

Preksha Dhyana

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Preksha dhyana is a technique of meditation for attitudinal change, behavioural modification and, integrated development of personality. It is based on the wisdom of ancient philosophy and has been formulated in terms of modern scientific concepts. We hope that the synthesis of the ancient wisdom and the modern scientific knowledge would help us in achieving the blissful aim of establishing amity, peace and happiness in the world by eradicating the bestial urges such as cruelty, retaliation and hatred.

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Introduction

In publishing this booklet it is hoped to bring to the reader in simple language, some truths, already known to the ancient philosophies, and now known to modern science.

Age of Tension

In this age of technology, industrialisation and overurbanisation, we are constantly subjected to tremendous stresses and tensions. These, in turn, produce psychosomatic diseases like hypertension, **insomnia**, and various types of heartdiseases. In desperation people take to drinking and dangerous drugs which give temporary relief but create more serious problems. The remedy does not lie in drugs or fantasy, but in a process of catharsis and development of the inherent powers.

Philosophy teaches us to realize that our existence is functioning in duality, i.e. there is a spiritual self within a physical body. Science is also proving that life's processes for man lie almost wholly within himself and are amenable to control. The control, has to be exercised by the power of the spiritual self, and this inherent potency and be developed by knowing how to live properly, which-incltides earring, drinking and breathing properly as well as'thinking properly.

What is Preksha Dhyana

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help us in achieving the blissful aim of establishing amity, peace and happiness in the world by eradicating the bestial urges such as cruelty, retaliation and hatred.

Benefits of Preksa-dhyana

Preksa may appear to mean different things to different people because it contributes to increase physical, nervous as well as spiritual energies.

On physical level, it helps each bodily cell to revitalize itself., it facilitates digestion; it makes respiration more efficient and improves circulation and quality of blood.

On mental level, it proves to be an applied method to train the mind to concentrate; it offers a way to treat serious psychosomatic illnesses without drugs; it is an efficient tool for ending addictions and other bad habits; it reveals to one the mysteries of his mind by the realization and real experience of the inner consciousness which includes the subconscious and the unconscious.

On the emotional level, the strengthening of conscious reasoning controls reactions to environmental conditions, situations and behaviour of others; harmonization of the functioning of nervous and endocrine system results in control and ultimate eradication of psychological distortions.

On spiritual level, regulation and transformation of blood-chemistry through proper synthesization of neuroendocrinal secretions, dispassionate internal vibrations leads one to attain the power to control the mind and to become free from the effects of external forces compelling one to lose equanimity.

No Theological Dogma

Preksa-dhyana can be learnt and practised by anybody without distinction of caste, colour, country or creed. There is no communal or theological bias nor does it insist on any particular theological belief.

Though the process is not very difficult to learn and practise, it is essential to learn the technique through experienced and trained teachers. Normally a ten-day retreat (training camp) is a suitable means to impart proper training.

Review of Results

During the last 15 years, more than hundred training camps have been organised and more than 13,000 persons have learnt this technique. Amongst them are scientists, doctors, engineers, professors, teachers, government servants and other intelligentsia, besides the general public. Police Department, Education Department and others have taken part in the special courses organized by Tulasi Adhyatama Nidam. More such courses are being planned for different disciplines, professions and work areas. Over and above those who have been trained in these camps, thousands of others have practised

Preksa-dhyana and have been benefitted thereby. While many of them have restored their physical health, hundreds others have been cured of mental tensions, hypertension and other psychosomatic diseases.

For all these we are grateful to Yugapradhana Acharya Shri Tulsi and his successor-designate Yuvacharya Shri Mahaprajna for their constant guidance and efforts in this direction.

These two great spiritual saints have truly blessed the entire human race with the boon of *Preksa dhyana*, and we are confident that all and sundry will be benefitted by learning and practising this universal and easy-to-learn technique of *Preksa-dhyana*. Two permanent training centres have been established, viz. 1. Tulsi Adhyatma Nidam at Jain Vishva Bharati, Ladnun, (Rajasthan) and 2. Adhyatma Sadhana Kendra at Mehrauli, New Delhi.

What Is Preksa?

The word *preksa* is derived from the root *iksa*, which means 'to see'. When the prefix 'pra' is added, it becomes *pra+iksa=preksa*, which means 'to perceive carefully and profoundly'

Here, 'seeing' does not mean external vision, but careful concentration on subtle consciousness by mental insight. *Preksa Dhyana* is the system of meditation engaging one's mind fully in the perception of subtle internal and innate phenomena of consciousness.

Sampikkhae appagamappaenam This aphorism from the Jain canon *Dasavealiyam* forms the basic principle for this system of meditation. It simply means : 'See you thyself- Perceive and realize the most subtle aspects of consciousness by your conscious mind. Hence, "to see" is the fundamental principle of meditation. The name *Preksa Dhyana* was therefore assigned to the present technique; thus this technique is basically not concentration of 'thought' but concentration of perception'.

To know and to see are the characteristics of the consciousness. In its mundane state, being contaminated by Karmic matter, the faculty is not fully manifested, but it can be developed.

The term *dhyana* (meditation) is usually defined as the concentration of thinking on a particular subject for a length of time. Now the mind is the instrument of 'thinking' as well as 'perception'. And, therefore, when linked with *Preksa Dhyana* becomes 'concentration of perception and not of thought. While it is conceded that both thinking (conception) as well as seeing (perception) assist in ascertaining and knowing the truth, the latter is more potent than the former. In the tenets propounded by Bhagavan Mahavira 'perceive and know' is given more prominence than 'think, contemplate and know'. This is because perception is strictly concerned with the phenomena of the present; it is neither a memory of the past nor an imagination of the future; whatever is happening at the

moment of perception must necessarily be a reality. The process of perception, therefore, excludes a mere 'appearance'.

One commences the practice of this technique with the perception of the body. Body contains the soul. Therefore, one must pierce the wall of the container to reach the content (the soul). Again, 'breathing' is a part of the body and essence of life. To breathe is to live; and so breath is naturally qualified to be the first object of our perception, while the body itself would become the next one. The vibrations, sensations and other physiological events are worthy of our attention. Our conscious mind becomes sharpened to perceive these internal realities in due course, and then it will be able to focus itself on the minutest and the most subtle occurrences within the body. The direct perception of emotions, urges and other psychological events will then be possible. And ultimately the envelope of *karmic* matter, contaminating the consciousness could be clearly recognised.

As stated above, our conscious mind is capable of two categories of functions viz. thinking and perceiving conception and perception. But it is incapable of being engaged in both the categories simultaneously. One either thinks or perceives. Exclusive perception of a single object can thus become an efficient tool for steadying the ever wandering mind. If one concentrates in perceiving any external object, he finds that his mind has steadied and his train of thoughts has almost halted. Similarly when one concentrate on the perception of his own internal phenomena such as sensations, vibrations or even thoughts, he will realize that the mind has stopped its usual meandering and is fully engaged in perception. Continued concentrated perception of intrinsic processes will ultimately enable one to perceive the subtle bodies.

In '*preksa*' perception always means experience bereft of the duality of like and dislike. When the experience is contaminated with pleasure or pain, like and dislike, perception loses its primary position and becomes secondary.

Impartiality and equanimity are synonymous with *Preksa*. *Preksa* is impartial perception, where there is neither the emotion of attachment nor aversion, neither pleasure nor displeasure. Both these states of emotion are closely and carefully perceived but not experienced. And because both are perceived from close quarters, it is not difficult to reject both of them and assume a neutral position. Thus equanimity is essentially associated with *preksa*.

Our sense-organ of sight is merely an instrument of perception of an object; it is neither responsible for its existence nor does it derive pleasure (or pain) from it. The same applies to the purely perceptive consciousness. He, whose 'perception' and 'knowledge' are pure, does neither attract new *karmic* matter nor does he suffer the effect of the old accumulated *karmas*.

Aim of Preksha Dhyana

The main purpose of the practice of *preksa-dhyana* is to purify the mental states. Mind is constantly choked by contaminating urges, emotions and passions. This hampers the flow

of wisdom. The hurdles of uncleanness must first be removed. When the mind is cleansed peace of mind automatically surfaces. Balance of mind, equanimity and the state of well-being are also experienced simultaneously.

As we shall see later, manifestation of "*Taijasa Lesya*" is the commencement of purity of mind. The state of well being is ever associated with *Taijasa Lesya*. Thus "*Taijasa Lesya*" brings about the state of well-being; "*Padma Lesya*" brings about peace of mind; and "*Sukla Lesya*" results in purity and equanimity.

It should always be remembered that the ultimate aim of *sadhaka* is purity and equanimity-freedom from contamination of passions. The state of well-being is not our ultimate aim, it will inevitably ensue; nevertheless, it is not the objective. Similarly peacefulness is also a secondary benefit and will always be achieved, but not the aim. We have to transcend both these mental states to reach our ultimate purpose, viz. total purity of mind and goodness.

Preconditions of Preksha Dhyana

Initiation

At the commencement of the meditation session, all *sadhakas* shall assume a posture of cross-legged position, totally relax the body and mind to remove the tension, and with folded hands, recite the following aphorisms

1. **abbhutthiomi arahanae**

I dedicate myself to the practice of Preksha-Dhyana.

2. **maggam uvasampajjami**

I initiate myself into the path of Spiritual Practice.

3. **samattam uvasampajjami**

I initiate my self into the practice of Internal Perception.

4. **samjamam uvasampajjami**

I initiate myself into the practice of Spriritual Experience.

Thus the *sadhakas* initiate themselves into the practice of *preksha-dhyana*.

Five Disciplines of Initiation

1. **Bhavakriya** (Synchrony of Mental and Physical Actions)

This is three-fold :

1. Present-mindedness.
2. Complete awareness of one's actions.
3. Un-interrupted (spiritual) vigilance.

Present-minded action is contrary to mechanical (absent minded) action. When one is engaged in doing some thing, it is not proper to be carried away by one's imagination which is not connected with the work in hand.

Habitually, one wastes his time and energy in useless recollection of the past or irrelevant imaginations of the future. But neither the past nor the future is real. Only the present exists and is real. One who lets the present slip away, is never able to re-capture it, and hence, Bhavakriya is the only means of capturing the reality of the present. It means present-minded action.

Bhavakriya also means complete awareness of one's action. Habitually, again, one thinks with 'half a mind', that is fracturing the mind, and engaging only a piece of it in the work in hand, while the rest of it is allowed to wander about. When the mind is totally engaged by the work in hand, the result is *Bhavakriya*. Synchrony of mind and body saves much waste of efforts and energy, increases efficiency and results in greater success.

Another meaning of *Bhavakriya*, is constant vigilance. One must be continuously aware of his ultimate aim, which is twofold : (a) Purification of mind and (b) Awakening the supine Will and other inherent powers.

2. Act - Do not "Re-act"

Habitually we react to external stimuli, that is, we are generally overwhelmed by retaliatory emotional forces within us demanding appropriate action. But, surely this cannot be called "action", it is, in fact, "re-action". Discipline of the reasoning mind controls the re-active forces and results in appropriate "action", rather than "re-action", One should endeavour to establish control and avoid retaliatory behaviour.

3. Amity

Behaviour of a *sadhaka* should radiate friendliness, compassion and sympathy. This is possible only when one is able to countermand one's reactive tendencies by reasoning and avoid retaliatory thoughts and actions. Subjugation of retaliatory impulse results in friendly and compassionate behaviour. The *sadhaka* should be ever vigilant in this respect and cultivate amity.

4. Dieting

Dietics is an important facet of meditational practice. Intake of food deeply influences not only our physical health, but also mental tendencies and emotional states. Habitually we eat too much. This overloads our digestive system and results in indigestion etc. This in turn, further weakens not only the digestive organs but vitiates the entire organism, including mental tendencies and emotional states.

Sadhaka should be vigilant towards his diet, avoid over-eating. He should particularly abstain from such foods and drinks as are unsalutary to one's health, physical as well as mental.

5. Silence

The last discipline of the initiation is controlled speech or complete silence. We speak in order to communicate with one another. However, habitually we speak too much and too long. *Sadhaka* should be careful to effect full control over his speaking mechanism. It should be used only when necessary. His speech should be modulated and measured.

Recitation of Arham

A precondition of meditational practice is a build-up of a defensive armour to protect the practitioner from the onslaught of evil influences of external environment. The process of the build-up is repeated loud recitation of the syllable "arham". Synchronised with the recitation, there should be a mental projection of the step by step build-up of the protective shell. The shell is being woven from the crisscross of the electromagnetic radiations, emanations from the sound waves thus produced. The radiations ultimately merge together and build an impregnable armour-like, enveloping the practitioner, keeping him safe for the duration of the practice.

Spiritual Vigilance

Spiritual vigilance, i.e. awakening of the consciousness and its constant alertness is an essential constituent of meditation. Only he who is alert can be vigilant: only he who is vigilant can concentrate and only he who is able to concentrate can practice meditation. One who is not vigilant is prone to be assailed by fear from all directions. On the other hand, one who is alert, and hence fully vigilant, is never perturbed by fear.

An alert mind never burdens itself with unnecessary memories of what is done. Man is habitually bothered more by the memories of the past actions rather than the work on hand. For instance, when he takes his meals, instead of concentrating on eating, his mind is agitated with umpteen other, mostly irrelevant, memories and/or plans. He who keeps his mind fully engaged by whatever is being done at the moment, is the true *sadhaka*. Complete harmony of body, mind and speech is indeed very rarely achieved. And where there is no harmony between the body and the mind, the result is agitation, tension and restlessness. In fact, real *sadhana* comprises total harmony of thought and deed - call it concentration, meditation or whatever you like.

Meditation does not mean suppression of mental function. Any attempt towards its suppression makes the mind more restless. The question then arises, what to do to achieve concentration? The answer is simply- 'See yourself and realise the Self'.

As already stated, breath is an essential constituent of the self. Realizing breath is a step towards realizing the self. And so he who realizes his breath is a wise man. He may not be a scholar but he knows his self, and is, therefore, wise.

Normally one pays no attention - makes no efforts to breathe. Nevertheless breathing does not stop. Proper breathing is very important. He who is indifferent to how he breathes is ignoring his own self. Breathing, internal breathing, sense organs, body and mind are all qualified to become objects of concentrated perception, without which peace of mind cannot be achieved.

Today we live in a world of mental tensions. Even routine chores like buying one's necessities from a ration shop or commuting, by public transport in a crowded city, produces enormous dangerous tensions. The question is- what is the remedy? How to avoid the injurious effects of the daily stress? Modern life-styles are unlikely to change for the better. We must therefore find the remedy within our own selves. Fortunately we do possess an innate protective mechanism tropotrophic or relaxation response-which when triggered can produce conditions diametrically opposite to those of stress. Regular practice of 'easy-to-learn meditation technique' is a potent remedy for relieving mental stress and achieving peace of mind. It can also prevent the onslaught of dangerous psychosomatic diseases.

Preksa Dhayana is such an uncomplicated, easy-to-learn technique of meditation. It is comprised of the following

1. *Kayotsarga* (Total Relaxation).
2. *Antaryatra* (Internal Trip).
3. *Svasa Preksa* (Perception of Breath).
4. *Sartra Preksa* (Perception of Body).
5. *Chaitanya Kendra Preksa* (Perception of Psychic Centres).
6. *Lesya-dhayana* (Perception of Psychic Spectrum).
7. Perception of the Present Moment.
8. Perception of thoughts.
9. Self Discipline.

10. *Bhavana* (counter vibrations).

11. *Anupreksa* (Contemplation).

12. Concentration.

Relaxation with Self Awareness

Bodily movements, speech and mental functions are three-fold activities of our organism. One of the facets of meditation practice is reduction or total cessation of each of these activities. Three types of meditation practices thus ensure from the trinity of activities. *Kayotsarga*, and its associates such as *Kayagupti*, *Kayapratisamlinata* etc. come under one of these three types.

Kayotsarga literally means 'abandonment of the body coupled with high degree of conscious awareness'. In practice, it is conscious suspension of all gross movements of the body resulting in relaxation of the skeletal muscles and drastic reduction of metabolic activities. This physical condition results in relieving mental tensions and is an essential precondition for meditation practice. It becomes, therefore, the first phase of *Preksa Dhayana* must be practised for a few minutes at the commencement of all types of this technique. Apart from this, *Kayotsarga* may be independently practised daily for longer periods, If one learns and practices systematic relaxation everyday he would remain relaxed, calm and unperturbed in any situation. Physically it is more restful than sleep, and is the most harmless and direct antidote to psychosomatic maladies resulting from tension. Spiritually, in this process, the lifeless body is cast off, while the consciousness upwards freed from and outside its material shell.

Method of *Kayotsarga*

Choose a comfortable position; 'Lotus-posture' is ideal, but other ones can also be adopted. Keep your spinal cord, neck and head in a straight line without causing tension. For longer period, lying flat on a hard ground on a blanket is more suitable. Relaxation commences with the total cessation of the voluntary movements. Since breathing and relaxation are linked together, be aware of your breathing. If it is shallow, hasty and irregular, regulate it until it becomes even, slow and rhythmic. After this, it may be forgotten altogether. Next persuade every muscle in each part of the body to relax by auto-suggestion. Keeping the body entirely motionless, allow the mind to move in small steps keeping in mind that the technique is that of patient persuasion, and not forced by strong will-power. Auto-suggestion is followed by an experience of relaxation in each part. When the whole body has become relaxed, there is an acute and actual perception of rest and relaxation, which is no longer auto-suggestion, but is real experience. Once this stage is reached, the body is cast off and forgotten, and the conscious element reveals its separate existence. Thus *Kayotsarga* is not only total relaxation, but actual perception of the self, quite apart from the material non-self i.e. the body.

Internal Trip

The second step of *Preksa Dhyana* is *Antaryatra* (Internal Trip). It follows the *Kayotsarga*. Exertion in systematic meditation discipline needs good deal of nervous energy, and it is, therefore, essential to generate it. *Susumna*, i.e. the spinal cord is an important part of the central nervous system. Its bottom end is in the vicinity of *sakti kendra* i.e. centre of energy. In the practice of *Antaryatra* the conscious mind travels from *Sakti-kendra* to *Jnana-kendra* (centre of knowledge, top of the head) via the spinal cord. This internal trip of the conscious mind is repeated several times, and results in an increased flow of the vital energy (*prana sakti*) upwards. Repeated practice of this process assists in better generation of the nervous energy necessary for further meditation practice.

Nervous system is an essential and very important component for the functioning of conscious activities. It permeates the entire body through a network of nerves. The spinal cord and the brain are the commanding stations of the entire system. The former extends from the centre of energy situated in the lumbar region of the spine and enters the latter at the base of the skull, and is connected to it by the brain-stem and pons. These, therefore, are the chief centres of consciousness and the seat of the conscious mind. The nerves from the sense-organs also converge here. Sensation, motor action and perception converge to or are radiated from here. Sensory nerves and motor nerves are energized and activated by it.

Man represents the culmination of the process of evolution in the entire cosmos. Human mind alone possesses the capacity for conscious reasoning. Lower organisms do not possess a rational reasoning mind. Man's ability for rational and conceptual thinking is derived from his reasoning mind. Thus man alone is capable to direct the flow of his spiritual energy in an upward direction. If the flow is downwards, the behaviour will be guided by psychological distortions such as cruelty, greed, fear and hate; on the other hand, if the flow is reversed, these distortions will disappear. This will immensely strengthen the power of the unique human attribute-rational thinking and conscious reasoning. It is the direction of the flow of the spiritual energy which is a decider of the human behaviour.

Perception of Breathing

It is impossible to canalise and concentrate the mental functioning if the breath is not adequately regulated. Breath is essential for metabolic functioning of the body. It is also linked with conscious mind. Since mind is ever restless, it is extremely difficult to steady the wandering mind directly. An efficient and easy way to control mental activity is concentrated perception of breath-*Svasa Preksa*.

Proper regulation of respiration by the conscious mind results in the development of the controlled activity of the mind. To stop the restlessness of the mind, and canalise its functioning, it is essential to be aware of breathing. Shallow, hasty and irregular

(spasmodic) breathing must first be regulated to be deep, slow, calm and rhythmic. Even in *Kayotsarga*, breathing is not stopped, but is made subtle.

Deep, slow and rhythmic breathing is an essential condition for regulating mental process. Very slow inhalation and complete exhalation (by the use of diaphragm) is called *dirgha svasa* deep breathing or diaphragmatic breathing.

Complete awareness of breathing and nothing else but breathing is the basis of *Svasa Preksa*. Attention can be kept focussed on a single point in the respiratory tract, e.g. nostrils or it can travel the entire tract during inhalation as well as exhalation. Various facets of breathing, such as movement of the diaphragm, rate of breathing and depth of breathing can conveniently become the object of *Svasa Preksa*.

Svasa Preksa can be practised in two ways viz. *dirgha svasa* and *samavrtti svasa*.

Dirgha Svasa Preksa

As already explained above, *Dirgha svasa* is slow and complete exhalation and deep inhalation. The first step in this process is to regulate the rate of breathing by reducing the number of breaths per minute. Normally a healthy adult's rate of breathing is 15/17 breaths per minute (b.p.m.). By practice of diaphragmatic breathing, this rate can be drastically reduced. Even casual practice can easily bring it down to 10/12 b.p.m. And further regular practice can reduce the rate to 6, 4 or even 2 or 1 b.p.m.

Regulation of breath, reduction in its rate, and the rhythm results in steadying the mind. Simultaneously, urges and impulses, emotions and passions and their impelling forces--the primal drives -- all become amenable to control. When the breath is shallow and its rate high, primal drives and passions are aroused, strengthening the urges and emotions. Quick breathing acts as a vehicle for all these distortions. One can easily pacify the passions by regulating the breath. If one slows down the breath-rate and commences rhythmic breathing, the passion forces would at once be retarded. This is because they are deprived of the vehicle, and without a transport they cannot make much headway. A practitioner of meditation would, in due course, be able to perceive in advance the onslaught of rising passions, and thus will be prepared to nullify their attack by resorting to '*dirgha svasa*'. The rising passion would then begin to subside. Thus by blunting the sharpness of their attack, a *sadhaka* saves himself from being the victim of the dreadful urges and emotions.

Breath is a reality of the present moment. Practice of *Svasa-preksa* leads the *sadhaka* to live equanimously and impartially. He will also get rid of tension as a side benefit.

As stated above, *Preksa Dhyana* is the technique of seeing one's own self. Breath is the gate-way to the self(consciousness). To commence the internal trip, one must pass through the main gate way of breath. And when mind and breath become inseparable, companions, the journey begins. In theory breath is a part and parcel of the self; and so

one can realize the goal of reaching the self via the breath. In practice, seeing oneself simply means perception of all aspects of breath by the conscious mind.

Samavrtti Svasa Preksa

Like *Dirgha Svasa Preksa*, *Samavrtti Svasa Preksa* is also an important process of this meditation system. Here breath is exhaled through one (say, left) nostril and inhaled through the other (right). Then exhaling through the right, it is inhaled through the left. Throughout the process, the perceptive mind is closely linked with the breath. As in *Dirgha Svasa Preksa*, breath is regulated to be rhythmic. In due course by the practice of this, one can develop the inherent capacities of the subconscious mind such as extrasensory perception, clairvoyance etc.

Perception of Body

With the modern life-style, an average educated person working almost entirely with his brain, is scarcely aware of his own body. He is, no doubt, quite familiar with the stresses he is forced to face, and the resulting fatigue as well as the mental tension. But his knowledge about its process is meagre. Even when one does experience tensions, he is unable to pin-point exactly where the tension lies. Indeed he has not an inkling that his body possesses an innate protective mechanism which, when triggered, can counteract the effects of the overstress. If, therefore, one desires to improve his physical and mental health, he has to re-establish contact with his body.

It should also be remembered that the body is the abode of the soul. Our existence functions in duality. That is, the subtle spiritual self works within the gross physical body. It is the spiritual self which gives one a sense of wisdom and mastership. But it must have a physical body to function and perform in. Science also has now proved that life's processes for man lie almost wholly within himself. Thus, the body alone can be the medium of exercising the power and authority of the consciousness to control and subdue one's primal drives, animal impulses and carnal desires. And subjugation of these urges will ultimately result in the eradication of the contamination by *karmic* matter. The spiritual self will then achieve the state of pure uncontaminated consciousness.

The process of *sarira preksa* is centripetal, i.e. from outside to inside, thus reversing one's usual direction of the flow of consciousness which is from inside to outside. Commencing with the outermost layers of consciousness one has to penetrate more and more deeply. Thus the successive stages of *sarira preksa* would be perception and awareness of :

- (a) the superficial sensation of the skin such as contact with cloth, warmth, perspiration, itching etc.,
- (b) the sensation produced by the muscular movements,

(c) the sensations produced by functioning of the internal organs such as liver, heart etc., and finally,

(d) subtle vibrations produced by the electrical impulses travelling in the nervous system.

In the vast complex of our organism various complicated chemical, mechanical and electromagnetic processes are constantly going on. Our sense-organs and other sensory outposts send thousands of separate sensation signals coded messages to the brain every moment. They are a variety of intensities of pleasure, pain, etc.

Process of *sarira preksa* aims at the development of totally impartial perception of pleasure and pain. This is practically achievable because there is a remarkable distinction between sensation and perception. While the sensation signals are the unprocessed inputs of awareness, perception is the finished product processed by the brain in the light of mood, expectations and many other variations. In the case of pain, for example, same sensation-signals (say, from a toothache) affect each person differently. His suffering is his perception and this varies immensely from person to person. The *sarira preksa* changes one's perception so that the sensation signals of pain are experienced without suffering. Same is the case with the signals of the sensation of pleasure.

As stated above, the *sarira preksa* is a centripetal process. Now the extension of the psyche is on par with that of the body and the spiritual self is on par with the psyche. In other words, each and every one of the billions of cells which constitute the body is permeated by the spiritual self, and that is why each cell is sensitive and capable of carrying out metabolic function through biochemical and bio-electric actions. In short, a totally impartial perception of the mass of sensations within the body is direct perception of the psyche and the spiritual self.

It is obvious that *sarira preksa* is the only means of complete body awareness, which, as explained above, is really self awareness. On the physical level, it helps each cell to revitalize itself, it helps digestion, improves quality and circulation of blood and increases the efficiency of the nervous system and bio-electric activities. On mental level, it is a methodology for training the mind to concentrate on internal phenomena instead of wandering about externally. On the spiritual level, impartial perception of ever-changing biological functions of the body is a means of experiencing the substratum of consciousness through its modes and attributes.

Perception of Psychic Centres

To cleanse the psyche from the dirt of animal impulses, carnal desires, and such other pernicious bad habits it is essential to know the sources of uncleanness and its modus operandi. Once we know this, the process of cleansing becomes easy and efficient. We can discuss the process applying the ancient methodology of Yoga as well as that of modern science.

Our glandular system consists of two types of glands-- exocrine and endocrine, the latter being ductless. Their products (called hormones) flow directly into the bloodstream and are distributed by it. The complex of endocrine system includes pineal, pituitary, thyroids, para-thyroids, thymus, adrenals, gonads and pancreatic islets. They participate in every bodily function and have profound influence upon the mental states, and tendencies, attitudes, emotions and behavioural patterns of every individual. The quality of our existence necessitates that there must be some built in mechanism through which our subtle spiritual self can exercise its authority and control the grosser elements of the physical body. This mechanism must translate the code of intangible and imperceptible forces of the psyche into a form of crude power which can function through the nerves and muscles of the body. Such a mechanism is located in the endocrine glands. They are the inter-communicating transformers between the psychical and the physical cells. The known methods of intercommunication are electrical impulses of the nerve action and the chemical reaction of the hormones and neuro-hormones. The endocrines are therefore aptly named psychic centres.

So far we had believed that the brain was the source of energy and the place from which the psychic forces acted. But now we know that it is only a repository of memories. The endocrine system is the seat of the impulses and emotions of an individual. Endocrine and the nervous systems are two very important systems of our body. Function of both these systems is to integrate the organism. Close collaboration between the two systems governs mental states, behaviour and habits. The functional interlocking between both qualify them to be regarded as constituting a single integrated system called neuro-endocrine system. It is this system which comprises the subconscious mind and profoundly influences psychological behaviour and tendencies of the conscious mind. It is, therefore, obvious that to cleanse the psyche by removing psychological distortions such as cruelty, retaliation, fear, etc. from our habits, we have to find means of transforming the nature of the chemical messengers i.e. the hormones. The above-mentioned psychological distortions originate in the adrenals, while the sex-impulses are produced in the gonads.

We can put the same facts in the language of *Chaitanya-kendras*-psychic centres.

The following table shows the relation between the endocrines and the *Chaitanya-kendras*

Endocrines *Chaitanya-kendras*

Pineal *Jyoti-kendra*

Pituitary *Darsana-kendra*

Thyroids *Visuddhi-kendra*

Thymus *Ananda-kendra*

Adrenals *Taijasa-kendra*

Gonads *Svasthya-kendra* and *Sakti-kendra*

Constant triggering and overaction of the lower endocrines viz. adrenals and gonads result in pernicious bad habits affecting our physical and mental health.

Development of the upper endocrines alone can modify the synthesization of the endocrine output, and weaken the intensities of the primal drives, thus making them controllable. Constant and regular practice of *Chaitanya-kendra preksa* results in establishing firm control of the reasoning mind over all actions. The cumulative effect of developing the reasoning mind, and weakening the forces of the primal drives would ultimately bring about the desirable transformation in mental behaviour and habits.

Svasa preksa, Sarira Preksa and Chaitanya kendra preksa are tools for developing the power of reasoning mind. Once the authority of the fully-developed reasoning mind is established, it would prevent the recurrence of the old injurious habits.

On the eternal spiritual level, we shall be able to gain self-mastery and attain infinite compassion, bliss and happiness.

Perception of Psychic Colours

Earlier it was stated that urges and impulses, passions and emotions are all endocrine expressions. There are forces more subtle than the physique. These forces are the primal drives emanating from the microbody (*Karma-sarira*) which is intimately united with the psyche. The micro-vibrations of the primal drives first produce appropriate conditions in the neuro-endocrine system. The integrated action of this system produces hormones and neuro-hormones which not only generate feelings but also command appropriate action that satisfies the need of the urge. We either progress or retrogress depending on whether we control and subdue our primal drives or succumb to them. The process of subduing the forces of primal drives consists in generating vibrations or waves which countermand them by conscious reasoning. It is the authority of the spiritual self which commands the reasoning mind to produce the counter-vibrations. The vibrations of waves resulting from the primal drives are malevolent *lesyas* whereas the counter-vibrations produced by the authority of the self are benevolent *lesyas*. On the basis of their intensities both the above type of *lesyas* are divided into three categories:

- (i) The most intense of the malevolent class are *Krsna* - dark black.
- (ii) The medium ones are *Nila* - blue dark.
- (iii) The least intense ones are *Kapota* - grey.

Similarly in the benevolent class,

- i The least intense ones are *Tejas*-bright red.
- ii The medium ones are *Padma*-bright yellow.
- iii The most intense ones are *Sukla*-bright white.

When one is under the influence of the evil trinity of *Krsna*, *Nila* and *Kapota*, the force of the instinctive drives is so powerful that the reasoning mind surrenders to it. On the other hand, with the conversion of *lesyas*, the rational mind is able to countermand the insistence of the carnal desires.

It will be seen from the above that the nomenclature of the *lesyas* has been made on the basis of the spectrum of dark and bright colours.

Colour is an inherent characteristic of the entire material existence. The nature of colour is electromagnetic radiation. Difference in wave-length and frequency distinguishes one colour from another. *Lesyas* are also radiations and different *lesya* have different wavelengths, and therefore, each has a definite place in the electromagnetic spectrum. Each one, therefore, can be associated through its harmonies with a definite colour in the visible spectrum, i.e. from red to violet. Thus on the basis of the relation between the colours of the visible spectrum and the *lesya* radiations, we can use specific colours as the means of strengthening or weakening the *lesya* radiations.

The spiritual progress will depend upon the degree of transformation of the malevolent trinity into the benevolent one. Without actual transformation, there will be no process. This is not merely a speculation, but the basis of a real experience. And to bring about the desired transformation, perception of psychic colour - *Lesya,-dhyana* has proved to be a practical means of transformation. *Lesya-dhyana* is thus an efficient tool of successively diminishing the intensities of the malevolent *lesya* from *Krsna* to *Nila* and from *Nila* to *Kapota*, and then progressively increasing the intensities of the benevolent *lesya* - from *Tejas* to *Padma* and from *Padma* to *Sukla*. The actual spiritual progress commences with the conversion of *Kapota* to *Tejas*, i.e. from grey to red. The index of *Tejas lesya* is bright red colour of sunrise. Colour psychology also supports the view that the bright red colour is the first indication of the spiritual progress.

With the above conversion, there is a remarkable drop in animal instincts and carnal desires and such other habits. Further progress will result from the change of *Tejas lesya* to *Padma lesya* and the final change of *Padma* to *Sukla lesya* will result in the total eradication of cruelty, hatred etc.

The Aura

It is now well-known that the body is constantly surrounded by an envelope of colours called "aura" which is an effect *lesya*. Change in *lesya* will bring about a corresponding change in the colour of aura. That is why aura is predominated at different times by different colours such as black, red, yellow, blue or white.

Aura is not only influenced by the internal colour indices, but is also influenced by the colours of the external environment. That is why the cause and effect relation between *lesya* and colours is reciprocal. In other words, just as any change in *lesya* would result in the change in the colour of aura, the change in the aura by the influence of the colours of the external environment would bring about a change in the *lesya*. This principle has been utilized in the "perception of the psychic colours" (*Lesya-dhyana*) to transform the malevolent *lesya* into benevolent ones.

Perception of The Present Moment

Past is what has already ceased to exist; future is what is still to be born; only the present exists, and is, therefore, real. The memories of the codes recorded in the past are translated to become tormenting mental states for the future. Refuge in the present alone spares one from the ordeal of the memories of the past and the tortures of the future. This is because memories, etc., are liable to produce the contamination of attachment and aversion. The perception of the present alone could be impartial.

Mind becomes agitated when the physical behaviour is not in harmony with the mental state. And the mental agitation creates hurdles in the practice of self-discipline.

Bhava-kriya, i.e. synchrony of the mental state with the physical behaviour is in itself a discipline, and steadies the mind, bringing it to meditational level. For example, when one walks, his mind should be completely occupied and be totally aware of the action of walking and it should not be engaged in other perceptual or conceptual activity of any sort. