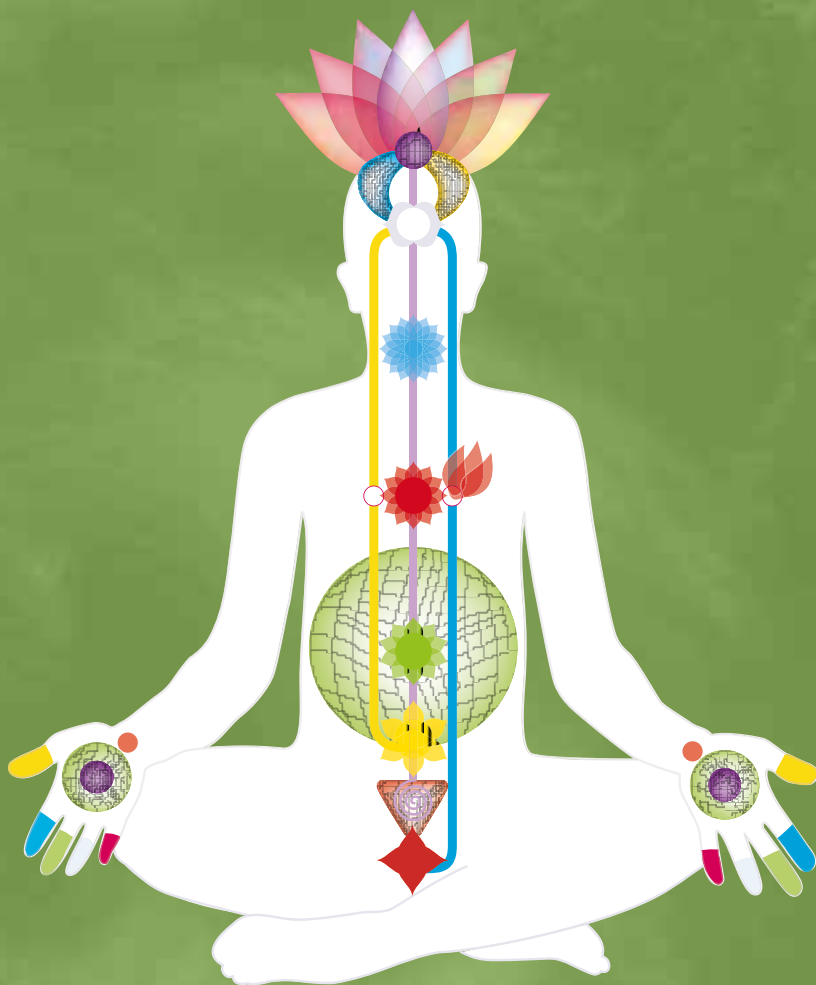


# SAHAJA YOGA

AN INTRODUCTION



# WHAT IS SAHAJA YOGA?

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*“As soon as you are born a human being, you have the right to unite with God. This is why human beings are seeking. They are somehow aware of that right. This is a living evolutionary process. You don’t have to pay, you don’t have to plan, you don’t have to work hard. In your own right you will get it.”*

SHRI MATAJI NIRMALA DEVI

**S**ahaja Yoga is a meditation technique developed in 1970 by Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi which enables us to go beyond our mental, emotional and physical activity to experience our true self within. SAHAJA means ‘BORN WITH YOU’ or ‘SPONTANEOUS’ and YOGA means ‘UNION WITH THE DIVINE’. It involves the awakening of the subtle spiritual energy known as the KUNDALINI, which lies dormant in the SACRUM BONE at the base of the spine in three and a half coils. The gentle awakening of this Kundalini energy and the inner journey of self-discovery is known as SELF REALISATION or YOGA. Those who have received Realisation are known as REALISED SOULS or DWEEJAH in Sanskrit, meaning ‘THE TWICE BORN’.

The awakened Kundalini rises up the spinal column until it reaches the limbic region of the brain from where it can be felt flowing out of the fontanelle (FROM OLD FRENCH FONTANELLE, MEANING 'A LITTLE SPRING') as a cool breeze or vibrations (CHAITANYA). These vibrations can also be felt on the fingertips and on the palms of the hands. In the same way we can feel the heat of the sun's rays upon our skin, we can feel vibrations and the experience of Sahaja Yoga.

