

### \*BEYOND NAME AND FORM:-

A man filled with earthly knowledge and what he calls learning, is often only the knowledge of names and forms and has no capacity for the knowledge of truth or God. It is the innocent and pure soul who has a capacity for learning. When a person comes to take a lesson on any subject, and he brings his own knowledge with him, the teacher has little to teach him, for the doors of his heart are not open. His heart that should be empty in order to receive knowledge is occupied by the knowledge that he already had acquired. Intellect is the knowledge of names and forms, their character and nature, gathered from the external world. It shows in an infant from birth, when he begins to be curious about all he sees; then, by storing in his mind the various forms and figures he sees he recognizes them as an addition to his knowledge of variety. Man thus gathers the knowledge of numberless forms of the whole world in his mind and holds them... and calls that 'learning'. This becomes his world, although it neither gives him a sense of unchanging comfort, nor does he thereby gain an everlasting peace. Wisdom is contrary to the above-named knowledge. It is the knowledge which is illumined by the light within; it comes with the maturity of the soul, and opens up the sight to the similarity of all things and beings, as well as the unity in names and forms. The wise man penetrates the spirit of all things; he sees the human in the male and female, and the racial origin which unites nations. He sees the human in all people and the divine immanence in all things in the universe, until the vision of the whole being becomes to him the vision of the One Alone, the most beautiful and beloved God.

### \*HOW TO BECOME HAPPY:-

Listen more and talk less.

Associate with good people.

Do not ask God and Guru for what you want; ask God and Guru how you can best serve. Better, don't ask, just start serving!

Exercise patience in life. Problems are like dark clouds - will not the clouds disperse and the Sun return again? Have faith in God. Realize that you are not this physical body. Nor are you your thoughts, emotions, or experiences! Your very nature is God. Let go of your attachments, ignorance, delusions, and desires. Work hard and always do your best. Abandon, greed, lust, delusion, anger and pride. Cultivate peace, love, never hurt others, and discriminate as to what is right and what is wrong.

Don't follow the way of the world. Surrender all your body, mind, emotions and intellect to God. Never worry about anything.

Let all things, "good" and "bad" be considered a gift from God.

### \*SATURN STORY:-

A King once invited merchants from all over the region to attend a big crafts fair, assuring each that he would purchase whatever they could not sell. One blacksmith of limited intelligence brought an iron image of Sani (Saturn) to this fair, and since no one purchased it, the king's officers procured it and delivered it to his majesty in his inner apartments.

That night in a dream, the King saw a luminous female form - obviously a goddess - leaving his body. "Who are you?" he asked in some alarm. "I am Lakshmi, goddess of wealth and prosperity," the figure replied. "I cannot remain in the same place where Sani remains." The King saluted her respectfully but allowed her to depart.

Next emerged a male deity, Glory (Vaibhava) who, as he departed, said he cannot remain with anyone who has no

prosperity. The King allowed him to go as well. Then departed, in order: Righteousness (Dharma), Staunchness (Dhairya), Compassion (Daya), Forbearance (Kshama), and a host of other virtues. When Truthfulness (Satya) prepared to leave, the King grabbed his feet and would not let him go, saying "I've never left you all these years, and you cannot leave me now."

All the other good qualities had been waiting outside the door for Truth to emerge, so that they might all seek shelter elsewhere. When he did not appear after quite a long time, Righteousness finally said "I have to go back; I can't exist without Truth." and so he returned. He was followed by all the others, in reverse order of their departure, and lastly, even Lakshmi returned. She told the King "It is thanks to your love of truth that you have all of us back, we could not resist. A fellow like you, who holds onto Truth, will never be miserable."

Adapted from The Greatness of Saturn, A Therapeutic Myth by Dr. Rupnathji.

Sani is best known for bringing suffering and affliction. The meaning of the story is that if we spend a life clinging to truth, even Sani cannot drive out our good fortune for long. It needs to be said that Sani, when well placed in a horoscope, also brings good qualities, like making one a hard worker.

