*Event Highlights in Pictures*



Jonathan Coslet in conversation with Sadhguru at The Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.



Event with Sadhguru at The Standard hotel, East Village, New York, N.Y.



Shambhavi Program with Sadhguru in Atlanta, Ga.



Annette Dixon, World Bank Vice President, South Asia, in conversation with Sadhguru at the World Bank, Washington, D.C.



Sadhguru with Jagadguru Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Mahaswamiji at the Decennial Celebrations of the JSS Spiritual Mission in Gaithersburg, Md.



Bhava Spandana with Sadhguru at the Isha Institute of Inner-sciences (iii), McMinnville, TN, USA

# ishanga 7%

a Partnership with Sadhguru

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**– Sadhguru**

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**Contact: 94425 04655 / 94425 04737;  
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## UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

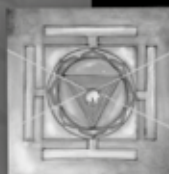


Date	Program	Place	Contact
7–10 Jun 2016	<b>Bhava Spandana (Gents)</b>	Isha Yoga Center, Velliangiri Foothills, Coimbatore – India	83000 93555 / 0422-2515300 iycprograms@ishayoga.org
11–14 Jun 2016	<b>Bhava Spandana (Ladies)</b>	Isha Yoga Center, Velliangiri Foothills, Coimbatore – India	83000 93555 / 0422-2515300 iycprograms@ishayoga.org
15–19 Jun 2016	<b>Ayur Rasayana Intensive</b>	Isha Yoga Center, Velliangiri Foothills, Coimbatore – India	0422-2515464 / 94890 45084 isharejuvenation@ishafoundation.org
16–19 Jun 2016	<b>Inner Engineering Retreat</b>	Isha Yoga Center, Velliangiri Foothills, Coimbatore – India	94890 45164 / 0422-2515300 ieretreat@ishayoga.org
16–19 Jun 2016	<b>Shoonya Intensive</b>	Isha Yoga Center, Velliangiri Foothills, Coimbatore – India	83000 11111 iycprograms@ishayoga.org
23–26 Jun 2016	<b>Inner Engineering Retreat</b>	Isha Yoga Center, Velliangiri Foothills, Coimbatore – India	94890 45164 / 0422-2515300 ieretreat@ishayoga.org
2 Aug 2016	<b>Yantra Ceremony with Sadhguru</b>	Isha Yoga Center, Velliangiri Foothills, Coimbatore – India	94890 45136 yantra@lingabhairavi.org

Current at the time of print, however subject to change. For full program schedules and updates, please visit our website: [www.ishafoundation.org](http://www.ishafoundation.org).

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# Yantra Ceremony

with Sadhguru  
Aug 2nd, 2016

To register: 9489045135/33  
[yantra@lingabhairavi.org](mailto:yantra@lingabhairavi.org)



# SPINACH TORTILLAS WITH MANGO SALSA

## Spinach Tortillas (Flatbreads)

(Makes 12)

### INGREDIENTS

3 cups whole wheat flour  
 1 tsp. baking powder  
 1 tsp. salt  
 1/3 cup oil of your choice  
 1 cup hot water  
 3 cups spinach (*palak*)  
 Optional: pinch of dried basil

### METHOD

1. Mix the flour, salt, and baking powder. Add the oil and mix with your fingers until all the oil is incorporated and the mixture looks like fine crumbs.
2. Blend 3 cups spinach and hot water in a blender until spinach is well pureed. Pour into flour mixture and mix well until there are no dry patches and a ball is formed.
3. Cover dough with plastic wrap and let it rest for at least 30 minutes or more if needed.

4. Divide into 12 portions and roll each portion into a circle on a floured surface.
5. Cook on a hot, ungreased griddle over medium-high heat. Turn the tortilla when brown blisters form on the first side.

## Fresh Mango Salsa

### INGREDIENTS

3 tomatoes, diced  
 1 green capsicum, diced  
 1 large mango, diced  
 2 tbsps. chopped fresh coriander leaves  
 3–4 tbsps. lemon or lime juice  
 1/2 tsp. coriander powder  
 1 tsp. cumin powder  
 Salt and black pepper to taste

### METHOD

Mix all ingredients and enjoy!