The immediate effects of raising the Kundalini and going into a state of thoughtless awareness can be felt as a gentle release from our mind and a spontaneous state of bliss, as one merely witnesses and enjoys the present moment. However, the effects of reaching this state go far beyond those few incredible moments of bliss.

When the Kundalini rises, it removes tensions occurring on our central nervous system that cause negative mental, emotional or physical sensations, and brings our system into balance. Thus we are spontaneously relieved from any stress, weight or pain we may be experiencing. As Sahaja Yoga meditation works directly on our central nervous system – which controls all of our mental, physical and emotional activity – it has the potential to dramatically improve our well-being in all of these areas by going directly to the source of any problem.

Another defining characteristic of Sahaja Yoga is that it empowers us to become the master of our own personal growth, connecting us with our innate qualities and giving us the tools to overcome most obstacles in life. It is free from levels, qualifications or hierarchies. All individuals who run meditation classes do so on a completely voluntary basis because they want to share their experience and because it strengthens their own connection to themselves. The knowledge and experience of Sahaja Yoga Meditation is always and unconditionally 100% free.

In the Gospel of John, Christ makes references to the COOL BREEZE and the SECOND BIRTH indicating that spirituality is an experience on our central nervous system:

*That which is born of the flesh is flesh,  
and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.  
Do not be amazed that I say this to you.*

*The wind blows where it wishes  
and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where  
it comes from and where it is going;  
So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit...*

*Truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know  
and testify of what we have seen.*

**NEW TESTAMENT  
JOHN, CHAPTER 3**



# THOUGHTLESS AWARENESS

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*Empty yourself of everything. Let the mind become still.*

LAO TZU  
TAO TE KING, VERSE 16

## THE FOUR STATES OF HUMAN AWARENESS FROM THE INDIAN SCRIPTURES:

### JAGRUTI

THE WAKING STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

### SWAPNA

THE DREAMING STATE OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

### SHUSHUPTI

THE STATE OF DEEP SLEEP IN WHICH THE MIND,  
THE EGO, AND SUPEREGO ARE STILL.

### TURYA

THE STATE OF THOUGHTLESS AWARENESS  
BEYOND THE MIND.

The first three states of awareness are commonly experienced in our daily lives. The fourth state is the state of THOUGHTLESS AWARENESS or NIRVICHARA SAMADHI. This is the state in which the constant rising and falling of thoughts in the mind comes to an end. At first, a gap begins to appear between the thoughts, this gap is known as VILAMBA. As this gap grows, thoughts diminish. Through the daily practice of Sahaja Yoga meditation, the mind enters into a state of THOUGHTLESS AWARENESS, becoming still – like a lake devoid of ripples – and a deep inner peace begins to dawn within our awareness.

When there are no ripples on the water of a lake, its surface becomes nearly invisible as it reflects the beauty of the landscape around it – the trees, the sky, the clouds. In the same way, a still mind reflects the beauty of creation, and melts into the bliss and the peace of the Divine.

*Now, instruction in Yoga (UNION).*

*Union is restraining the thought-streams natural to the mind.*

*Then the seer dwells in his own nature.*

*Otherwise he is of the same form as the thoughts.*

PATANJALI  
YOGA SUTRAS

*Enjoyment is only possible when you are beyond your mind.  
With your mind you can never enjoy. It's like a big load.  
It will not act, it will not help. Enjoyment comes  
when you are in complete silence – in a rippleless lake.  
The reflection of all the joy that is created on the shores  
of that lake are completely reflected, they are not deflected.  
If there were ripples it would have been  
a different image altogether and would have been  
something nowhere near the image of reality.*

SHRI MATAJI NIRMALA DEVI  
ITALY -1 OCTOBER 1995

In the state of thoughtless awareness we think neither of the past nor of the future. We are entirely in the present moment, in the state of 'BEING' and do not waste precious moments dwelling on times that are finished forever or thinking about what is yet to come. We start to enjoy our SELF, our SPIRIT, our own inner beauty and the beauty of creation. We begin to enjoy simply 'BEING'. We are able to enjoy the singing of birds, the scent of flowers and the beauty of those around us at a much deeper level as we are no longer bombarded by meaningless mental chatter that assails our awareness and pollutes our attention, distracting us from the simple joys of our existence.

