

Namaskar
(I greet the Divinity within you)

We have now reached the 7th cakra in this ongoing summary of layers of the mind and plexii of the human psychic structure. Further details are given below.

Dharma

Beyond the Mind

Beyond the deepest layer of the mind is nothing but the pure Cosmic Consciousness - the essence of all layers of mind; the ultimate existence; the complete awareness of infinite happiness - bliss. It's here that the sense of individual existence completely merges with the infinite Cosmic existence - just as a river merges with the sea - and becomes one with the deepest layer of the Cosmic ocean - serene and still, only the total experience of Cosmic bliss remains.

Those that have experienced this state have been powerless to describe it to others, because it's completely beyond the mind. It is beyond all relativity. It is Absolute. It cannot even be thought of, let alone expressed in words. Ramakrsna, a yogic master who lived in the 19th century, used to slip in and out of this state all the time. When asked to describe it he had no choice but to remain silent.

After a long evolutionary journey the individual mind finally attains the complete experience of the Infinite: the merger of one's limited "I"-feeling in the infinite and eternal Cosmic "I"-feeling: the Cosmic bliss. We feel hesitant to dive into that ocean of bliss because we don't want to sacrifice our individual sense of existence. We don't realize that we would gain something far greater in return. Once a worldly man went to visit a saint who lived by himself in a cave. The man remarked to the saint that he had sacrificed a lot living the way he did. The saint replied, "On the contrary, it is you who has sacrificed. In your worldly aspirations do you enjoy the Beloved? Before you came I was enjoying the company of my Beloved."

This is one description of the closeness one can feel in self-realization; the attainment of our deepest desire: complete identity with the Cosmic Self.

So, continue with all the practices come what may. Your inner journey is the greatest journey, because through it you will attain the greatest fulfilment in life. The result of your meditation will transcend all other results. When you lose all the limited and temporary things in your life; when everything else has gone; only the Infinite will remain.

The Seventh Cakra

The topmost cakra in the body, at the crown of the head, is called the Occult Plexus. The word "occult" has a bad name these days, but in fact its meaning is "mystical, esoteric". Appropriate indeed for this plexus, considering that the gland associated

with it – the pineal – has remained a mystery to traditional medicine even right up to the present day. At one stage the conventional medical thinking was that it was completely useless – like the appendix! They are only now just starting to realize that it is in fact the most important gland in the body – the master gland, the overall controller of both body and mind.

Roughly the size of pea, and shaped like a pinecone, the Pineal has the largest blood supply by weight of any organ in the body (except the kidneys, but that's because their job is to filter the waste products out of the blood). In Eastern philosophy it's sometimes called the "third eye". In reptiles it actually has a lens and retina, and the human pineal that evolved from it is still light sensitive. For this reason it's the biological clock of the body, adjusting the individual biorhythms to the phases of the day and introverting the mind at night. The hormone melatonin that it secretes counters stress and gives the feeling of bliss.

Healthy Hints

The only thing that's important here with the occult plexus or seventh cakra is meditation. More and more of it! This is the ultimate practice for health and happiness because once the pineal gland is controlled, the whole body is under control and the mind is free to merge into the infinite bliss of the Cosmic Consciousness.

There is an asana which helps in meditation because it increases the tendency towards this Cosmic ideation by putting pressure at the top of the head and stimulating the secretion of the hormone melatonin. It's called the Hare. To perform the asana, kneel on the floor and hold the back of your heels with your hands. Bend down and place the top of your head on the floor. Breath out as you go down and hold the breath out for 8 seconds. Breath in as you come back up. Practice eight times.



What do you want?
by Acharya Gunamuktananda Avt.

Gunamuktananda attended the University of Otago School of Medicine in New Zealand for five years before training in meditation, yoga and natural health sciences in Australia, the Philippines and India. He is a qualified meditation teacher and yoga therapist since 1995, and is currently consulting and teaching in Malta.

Let me start off by asking you an important question – perhaps the most important question: What is the one thing you want, more than anything else?

You may say different things: freedom, success, love, money; but the essence of all these is happiness. We want them because they give us happiness. Happiness is a sweet feeling; a flow of love; an expression of joy. We want it limitlessly and all the time.

"There is in the living being a thirst for limitlessness"
(Shrii Shrii Anandamurti)

Where do we look for it?

Maybe you like chocolate icecream, and someone else likes vanilla. Two different icecreams – two different responses. So where is the happiness? Not in the icecream! It's in the mind. It's a mental experience; a mental feeling. Happiness is a state of mind. If you think your chair is a throne, then for you it will be a throne!