### \*MAKRA SANKRANTI: -

"Makar Sankranti is the day when the glorious Sun-God begins its ascendancy and entry into the Northern Hemisphere. Sun - the manifest God, who symbolizes, the one, non-dual, self-fulgent, glorious divinity blessing one & all tirelessly. Sun is the one who transcends time and also the one who rotates the proverbial Wheel of Time. Sun not only represents God but also stands for an embodiment of knowledge & wisdom. Just as the sun embarks on his northward journey, Sankranti is the day on which the intellect should be turned towards the Atma for Self-realisation, and it is time when the inward journey towards a pure heart should be made.

Sankranti, signifying light, also gives the message of intellectual illumination. It is the capacity to discriminate between the right and the wrong, the just and the unjust, truth and falsehood, virtue and vice. It is this discriminative wisdom - Viveka - which leads the individual on the path of human evolution and human happiness. Mere dry reasoning power devoid of this insight will be like the charging of a wild horse without the stirrup and the rider. The Uttarayana punya-kala or the Makara Sankranti is a holy occasion to pray to the Lord : Asatho maa sath Gamaya (lead me from unreal to real); Tamaso maa jyothi Gamaya (lead me from darkness into the Light); Murthyor maa Amritham Gamaya (Lead me from death to immortality). When the sun moves northward that is God-ward, the Intelligence too must pursue Godward. That is the significance of Uttarayana.

The Sankranti festival should be regarded as the day on which man turns his vision towards God. Man's life may be compared to a stalk of sugarcane. Like the cane, which is hard and has many knots, life is full of difficulties. But these difficulties have to be overcome to enjoy the bliss of the Divine, just as the sugarcane has to be crushed and its juice converted to Jaggery to enjoy the permanent sweetness of Jaggery. Enduring bliss can be got only by over-coming the trials and tribulations.

Thus Sankranti is intended to bring about various changes in man's attitude, so that he may sanctify his life. It is a festival for the entire mankind. Its message has a meaning for every one in the world. It has a message for people of all castes, creeds and countries." ~ Siddha Yogi Rupnathji.

### \*THE FOUR STAGES OF LIFE:-

Have you tried dividing the years of your life into phases and categories? If you have, you'll be struck by a certain dominant theme that runs through these stages in life. Many a time you may have felt like being at the crossroads, looking for a guide that will tell you what to do next. And you might have wondered, what's the right thing to do at these stages in life, and what's the next step to take. Fortunately, Hinduism has a set of answers to these questions. While Shakespeare divided life into "seven ages", in Hinduism, human life is believed to comprise four stages or "ashramas":

The First Ashrama - "Brahmacharya" or the Student Stage.  
The Second Ashrama - "Grihastha" or the Householder Stage.  
The Third Ashrama - "Vanaprastha" or the Hermit Stage.  
The Fourth Ashrama - "Sannyasa" or the Wandering Ascetic Stage.

#### \*REFLECTIONS:-

Once you become enlightened, you will no longer try to run your life from your limited perceptions of life and reality. You will find that the entire universe moves through you. Synchronicities become a way of life; opportunities will come your way with seemingly little effort. At this point you just have to be alert and recognize what the creator is sending your way, then life will become spontaneous and easy. You will Realize that you are a divine being having a human experience. You will free your self from from destructive emotions such as fear, guilt, jealousy and all of its sub- products. You will free your self from the world of Illusions call Maya and start living your life guided by Ultimate reality. You will no longer be a seeker of the light, but a bringer of the light. You will no longer do things to make your self happy, but do the things you do because you are happy. You will realize that happiness it is a state of being, and not a state of mind. You will realize that the riches person in the world it is not the one who has the most, but the one who needs the least. You will develop your natural psychic abilities and use them to make your life easier. You will no longer see problems, but only solutions. You will reconnect with the universe and loneliness will be no more. You will be living and experiencing life from your true nature which is Freedom, Love, Peace and constant harmony. No more Fear! No more Guilt. Namaste.

#### \*IMAGINATION .. -

When one invokes the names of God, one forgets his limitations and impresses his soul with the thought of the Unlimited, which brings him to the ideal of Limitlessness. This is the secret of life's attainment.