In this state, we start to feel the vibrations of our chakras and our surroundings on our fingertips. We also begin to feel the effect our behaviour and lifestyle has on our selves and our



surroundings – we feel the vibrations in either the presence or absence of our inner joy and peace. As a result we spontaneously and naturally change ourselves and our environment – shifting our attention so that we maximise the joy, both for ourselves and for those around us. Shri Mataji has described this as ‘INNATE RELIGION’.

*The Self, which is in fact the Lord and which is called ‘I’ because it abides in the body, is different from the physical and subtle bodies. ‘I am that Spirit. I am without attributes, actionless, eternal, ever free and indestructible. I am not the body which is ever changing and unreal.’ This is called Knowledge by the wise.*

SHRI ADI SHANKARACHARYA

Our growth in Sahaja Yoga raises us to a higher level of consciousness. It is a natural and spontaneous process that gently transforms us from within, enabling us to manifest and express positive human qualities and to enjoy the peace and the bliss of life as described in the ancient scriptures. Sahaja Yoga is an inner revolution that brings about the transformation of human beings into spiritual beings who gradually manifest sublime qualities of compassion, generosity and detached, unselfish love – who live in a progressively profound state of inner peace. It is a living process and a gradual transformation of our awareness rather than a mental projection or conception.

Sahaja Yoga is a spiritual movement of global proportions. People from most countries around the world, from all age groups, and diverse religious and social backgrounds are united by their experience of the same inner joy and peace. The benefits of Sahaja Yoga can be experienced by absolutely anyone!

Hundreds of thousands of people have experienced the blissful state of thoughtless awareness from Sahaja Yoga classes all around the world, which have also been offered in schools, prisons, orphanages and refugee camps with huge success. All that is required is an open mind and the desire to discover the truth about yourself.





# SHRI MATAJI NIRMALA DEVI

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*When are you finally going to start your spiritual work?  
Now you are free, and you have to start.*

MAHATMA GANDHI  
IN A CONVERSATION WITH SHRI MATAJI

**S**hri Mataji Nirmala Devi discovered the unique method of meditation SAHAJA YOGA, which allows one to achieve inner enlightenment, and reveals the true potential of mankind. Shri Mataji devoted her entire life to the development and dissemination of this method, and today hundreds of thousands of people around the world practise and benefit from Sahaja Yoga. The classes – always free – are offered in over 80 countries around the world.

## THE GREAT MASTER OF YOGA

Shri Mataji showed that within each person there is a motherly spiritual energy called KUNDALINI, the awakening of which leads a person to a state of spontaneous meditation. Unlike many ancient teachers who were only able to share this experience with a few individuals, Shri Mataji could raise

the Kundalini in thousands of people, which was previously considered impossible. It is the opportunity to awaken this inner spiritual energy that distinguishes Sahaja Yoga from other methods of meditation. It is an extraordinary living experience that allows us to touch the very essence of ourselves, to uncover our very best qualities and to achieve a state of complete peace and satisfaction.

### FROM NIRMALA TO 'SHRI MATAJI'

Initially Shri Mataji taught this method to a few seekers in India, awakening their Kundalinis and giving them Self Realisation. Since ancient times only the most worthy and dedicated had managed to attain their Self Realisation through TAPASYA (GREAT PENANCE), cleansing and introspection.

Somehow, the presence of Shri Mataji combined with her loving attention and her work on seekers' subtle systems became the catalyst for this process. After a while, her students reached a sublime state of inner freedom and lightness, experiencing a cool breeze on the palms of open hands and above their heads.

As an expression of love, respect and gratitude for Nirmala and her unique ability to grant Self Realisation, her students began calling her SHRI MATAJI, which literally means RESPECTED HOLY MOTHER.

