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Svaroopaa® Vidya Ashram

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Self & Self #10

## Consciousness Imprints

By Gurudevi Nirmalananda

You were trained by masters. Your family and schoolteachers were masters of “busy mind.” They did their best to cultivate your mastery. Yogic training gives you “quiet mind,” a sweet inner stillness, spaciousness and peace. It deepens into bliss.

This process involves both training and conditioning. Training is when you study the theory and begin to apply it. A baseball pitcher gets coaching on his throw or a golfer on his swing. Their coaches take videos and measure the speed of his ball. Then they show him how he’s losing power with some little thing, like the placement of his foot. He tries it out. The coaches help him fine-tune his new plan.

Now the conditioning begins. He practices. He throws the ball, then he throws it again. Hundreds or thousands of pitches later, he’s ready to bring it to the game, with the crowds roaring and his teammates watching his feet placement. He has to forget it all, even the theory and plan, so he can simply do it. He gets in the groove and throws the ball.

You need both training and conditioning. Theory alone is not enough; you need to practice. This means that you quiet your mind. But quiet mind doesn’t last very long in the beginning. Your mind gets busy again, so you have to quiet it again. And again... Repetition is the key.

Yoga excels at quieting your mind. All yogic practices are about quieting your mind, including the poses. With athletic and aerobic yoga styles, quiet mind is often attained through exhaustion. You’re too fatigued to think, which is mildly blissful. Similarly, most meditation systems work this way. You sit through the internal storms, waiting for them to pass so you get a moment of inner stillness. Then you do it again.

Svaroopaa® Yoga is different. It works energetically. Your spine is the central conduit of energy in your body, so our poses decompress it, opening up new levels of energy inside. In Svaroopaa® Vidya meditation, you pour your mental energy toward infinite Consciousness. These energetic interventions work more powerfully than any other approach. Not only do you feel better, but your habitual patterns also begin to change.

In daily life, your mind and body follow patterns, like a machine with gears that keep turning. The machine runs on electricity. Svaroopaa® practices supply your mechanism with more energy, so it’s like your machine starts throwing off sparks. It shifts into a new rhythm and pattern. It produces amazing new results. The life changes are nourishing and uplifting. The inner changes are profound and fulfilling.

Your mental machinery can no longer pump out the repetitive thoughts that plagued you for so long. Your body becomes free from the habitual tensions that caused so much pain and dis-ease. This is called healing and transformation. In computer lingo, this is de-programming and re-programming. Yoga gives you bliss-based programming.

Right now, your programming may be anxiety-based, perhaps pain-based or blame-and-anger-based. Such programming makes your first response predictable, always the same emotion, even if you’re getting good news, “Oh, that is good news, but I doubt how long it will last.” When you predict negative outcomes, you live in pain, even if the negative outcomes don’t come true.

What if your first response was bliss? No matter what happens, the bliss of Consciousness will carry you through. Your own Self is the source of your strength as well as your bliss. The sage Shankaracharya explained it in a famous sang about 1300 years ago, “Chidananda Rupah, Shivo’ham, Shivo’ham” — my true form is the bliss of Consciousness.

When teaching a Svaroopaa® Yoga class, I always leave a long pause after students do both sides of Seated Side Stretch. There, sitting in the center, you are suspended in an easy timelessness. It is an entry point into the deeper dimensionality of your own Self. It happens after a chant as well. I love to linger in the timelessness with everyone. The sage K.semaraaja called it “vyutthana,” a threshold zone, and recommends you linger there:

Meditative absorption leaves internal impressions.

Linger in the threshold zone,  
again and again contemplate your oneness with Consciousness...

Of course your meditative absorption leaves internal impressions. Everything in life leaves impressions in your mind, even what you had for breakfast today. Meditation leaves Consciousness imprints in your mind. Not only does your mind become filled with Consciousness, each of these impressions dissolves prior impressions, freeing you from your own history. This is called "parinama," the transformation of your mind. You can actively participate in this transformation when you are in the vyutthana (threshold zone).

There are two ways to get into the vyutthana. Turning your attention from the world to look inward is easily done with spinal release poses, Ujjayi Pranayama and chanting. You get in the zone. It is like you're standing in the doorway of your own home, looking inward from outside.

Meditation pulls you deeper within, especially once you've received Shaktipat. At the end of your meditation period, when you open your eyes, you're seeing the world from a deeper place inside. Now it's like you've arrived home and are inside, looking out. The goal is to live here, always based in the Consciousness that you are.

K.semaraaja recommends you contemplate Self when you're in the zone. You are choosing to layer in internal impressions. These samskaras are the seeds of your karmas, impressions you've layered in through decades, even through lifetimes. You're replacing your old samskaras with Consciousness samskaras.

My Baba taught us to cultivate Consciousness samskaras by repeating mantra while falling asleep. When you rouse to roll over, notice if the mantra is going inside. If not, get it going again. In the first moment of waking, notice if the mantra is going. If not, start it up again.

It took me about three years to get there. Once mantra continued all night long, my sleep changed. It became more restful, deep but not heavy. I needed fewer hours of sleep and had more energy throughout the day. My mind didn't harass me so much. Best of all, my mind returned to mantra whenever I didn't have a specific task for it.

Patanjali, another yogic sage, describes this kind of mind:

Tadaa viveka-nimna.m kaivalya-praagbhaara.m chittam. — Yoga Sutras 4.26 Such a  
mind is naturally inclined towards discernment and is heading toward liberation.

Currently, your mind is naturally inclined toward something. Do you know what it is? Discernment means you distinguish between what is beneficial compared to harmful, what uplifts you instead of entrapping you, and what is lasting instead of something that will pass by like a rainstorm. True discernment frees you from the knee-jerk reactions that rule most peoples' lives. It empowers you to choose the highest and best for yourself and others.

Beyond discernment, the sage says that such a mind is headed toward liberation. How would you like to have a mind that is heading toward Consciousness? You're on your way to enlightenment! Your mind becomes a valuable tool in your process.

Yoga makes you able to harness the energy of your mind and pour it toward your inherent Divinity. Now your mind shines with Divine Light, emanating from within. It shows you the pathway through life's twists and turns. You can have a mind that is programmed by Consciousness. How? Do more yoga.

THIS IS AN ARTICLE IN A YEAR-LONG SERIES, "SELF & SELF"

To reach our teachers or to learn more about Svaroopa® Yoga & Meditation, contact

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