

**Miracle Of
Witness Consciousness
(Based on Shiva Sutras)**

By Prabhu



आत्मनो मोक्षार्थं जगद हिताय च

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लोकाः समस्थाः सुखिनो भवन्तु ॥

ओं शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Know Thyself

This book is about you. About your inner Self as taught by Enlightened Master Lord Shiva in the ancient treatise called Shiva Sutras. It is about knowing your Higher Self which is Light of awareness and discarding your lower self which is born out of darkness of ignorance.

Who You Are

You are the Eternal Self (*Atman*), Eternal Witness (*Sakshi*) – of the drama of life involving the play of mind and matter.

You are the Light of the Self (*Atma Jyothi*) which is also the Light of Universe (*Brahma Jyothi*) knowing which you become the light for the world (*Jagat Jyothi*) - light of Love, Compassion and Wisdom.

What you are not

You are not the body, nor the mind nor the memory or the intellect.

You are not the doer, nor the enjoyer and not the thinker.

The wisdom of what you are not is the essential meaning of “*Atatwam Asi - Thou Art Not that*”

Enlightenment and Liberation

Freedom from suffering by knowing who you are not, is called Liberation (*mukti*).

Experiencing Eternal Peace (*Para Shanti*), Eternal Bliss (*Ananda*) by realizing who you are, is called Enlightenment.



Dance and Dancer

Can the dance be different from the Dancer?

Can the Creation be different from the Creator?

Behold the Great Cosmic Dance and the Dancer,

The Glory, the Beauty of Divine Dance

Of Shiva and Shakti,

Of Consciousness and Energy,

In living and non living

In mountain and valley

In Sky, earth and water

In fire and wind.

In Mind and Matter

In Atom and Molecules

And Galaxies.

Cosmic Dancer –Nataraja on Cover Page

The cover page depicts the cosmic dancer Shiva in the form of Nataraja. Shiva is the Universal Consciousness. Shakti – the energy is His Consort. The ancient sculpture of Nataraja represents the dance of the Cosmos. The dance of Nataraja goes on at all levels in the Universe – from galaxies to sub atomic particles. He is the creator. He is the creation. He is the dancer. He is the dance. He is the subject. He is the object. We are all part of this eternal Cosmic Dance.

This is what Einstein has to say about relationship between us and the Cosmos.

“A human being is a part of the whole, called by us Universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest-a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison, restricting us to our personal desires

and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole nature in its beauty.”

–Albert Einstein.

The sculpture represents the wonderful play of Shiva and Shakti– Creation, Sustenance and destruction of the cosmos and also of participation in the cosmic drama in the form of individual soul ‘*jiva*’. It also represents the power of deluding and freeing of the soul. The various symbols in the sculpture of Nataraja are described below

Sarpa – Snake represents the *kundalini*, the energy responsible for human evolution.

Damaru – The drum in the upper right hand represents the creation of cosmos in the form of primordial cosmic sound *Om*

Agni – The fire in the upper left arm represents the power of destruction of cosmos.

Apasmara – The dwarf being trampled by Shiva represents ignorance of the earth bound soul - *jiva*.

Prabhamandala – Outer ring of fire represents the

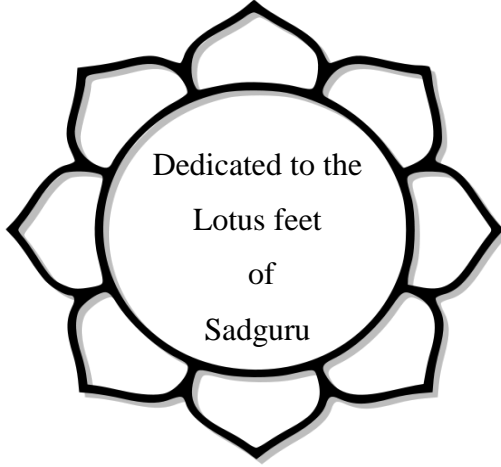
subtle and gross principles of cosmos and the inner ring represents water. Together the outer and inner rings represent duality inherent in cosmos.

Uplifted left leg represents the power of wisdom for liberating the *jiva*. Left hand pointing to the left leg assures the Grace of Shiva for the spiritual aspirant. Lower right hand provides *abhaya* – fearlessness in the form of Grace of the Lord. Un-matted hair represents the chaotic condition of the universe during the process of creation.

Tandava - The dance performed by Lord Shiva represents the cosmic dance of creation, sustenance and destruction.

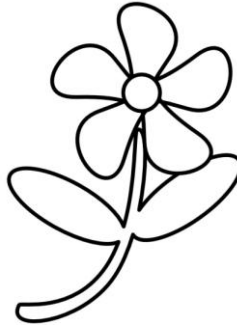
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To the existence Supreme

To the Enlightened Masters – Rishis and Sadgurus

To the group of spiritual aspirants - Sangha

To all my students - carriers of Light – Atma Jyothis

To Guruji Shri Ram Bhandarkar

To Shri Sudhindra Tirth Maharaj

To the family deities Shri Kathyayini-Baneshwar

To my wife Mamatha,

To my daughters Kathyayini and Maithreyi,

To my parents Smt Shantha and Shri Devadas Prabhu

To my in-laws Smt Kasturi and Shri K.M.N.Kamath

1.0 Who are you?

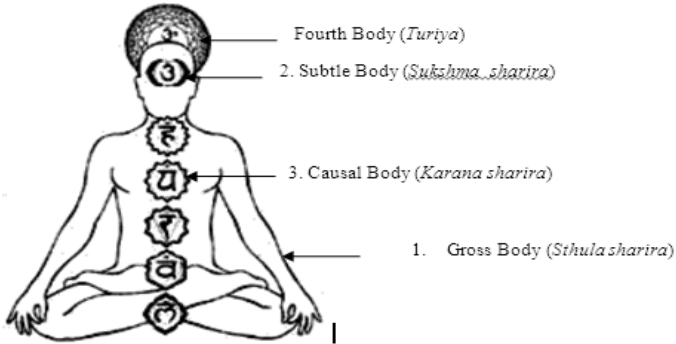


"Enquire into the nature of yourself. Find out who you are and become free." so said the Enlightened Master Ajja when we met him in his residence in a small village of India. The glow in his face, the joy in his body language and the peace I felt in his presence had a deep impact on me. I was startled by his questions. This led me to a search for the answer - journey into my own consciousness. The question became a quest a burning desire to discover myself which led me to many great Spiritual Masters.

This book is based on the wisdom and understanding I gained during the course of my spiritual journey, described through framework of “Shiva Sutras” one of the most ancient treatise on the topic of enlightenment and liberation. “Shiva Sutra” is a dialogue between Enlightened Master Shiva and his spouse and disciple Shakti on the nature of enlightenment and path to liberation.

To understand ourselves, we need to understand our bodies first. We have three bodies according to yoga as shown in the figure below.

Our Three Bodies



First one is the gross body consisting of blood, flesh bones and all internal organs. Second one is the subtle body, operating from the center of our forehead which controls the physical body through the energy system of six chakras. The subtle body is controlled by causal body operating from the heart region. We can explain the operation of these bodies with the analogy of a car and its driver.

Who is the Driver?

When we see a vehicle moving on the road, we know that there is a driver inside who is steering the vehicle. Is it the physical body of the driver which is driving the vehicle or his mind? It is the mind of the driver which is controlling the physical body. The car and drivers body are visible but the actual driver – the mind is invisible. This is how the subtle drives the gross. Similarly, the causal body and subtle body drive the gross body in human beings.

Beyond the three bodies, there is the fourth body. The fourth body is the pure awareness – divinity in us. While the gross, subtle causal bodies belong to individual, fourth body is universal. It is common to all beings. The purpose of self-enquiry is to discover our essential nature – higher Self – the Fourth body. It is called *Sakshi* – the witness.

Our Spiritual Heart

Great Spiritual Masters pose one question. “Who are you?” What is the importance of this question? It is an invitation for us to explore the treasure of

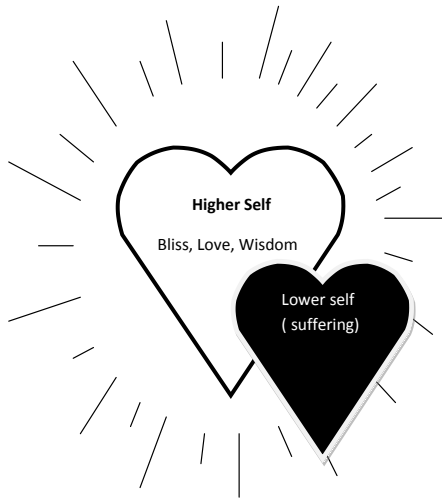
Kingdom of Divinity within us. All the major Sacred Books of the world declare this Truth.

Lord resides in the Heart of every being

– *Bhagavad-Gita 18.61*

Next question which arises in our mind is about the Heart. What is this Heart and where is it? Obviously it is not the physical heart which is being spoken of in this proclamation. The ancient language of Sanskrit speaks of the heart as *hridaya* – center from which our sense of self arises. All of us feel that we are the body-mind-intellect complex. This is feeling of “small i” or our lower self. In reality we are not this lower self but the witness – *sakshi*. The witness in us is our Higher Self represented by “big I”. The feeling of “small i” arises in our spiritual heart called *antakarana*. The real Self, the “big I” is beyond time and space and witnesses the actions of ego self – “small i”. The call is for us to discover the Witness in us.

The representation of our lower self and Higher Self is shown in the figure in next page. The essence of the wisdom of Higher self and Lower self is given in the form of the story “Hiding Place for God”.



Hiding Place of God

Out of creative urge, God created the beautiful universe. He populated the universe with plants, animals, and birds. All beings were living happily. Then God created man and woman. That was the beginning of the trouble for God. Every day, God started receiving complaints from man. This is not ok, that is not ok. Winter should be hot and summer should be cool. So on and so forth. The list was

endless. God got fed up with this list. He wanted to escape from man. He tried to hide under the sea. Unfortunately for God, man created submarine and caught hold of Him. Then God tried to escape to moon. He was peaceful there till the first man landed on moon. God was worried. Based on the advice of his councilors, He finally found a safe place to hide - in the Spiritual Heart of human beings. So far God is safe there. People are searching for God in various places ... Temple, church, mountain and sky.

We are ignorant of our True Nature. Instead of experiencing the Bliss and Peace of our Higher Self, we suffer. We are stuck to our lower self. Fortunately for us, there is a way out of this suffering. We can choose to drop our identification with the lower self to establish in the blissful consciousness of our Higher Self. For this, it is necessary to understand our spiritual heart in greater detail before we proceed with our spiritual journey.

The spiritual Heart has four components as shown in the figure below.



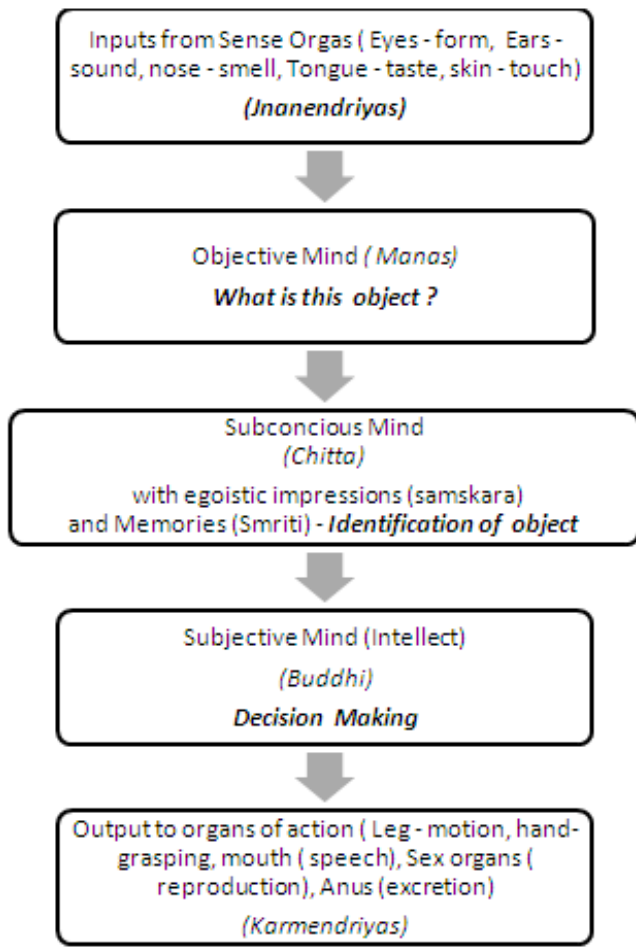
The four components of the Spiritual Heart are – the objective mind (*manas*), the subjective mind (*buddhi*), the subconscious (*chitta*) and the ego sense (*ahankara*).