## INNER DEVELOPMENT AS THE FOUNDATION OF A HEALTHY SOCIETY

Shri Mataji, in her lectures and conversations, paid attention to many aspects of a person's life saying that the inner state, enlightened by the practice of meditation, will find an outward manifestation in all spheres of human life.

### SHRI MATAJI'S EARLY LIFE

Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi is a descendant of India's royal Shalivahana Dynasty. She was born into a Christian family at Chindwara, in the centre of India, at noon on the 21st March, 1923 – the spring equinox. She was born completely self-realised and from a young age knew that she had a unique gift that had to be made available to all mankind.

Both Shri Mataji and her parents, Prasad and Cornelia Salve, played an active role in India's fight for independence. Her father, a talented lawyer and close associate of Mahatma Gandhi, was a member of the Constituent Assembly of India and helped write India's first constitution. He was a renowned scholar, fluent in 14 languages.

As a child Shri Mataji and her family lived for some time in the ashram of Mahatma Gandhi, who affectionately gave her the nickname NEPALI. Even at a young age, her deep wisdom and understanding was evident to the Mahatma.

Shri Mataji played a courageous role as a youth leader in the fight for freedom. In 1942 she was arrested, imprisoned and tortured for her participation in Gandhi's "QUIT INDIA" Movement. She later studied medicine at the Christian Medical College in Lahore, in what is now Pakistan.

Shortly before India's Independence, Shri Mataji married Mr. C.P. Srivastava, who would go on to become one of India's most respected, high-ranking civil servants. Mr. Srivastava held the post of Joint Secretary to the Office of the Indian Prime Minister, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, between 1964-66. Later, he was unanimously re-elected for four consecutive four-year terms, as Secretary General of the United Nations International Maritime Organisation based in London. He was knighted by the Queen of England in 1989 and received similar honours from many countries for his service to the international maritime community.

### SHRI MATAJI'S SAHAJA YOGA WORK

After fulfilling her familial duties of bringing up two daughters, Shri Mataji embarked on her spiritual mission. On the 5th of May, 1970 she was meditating on the many problems of humanity on a lonely beach in India, when a blissful Divine experience filled her whole being and she knew that the moment had come for her unique spiritual gift – the ability to give en-masse Self Realisation – to be shared with humanity. Soon thousands of people in many countries

were receiving the transforming experience of Kundalini awakening and discovering for themselves that – using Shri Mataji’s techniques – they could also pass this experience on to others, as one candle can be used to enlighten another.

Unlike the many so-called ‘gurus’ of the modern era, Shri Mataji neither charged for her lectures or for giving Self Realisation. She always insisted that one cannot pay for enlightenment. She warned of the dangers of going to false gurus and enterprises that packaged spirituality as a business. Self Realisation and spiritual enlightenment are beyond money. (The knowledge and experience of Sahaja Yoga meditation is always and unconditionally 100% free. All individuals who run meditation classes – either online or in person – do so on a completely voluntary basis because they want to share their experience.)

Shri Mataji created many non-profit organizations in various fields of public life. From a centre for destitute women and orphans to international schools, from health centres using the methods of Sahaja Yoga to academies teaching classical arts – the list of Shri Mataji’s achievements is striking in its diversity.