Man is the picture or reflection of his imagination. He is as large as he thinks himself, as great as he thinks himself, as small as he thinks himself to be. If he thinks he is incapable, he remains incapable; if he thinks himself foolish, he will be foolish and will remain foolish; if he thinks himself wise, he will be wise and become wiser every moment; if he thinks himself mighty, he will be mighty. Those who have proved themselves to be the greatest warriors, where did their might come from? It was from their thought, their feeling; 'I am mighty.' The idea of might was impressed on their soul, and the soul became might. The poet had poetry impressed on his soul, and so the soul became a poet. Whatever is impressed on man's soul, with that the soul becomes endowed, and that the soul will become.

#### \*FROM THE MANDUKYA UPANISHAD:-

Dwelling in every heart,  
the Self is the Lord of all,  
the seer of all,  
the source and goal of all.

The Self is not outer awareness,  
It is not inner awareness,  
Nor is it the suspension of awareness.  
It is not knowing,  
It is not unknowing,  
Nor is it knowingness itself  
It cannot be seen nor grasped,  
It cannot be contained.

It is beyond all expression and beyond  
all thought.  
It is indefinable.

The only way to know it is to become it.

It is the final resting place of all activity,  
silent and unchanging,  
the Supreme Good,  
One without a second.  
It is the Supreme Self  
It, above all else, should be known.

#### \*COSMIC STORY:-

In the poet Tulsidas' Ramayana, the demon Vibhishana, brother to Ravana, has gone over to Rama's side. He is very worried when he sees that his brother Ravana is going to fight Rama from a chariot. Ravana has a great chariot, while Rama neither has a chariot, armour, or even shoes.

Tulsidas says Rama responds to Vibhishana's worries as follows:

"Listen, friend, the chariot which takes one to victory is quite another (than the physical chariot Ravana is riding). Valour and fortitude are the wheels of this chariot, while truthfulness and good conduct are its enduring banner and standard. Even so strength, discretion, self-control and benevolence are its four horses, that have been joined to the chariot with the cords of forgiveness, compassion and evenness of mind. Adoration of God is the expert driver; dispassion, the shield and contentment the sword. Again, charity is the axe; reason, the fierce lance and the highest wisdom, the relentless bow. A pure and steady mind is like a quiver; while quietude and the various form of abstinence (Yamas) and religious observances (Niyamas) are a sheaf of arrows. Homage to the Brahmanas and to one's own preceptors is an impenetrable coat of mail; there is no other equipment for victory as efficacious as this. My friend, he who owns such a chariot of piety shall have no enemy to conquer anywhere.

"Listen, O friend of resolute mind: the hero who happens to be in possession of such a strong chariot can conquer even that mighty and invincible foe, attachment to this world."

These words filled Vibhishana with joy.

In the Ramayana, Rama represents, good, Ravana represents selfishness and egoism. Rama's struggle with Ravana is every man's struggle with mastering the senses and getting his or her mind under control.

## \*SATURN ..

Saturn is the planet of time. Time is the great container of all worldly experiences. Managing time, and dealing with the limitations time places on us as has a lot to do with our life and how much we get out of it. Saturn is the force that makes us aware of time and its patient progression. Once we enter the wheel of Time, we must face the complex of loss, endings and facing our limitations. Saturn teaches us to live simply and move beyond our attachment to a phony sense of security that comes from excessive materialism. When a person is excessively materialistic, Saturn's influence hurts them deeply. It is the nature of Saturn to shatter our illusions around fear and make us grow up. Saturn makes us mature. His influence exerts physical and psychological pressure that we cannot ignore. Based on this pressure we deepen our commitment to something, body, mind or soul

## \*RAMA :-

\*Rama, Vibhishana, and the Chariot-

In the poet Tulsidas' Ramayana, the demon Vibhishana, brother to the demon King Ravana, went over to Rama's side. A big battle takes place between Rama, Ravana, and their armies. Vibhishana is very worried when he sees that his brother Ravana is going to fight Rama from a chariot. Ravana has a great chariot, while Rama neither has a chariot, armour, or even shoes. It looks as if Rama is at a tremendous disadvantage against the ten headed monster Ravana.