The witness (*Sakshi*) illuminates all the four components of the Spiritual Heart. Just like the physical heart which is responsible for pumping the blood, the Spiritual Heart generates feelings, emotions and thoughts which drive the physical body.

It is the Spiritual Heart which moves to another body after death. It is here we have to discover the Divinity. In yogic terminology Spiritual Heart is called as the inner instrument (*antakarana*). The functioning of the spiritual Heart is explained below.

Functioning of the Spiritual Heart

The operation of the spiritual Heart is shown in the ensuing figure. The inputs from sense organs are received by the objective mind (*manas*). When the senses become aware of some object, an impression of the object is created in the objective mind. The objective mind queries “what is this object”? For further processing, the inputs pass through the subconscious mind (*chitta*) – vast store house of memory and egoistic impressions (*samskaras*).



When the match for the object is found in memory (*smriti*) associated egoistic impressions (*samskaras*) arise from the subconscious. For

example if chair is the object seen by the senses, chitta identifies the object as “plastic chair or wooden chair”. Egoistic impressions color the perception with “my chair, nice chair ... etc.” The intellect takes decision based on the inputs from *chitta* and directs the organs of action. Due to accumulated impressions (*samskaras*), there is sense of ego – (*ahankara*) in every decision making. This ego sense is our lower self.

Spiritual Practices

The purpose various spiritual practices (*sadhana*) is to reduce egoistic impressions in the subconscious (*chitta*) so that intellect becomes free. The freed intellect operates directly under the guidance of the Witness (*Sakshi*) – our Higher Self. The purpose of practicing the three systems of yoga – Karma yoga, Bhakti yoga or Raja yoga is to purify the chitta. Purification of chitta leads to serenity of the mind. Serene Mind can enquire into true nature of ego self and get freed from the bondage. This process of self-enquiry is Jnana yoga.

It is the process of self-enquiry which shatters the illusion of ego self and establishes us in our Higher Self. The question “Who am I” is the tool used for self- enquiry. Whenever we ask the question “Who am I?” we get various answers – “I am body/I am husband/I am wife/ I am professional ... etc.” All these answers are nothing but impressions in *chitta*. To find the rights answer a simple question of this nature becomes difficult for us due to our blind spot.

Our Blind Spot

The question “Who am I?” - appears to be very simple. Any answer we get for this question – “I am man/woman, I am Indian/German, I am musician” fails to address this question. Every answer seems to be defining some aspects of me rather than telling about me.

In this age, when information on every little thing in the universe is at our finger tips, why do we find it is so difficult answer such a simple question? We

seem to have no difficulty in understanding very complicated subjects be it nuclear physics or molecular biology. But we are at loss when we try to understand ourselves. Why?

We are good at understanding all things which are objective in nature. But when it comes to subjective matters, we are at a loss. We can see very small mistakes done by others while ignoring the grossest blunder of our own relatives or ourselves. We seem to be suffering from a problem of short sightedness. When it comes to something closer to us, our self-interest pops up. It distorts the vision. It creates the confusion. It is our blind spot. The spiritual blindness is indicated through the character of Dhritarashtra in the great epic Mahabharat.

Story of the Blind King

Blind King Dhritarashtra in the epic story of Mahabharata represents the spiritual blindness of human beings. He had one hundred children called Kauravas. He was very much attached to his children. He kept on ignoring the blunders done by his children. Against the advice of the wisest people in his court, he ignored even the acts of outrage of the modesty of his own daughter-in-law Draupadi. Due to several such acts of injustice, a great battle ensues where in all his hundred children get killed by cousins. Symbolically, the Kauravas represent our egoistic negative thought patterns and Pandavas represent our positive thought patterns and Dhritarashtra represents our spiritual blindness.

Like blind king Dhritarashtra in the epic story of Mahabharat, who tolerated every misdeed of his children due to the parental affection, our judgment errs when we look at ourselves. That is the reason why we find the answer for the question “Who am I” so eluding. If we can observe ourselves and our actions objectively and dispassionately, the answer

about the nature of our own self becomes so obvious. Cultivating this ability is called development of witness consciousness (*Sakshi bhava*).

Witness Consciousness (*Sakshi Bhava*)

Witnessing is the ability to watch. It is the ability to see things as they are in a non-judgmental way. by perceiving things as they are. At the outset it may appear to be a very simple task. But it is not. Every perception of ours is colored by uncontrolled noise of mental chatter arising out of our *chitta*. Every conclusion we derive is corrupted by explicit and implicit belief system. Mind sees reality based on the impressions rather than seeing it as it is. Cultivating the witness consciousness frees the intellect from the mental chatter and helps us to develop the ability of seeing things as they are.

Development of witness consciousness is the

essence of spiritual life. It is the essence of meditation. It is the ultimate results of all the paths of yoga, be it path of action (*Karma Yoga*) or path of devotion (*Bhakti yoga*) or path of wisdom (*Jnana Yoga*) and royal path (*Raja yoga*). The life led in such a state is full of bliss.

Witness consciousness is the ability to be a detached observer in every situation of life.

Bondage and Liberation

Intellect aligning with lower self “small i” based on egoistic impressions in Chitta is called bondage. Intellect operating under the influence of the witness in us – Sakshi is called liberation. One who is established in witness consciousness is called “enlightened”- *sthita prajna* by Shri Krishna.

“ One who is not elated in joyful situation, and does not get depressed in sorrowful situations of life, One whose mind is free from the attractions

and repulsions caused by objects of senses and One who is free from the afflictions of mind in the form of anger and fear is indeed enlightened “. – Bhagavadgita.2.56

That brings us to the question, how to develop the witness consciousness and what to observe? How to cultivate the ability of observing of various layers of our personality in an objective and non-judgmental way to discover the weaknesses and treasures within us? The cultivation of this ability not only helps us elevate spiritually, but also helps us function efficiently in the worldly matters. Witness consciousness helps us to shed the suffering in our life and experience the eternal bliss which is our true nature. Establishment in witness consciousness (sakshi bhava) frees us from the suffering.

Pain and Suffering

To be free from suffering, we should know the real nature of suffering. Suffering is different from pain. Pain and pleasure are part of life, part of existence. Pain can be physical due to illness or injury to the body or it can be mental because of reasons like separation from loved ones or loss of valuables etc. While pain can be of temporary nature, suffering can be long lasting. The suffering in our life is due to the prolongation of pain psychologically. Suffering is the wound in the mind which takes long time to heal. For example loss of money can cause momentary mental pain but, brooding over that loss over and over again throughout the life causes immense suffering.

While pain is existential and absolutely unavoidable, suffering is optional. Suffering is a choice made by the individual. Suffering can be reduced or eliminated by understanding the real

nature of suffering. Suffering is the mental impressions acquired during interactions in the world. This is what we call as karma or karmic bondage. With a proper attitude towards life, suffering can be minimized or ever eliminated. For that we need to understand the nature of life.

Flow of life

Duality is nature of life. Nature is full of contradictions and opposing forces. Light and darkness, peaks and valleys, cold and heat, sound and silence are all part of nature. Every happening in nature is transient. Everything passes away in no time. Nothing is permanent. Darkness of night follows sunshine in the morning. Life flows continuously like a river. It is the fluidity of life which makes life interesting and challenging. Every moment of life is new. Every moment, a fresh response or perspective is needed to respond to life meaningfully.

While nature of life is fluidity, human mind wants concreteness and stability. The mind looks for status quo. While change is the only permanent thing in life, human mind craves for the stability. There can be no stability or permanence in life. Very nature of life is impermanence and change. This kind of unrealistic expectation by the human mind is the cause of suffering.

Root Cause of Suffering

In the heart of our heart, we look for stability. We look for maintaining what we have – status quo. While aging is the nature of body, we crave for youthful look. While death and disease are inevitable for the one who is born, we would like to get rid of both. This is fighting against natural order. Science and technology may help us in this fight. We may find cure for some diseases or even eliminate a few. We may find comfort in our air-

conditioned room by avoiding hot sun or chilly winds. But there is there is very little we can do to change the essential nature of life. The essence of nature remains same – ever changing and transient.

All the changes in the external world - cold or heat, sunshine or darkness affect our mental world. Depending on the objects perceived in the external world, mental world undergoes changes in the form of attraction, repulsion, fear, anger and love. Favorable situations cause pleasure and unpleasant ones cause pain. The mind constantly, hankers for the sensation of pleasure and avoidance of pain. Nothing in nature or life is permanent while we want all pleasant experiences to last permanently! This is the root cause of our suffering. We are like the foolish king who wanted to carpet the whole kingdom!

Story of the foolish King

There was a king who got injured by a thorn while walking in the garden. He got very wild and ordered that from that day onwards his whole kingdom should be carpeted. A very expensive proposition indeed! The order was implemented and many areas in the kingdom were carpeted with best of the carpets imported from Persia. Soon, the kingdom ran out of money required to fulfill the grand plan of carpeting the kingdom. The king was worried. He called for counseling from his ministers. One minister gave a brilliant idea. Instead of carpeting the whole kingdom, the King should wear a pair of leather shoes!

Witness consciousness provides us this good pair of shoes of equanimity while walking on the path of life full of thorns! The ability to live life with equanimity is a great miracle indeed.

The Greatest Miracle

There are stories of miracles of yogis being able to walk on water. We are wonderstruck hearing these stories. One such story is given below.

Walking on Water

A Zen Master and a Yogi were waiting for a boat to cross the river. To impress the Zen Master, the yogi started telling story of his spiritual practices. How intensely he practiced for 30 years. How he slept on stone, ate leaves and walked on coal. How he attained the spiritual powers (Siddhis) of walking on the water.

Zen Master was not impressed. He took a one rupee coin from his pocket and told the yogi. “This one rupee is all that it takes to cross the river. What is the point in wasting thirty years of spiritual practice which can be simply accomplished with a coin of one rupee?”

Whenever some feat is accomplished which defies laws of nature then we call it as miracle. But there is a greater miracle than walking on water or sending a man to the moon. It is living life in a state of witness consciousness. Just like walking on water leaves no foot prints, living in a state of witness consciousness leaves no impressions of the of karmic reactions in the mind. Without the karmic impressions, there is no suffering in life here and hereafter. Life lead without such an attitude is like

walking on sand or earth. Just like every foot step leaves prints on sand, similarly, every interaction in life, every experience in life leaves a deep impression in the mind. This is the cause of suffering. Attaining the Witness Consciousness is peak of human achievement and can be called the final frontier for humans.

The Final Frontier

“Space... the Final Frontier.”

- From the Television Serial Star Trek.

I often wonder what the final frontier for the man kind is. Is it the outer space of galaxies and stars or is it the inner space of human mind and consciousness? As per the ancient wisdom, it is the inner space of mind-consciousness which is very important. Conquering the inner space leads to deepest peace and silence of mind. In India one who has conquered the inner space of the mind, is called a great Hero (*Mahavira*).

Being and Becoming

Pure awareness is the inner reality and the matter the outer reality. While pure awareness is the formless, matter has a form. In the presence of formless awareness, matter keeps changing the form. Like waves in the ocean, forms arise from the formless, grow and merge back into the formless essence.

