



June 2013 Contemplation Theme: Alignment with Grace #6

Revelation

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Why do you love Shavasana, especially the final Shavasana in a class? You can hardly wait until your yoga teacher says, “Now JP and Shavasana.” There are so many wonderful things about Shavasana, but the real reason you love it is because you dive in deeper. What is deeper? Deeper is the experience of your own Self.

Shavasana is not a nap. If your head stays in the middle, you’re not sleeping. If your head turns to one side, even slightly, you do fall asleep; you are not experiencing the Self. Check it out. In a Shavasana, turn your head toward one side a little bit and remain in the pose for the same amount of time. You can tell that it’s not the same. The nap makes you feel a little tired as you are getting up. With your head in the middle in Shavasana, you experience a profound deep immersion into Self.

The physical improvements you get from *Svaroopa*® yoga are amazingly easy. It works from the inside-out; we call it core opening. This spinal decompression provides the physical benefits, plus it creates a deeper opening, into your Self. It becomes easy to explore who you are at the innermost level. Deeper than your body, deeper than your mind and heart — who and what are you? You find your answer by finding your Self, “svaroopa,” which is your Divine Essence. Knowing your own Self is the real purpose of *Svaroopa*® yoga, the mystical secret hidden in the seemingly simple physical processes.

Your body is a living body because the energy of enlivenment flows through your spine. Named “chi” in Chinese, Sanskrit calls this energy “prana.” As your core opening increases, your pranic flow opens up, making you progressively healthier, more alive and even younger. Once you get enough opening at your tailbone, the Grace of *Svaroopa*® yoga ignites a more powerful current: the enlivening and enlightening power named “Kundalini.” This is your own inner force of upliftment, working within you to reveal your own Self to you. This is the specialty of *Svaroopa*® yoga. This is why *Svaroopa*® yoga is the yoga of Grace.

Grace is a technical term in yoga, classified as the fifth of Shiva's Divine Powers, clearly described in the Pratyabhijnahridayam:

Aabhaasana-rakti-vimar”sana-bijjaa-vasthaapana-vilaapana-tastaani. — Sutra 11

Shiva performs the five processes on the cosmic level [as well as on the individual level]: manifesting, sustaining, ending, concealing and revealing.¹

Shiva is the name we use for Ultimate Reality, the “who” that brings these powers into being and uses them to create the world and to become you. As an individual, you use all five of these powers, though in a more limited way because you don’t yet know you are Shiva. These five powers are:

- 1) Manifesting: Shiva creates the universe and all that is in it, including you. As an individual, you create a family, music, a beautiful meal, a garden, etc.
- 2) Sustaining: Shiva maintains the universe, keeping it going, including continuing to be you. As an individual, you maintain your relationships, your home, your car, your job, and more.
- 3) Ending: Shiva is the destroyer as well, bringing about endings every day. A tree falls in the forest. A beloved person or pet dies. Everything that was created reaches an ending point. As an individual, you destroy things: even relationships, jobs, or a place where you live (when you move). Sometimes endings are thrust upon you; sometimes you choose them.
- 4) Concealment: Shiva conceals His own Presence within each being, each object and each atom of the universe, including you. As an individual, you hide your feelings, you hide parts of your life from others, and you hide your mistakes or your ability to do things well. The power of concealment means a hidden dimension is there in everything, including the Divinity hidden within you.

¹ Translation rendered by Swami Nirmalananda

- 5) Revelation (Grace): Shiva reveals His own Presence within all that exists. Grace is the power of revelation. The ultimate revelation is your own Divinity — Shiva is revealed as your own Self. As an individual, you also reveal things. You show someone an easy way to do something, you say something that sheds light on the situation, or you do something uplifting for others or for yourself.

Svaroopā[®] yoga is the yoga of Grace, meaning it is the yoga of revelation. You may have thought of Grace as being about graceful, beautiful, flowing and elegant. More expansively, you may want Divine Grace to make your life easier: finding a new job, a new spouse or a better situation. Yoga says, as important as these all are, they fall within the third power of God, maintenance — not Grace. Let's look at it again.

Birth is a moment of creation. Death is an ending. Everything in-between is maintenance, taking care of yourself, your life, your loved ones and your possessions. While these are important things, they are not what Grace is about. Grace is the fifth cosmic power: the revelation of your own Divinity.

Knowing your own Divinity does, of course, make all the maintenance easier! That happens because you are coming from a deeper place within. Being based in your own innermost essence, you are not as reactive. You are not as superficial. You are not as needy. You are more compassionate. You are more able to go with the flow. Life gets easier, even when it is hard.

Einstein understood revelation. He would sit in a chair, set a spoon across his knee and stare at it until it fell. In the time between its leaving his knee and landing on the floor, he saw the structure of the universe. Yoga calls this visions or insights. Consider how long the time was between the spoon leaving his knee and landing on the floor. In that instant, he saw the structure of creation.

His problem was that he didn't know how to meditate. He needed a spoon! In the time between his knee and the floor he got insights about how the universe worked, then he would write mathematical formulas to try to explain it. He wasn't figuring out a formula that would get him to an unknown result. He knew what was there because he had seen it, so he was trying to use mathematics to explain it. He got it from the same place the ancient sages got it from, IN-sight. Revelation.

His insights were profound and have had a significant effect on our world, but yoga says this is a limited use of inner vision. There is so much more to discover inside: the Divinity of your own Being. How do you get there? By quieting your mind, only you don't need a spoon.

Tadaa dra.s.tu.h svaruupē'vasthaanam — Patanjali Yoga Sutras 1.3

In the moment that your mind becomes still, you are established in your own Divine Self.²

This is why you love Shavasana, just as Einstein discovered, that the instant your mind settles, your own Divinity is revealed to you. Even a moment of that experience heals all the wounds, dissolves the memories and frees you from old patterns that keep you limited. It takes only an instant to have an experience of your own Self. It's like lighting a match. How do you light a match slowly? You can't. It flares in an instant. *Svaroopā*[®] yoga is not stair-step Yoga. *Svaroopā*[®] yoga is the yoga of Grace; it is the yoga of revelation. Grace gives you your own Self. To receive this Grace, do more yoga.

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² Translation rendered by Swami Nirmalananda