In response to Vibhishana's concern, Rama speaks these sweet words:

"Listen, friend, the chariot which takes one to victory is quite another (than the physical chariot Ravana is riding). Valour and fortitude are the wheels of this chariot, while truthfulness and good conduct are its enduring banner and standard. Even so strength, discretion, self-control and benevolence are its four horses, that have been joined to the chariot with the cords of forgiveness, compassion and evenness of mind. Adoration of God is the expert driver; dispassion, the shield and contentment the sword. Again, charity is the axe; reason, the fierce lance and the highest wisdom, the relentless bow. A pure and steady mind is like a quiver; while quietude and the various form of abstinence (Yamas) and religious observances (Niyamas) are a sheaf of arrows. Homage to the Brahmanas and to one's own preceptors is an impenetrable coat of mail; there is no other equipment for victory as efficacious as this. My friend, he who owns such a chariot of piety shall have no enemy to conquer anywhere.

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These words filled Vibhishana with joy. In the end, Rama did conquer Ravana.

## \*PERFECTION:-

Cosmic Story - The Perfect House:

\*A rich billionaire decided to build the perfect home. He decided to spend crores of rupees to build a mansion that had all the benefits - good vastu, ease of access, room for recreation, beautiful landscaping, and every comfort. He hired all the best architects and engineers to design the house. No expense was spared on the design. Finally, they developed a set of plans that looked perfect in every way.

Still, the rich man wanted to make sure that he had the perfect house. So he brought in more architects, engineers, and put them in a big room, so they could look at the plans. Not only did he bring in architects and engineers, but also vaastu staphathis (experts in sacred architecture). Moreover, he invited yogis, saints, Maharishis, and others, all to look at the plans. He said to all of them: "Please, I want to build the perfect house. If you find any fault at all in these plans, please tell me now so we can correct them before the building is built. Do not be afraid to make any suggestion."

Everyone shook their heads. No one could find any fault in the design. It was a truly wonderful mansion. Finally, one yogi spoke up. "I find two faults in the plans" he said. Everyone turned their head and they were interested to hear what he had to say. The rich man folded his hands in supplication and said "Please sir, tell me the defects. Then I will correct them." The yogi shook his head and said "You cannot correct these defects. The first defect is that in some distant time this mansion will collapse. The second defect is that in some future time the owner of the mansion will have to leave it. Death is certain for him. You have not realized this truth. Abandon your pride and realize these truths."

#### \* LAKSMI :-

"For shelter in this world, I resort to that Lakshmi who is beautiful like the moon, who shines bright, who is blazing with renown, who is adored (even) by the gods, who is highly magnanimous, and grand like the lotus. May my misfortunes perish. I surrender myself to Thee. O Thou, resplendent like the Sun! By Thy power and glory have the plants, (like) the bael tree, grown up. May the fruits thereof destroy through Thy Grace all inauspiciousness rising from the inner organs and ignorance as well as from the outer senses."

- Sri Sukta

#### \* YOU ARE THE SEER :-

\*You Are The Seer.

The dream self is created from identification with objects that arise. For example, you might think, "I am angry," or "It's a dreadful day." But look more closely. If you can see a thought, is that thought you? If you can see an emotion, is it you?

You are the seer, not the objects seen. That which is seen is an object that arises and falls -- a temporary form. You are that which is looking at those objects as they arise and fall.

Even the notion that there is a seer as a separate identity is an object (an idea) in awareness. In looking inward, there is no separate entity there. There is only awareness recognizing awareness. Awareness is not an object. Your true identity is pure seeing itself.

This can be fearful if there is a desire to hold onto some identity. But it is absolutely liberating if you see that even that fear is an object in awareness.

Suffering happens when you believe that you are your thoughts and emotions. In reality, you are not angry. Anger is arising. It's not actually a dreadful day. The thought, "It's a dreadful day" is arising in awareness. This is not about denying or suppressing thought and emotion. It is about seeing them for what they really are.

### \*MEDITATION:-

When people begin to meditate, they often say that their thoughts are running riot and have become wilder than ever before. But I reassure them and say that this is a good sign. Far from meaning that your thoughts have become wilder, it shows that you have become quieter and are finally aware of just how noisy your thoughts have always been. Don't be disheartened or give up. Whatever arises, just keep being present, keep returning to the breath, even in the midst of all the confusion.