Most of the living beings are trapped in form, unaware of the nature of Inner Self – pure awareness and bliss. Getting trapped in form is called *samsara* getting established in inner self is called *moksha* or liberation. Continuous strife which one undergoes to survive and grow in the domain of form is the process of evolution.

Life exerts intense pressure of survival on all living beings. Everywhere there is competition for resources like food, water and a constant struggle for survival. Every living being wants to become

better and better to survive in this rats race. Every moment of life we want to become something better and better. Better than our nearest competitor for survival. This is the process of becoming – evolution at the physical level.

Like in the story of Jerry the rat who wanted to change from being a rat to a cat, cat to a dog, dog to a man, so on and so forth to until he becomes a rat again, one stuck in rats race for survival, gets fed up of constantly becoming something or someone and starts looking for ways of just being his own true self.

Story of Jerry the rat

There was a rat called Jerry. He was very much afraid of the cat Tom and keeps praying God for some help. Hearing his cries for help, a fairy appears before him and asks Jerry what does he want? Overjoyed by the presence of fairy, Jerry asks for a boon to make him a cat. Lo! With a weave of wand of fairy, Jerry becomes a cat.

Bully, the dog living nearby, sees Jerry the cat and starts chasing him. Running for his life, the cat

prays to fairy to make him a dog rather than a cat. Immediately, he is transformed into a dog.

A man catches hold of Jerry the dog and chains him. Jerry is very sad now and prays to fairy to make him a man. His wish is fulfilled immediately.

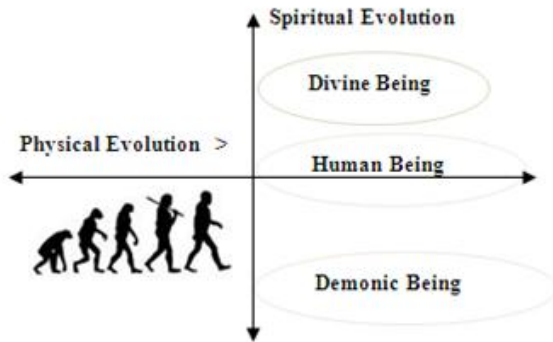
One day, Jerry gets drenched in rain and wishes to become a cloud rather than a man. Lo!, he becomes a rain cloud.

Rain cloud gets stopped by mountain. Now, Jerry wants to become a mountain. He thought he is happy now. Suddenly he realizes that somebody is drilling through the mountain. A rat is drilling hole in the mountain. Now, Jerry wants to become a rat again. So on and on the story goes.

Human beings are like Jerry the rat. Never satisfied with anything they get in life. Constantly they keep chasing different objects in life. Life becomes literally a rat's race! At that point of time, some people wake up and try to find a way out of stressful situation. If they are able to turn their sights inwards through the practice of meditation, a new dimension of consciousness and inner awareness opens up.

As against the scientific theory of evolution dealing with the competition for survival, the process of centering oneself in the bliss of inner awareness deals with process of the evolution of consciousness. While the theory of evolution deals with evolution at the physical level, spirituality deals with the evolution at the level of consciousness.

Evolution of Consciousness



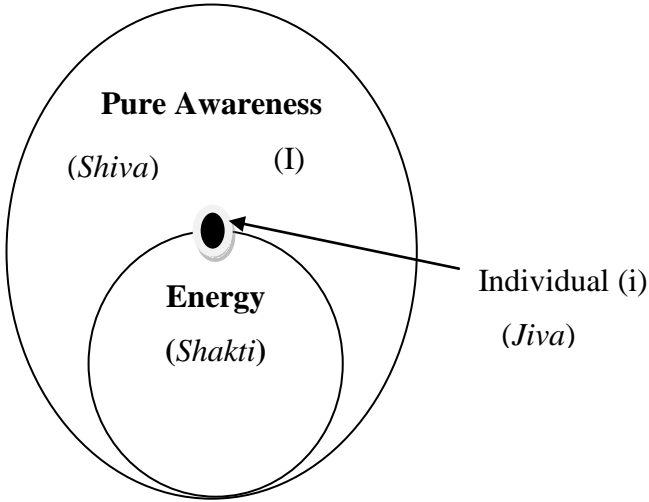
Scientific theory of evolution, explains the evolution of species based on the struggle for survival and existence. Stronger and stronger species emerge because of this struggle. This is how

man has evolved from his ancestor - monkey. While the theory probably explains the evolution of the physical body of life forms, it fails to address the issue of consciousness. We can see that as the species evolve, there is manifestation of higher and higher degree of consciousness and self-awareness. This is the domain of spirituality - issue psychological maturity leading to pure Self-awareness – enlightenment.

The Enlightened Master Shiva provides a road map for evolution of human consciousness. Human beings have a great opportunity to evolve spiritually into Divine beings or fall down to lower level of demonic existence based on their actions.

The key to evolution of human consciousness as outlined in Shiva Sutra can be summarized in one sentence – “Somebody to nobody and nobody to everybody”. The steps involved in the process are given below.

From Somebody to Nobody



The figure above shows three entities. Awareness – Shiva, individual-*jiva* and the energy (*Shakti*). The Universal Consciousness is called *Shiva*. The energy of Universal consciousness called *Shakti* manifest as Existence – creation. Shiva associates with a physical body in the form of mind to explore the Universe and such an entity is called *jiva* - the individual soul. Identifying Self with the

body and mind complex, *Jiva* undergoes tremendous existential struggle and evolves. This is the process of evolution- of becoming somebody.

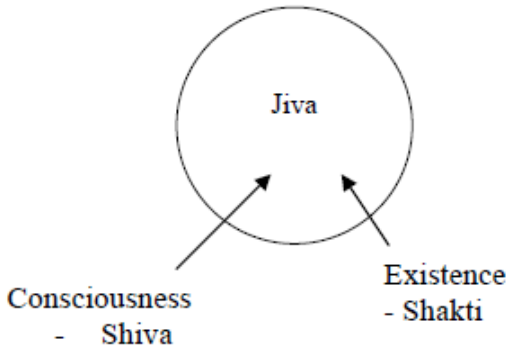
This is the evolution at physical level. Beyond the physical level, there is a spiritual evolution which pushes jiva to higher and higher level of Self-awareness. This change is triggered through deep relaxation and meditation. Progressive detachment from external stimuli of sense inputs and moving towards the center of one's own consciousness brings about a remarkable change in the individual. As one touches the source of one's own Self – Pure awareness, there is an experience of deep peace and tranquility. All aspects of day to day living of such an individual are transformed.

This is the process of becoming somebody to nobody when the individual mind identifies with its source of pure awareness. This can only happen when the individual sense of separation from the existence called ego or (*ahankara*) disappears.

Individual ego sense (i) finding its source pure awareness (I) is called Self Realization. This is a state of pure subjective awareness where there is no objectivity at all. This is the realization of Shiva.

From Nobody to Everybody

Establishment of mind in pure awareness gradually opens up the dormant evolutionary energy Shakti. At this stage, realization of all life, whole of creation as one entity not separate from the Universal Self dawns. There is realization of Oneness of Shiva and Shakti, of oneness of mind and matter and that of awareness and energy. This is the process of becoming everybody from being nobody. The following diagram illustrates this realization.



This is the dawn of true Universal Love. Everything in the Universe appears as one's own Self. There is a deep understanding of oneness of Life at this stage. Experience of one life force flowing through the entire universe animating living and non-living brings about tremendous sense of love and compassion. This is the realization of power of Divine in the Universe (*Shakti*).

Path to Higher Consciousness

The remaining chapters of this book are based on the teachings of Lord Shiva in the form of Shiva

Sutras. Shiva Sutra is a set of revelations by the Universal Teacher Lord Shiva - about His Nature. Lord Shiva the Universal Self revealed the teachings to Sage Abhinavagupta of Kashmir who transmitted it to the rest of the humanity through a succession of teachers.

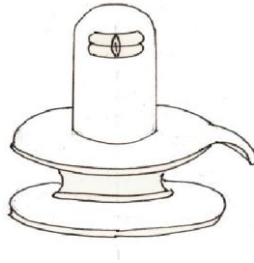
Lord Shiva pours His Grace on us in the form of teachings to awaken the Shiva consciousness in all of us. He points to us the fountain of bliss present in the depth of our consciousness and means to tap the same. Shiva Sutra is the nectar which frees us from the sufferings caused by the dualities of existence. It is replete with practical techniques for spiritual evolution and gives clear guidelines for the practitioners.

There are two supplementary books to Shiva Sutra called Spandakarika and Vijnana Bhairava Tantra. Spandakarika provides insights into the Nature of Shakti – power of Shiva and the Vijnana Bhairava Tantra provides several practices leading to Self-realization.

In the ensuing sections of this book, the path of Self-realization called *Shambhavopaya* and various stages of realizations which the yogi passes through during his spiritual journey are described.

An attempt is made to present the essence of Shiva Sutra with minimum amount of technical details, Sanskrit terminologies and philosophical discussions in view ease of reading.

2.0 Inner Self is Shiva!



Shiva is auspiciousness. Shiva is bliss. Shiva is the consciousness. More importantly, Shiva is the Self of one and all.

It is said that God sleeps in rocks, dreams in plants, wakes up in animals and becomes aware of Himself in human beings. Human being is the vehicle for Universal consciousness to the Glory of the Self as the creation.

Lord Shiva is giving a call for all of us to wake

up from the dream of limited concept of self, based on body-mind-intellect complex to experience nature of Him in the core of our being. To experience Lord Shiva as our inner Self and as the Self of the whole creation is to find deeper meaning in life which frees us from the conflicts imposed by the perceived dualities of creation.

चैतन्यमात्मा

॥१॥

Pure Awareness is one's Self.

Pure awareness is the Self of one and all. Pure awareness is Lord Shiva whose nature is existence, consciousness and bliss. Everything and everyone is Lord Shiva. There is nothing other than Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva is the inner reality of mind and body and outer reality of cosmos. Blissful nature of Lord Shiva is the sum and substance of the Universe.

Shiva and Shakti

Shakti is the energy of Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva and Shakti are one. Shiva is Shakti and Shakti is Shiva. They are inseparable like heat in fire or fragrance of flower. She is the Self-awareness of Shiva and also the power of consciousness by which everything else is revealed. She expresses in the form of infinite Will, Wisdom and Action of Lord Shiva. As Universal Mother, she creates, sustains and destroys the whole Universe.

Shiva and Jiva

Jiva is the atomic soul manifested from Lord Shiva. Shiva is *jiva* and *jiva* is Shiva. By His own power of Will, Lord Shiva takes the form of infinite number of atomic souls or *javas* by restricting His power of Will, Wisdom and Action. The essential

nature of Lord Shiva existence, consciousness and bliss does not get affected in spite of His expansion as creation.

Parama Shiva and Spanda Shakti

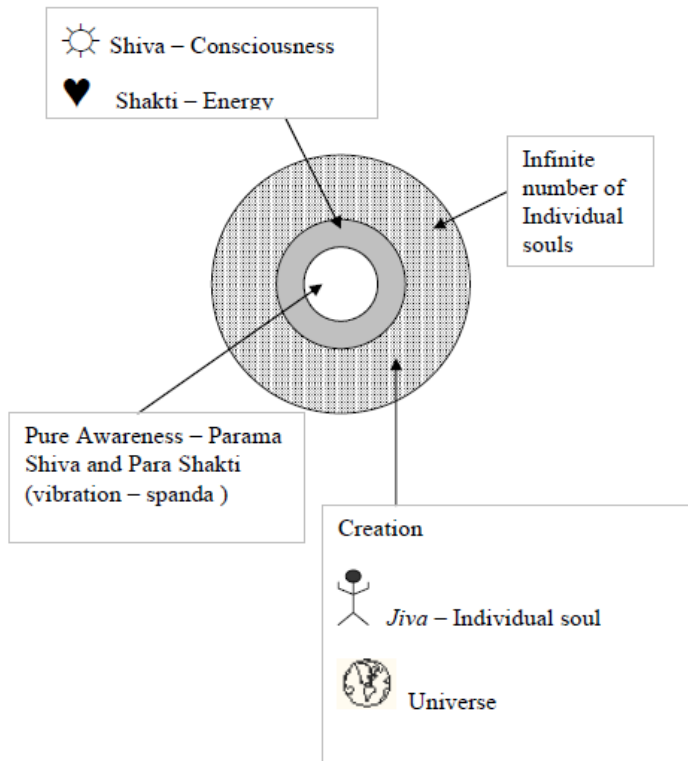
Parama Shiva is the transcendent form of Shiva unaffected by taking the limited form of *jiva*. In His transcend form, He is pure awareness. Shakti – the energy, in the form of subtlest vibration is the heartbeat of *Parama Shiva*. Because of pulsation of *Spanda* Shakti, whole of the Universe is created sustained and dissolved. She is also called *Para Shakti* in this form.

