



Svaroopa® Vidya Ashram

January 2017 Contemplation:
Exploring Yoga's Multidimensionality #1
Mapping Your Dimensionality

By Swami Nirmalananda & Vidyadevi Stillman

Life is about bringing your innate capacities to their fullest blossoming. What is this fullest blossoming? Yoga says that it is to live in the knowing experience of your multidimensionality. How many dimensions are there? Sri Google offered 18.5 million hits on this question. One site explained the question very yogically:

Moviegoers appreciate the difference between 2-D and 3-D, and they're willing to pay a little more for an upgrade... When we put on those 3-D glasses, we see a world that has shape, a world that we could walk in. Because we only know life in 3-D, our brains don't understand how to look for anything more...

Our brains aren't trained to see anything other than our world, and it will likely take something from another dimension to make us understand.¹

According to yoga's sages, you can upgrade to 36-D at no extra cost. Vidyadevi says, "In meditation I have pierced some levels of contraction. Piercing the limitation of environment into all-pervasiveness, piercing the limitation of time into eternity and piercing the limitation of bliss into ever expanding ecstasy. These dimensions expand inward, easy to access with *Svaroopa*® Yoga and *Svaroopa*® Vidya meditation."

Yoga's sages agree that "our brains don't understand how to look for anything more," saying that this means you have to go beyond your mind. They discovered all 36 dimensions by diving deep into meditation, exploring the inner realms of their own being. All of yoga's practices purposefully take you beyond your mind, so you experience the multidimensionality of the universe, which is here in your own human body. This is why it is so valuable to do poses and yoga breathing: to begin with your body and to go deeper, so you get to know who lives in it.

The 36 dimensions are called the 36 tattvas, a cosmic map of how the universe is manifested. Consciousness is the One, the Source, Ultimate Reality. Consciousness takes on 35 levels of contraction in order to become the universe and everything in it, including you and me. This is described in sutra 4 of the Pratyabhijnahrdyam:

citi-sa.mkocaaatmaa cetano'pi sa.mkucita-vi"sva-maya.h

Consciousness willingly takes on contraction, in order to become both the universe and the individuals, who have the universe as their bodies in a contracted form.²

That which existed before the Big Bang, yoga calls Consciousness or "Shiva." Shiva initiated the movement of Shiva within Shiva, a movement that science calls the Big Bang. This movement is the energy which contracts to become matter. Everything that exists is made of this contracted energy. The subatomic particles that make up your chair are identical to the subatomic particles that make up your own body. The only thing that is different is the patterns in which they move, which is the movement of Shiva within Shiva.

Now please take this all very personally. This is the stuff of which you are made. Consciousness contracts to become you. Who you are as an individual truly matters. Why? Because Shiva wants to be you. Shiva is choosing to be everything in the universe: mountains, rivers, clouds, ants, elephants... and you. Uniquely and individually you.

You must look inward to find your own Divine Essence, your own Shiva-ness, but how you are and who you are in the world is also Divine. Except when you're not being fully you. When you're not

¹ www.science.howstuffworks.com

² Rendered by Swami Nirmalananda

aware of your own Divine Essence, you've lost the multidimensionality that is your birthright. You get trapped in your mind, creating an alternate universe that no one really understands, a world in which you truly are alone.

Yoga's sages offer many maps to help you find your way home to your Self, your Divine Essence. These different maps of Consciousness give you a better understanding of where you are when you begin, as well as where you are going and why. No one map gives you the whole of Consciousness, just like no one map can give you the whole of the town in which you live.

If you want a map of your town, you can go to a convenience store or gas station and buy a fold out map or book. This street map is not the only map of your town. The cable TV company has a map showing where all the cables are located, with some of them along streets, but others along valleys and across open fields. The Water and Sewer Department's map has water and sewer lines, related to the street map and cable map in some ways, but different in others. The US Geological Survey has an elevation map showing hills and valleys, little circles with elevation noted on them. In some places they correspond to streets, cables and water and sewage lines, but others not. If you line up all these maps and stack them up, do you have your town? No. The maps give you several different ways of looking at your town, but your town is more than that.

In this way, the sages give us different maps of Consciousness. There are places where they agree and there are places where they don't. When you understand any one map, you still only understand a map. Even when you understand all the maps, you still don't have the whole of Consciousness. Yet the different maps are all true, all at the same time. The many maps give you an understanding of the profound experience you have when you decompress your spine by doing *Svaroopā*® Yoga. This inward blossoming is our specialty.

We have dedicated 2017's monthly contemplation articles to Exploring Yoga's Multidimensionality. As it says above, "Our brains aren't trained to see anything other than our world, and it will likely take something from another dimension to make us understand." We will take a full year to delve into the gifts the sages gave us from those other dimensions. These maps can give you new insights about your life and your being. We'll follow their maps to discover the multidimensionality within so you can revel in that within yourself.

Today we've introduced the 36 tattvas, and we'll also be exploring duality-in-unity, the triune nature of the universe, the four-fold model, the three malas, five kleshas, seven chakras, five pranas, three doshas and more. Each map gives you new insight into who and how you are. Ultimately the goal is to go beyond theory to experience. By living in the knowing experience of your own multidimensionality, you bring your human capacity to its fullest blossoming in this lifetime. This is the power of the *Svaroopā*® practices. Do more yoga.

THIS IS AN ARTICLE IN A YEAR-LONG SERIES ON "EXPLORING YOGA'S MULTIDIMENSIONALITY," OUR THEME FOR 2017, CO-AUTHORED BY SWAMI NIRMALANANDA SARASWATI, VIDYADEVI STILLMAN & RUKMINI ABBRUZZI.

To reach our teachers or to learn more about *Svaroopā*® Yoga & Meditation, contact
Svaroopā® Vidya Ashram ♦ www.svaroopaa.org ♦ info@svaroopayoga.org ♦ 610.644.7555