### \*FOOD:

The Bhagavad Gita, Charaka Samhita, and other scriptures say that food comes in three types. Sattvic food is fresh and pure. This is food like fresh milk, fresh fruits, and fresh vegetables. Sattvic food tends to create pure thoughts. Rajasic food creates passionate thoughts and an active body. Many meats are rajasic, as are condiments like onions, garlic, and chili peppers. "Junk" foods are tamasic, and make both the mind and body lazy, slow, and dull.

Almost any food when eaten in excess has a tamasic effect. In addition to that, when we eat too much, our mind tends to get identified with the five senses. Therefore, spiritual seekers generally try to eat lightly so that they will see the light of their soul more clearly.

People under stress tend to eat more. They are in pain due to their circumstances. Therefore, they indulge in tamasic foods in order to make themselves more dull to their pain. In the tamasic state, there is a sort of peacefulness that sets in for a short time. In order to experience this lethargy, people deliberately overindulge in tamasic foods.

### \*BLESSINGS :-

om purnamidah purnamidam,  
purnat purnamudacyate purnasya purnamadaya,  
purna-eva-vasisyate.

That is the whole, this is the whole; from the whole, the whole becomes manifest; taking away the whole from the whole, the whole remains.

~Isavasya Upanishad.

### \*PRAYER:-

"There is an endless net of threads,  
throughout the universe.

The horizontal threads are in space.

The vertical threads are in time.

At every crossing of the threads, there is an individual.

And every individual is a crystal bead.

And every crystal bead reflects,  
not only the light from every other crystal in the net,  
but also every other reflection throughout the entire universe"

--The Rig Veda

### \*WHY NATURAL DISASTERS?

"Everything in creation consists of the five elements. {The pancha bhutas - space, air, fire, water, and earth} The Vedas say that the pancha bhutas have the power to confer grace or inflict punishment on human beings when they are displeased with them. This is why the Vedas praise and worship the elements of nature. If we show them disrespect, these elements can get angry and shake the world around us through natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods. Scientists have learned only recently that the five elements of nature have life. The rishis of ancient times knew this. That is why it is very clearly said in the Vedas that we should protect nature as we would our own beloved mother."

### \*Ego ...

Ego plays brilliantly on our fundamental fear of losing control, and of the unknown. We might say to ourselves: "I should really let go of ego, I'm in such pain; but if I do, what's going to happen to me?"

Ego will chime in sweetly: "I know I'm sometimes a nuisance, and believe me, I quite understand if you want me to leave. But is that really what you want? Think: If I do go, what's going to happen to you? Who'll look after you? Who will protect and care for you like I've done all these years?"

Even if we see through the lies of the ego, we are just too scared to abandon it; for without any true knowledge of the nature of our mind, or true identity, we simply have no other alternative. Again and again we cave in to ego's demands with the same sad self-hatred as the alcoholic feels reaching for the drink that he knows is destroying him, or the drug addict feels groping for the drug that she knows after a brief high will only leave her flat and desperate.

### \*NAMASTE:-

The body is an energy field. It is more than just flesh and blood. The sages developed many different "mudras" or hand postures, to direct energy to different centers in the body.

The "namaste" mudra, is best used in worship as follows. Place the tips of the fingers in the direction of the deity. Place the bottom of the hands on top of or above the center of the chest. The center of the chest is where the "heart chakra" is. Mystics call it the "anahata" chakra. When it is activated, unconditional love starts to flow and many miracles happen.

Not only is our body an energy field, but this whole universe is an energy field. ( $E=Mc^2$ ). When the hands are held in the namaste position as described above, cosmic energy from the idol flows into and energizes the heart chakra.

Developing unconditional love is one of the great purposes of human birth. Therefore, practice the namaste mudra while performing worship and get spiritual awakening.

#### \*RUPNATHJI'S TIPS FOR PARENTS:-

In some houses, parents quarrel in front of their children, which is an unhealthy practice. If there is any difference of opinion among parents, they should resolve it in the absence of their children. Children cannot concentrate on their studies if they are disturbed by family problems. So parents should never discuss problems in front of their children.

Consider the life of a house-holder and children as a training ground for spiritual life. You wear glasses to correct the vision, to improve the sight. Use the opportunities confronting you for developing detachment and self sacrifice. If you do not, you are the fool who puts on wrong glasses and spoils the vision.

Failure are not boulders that block your way! Remember, they are stepping stones to victory!

-Rupnathji

#### \* WORDS AS WEAPONS:-

Growing up, I often heard on the play ground, in elementary school, the saying:

"Sticks and stones may break my bones  
but words will never hurt me."

The funny thing was, that whenever I would sing that out, I would still feel the hurt inside. I tried to not let the other kids know how much their words really had hurt me.

Words are powerful. We can change our lives in moments by changing our thoughts and words. Thoughts are the seeds that we plant and words often carry forth the actions of our thoughts. God created the universe first through a thought and then with the spoken word, "Let there be Light."

\*Spiritual Freedom:-

National, economic, religious and cultural freedoms are the reflections of the duality of existence. They exist only in varying degrees, subject to constant discordant adjustment. Even when won through persistent effort, they cannot be permanently maintained because the external conditions upon which they have been constructed are themselves subject to deterioration.

Only spiritual freedom is absolute and unlimited; when it is won through persistent effort, it is won forever. For, although spiritual freedom can and does express itself in the duality of existence, it is grounded in and sustained by the realization of the inviolable unity of all life....

One important condition of spiritual freedom is freedom from all wanting. It is wanting itself which chains life by attaching it to the conditions in environment which would fulfil that want. If there is no wanting, there is no dependence, and therefore no limitation.

The individual never achieves true freedom until he is no longer pushed or pulled by any inner compulsion. When he has worked through all the desires and worn them so threadbare that he can be, or not be -- have, or have not -- then he is free.

When the individualized soul breaks through the encasing steel armour of wanting, it emancipates itself from its illusory bondage to bodies, mind and ego. This is the spiritual freedom which brings with it the final realization of the unity of all life and puts an end to all doubts and worries....

It is only in spiritual freedom that one can have enduring happiness and unhampered self-knowledge. It is only in spiritual freedom that one finds the supreme certainty of truth-realization. It is only in spiritual freedom that there is a final end to sorrow and limitation. It is only in spiritual freedom that one can live for all, and yet remain detached in the midst of all activity.

Any other lesser type of freedom is like a house built on sand, and any lesser attainment is fraught with fear of decay. There is no gift greater than that of spiritual freedom, and no task more important than helping others to find spiritual freedom.

### \*JNANA YOGA:

\*What Is Jnana Yoga?

Have you ever felt that there must be something more to life, something beyond our mundane experience of the everyday world? From our childhood on we are programmed to conform to the reality we perceive around us, the reality that our family and friends perceive.

We are conditioned to believe that we are only our personality, our thoughts. Yet, this is not so. The conditioned mind and structured personality are just a set of energies that overlay the original Self. Then how do we discover the nature of this original Self?

Jnana yoga (pronounced nyah-nah yo-gah) is a system of Self-inquiry whereby we gradually let go of our identification with the personality until the true Self is revealed. Just as Hatha yoga stretches and opens the body, jnana yoga stretches and opens the mind.

As we dissolve our description of reality, we realize the world is different to what we had imagined before. Life becomes new, fresh. We become more discerning, more peaceful inside. Insights and clarity arise more readily and our lives become balanced and filled with Grace.

There are three main methods used in this Self-inquiry.

The first is called "activating the witness consciousness". Our witness is our unbiased, neutral, eternal Self. It is who we really are. In order to cultivate our witness we consciously and deliberately examine how we feel, think, and behave. With this, we gradually strip away our layers of social conditioning and identification with the ego. We discover that the mind and awareness are not the same and that there is an intelligent part of us that can observe our mind dispassionately.

The second method is to ask the question "Who am I?" The approach used here is normally a stripping away of who we are not, which leads us to a place beyond the mind where nothing remains to describe the individual being but the true, essential nature of the Self.

The third technique involves bringing what has been unconscious into consciousness. It is important to uncover and dissolve the hidden patterns wedged in our unconscious in order to be free of them, as the newness and freshness

constantly coming to us from Source is blocked by these patterns.

Here we look at aspects of ourselves such as our unconscious behaviors, habits and addictions. We bring what has been in the dark into the light. It's as though we have to understand the functioning of this human system fully before we can move beyond it. We own all of our parts, and then we let them go.

As we progress in our practice of jnana yoga, we take a step back and observe ourselves on the stage of life, playing our role, like watching a movie on a screen. We are the actor, yet we also get to write our own script. Our witness is really our Divine Self watching the ego living life in this way.

The more we strengthen our identification with our witness and the less with our egoic personality, the more we grow spiritually. As this process continues, we experience an emptying out, a letting go of our attachments, desires, fears, and stories.

The more we empty, the greater our Presence and our love; the less we attach, the greater our delight and joy in the mystery of life; and the more we cultivate acceptance, the greater our contentment. We experience a "lightening up". Indeed, this is the process of achieving "en-lighten-ment".

Even a little bit of jnana yoga practice goes a long way to bringing more consciousness into daily life and along with it more clarity, peace and joy. The invitation here is to celebrate the process! How far down the road of awareness are you willing to tread?

#### The 10 Principal Aims of Jnana Yoga

To activate our witness consciousness, so we are at once the observer and observed, noticing that when we shine the light of awareness on something it changes.

To cultivate a habit of gracious acceptance for life as it is rather than resisting the things we can't change.

To let go of our attachments to outcome and surrender up our preferences to God.

To come fully into our feeling nature, so we can be more present with our experiences and move through our lessons more quickly.

To know that we are totally responsible for the quality of our experience of life and that how we respond in any situation is always our choice.

To realize that we can have no peace in the present without healing our past.

To appreciate the sacredness of life just as it is.

To feel what it is to be a person of integrity, speaking truth and being authentic.

To surrender our habit of control, so we can explore the frontiers of life's mysteries, rather than remaining in the safety of our known.

To realize that true joy is in living out our life's purpose as an instrument of God. Have you ever felt that there must be something more to life, something beyond our mundane experience of the everyday world? From our childhood on we are programmed to conform to the reality we perceive around us, the reality that our family and friends perceive.

We are conditioned to believe that we are only our personality, our thoughts. Yet, this is not so. The conditioned mind and structured personality are just a set of energies that overlay the original Self. Then how do we discover the nature of this original Self?

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There are three main methods used in this Self-inquiry. The first is called “activating the witness consciousness”. Our witness is our unbiased, neutral, eternal Self. It is who we really are. In order to cultivate our witness we consciously and deliberately examine how we feel, think, and behave.

With this, we gradually strip away our layers of social conditioning and identification with the ego. We discover that the mind and awareness are not the same and that there is an intelligent part of us that can observe our mind dispassionately.

The second method is to ask the question “Who am I?” The approach used here is normally a stripping away of who we are not, which leads us to a place beyond the mind where nothing remains to describe the individual being but the true, essential nature of the Self.

The third technique involves bringing what has been unconscious into consciousness. It's important to uncover and dissolve the hidden patterns wedged in our unconscious in order to be free of them, as the newness and freshness constantly coming to us from Source is blocked by these patterns.

Here we look at aspects of ourselves such as our unconscious behaviors, habits and addictions. We bring what has been in the dark into the light. It's as though we have to understand the functioning of this human system fully before we can move beyond it. We own all of our parts, and then we let them go.

As we progress in our practice of jnana yoga, we take a step back and observe ourselves on the stage of life, playing our role, like watching a movie on a screen. We are the actor, yet we also get to write our own script. Our witness is really our Divine Self watching the ego living life in this way.

The more we strengthen our identification with our witness and the less with our egoic personality, the more we grow spiritually. As this process continues, we experience an emptying out, a letting go of our attachments, desires, fears, and stories.

The more we empty, the greater our Presence and our love; the less we attach, the greater our delight and joy in the mystery of life; and the more we cultivate acceptance, the greater our contentment. We experience a “lightening up”. Indeed, this is the process of achieving “en-lighten-ment”.

#### **\*BLESSED AKSHAYA TRITYIA :-**

Akshaya Tritiya is considered one of the most auspicious days in Hindu calendar. This day is chosen as the best time to perform religious activities like Homa & Pujas. People start new ventures and businesses on this day of Akshaya Tritiya hoping that this will bring in sheer fortune and opulence to their lives. People worship Devi Lakshmi and purchase Gold coins, lands and jewelry on Akshaya Tritiya to retain fortune and wealth forever.