Shiva and Universe

The creation is nothing but Lord Shiva. Universe consisting of five elements space, air, fire, and water and earth element are nothing but forms of energy. Energy is of the form Shakti – the

expression of Lord Shiva. In other words, the creation is the creator.

Shiva and His Manifestation



Mythological Shiva



Lord Shiva is an unique combination of opposites representing dualities of nature. He is an ascetic on one hand and a householder on the other. His meditative posture represents the nature of Universal consciousness in a state of Self-absorption. Lord Shiva represents the Universal Self – pure “I” in the form of yogi in meditation.

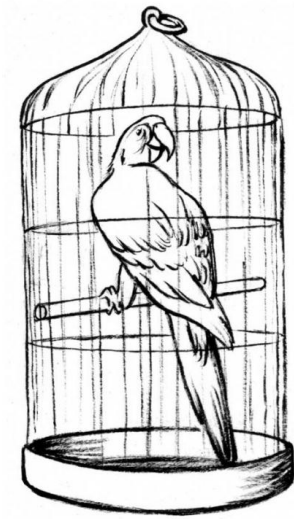
Ardharnarishwara – Shiva and Shakti



Shakti, the Universal Mother is the power of consciousness in the form of Will, Wisdom and Action. Lord Shiva as house holder creates the Universe with his Shakti. Shiva and Shakti are not different from each other. *Ardhanareeshwara* half male, half female form of Shiva and Shakti represents this Truth. This representation is akin to

the yin and yang, masculine and feminine representation in eastern cultures.

3.0 The Bondage



In the following Sutras, Lord Shiva considers the question of bondage and freedom. The roots of the bondage lie at the deepest recess of the mind. Deep rooted concepts, ideas, beliefs and habits held in the unconscious and subconscious layers of the mind put limitation on the capability of the individual and curtail the freedom of thought and action. The

conscious mind becomes a slave of the unconscious habit patterns. Real bondage is unconscious living in total ignorance of our Divine nature. On the other hand, freedom is leading a conscious life in full awareness our own nature.

ज्ञानं बन्धः

॥२॥

Knowledge is the cause of bondage.

योनिवर्गः कलाशरीरम्

॥३॥

The cause of bondage is *maya* and its associated principles of *kala*.

ज्ञानाधिष्ठानं मातृका

॥४॥

Limited knowledge is due to power inherent in alphabets

The cause for all these types of bondages is the *Matrika* Shakti, power inherent in the alphabets, words, sentences and language

In transcendent form, Lord Shiva is omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient while *jiva*, manifested form of Lord Shiva feels experiences all kinds of limitations. Due to limited power of will, wisdom and activity, *jiva* feels constrained and feels a sense of bondage. Three types of bondage felt by *jiva* are as follows.

- Bondage due to knowledge
- Bondage due to differentiated perception
- Bondage due to fruits of action

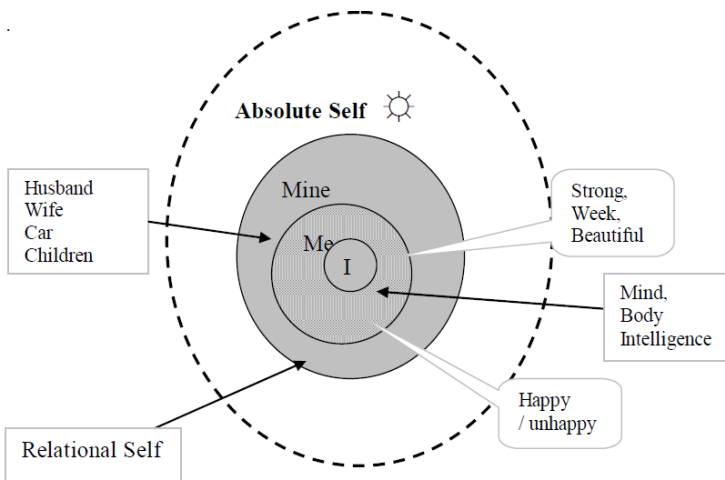
Bondage due to knowledge (*anava mala*)

Knowledge is the cause of bondage! This is a very startling statement by Lord Shiva. We will be under the impression that it is the knowledge that liberates. The knowledge which Lord Shiva speaks of is the knowledge about oneself based on the interactions with the world!



For interaction in the world we take upon several roles – husband, wife, businessman, boss, subordinate etc. Sooner or later, we forget that these are the personalities we take up for interacting with the world and start believing that we are those personalities. It is like an actor forgetting that he is acting out and starts experiencing the pains and perils of the role he is playing. The mask which we wear for our social interaction becomes our identity. We forget our absolute Self and start believing the reality of our relational selves. We become our masks! This is the bondage caused by knowledge.

Any kind of interaction with the world leaves impressions, images, and memories in the consciousness and it is these images which cause wrong knowledge and bind the individual.



Absolute and Relational Selves

Knowledge derived from sense input causes the forgetting one's own nature and identifying wrongly with the body, mind and intellect, the *jiva* feels sense of inadequacy. This feeling of inadequacy felt

by jiva due to imperfect knowledge is called *anavamala*. The inadequacy in turn leads to desires for regaining fullness. Desires lead to actions which in result in impressions in consciousness called *samskaras*. *The impressions become*. This pushes the soul into bondage due to karma.

Bondage due to maya (*mayiya mala*)

Maya is the power of differentiated perception which causes the differences to appear where there is none. Due to *maya* one appears as many. Unitary experience gets differentiated into multiplicity.

At the level of Universal consciousness, ability of differentiated perception is the creative act of freedom while at the individual level the same ability becomes the bondage. The power of perception is called *Maha maya* at the level of Universal consciousness and *maya* for the individual soul.

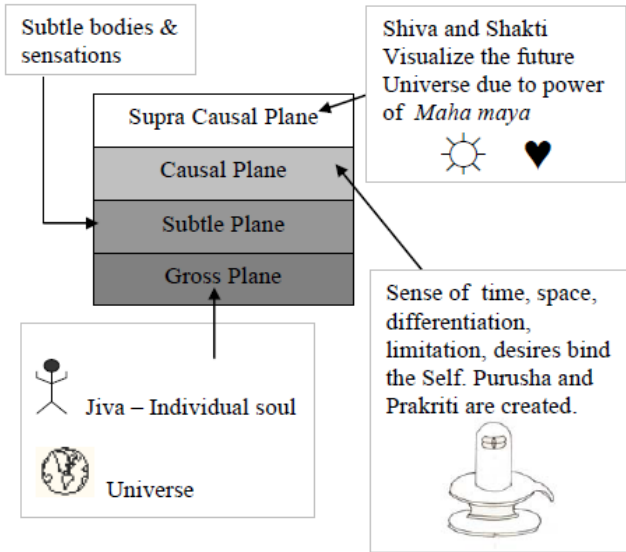
Maha maya is the creative power of Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva uses power of *maya* to manifest universe out of Him and assume the role of individual soul (*jiva*) to explore the universe thus created. Creation or existence has four fold manifestations.

- Supra causal plane
- Causal plane
- Subtle plane
- Gross plane.

In supra causal plane, Lord Shiva with his Shakti visualizes the universe to be created in his consciousness. In this plane, the idea of creation emerges in the Universal consciousness. In causal plane, duality emerges due to play of *maya*. Of His own Freewill, limitations arise in consciousness of Lord Shiva for the purpose of creation. Power of *maya* creates the perception of differentiation with the help of following associated principles and brings about the limitations in Self.

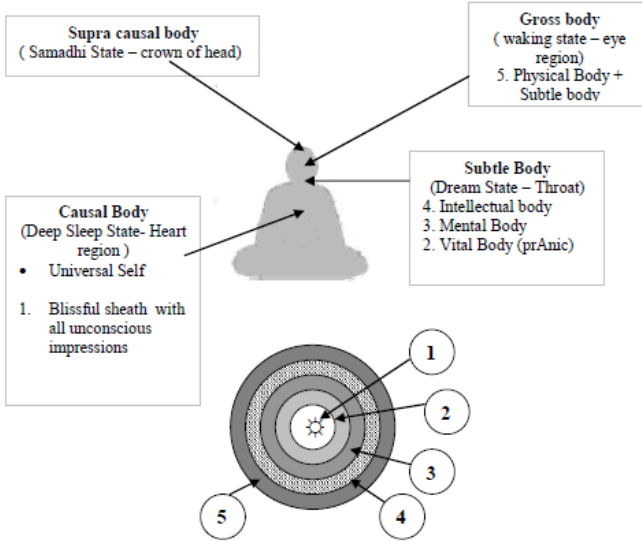
- Principle of Kala - Concept of past present and future appear creating sense of limitation due to time.
- Principle of Vidya - Limitation in knowledge appears causing forgetfulness of own nature.
- Principle of Raga - Sense of inadequacy appears causing desires for fulfillment.
- Principle of Kalaa - Concept of differentiation creates a sense of self and nonself.
- Principle of Niyati - Concept of space creates a sense of spatial limitation.

Four Planes of Existence



Due to power of *maya*, bound soul which is called *purusha* and matter called as *prakriti* are created in the causal plane. Subtle bodies and subtle sensations are created in subtle plane. Gross bodies and physical world of five elements of space, air, fire, water and earth is created in the gross plane.

Three Bodies – Three States – Five Sheaths



Individual soul *jiva* enjoys the causal, subtle and gross plane of existence with the help of five layered body. The physical body (gross body -5) is used by *jiva* for enjoying the physical world through the center of eyes in the waking state.

Subtle body consisting of layers 4, 3, and 2 respectively representing intellectual, mental and

vital (*pranic*) sheaths operates with the eyes as center and the gross body as vehicle in the waking state.

In the dreaming state, subtle body enjoys the subtle objects of dream world within the throat region. The causal body called sheath of bliss shown in layer 1 is the repository of all the unconscious impressions. The individual soul enjoys deep bliss in the dreamless sleep state while resting in causal body.

Beyond these three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep, there is a supracausal state (*turiya*) experienced at the crown center. The bliss of transcendental state of *turiya* can be enjoyed in a trance state (*samadhi*).

At the individual level, *maya* is the binding force of perception. Perception is the reality for individual. Perception is based on the input from senses and inference derived from those inputs.

Inference is influenced by deep rooted subconscious or unconscious belief systems which give a shape to reality. Thus *maya* is the power inherent in belief systems which alters the sense of reality based on perceptions. Altered sense of reality caused by perceptions becomes the bondage for the individual.

Thus Lord Shiva the Universal Self uses the power of *maya* to bind himself into a five layered body enjoying three states of consciousness of waking, dreaming and deep sleep and totally forgetting the nature of Self which can be enjoyed in the supra causal state of consciousness.

Kali the Power of *maya*



The binding power of *maya* is beautifully represented in the mythological description. Mother Maha Kali represents the power of time in the form of veiling power of *maya*. For the purpose of creation, Lord Shiva of his own accord submits to the power of *maya* Shakti. The mythological picture of Mother Kali trampling Lord Shiva is the representation of Lord Shiva subjecting himself to the power of time even though He is beyond time.

Dark blue color of Mother represents the color of

infinity– the eternity of time. Garland of heads on her neck represents, the fifty two alphabets of *Sanskrit* representing the *matrika* Shakti power responsible for creation and bondage at the same time cut heads represent the destruction.

Her protruding blood smeared tongue is sucking out the blood of the demon called Raktabijasura. It is said that for every drop of blood shed from the body, Raktabijasura creates millions of copies of demons like him. Raktabijasura is nothing but evil thoughts and tendencies in us. Given half a chance, these tendencies multiply rapidly.

Every thought and action in life sooner or later brings the results due to law of *karma*. Thus time and *karma* are the great teachers. Mother Kali as principle of time is gracefully sucking the evil tendencies in us. She is happily wearing the apron of human hands. Hands indicate the action – *karma*. All the selfless action becomes an offering to mother in the form of dress.

Bondage due to Karma (karma mala)

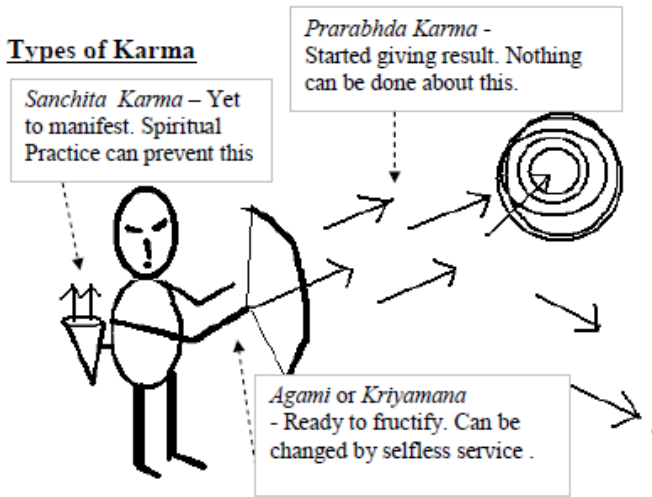
Every action leaves a subtle impression in the form of habit patterns in sub-consciousness of the individual. These habit patterns called *samskaras* keep compelling the individual to repeat similar actions over and over again. Unfortunately for the individual, same result is not guaranteed every time. Some times the results are favorable with pleasant experiences and often they are unfavorable with unpleasant experiences.

Constantly, there is a craving in the mind of the individual to repeat the actions which bring more and more favorable results and avoid those resulting in unfavorable results. These subconscious desires for experiencing the desired results again and again from the tendencies called *vasanas*.

Like the futility of pouring ghee into fire for extinguishing it, attempt to fulfill each and every

desires rising in the consciousness leads one to nowhere. Every time a desire is fulfilled, craving for more of that gets created in the subconscious mind.

The conditioned habit patterns of the mind (*samskaras*) and compelling nature of desires (*vasanas*) tie the individual into bondage due to action – *karma*. This is called *karmamala* or impurity due to *karma*. There is no way to clear the innumerable subconscious impressions in the normal course of ones life time. To fulfill the desires, conditioned habit patterns, the individual soul has incarnate many times. Every incarnation creates more *karmic* impressions and this cycle goes on and on forever. The individual soul gets trapped into a never ending cycle of bondage due to *karma*. The following figure illustrates various types of *karma* with an analogy to the arrows of the archer.



Matrika Shakti – The Cause for Bondage

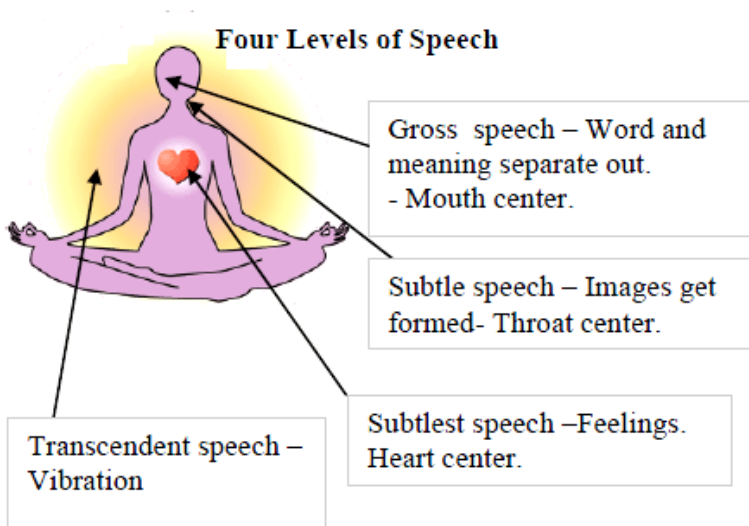
Matrika Shakti – the power inherent in the alphabets of the language is the cause for the three types of bondage described above. Universe is of the form of name and form (*nama* and *rupa*). While name belongs to the domain of mind, form belongs to the domain of matter. Name is the subjective aspect and form is the objective aspect.

All our experience of the inner world has come out of sentences, sentence from words, words from alphabets and alphabets from the deep levels of unconscious mind. The transcendental vibration of the Universal Consciousness is the source of energy for the whole structure of language starting from the alphabets. Language creates the inner world of emotions, images and feelings.

Language is the mechanism by which entire subjective world and objective world is reflected in the consciousness like images in the mirror.

Without words, there is no thinking possible and no communication possible. In other words, words give form to thoughts. Words create images and feelings in the mind causing the subtle form thought to manifest in the grosser form. For example, the moment someone thinks of the word “cow”, an image of cow gets formed in the mind. Similarly if someone else says the word “fool”, immediately feelings of anger arises in the mind. Thus the word creates inner world of feelings and images.

At the pure awareness level, the sound and its meaning are inseparable. This is the transcendent (*para*) form of speech operating from Universal Consciousness. As the vibrations of speech rise to the heart center, subtle feelings related to meaning arise in the heart. This is the subtlest form of speech and is called *pashyanti*.



When the vibrations rise to the throat center, words

and images are formed. This is subtler form of speech and is called *madhyami*.

Finally, grossest form of speech is expressed through mouth. This is called *vykhari*. At the grossest level of speech, the sound and its meaning separate out totally.

Thus the words, sentences and language create the inner world of individual in the form of images, feelings. By identifying with these images, the jiva gets enmeshed in false knowledge about the self.

Reflecting on the role of words in creating the self-image and not identifying with the images created leads to freedom. Freedom from the false concept of self-created by *Matrika* is achieved through this reflection.

Power of Mantra

Matrika Shakti is responsible for bondage on one hand and liberation on the other hand. *Matrika*

Shakti in the form of *mantra* acts as an aid in Self-discovery. *Mantra* is a word or syllable which is related to higher reality.

Mantra is the representation of God in the form of sound. By repetition of the *mantra* gradually the person starts experiencing the power inherent in the deity of the *mantra*. *Mantra* thus becomes the liberator from bondage. *Mantra* has greater and higher potency when the spiritual Master initiates the seeker. It is said that the power of recitation of mantra made Panini - an idiot, into a great grammarian.

Story of Panini – The Grammarian

It is said that Panini the great grammarian of Sanskrit language was an idiot as child. His parents got fed up of him and disowned him. He was very depressed because of this and wanted to commit suicide by jumping into the river. There he watched some of the village woman washing the clothes. Years of washing clothes on the stone had created depressions in the stone. Suddenly there was a flash of an idea for Panini. “If a depression can be created even in stone while washing the clothes why can’t my mind be changed by repeated exposure to

an idea?”

He suddenly remembered the mantra “Om Namaha Shivaya” given to him by his Guru and started chanting the same. Slowly, all the impurities of his mind melted away and wisdom dawned on him due to the vibrations of the mantra. He went on to become the greatest grammarian of Sanskrit language

4.0 Path to Freedom



Intellectually understanding the nature of bondage and that of freedom does not solve the problem of existence. Real freedom comes only with the help of experiential knowledge borne out of true wisdom. The path to freedom expounded by Lord Shiva falls into three categories listed below.

- Techniques based on will. (*Shambhavopaya*)
– For the most advanced yogi.

- Techniques based on wisdom. (*Shaktopaya*)
– For the advanced yogi.
- Techniques based on action. (*Anupaya*) –
For the beginner on the path of Self-
realization.

Naturally, like any teacher who would like to address the most brilliant student first, Lord Shiva gives out the technique of *Shambhavopaya* for the most advanced yogi in the ensuing sutras.

उद्यमो भैरवः

॥५॥

Upsurge in consciousness is Bhairava Himself.

शक्तिचक्रसंस्थाने विश्वसंहारः

॥६॥

Contemplation on wheel of Energies brings about end of differentiated universe.

Grace of Sadguru

Shambhavopaya is in essence the path of Grace. Just like a rocket to escape the gravitational field requires lot of fuel, but glides smoothly after escaping the gravitational field, a yogi has to evolve through intense effort in the earlier stages. He graduates through techniques of *Anupama* and *Shaktopaya* before he becomes eligible for the Grace of the Sadguru.

It is a path of effortlessness. All that the yogi has to do is to remain in thoughtless awareness with an attitude of total surrender for the Grace to descend in the form highest intuition – Bhairava leading to enlightenment.

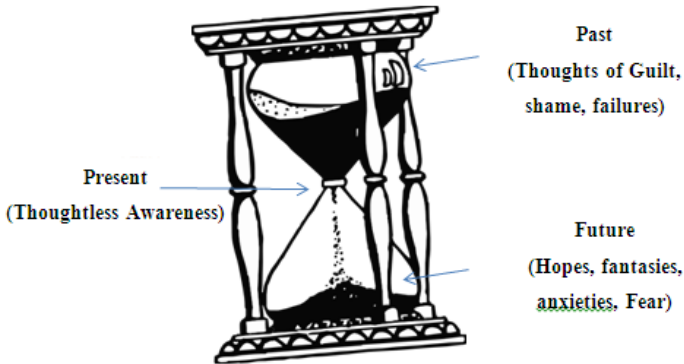
Thoughtless Awareness

For the enlightenment or final liberation to occur, the yogi has to remain in a state of thoughtlessness. Mind is always in a state of constant flux. Subconscious impressions, images, feelings and

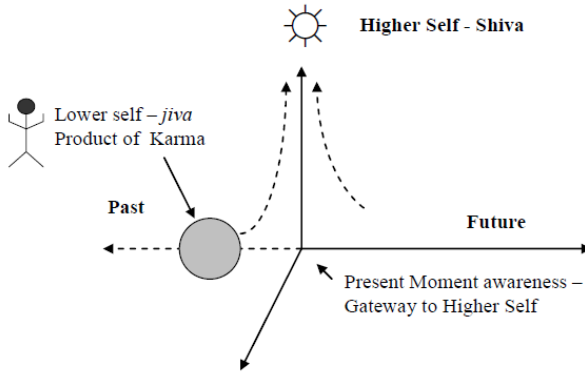
emotions clutter the mind. The nature of mind is always to brood on the past or future. Past guilt, failures, fear and hope of future continuously haunt the mind. Unless these chattering are silenced, there is no possibility of opening to full intuition. Mind like a sand hour glass continuously pours out from past to future and does not stay even once briefly in the present moment.

When the mind is alert and stays totally in the present moment, getting dragged neither by the thoughts of past nor by the visions of future, thoughtless awareness develops. Staying in a state of thoughtless awareness is the key to enlightenment or liberation. In a state of

Staying in the Present



thoughtless awareness, all the junk information stuffed in the mind gets emptied out and a free space is created for deep intuitive understanding of Universal Truths coming from the inner Self. Following figure shows the gateway to Higher Self by means of present moment awareness. The term present moment awareness and thoughtless awareness mean same thing since when mind focuses totally on the present moment, all thoughts disappear.



Enlightenment

The process of unfolding of enlightenment involves freedom from following bondages.

Freedom from the bondage of *Karma* (*Karma mala*)

The individual self identifies itself as the actor and enjoyer of fruits of action (*karma*) and gets entrapped in the cycle of *karma*. Realizing that the individual self is the non doer while the real doer is the energy of Lord Shiva, frees the self from the bondage of *karma*.