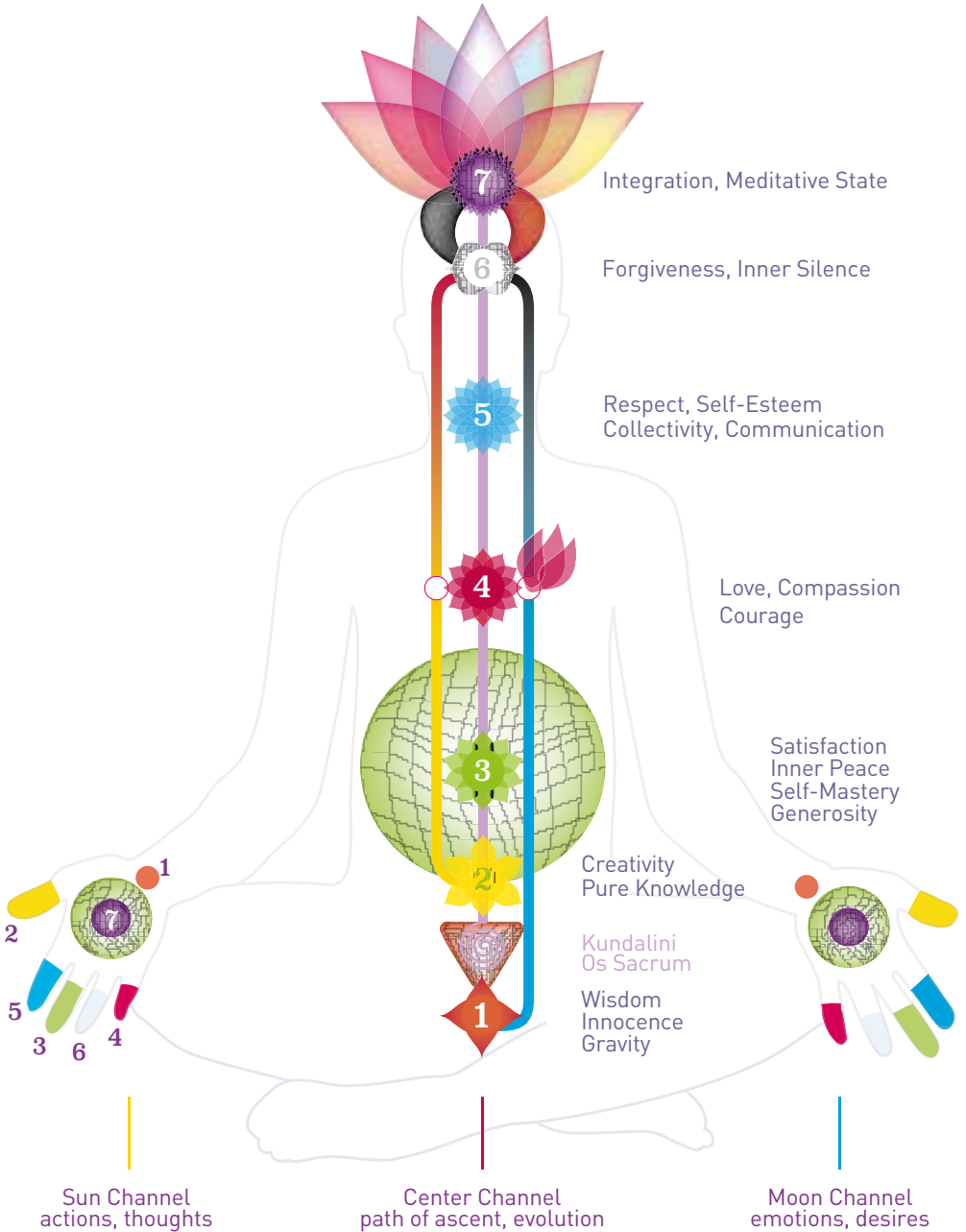
For a more complete biography visit:

[shrimataji.org](http://shrimataji.org)

[wemeditate.co/page/shri-mataji](http://wemeditate.co/page/shri-mataji)



THE SUBTLE SYSTEM



# THE SUBTLE SYSTEM

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**T**he Subtle System, which was documented in India thousands of years ago, consists of seven energy centres called as CHAKRAS, three energy channels called as NADIS and the KUNDALINI. The chakras correspond on the physical level to the plexuses of our central nervous system, and the energy channels to the SYMPATHETIC and PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEMS within the spinal column.

CHAKRA means 'WHEEL' in Sanskrit, because the chakras rotate clockwise like wheels. Chakras are also likened to lotus flowers, each chakra having a different number of petals, which correspond to the number of sub-plexuses within the physical plexus (NERVE PLEXUS).

These nerve plexuses control all of the energies at force within our body and secrete hormones. They are the root of all of our physical, mental and emotional activities. Thus, each Chakra is associated with certain physical, mental and emotional traits. When we experience disorders at the mental, emotional or physical level it is due to a 'BLOCKAGE' or obstacle, or tension in these Chakras.