#### **\*GAYATRI, MANTRA AND HISTORY:-**

Richah, Yajumshi and Samani form eight syllables and the second foot of the Gayatri consists of eight syllables. So these three Vedas constitute the second foot of the Gayatri. Whosoever thus knows the second foot of the Gayatri

wins as much as that treasury of knowledge, the three Vedas, has to confer. Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad V, XIV-The Sacred Gayatri, 2 Prana, apana and vyana form eight syllables and the third foot of the Gayatri. consists of eight syllables. So these three forms of the vital breath constitute the third foot of the Gayatri. Whosoever knows this about the third foot of the Gayatri wins all the living beings that are in the universe. Now, its turiya, apparently visible (darsata) and supramundane (paroraja) foot is this-sun that glows yonder. That which is fourth is called turiya. He (the being in the solar orb) is apparently visible (darsata), because he is seen, as it were, by the yogis. He is supramundane (paroraja), because he shines alone on the whole universe as its overlord. He who thus knows the fourth foot of the Gayatri shines with splendour and glory. Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad V, XIV-The Sacred Gayatri, 3 That Gayatri rests on that fourth, apparently visible, supramundane foot. And that, again, rests on truth. The eye is truth, for the eye is indeed truth. Therefore, even today, if two persons come disputing, one saying: I saw it, and another: I heard of it, we should trust the one who says: I saw it. That truth rests on strength. The vital breath (prana) is strength. Hence truth rests on the vital breath. Therefore they say that strength is more powerful than truth. Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad V, XIV-The Sacred Gayatri, 4 Thus the Gayatri is based on the vital breath within the body. That Gayatri protected the gayas. The organs are the gayas; therefore the Gayatri protected (tatre) the organs. Because it protected the organs, it is called the Gayatri. The Savitri verse, which the teacher communicates to the pupil, is no other than this. It saves the organs of the pupil to whom it is imparted by the teacher. Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad V, XIV-The Sacred Gayatri, 4 (cont) Some impart to the pupil the Savitri which is in the Anushtubh metre, saying: The goddess of speech is Anushtubh; so we shall impart it to him. But one should not do that. One should impart only that Savitri which is Gayatri. Verily, if one who knows this accepts too much as a gift, as it were, it is not enough for even one foot of the Gayatri. Yajur Veda, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad V, XIV-The Sacred Gayatri, 5.

#### \*SCRIPTURES ...

\*Once I was with a sage whom many people went to see. He pleased them all, and he was not fond of disputing or discussing, because to a sage there is nothing to discuss. Discussion is for those who say, 'What I say is right, and what you say is wrong.' A sage never says such a thing; hence there is no discussion. But the world is always fighting and discussing and disputing.

Many would come and try to dispute with him, but he did his best to avoid dispute. I was very fond of listening to his way of dealing with inquirers. My friends wanted to discuss what the ideal life is. He said, 'Whatever you think it is.' But my friends were not satisfied with this. They wanted a discussion. They answered, 'Do you think this worldly life, with so many responsibilities, with strife from morning to evening, can be the ideal life?' He said, 'Yes.' They asked, 'Do you not think that the life you lead, retirement and seclusion, is the ideal life?' He answered, 'Yes.' They said, 'But how can we give up our present life, our responsibilities to our children, our occupations, and all these things that take up so much time. How can we leave that life in order to follow your ideal life?' He said, 'Do not leave it.'

They went on, 'But, if we do not leave it, how can we get on in the spiritual life?' Then the sage asked, 'What do you mean by the spiritual life?' 'We mean by spiritual life a life like yours,' they answered. He said, 'If you think my life is a spiritual life, be like me. If you think your life is a spiritual life, keep to it. It is not possible to say which life is best. If you think your worldly strife brings you happiness, just keep to it. If you think my life gives you happiness, give up your own. Whatever makes you happy and makes you think you are doing right, do it from that moment, and see what the result is. If it gives you more happiness, go on regardless of what others say. If it gives you happiness, if you are satisfied while doing it, while reaping its effect, then it is all right. Go on with it, and you will always be blessed.'