There's three things wrong with looking for happiness externally: for one, it's always limited. You can't find anything infinite in this world – it always has a fixed size and shape, so it can't give unlimited happiness. Two, it never lasts forever. What's the best part about eating an icecream? The beginning! After a while you get used to it, then you get sick of it! (if you eat too much - even if you don't you wonder where the pleasure has gone when it is finished). And so it is with every worldly object – it can only give a limited and temporary experience; a limited and temporary amount of happiness. And three, there's always a reaction to counteract the action. The universe is a world of opposites – for every action there is a reaction! So we can only find infinite happiness in the mind, not in the physical world. If that's so, then that's where we should look for it – in the mind. You don't use a torch to look for light – the light's already within the torch.
Happiness is in the mind, and that's where we should look for it.

How do we get it?

We want happiness, and not only happiness but infinite happiness, and that happiness is in the mind. Now what's the process of looking for infinite happiness in the mind? Meditation.

Meditation is the process of looking within yourself for infinite peace and happiness. But don't believe a word I've said! Why? Because you have to experience it for yourself! It's a personal experience. You have to eat a banana to know what it tastes like! Meditation is an internal process, and the important thing is to practice it.

There's a story about a fisherman who took a well-read intellectual out on his boat. The intellectual asked the fisherman if he could read. "No" was the reply. "Then half your life has been useless," the intellectual remarked. Suddenly the boat was capsized by a huge freak wave. They were both in the water, when the fisherman asked, "Can you swim?" The intellectual was swallowing water as he just managed to reply, "No!" "Now your whole life has become useless!" the fisherman concluded. So which is the

more important? Reading or doing? Of course, both have relevance, but doing is what counts.

What follows is a brief explanation of how meditation works, and how to practice it. It's not difficult. It's a very simple technique. You just have to do it, because as in the story, it's the doing that counts! Let's see how the simple and effective technique of meditation can change your life for the better! Of course, if you have already learnt a more advanced personal method from your acarya (teacher), then stick to that.

How do we meditate?

In a nutshell, we have to concentrate on the idea of infinite happiness. Concentration means only one thought. But there's usually many different thoughts in the mind, almost all at the same time! So how do we control them?

Try this exercise: Close your eyes, and for about a minute try not to think about a pink elephant. You can think of anything you like, but not a pink elephant! Try it now. Did it work? Probably not. Why? Because when you tell your mind not to think of something, it doesn't take any notice of the "not". It only sees the "something." Suppression doesn't work. The mind is too curious for that!

Then what's the answer? If you have a garden full of weeds, the best way to control them is to plant a tree right in the middle of them. As it grows, it will naturally smother the weeds. And so it is with the mind. We have to channelize all our thoughts towards a greater one; a stronger one; a more positive one. And the strongest and most positive thought is that of infinite happiness; what in meditation we call bliss – perfect peace and contentment.

How does it work?

So how does meditation work? That positive thought is introduced into the mind through what we call a mantra. Of course you've heard the word before, but what does it really mean? It means a word or phrase that "liberates the mind". Although we rely mostly on our eyes, sound has the most powerful effect on the mind. So the internal sound of a mantra is a very powerful way of creating a feeling in the mind. Here's how.

First it acts as an object of concentration, because the mind has to have something to focus on. Secondly, it vibrates the mind. Everything has a particular vibration; everything and everybody. You like someone when their vibration suits your own. You like music that suits your own vibration. The mantra gives your mind the vibration of infinite happiness, and you feel it as bliss. Thirdly, also important is its meaning. "As you think, so you become." If you think negatively, your life will be negative; but your life will automatically be positive if you think positively. We're continually in the process of becoming the object of our ideation. So the meaning of the mantra is vital. It must be the most uplifting ideation; the most positive of thoughts. Again: infinite happiness; perfect peace and contentment – bliss.

The simply universal mantra of BABA NAM KEVALAM has been taught many times. If you are still curious or a beginner try it again.

BABA NAM KEVALAM.

BABA = Infinite Consciousness, Infinite Love, or Most Beloved

NAM = Name or Expression

KEVALAM = Only or Everything

Thus, BABA NAM KEVALAM means: "Only the name of Infinite Consciousness" or "Everything is the expression of Infinite Love - all is Love" or "The Most Dearest is Everywhere" or similar sentiments.

Repeat this mantra in a rhythmic way, steady breathing, with eyes closed and ideation on the Infinite Happiness.