Freedom from the ignorance (*Anavamala*)

Realizing the identity of individual self with the Supreme Self – Lord Shiva is liberation. It is the recognition that the inner feeling of “I” in oneself to be same as that of Universal Self. This recognition leads to a state of total freedom and bliss.

Freedom Maya(*mayiya mala*)

Realization of powers of Self in terms omnipresence, omnipotence and omniscience is freedom from the limitations imposed by *maya*. The liberated soul feels that pure awareness is the ground of entire manifest and un-manifest world. He realizes that there is only one experiencer for all the beings of the universe - Lord Shiva who is the inner self of all beings. Further, consciousness being the source and substratum of all the objective phenomena, the objects are no different from one

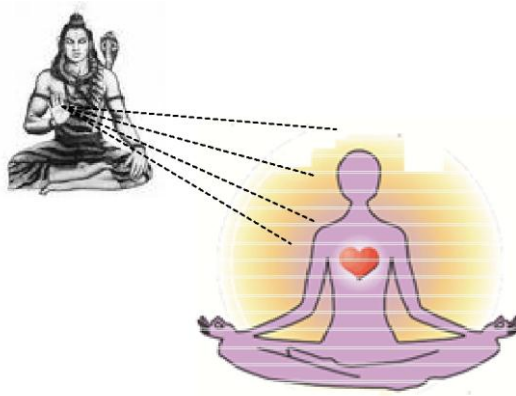
another. This experiences oneness of the whole creation fills him with bliss.

Self-Effort and Grace

Self-effort and grace are like two wings of a bird. Even though it is Lord Shiva who has taken the form of jiva, liberation is not automatic. Individual effort has to be put in terms of getting rid of the limitations. Following are some of the practices which are helpful.

- Austerities like fasting for freeing the deep rooted habit patterns of the mind.
- Study of scriptures for removing the ignorance and freeing the intellect.
- Selfless service to the needy and offering the fruits of physical, mental, verbal action to Lord Shiva for freedom from the bondage of *karma*.
- Meditation for purification of subconscious mind and developing self-awareness.
- Surrender to Divine, Spiritual Master.

Due to the spiritual practices, individual opens up for the Grace. Bestowing Grace is last of the fivefold acts of Lord Shiva – creation, sustenance, dissolution, bondage and liberation. Without the Grace there is no possibility of liberation or enlightenment. Any amount of self-effort won't be sufficient.



It is said that the flow of Grace of Lord Shiva is unconditional and acasual. It is the Grace which awakens the desire for liberation in *jiva*. It is the

Grace which shows him the path. It is the Grace which liberates. But individual has to prepare himself to receive grace. He has to make himself empty vessel to receive the Grace through all the practices. It is like saying there is abundant water in sea. But what you can bring home from sea is dependent on your vessel you carry. One who takes a cup gets a cup of water from sea. One who takes a bucket will get one bucketful. Grace is something similar. If one desires more grace, he has to prepare himself fully through spiritual practices.

Enlightened Master

The Enlightened Master (*Sadguru*) is the representation of Lord Shiva on earth. One who has realized total identification with the Lord Shiva the inner Self of all and one who sees the entire world as manifestation of Lord Shiva is *Sadguru*. It is the Grace only which brings one closer to *Sadguru*. The

Grace of the Enlightened Master flows in the form of *Shakti*. The flow of Shakti from the Master to Disciple is called *Shaktipat*. A mere look, touch or even few words can awaken the inner *Shakti* in the yogi depending on his ability to receive. It is the Shaktipat which opens up deeper wisdom in a yogi who has achieved a state of thoughtless awareness.

For the full liberation, energy of the highest order has to descend on the yogi destroying the last traces of ignorance. This energy of liberation is called *Shaktipat*. The role of the Sadguru is to help the disciple recognize his inner Guru – Atma Guru.

Oneness with Lord Shiva

The practice of thoughtless awareness leads one to the state of Lord Shiva. When the energy of Lord Shiva descends in the form of Shaktipat on the yogi in a state of thoughtlessness, deeper inner wisdom opens up. This is not the knowledge gained through

senses. The soul feels the upsurge in consciousness called Bhairav leading him to the highest wisdom and enlightenment. The embodied soul experiences the deepest bliss and delights in the experience of oneness with the inner Self – Lord Shiva. Grace in the form of Shaktipat only can liberate the bonded soul.

Developing Witness Consciousness

State of thoughtless awareness can be developed by practicing the technique of witness consciousness. Whether one is sitting idle or engaged in some activity, mind is always busy. Subconscious impressions in the form of thoughts, ideas, and images rise to the level of conscious mind continuously. Inputs keep coming from sense organs leading rise and fall of sensations and perceptions. Images, thoughts, ideas, emotions and perceptions keep appearing and disappearing in consciousness. These are caused by various energy movements. These movements cause pleasant or unpleasant experiences. Fortunately for us, every

movement in consciousness whether pleasant or unpleasant passes away. Nothing is permanent. But the psychological scars left by all these movements lasts for long unless we are careful. All the trials and tribulations of life, joys and sorrows make deep impact on the subconscious mind. Unless one is able face to all the ups and downs of life with perfect equanimity, life becomes miserable.

Witness Consciousness

One can overcome the effects of these energy movements by developing witness consciousness. At the center of all these ceaseless activities being done by Shakti, the center Lord Shiva in the form of “I” consciousness remains unperturbed. All the Shaktis rise from the center “I” and merge back into “I”.

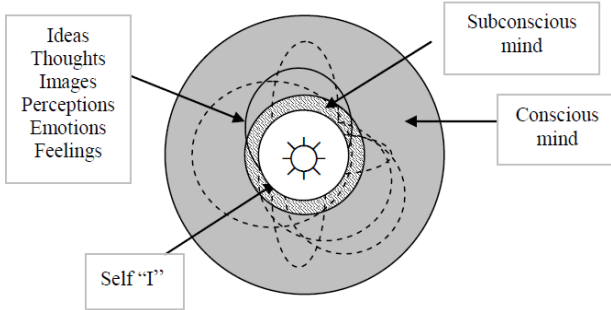
By centering one’s awareness on absolute Self “I” and watching the energy movements from that center one can become free from the psychological impressions created by the ups and downs in life.

One should watch these energy movements in total equanimity. Soon, he will fall into a state of deep tranquility of Self. With a firm understanding that all the energy movements are transient, one should not identify with any image or thought .This is the path to freedom.

Witness - The Divine in Human

Development of the center of witness consciousness (*sakshi bhava*) itself is the way to merge with Lord Shiva. As the center of witness consciousness develops, one develops detachment to the fullest degree and bliss of Self starts flowing. Witness consciousness breaks the action-reaction cycle created by the karmic bondage.

Witness Consciousness



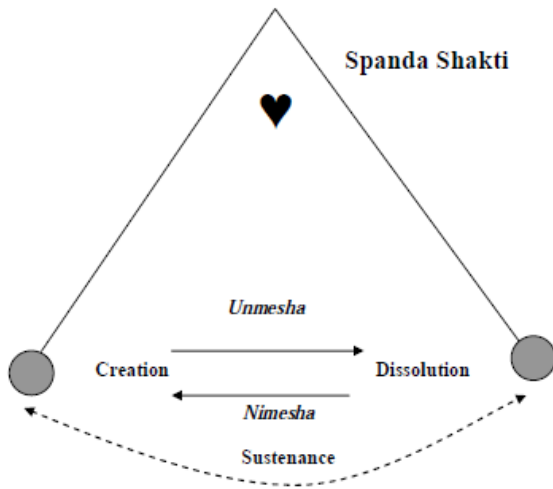
This is what Mata Amritanandamayi says about witness consciousness.

Witnessing is a state in which you remain constantly detached and untouched, simply watching everything that happens, without the interference of the mind and its thoughts. To become a witness is to really wake up and become conscious of everything that happens, both within and without. But in reality, there is no within or without. In that state of supreme witnessing, you become the center of everything, just watching all the changes that occur. The changes never affect you because now you have become the center, the very life force of everything.

- Mata Amritanandamayi

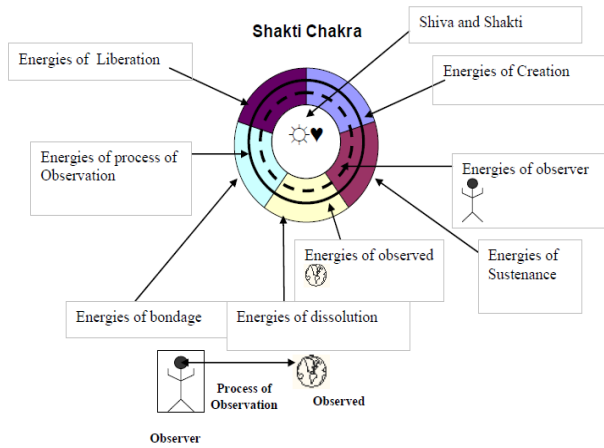
Wheel of Energies (*Shakti Chakra*)

Creation, sustenance, dissolution, bondage and liberation are the fivefold acts of Lord Shiva. These acts of Lord Shiva are carried out by *Shakti* the energy of Lord Shiva. Pure awareness, the transcendental form of Lord Shiva is called Parameshwara and his energy is called *spanda* which means vibration. *Spanda* is the movement in pure awareness for creation. She represents the absolute freedom of the associated bliss. The *Spanda Shakti* operates in two poles of Self (*Aham*) and the creation (*idam*). She keeps swinging, pulsating between these two poles like a pendulum as shown in the figure below.



It is the pulsation of *Spanda Shakti* which creates, sustains and dissolves the Universe. This process is called *unmesha* and *nimesha* as shown in the figure below

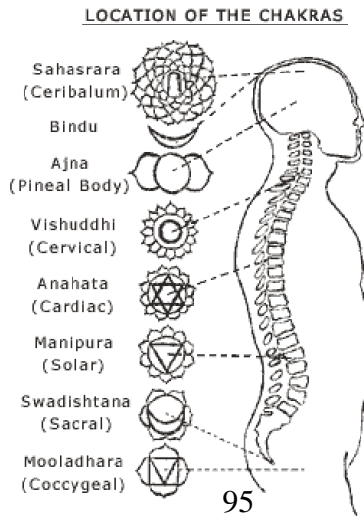
When the expansion in the form of Universe takes place, the Self nature and bliss is forgotten. With the dissolution of the Universe, the Self-awareness and bliss increases.



Spanda Shakti manifests as twelve different kinds of energies for creation, sustenance, dissolution, bondage and liberation. It is the *Shakti* who manifests as *matrika*. These twelve Shaktis cause a differentiated perception of observer, observed and the process of observation in pure consciousness and cause either bondage or liberation of the individual based on the evolution of the soul. Process of observation is related to five senses –

eyes, ears, tongue, skin and nose and corresponding sensation. These energies continuously create ideas, thoughts, images, perception, feelings and emotion in individual.

It is the *spanda* Shakti who manifests as heartbeat, blood circulation and various kinds of emotions, feelings and thoughts in individual. These energies operate through subtle energy channels called *nadis* and six major vortexes (*chakras*) of energy situated in various parts of the spinal cord and nervous system as shown in figure below.

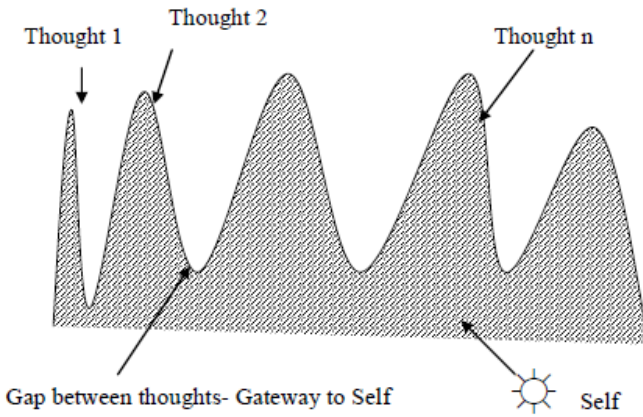


The energies operating through the nervous system and *chakras* are responsible for various states of consciousness in human body.

Awareness and contemplation on Shakti *Chakra*, the play of Shakti in one's own consciousness leads to liberation. Establishing one's own awareness in a state of witness consciousness and being aware of play of twelve energies of Shakti *chakra* is the path to liberation.

Energy is consciousness in motion. All manifestations of energy including breath, heartbeat, perceptions, thoughts, ideas, and emotions can be traced back to the Self.

If one closely observes the gap between two thoughts or in breath and out breath, the nature of Self is revealed as shown in figure below. One should be aware and alert about the gap created by the energy movement creating thought/breath to establish fully in the Self.



Mother of the Universe

Consciousness is the sole reality of Universe. The energy of consciousness *Para Shakti* in the form Will, Wisdom and Action creates, sustains and dissolves the Universe. Verily, *Parashakti* is the Mother of Universe. It is *Parashakti* only who takes on various forms of Laxmi, Durga and Saraswati to act out the play of consciousness. They represent the various energies of *Shakti Chakra*.



Mother Laxmi representing the
Iccha Shakti – Energy of Will



Mother Durga representing the Kriya
Shakti – Energy of Action



Mother Saraswati representing the
Jnana Shakti – Energy of Wisdom

5.0 Super consciousness



We are all aware of three states of consciousness namely waking, dreaming and deep sleep. *Turiya* is the state beyond these three states. *Turiya* is the background for all the three states. It is the state of super consciousness. One who enters *Turiya*

experiences the eternal bliss of Self. In the ensuing sutras, Shiva explains the characteristics of each of these states.

जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तभेदे तुर्याभोगसंभवः ॥७॥

Bliss of fourth state of consciousness – *Turiya* is enjoyed (by realized soul) in waking, dreaming and deep sleep state.

ज्ञानं जाग्रत् ॥८॥

All knowledge obtained by the mind by coming in contact with external world during waking state.

स्वप्नो विकल्पः ॥९॥

Dream state is characterized by knowledge when mind is not in contact with external world.

अविवेको मायासौषुप्तम् ॥१०॥

Deep sleep is a state of unawareness of both the internal and external world.

One who has assimilated all the three states of consciousness in the super conscious state is the Courageous One.

States of Consciousness

Waking, dreaming and deep sleep are normal states of consciousness. These are called *jagrat*, *swapn* and *sushupti* respectively. All these states arise and merge back into super conscious awareness called *Turiya*. Super consciousness is not a different state at all but the background for all these states. The relationship between super conscious state and the other three states is like the relationship between ocean and the waves or sky and the clouds. Waves rise and fall in the ocean but ocean is ever unchanging. Waves have the same quality as that of the ocean. Similarly, clouds appear and disappear in the sky. But sky itself never undergoes changes.

The states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep are very different. It appears as though the person who is in waking is different from the one who is going through dreaming or deep sleep. But because of the substratum of super conscious state, in spite of the different experiences in different states of consciousness, the experiencer appears to remain same.

There is a beautiful story about Zen master who questions the reality of dreaming and waking state of consciousness.

Story of Dream of a butterfly

A Zen Master woke up in the morning and started crying loudly. His disciples were perplexed. They gathered round the bed and asked him “Sir, What is the matter? Did you have any bad dream?” Sobbing Master told – “Yes! Yes! I had a very bad dream. I dreamt that I was a butterfly “. Students felt relieved. They tried to console the master by saying - “Oh! That’s all. Now that you have woken up from that bad dream, you can be happy.” Master started

crying more loudly. He said “What to do? I don’t know whether I am a Zen master who dreamt of a butterfly or butterfly dreaming that it is a Zen Master. Which one is true? ” .

Waking State

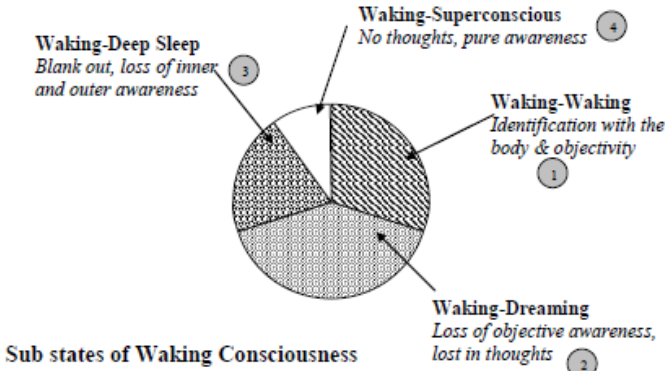
In waking state of consciousness, the awareness flows through the sense organs and focuses on the external world. Because of this reason, it is said that waking state consciousness is centered on eyes. Consciousness gets differentiated into subject *jiva* and object *jagat*. The subject is the one who identifies with body-mind complex and experiences the world as separate from the self. Even though the world and subject are made up of same basic ingredient - pure awareness, due to the effect of differentiation, there is arousal of feeling of separation from the world. The unitary experience of pure awareness gets differentiated into the perception, perceiver, and perceived. This leads to the feeling of “i-ness”, “my-ness” separate

from the world. This apparent feeling of separation causes the fear to rise.

Through the sense organs of eyes, ears, mouth, skin and nose and also organs of action like mouth, hands, legs, sex and excretory organs, the individual self starts interacting with the world.

The differentiated perception, play of *maya* is strongest in this state of consciousness. Waking state is interspersed with other states of consciousness as shown in figure below. They are called waking-waking, waking-dreaming, waking-deep sleep, and waking-super conscious states.

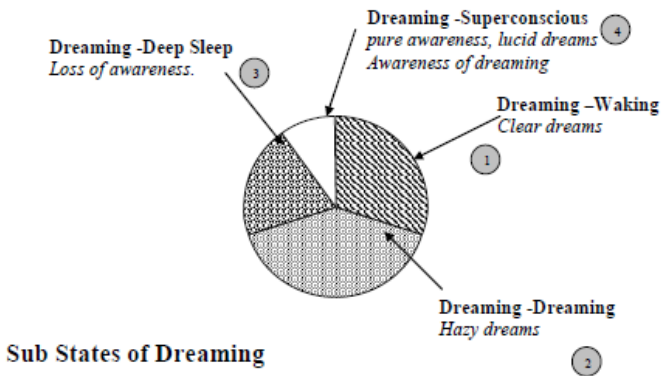
The degree of bliss felt in each of these states is related to the degree of Self-awareness. Least amount of bliss is felt in state 1 and highest bliss is felt in state 4. Since the operation of the *maya* is at its peak in waking state yogis call waking state as deep slumber!



Dreaming State

In dreaming state the consciousness starts inward movement. It is said that in dreaming state, the consciousness is centered on the space in throat region. The happenings in the waking state leave impressions on the subconscious. All the happiness, unhappiness, victories, losses, tensions and traumas of waking state leave impressions called *samskaras* in the subconscious mind. The individual mind projects a dream world in which he starts enjoying

the subtle impressions. He starts fulfilling his waking time unfulfilled desires through the dreams. In dream state, the sense of ego is weakened compared to waking state. However, thoughts patterns are strong in the dreaming state. Dream state is interspersed with other states of consciousness as dreaming-waking, dreaming-dreaming, dreaming-deep sleep and dreaming-super conscious as shown in the figure below.

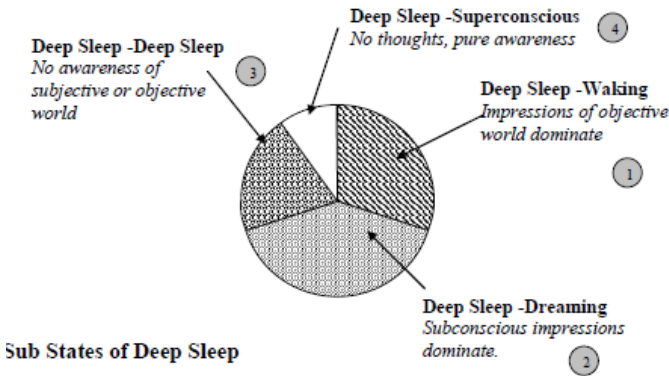


For a yogi, dreaming state of consciousness is a higher level awakening compared to waking state of consciousness. This is due to the fact that consciousness is in a state of inward movement. The Seer of *Mandukya* Upanishad calls the inner state of consciousness in dream state as *taijas* – light because it illuminates the inner world of thought, emotion, memories and ideas. According to Seer of Upanishad, there is a higher degree of light or awareness in dreaming state compared to waking state.

Deep Sleep State

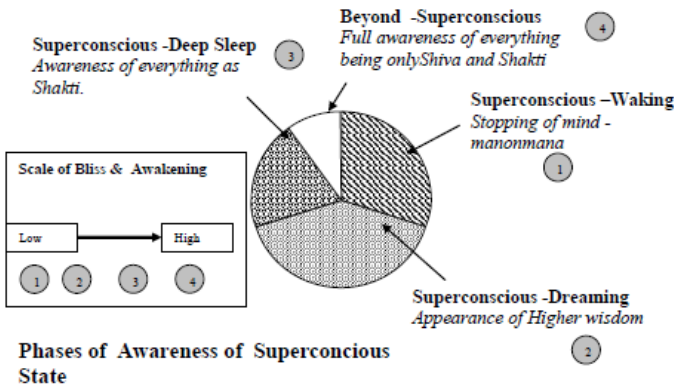
Deep sleep state is the state of total rest. Waking state and dreaming states cause unrest for the individual self because of extroverted and differentiated nature of consciousness. Surprisingly, yogis consider deep sleep state as higher level of awakened state compared to both waking and dreaming state. Upanishads call the individual self

in deep sleep state as *prajna* indicating a higher state of wisdom in deep sleep state compared to waking and dreaming state. Since subjective awareness dominates in deep sleep state, individual self is very close to Universal Consciousness in this state. Again, yogis classify four sub-states for deep sleep namely, deep sleep-waking, deep sleep-dreaming, deep sleep–deep sleep and deep sleep-super conscious as shown in the figure below.



Super Consciousness

Super consciousness is not another state like waking, dreaming and deep sleep. It is called *Turiya* which means beyond three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. It is a background for all the three states of consciousness being in state of awareness and total bliss. This state is characterized by complete absence of any thoughts ideas or visions. Super conscious-waking, super conscious-dreaming, super conscious-deep sleep and beyond the super consciousness are some of the phases which can be recognized before one really gets fully established in the super conscious awareness. These phases are shown in the figure below.



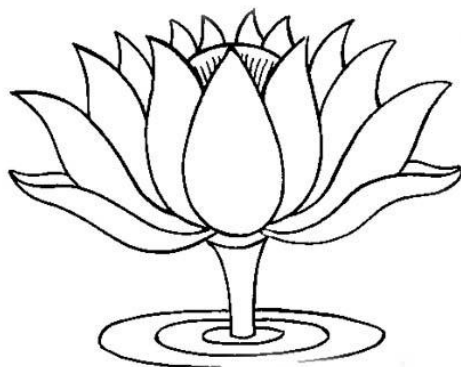
Beyond Super consciousness

Super conscious state is the background state for all the three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. Super consciousness being the background state of every movement in consciousness be it thought, emotion, breathing, perception or idea, an alert yogi is aware of super conscious state in the gap between every two thoughts, between in-breath and out-breath and also between various emotional states. One who realizes that each state of

consciousness is supported by and permeated by super consciousness, enjoys bliss every moment of his life. He is considered a hero because he is unperturbed by duality of life like happiness, unhappiness, attraction and repulsion etc.

Turiyatita is a state in which transcends the state of *turiya*. In *Turiyatita* state, the state of waking, dreaming, dreamless sleep and even *turiya* is realized as nothing but the expressions of pure consciousness. This is a state of non-duality. One who has this realization experiences supreme bliss. He sees every manifest and unmanifest thing in the universe as glory of His own Self.

6.0 Flowering of Bliss



Path of Self Realization is path of joy. As one starts exploring his inner consciousness he gets filled with wonder. As the intuition develops, leading him closer and closer to the nature of Self he starts acquiring the latent power, loosening up the bondages caused by *maya*. As he starts coming out of the bondages, he gets filled with bliss. The glory of such a yogi who is on the path of Self-realization is described in the ensuing sutras.

विस्मयो योगभूमिकाः ॥१२॥

Wonderful are the stages of (unfolding experiences)
in Yoga.

इच्छा शक्तिरुमा कुमारी ॥१३॥

Such a Yogi will acquire the supreme Will power
(Uma Kumari) of Lord Shiva.

दृश्यं शरीरम् ॥१४॥

He experiences whole of the perceived Universe as
his body.

हृदये चित्तसंघट्टादृश्यस्वापदर्शनम् ॥१५॥

By establishing ones mind in the heart (universal
consciousness), the whole world of perceptions
appears as ones own nature.

शुद्धतत्त्वसंधानाद्वाऽपशुशक्तिः ॥१६॥

Or by establishing uninterrupted pure awareness of
supreme nature, energy of Lord Shiva is realized.

लोकानन्दः समाधिसुखम् ॥१८॥

वितर्कं आत्मज्ञानम् ॥१७॥

For such a realized soul any ordinary thought becomes means of realizing one's own self. He enjoys the bliss of the totality of the universe even when he is not in trance (*Samadhi*).

शक्तिसन्धाने शरीरोत्पत्तिः ॥१६॥

By putting his mind on Universal Energy, any body – internal or external (in waking/dream state/deep sleep) is formed by his mere will.

भूतसंधानभूतपृथक्त्वविश्वसंघटाः ॥२०॥

Such a yogi who is unbounded by space and time is capable of helping humanity since he experiences himself in all the bodies as Universal Self.

शुद्धविद्योदयाच्चक्र शत्वसिद्धिः ॥२१॥

Even though, he manifest several miraculous powers-siddhis, a Yogi who abstains from (using) such powers, attains lordship over the wheel of universal energies through the rise of pure knowledge.

महाहृदानुसंधानान्मन्त्रवीर्यानुभवः ॥२२॥

By contemplating on the Great heart he experiences the power of the *mantra*.

Wonders of Yoga

Fortunate is the yogi who is on the path of yoga. Every day is a new day for him. Every moment is filled with life. Like a scientist, yogi on the path of Self-discovery explores the inner consciousness with the curiosity of a child. Every day he comes out with precious discoveries from the bottom of

consciousness. Some of the jewels discovered on the path of Self-realization are described in the following sections.

Seeing things as they are

As one gets established in witness consciousness, he is able to withstand all the turbulences in life with calm serenity. He is able to observe very objectively and act decisively. In other words, he is in a position to see things as they are. Ability of true seeing develops. This ability gives him the power of effective action.

Release of Subconscious Blocks

He has the ability to witness the subconscious and unconscious impressions of trauma, tragedies, and tensions coming to the surface of consciousness and dissolving without getting perturbed. This leads to a process of cleansing of subconscious giving a sense of deep relief and freedom. There is a tremendous

sense of healing of mind and the body due to this cleansing activity.

Descent of Grace

As the inner cleansing intensifies, he becomes a suitable vessel for Divine Grace flowing through the Spiritual Master in the form of Shakti. This flow of energy called *Shaktipat* accelerates his evolution by awakening the latent power of *kundalini* at the base of the spine. *Kundalini* is the energy responsible ascent of the soul to the higher realms of consciousness by further releasing the internal blocks

Upward movement of Energy

Awakened kundalini energy starts her journey upwards through subtle centers of spinal cord. This journey of energy starts from the energy center called *muladhar* at the base of the spine and ends in

sahasrar at the crown of the head. In the process she opens up blocked energy centers, cleans subconscious and unconscious impressions. This process of upward movement of energy and freeing up of blocks results manifestation of various powers of consciousness in Yogi.

Experience of Divine Sensations

The flowering consciousness can open up several subtle sensory experiences in the form of Divine sounds, smells, touch, taste, and lights. He may also have the vision of various deities and enlightened masters.

Experience of subtle worlds

There are several subtle planes of existence beyond the gross earthly plane. Due to refinement of the senses, the vision of subtlest of subtle worlds opens up in the inner vision of yogi.

Extrasensory Perception

Refinement of senses brings in the ability of extra sensory perception like clairaudience, remote viewing etc

Realization of Lord Shiva and Shakti

When the ascending kundalini reaches the crown center, the merger of the individual soul with the Universal Self is complete. The individual sense of “I” becomes one with the Universal Self. This is the realization of Lord Shiva. The powers of consciousness, Shakti of Lord Shiva, start manifesting through such a blessed being. This is the realization of Shiva-Shakti. The Glory of such a Divine being is explained in the following sections.

Ascent to Higher Level of Consciousness

The process of creation involves descent of Supreme Consciousness into lower planes in progressive stages of manifestation and contraction of power. As the yogi makes progress in his spiritual practices, the process gets reversed and he starts experiencing expansion of consciousness and power in progressive stages of ascent of consciousness.

Omni Potency

Uma is the Supreme Will power of Lord Shiva. It is the Will power of Lord Shiva makes him manifest the entire universe out of his own body of consciousness and take the body of *jiva* – individual self to explore the Universe. It is She who bestows her grace on highly evolved yogi in the form of intuitive flash which bestows liberation. Due to merger of his self-identity with absolute identity of

Lord Shiva, yogi acquires the supreme Will power and can manifest anything if he desires so.

Omni Presence

As the identification of yogi to the limited body mind complex drops and his sense of individual “I” starts merging with the absolute “I” of universal consciousness, he perceives his own Self shining in every being. Whatever form he perceives, he sees Shiva Consciousness itself shining.

Omniscience

Shiva is the sole experiencer in all the beings. Due to identification with the Self, the mistaken perception of differentiation of the consciousness into perceiver, perceived and the process of perception drops. With this, unitary perception with the consciousness forming the basis of entire creation is developed. He sees his glory of his own

Self in whole of the Universe. He experiences the Universe as his own body.

Liberation

Dropping of the triple bondage of ignorance, *maya* and *karma* and identification with the true Self, yogi becomes liberated while alive – *jivanmukta*. Experiencing the fullest freedom of the Self, he becomes the representation of Lord Shiva on the earth in human form.

Flowering of Bliss Supreme

It is said that there are seven stages super consciousness (*Turiya*) each progressively leading to higher and higher levels of bliss. Breath is the link between the body and mind. The flow of breath indicates the state of consciousness. In the following

stages various refinements of the breath and associated consciousness are indicated.

Nijananda or bliss of own Self opens up when one becomes aware of the Self in between in-breath and out breath.

Nirananda or unlimited bliss experienced when the breath becomes very subtle indicating subtle state of mind.

Parananda or the experience of blissful breathing due to silence of the mind.

Brahmananda or all pervading bliss when breath stops of its own because of very refined state of mind.

Mahanananda or great bliss when the subtle breath rushes to root *chakra* – *muladhara* .

Cidananda or bliss of consciousness when the subtle energy of *kundalini* raises and reaches *sahasrara* – the crown center.

Jagadananda or *Universal bliss* when one is established fully in state of supreme I consciousness

and experiences the whole of Universe as ones own Self.

In the state of *jagadananda* bliss of the deepest level of trance – *Samadhi* is experienced in every state of consciousness. While walking, talking or eating, he experiences the highest order of bliss.

Blessed Life

Such a Divine soul is blessing to the earth. Wherever he goes and whatever he goes provides the healing through words, action and just by his mere presence. All his actions are for the welfare of the whole creation.

7.0 Contemplations and Meditation

The purpose of meditation and contemplation is to separate the Seer from the Seen, the objects of consciousness from the subject for experiencing the eternal Bliss which is your own nature. Maintain the following awareness throughout the day.

1. Be aware that you are not the body, mind or intellect.
2. Be aware that you are the witness (sakshi) for the happenings in body, mind and intellect.
3. Be aware that you are the witness (Sakshi) to the happenings in the world.
4. Be aware that the matter is nothing but objects in consciousness and not different from

consciousness itself.

5. Be aware that the world is nothing but a projection in the pure consciousness.
6. Be aware that the world is not different from pure awareness.
7. Be aware that your true nature is pure awareness and bliss.
8. Be aware that the suffering is caused by identifying with the body, mind and intellect.
9. Be aware that the thoughts arise and fall into consciousness just like a wave arises and falls into the ocean.
10. Be aware of the speech whenever you use the word “I” implicitly or explicitly. Are you referring to the “I” as body mind complex or pure awareness?
11. Be in the present moment by becoming aware of the breath and sensations of the body.
12. Be aware of how your speech and thoughts color the perceptions.
13. Be aware how the memories of past color the perception of the present moment.

14. Be aware that the gross, subtle and causal bodies are not you.
15. Be the eternal witness in waking, dreaming and deep sleep state.
16. Be aware that the witness (sakshi) itself is all pervading pure awareness.
17. Be aware that the thoughts create the feeling of being the thinker while in reality there is no thinker.
18. Be aware that the actions create the feeling of being the doer while in reality there is no doer.
19. Be aware that experiences of the mind create the experiencer while in reality there is no experiencer.
20. Be aware of the oneness of Shiva and Shakti – awareness and the content of awareness.
21. Be aware how you experience pure silence and bliss whenever you enquire “Who am I”.

8.0 Recommended Books

Siva Sutras by Jaidev Singh,
Motilal Banarasidass
Publishers, 2006

Spanda Karikas by Jaidev Singh, Motilal
Banarasidas publishers, 2000

The aphorisms of Siva by Mark S.g. Dyczkowski,
Indica Books,1998.

Kashmir Shaivism, Swami Lakshman Joo
The Universal, Shaiva Trust 1988.

Play of Consciousness, Paramahansa Muktananda,
SYDA Foundation.

The Supreme Truth, Absolute and Ultimate
Sadguru Published by Sridhara Seva Mahamandala,
Varadapura.

Annexure I : Spiritual Heart

Explanation of the Logo of Spiritual Heart shown on the back of the cover page.

Supports for Spiritual Life



Sangha - Supportive group of Spiritual Aspirants.

Sharanagati - Surrender to Sadguru, Sangha and Dhrma.

Swadhyaya – Non judgemental witnessing of thought feeling and emotions, body and mind

Sadhana - Spiritual Practice

Sadguru - The Enlightened Master

Shastra – Scriptures

Shraddha – Faith in Sadguru and Shastra

Function of Spiritual Heart

Objective Mind (*Manas*)

Controller of Senses



Awakened Kundalini

Caudal Rod

The awakened shakti

Light of the Self - *Atmajyothi*

The Divine in Human – Pure awareness (*Chaitanya*)

Ever watchful Witness – (*Sakshi*)

Seat of the intelligence (*Buddhi*)

Holy Name (*Omkar*)

Omkar the Holy Name

Of the Lord Within

Unstuck sound (*Anahat*)

Sound of Silence

Goal and Destination of all spiritual practice

Individual Soul (*Jiva*)

The sense of “I” the ego,

The individual soul

Swimming in the waters of subconscious (*chitta*)

Subconscious Mind(*Chitta*)

Storehouse of impressions (*samskara*)

Representation of Spiritual Heart of Liberated Soul

Intellect operating under
guidance of Sakshi - witness



Ego (i-aham)
Disappeared long ago
Never existent
But really persistent
The real troublemaker
Gone ... Gone ... Gone

Spiritual Heart is the **Sacred Heart**,
The Heart of the Saint,
Heart Divine.
Full of Love, Compassion and Wisdom Supreme.

Chitta (Subconscious)
Free of all impurities,
Of all defilements of Nature
Pure and Pristine
Vast and peaceful
Like Milky Ocean

Manas (Objective mind)
Free of all concepts
Silent like still waters

Buddhi (Intellect – Subjective Mind)
Free from the clutches
From the monster of ego
Servant of Divine
Master of the body mind.

Annexure II : Macro and Microcosm

Shiva - Pure awareness



Shakti - Pure energy

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