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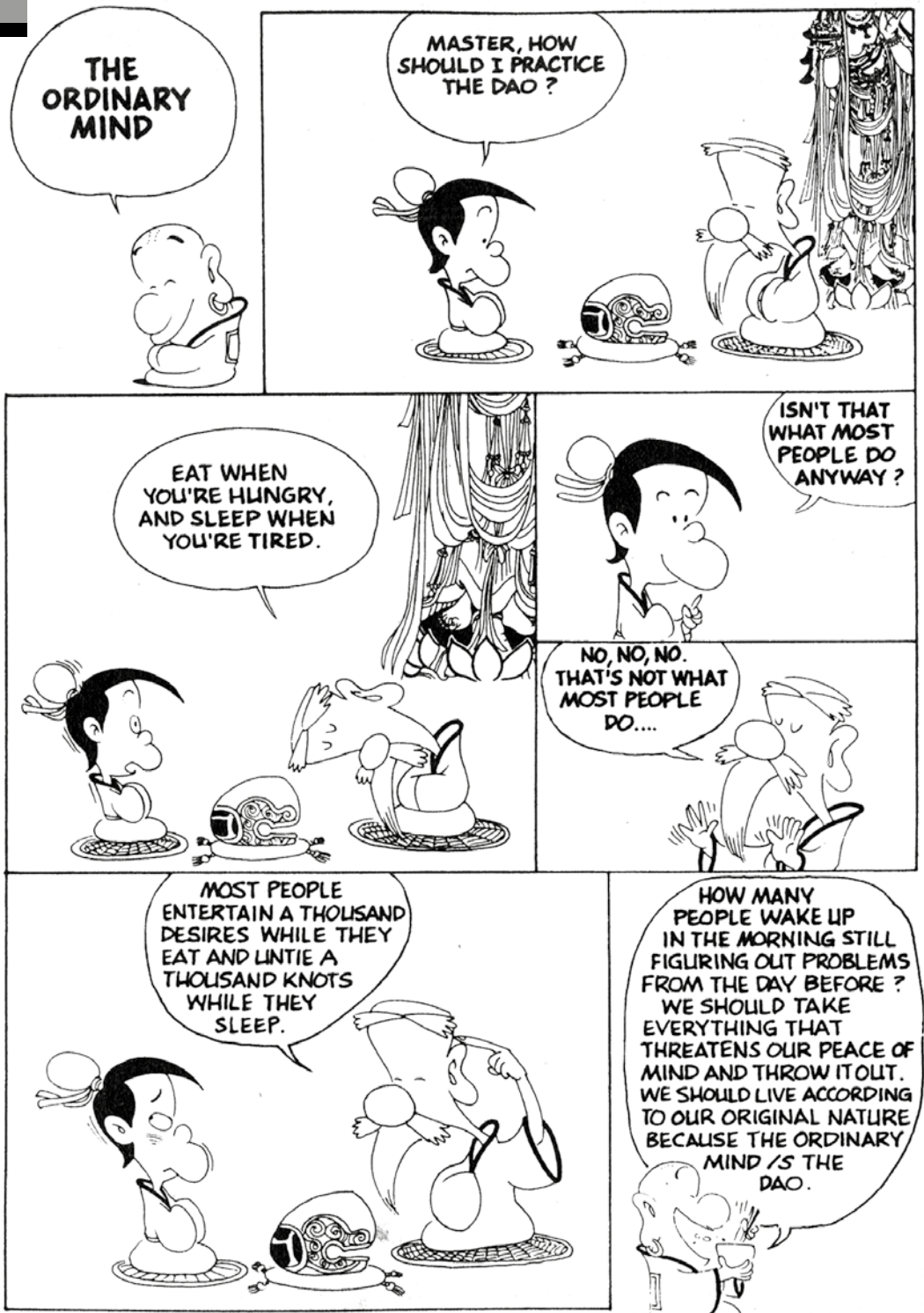
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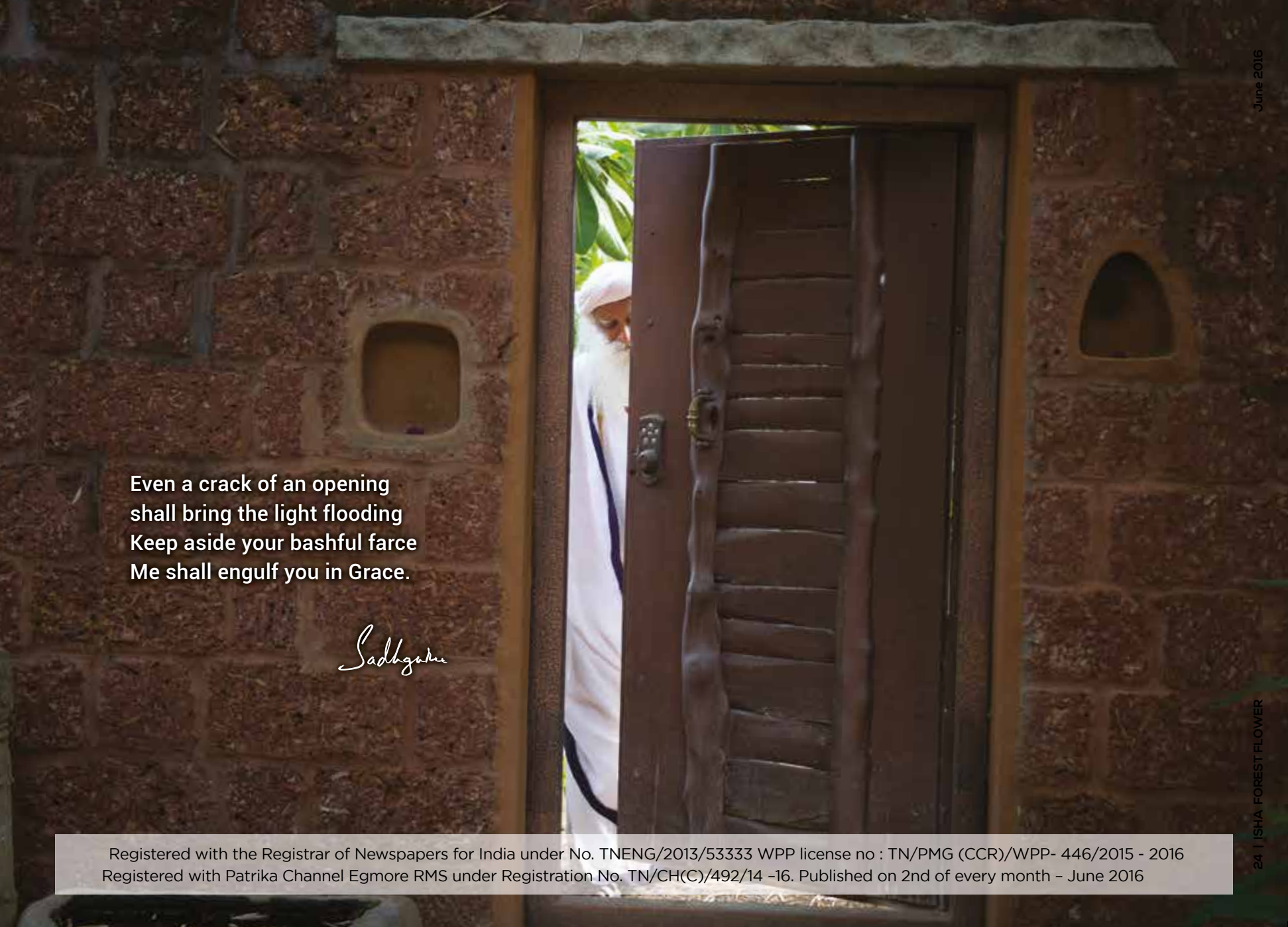
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Even a crack of an opening  
shall bring the light flooding  
Keep aside your bashful farce  
Me shall engulf you in Grace.

*Sadhguru*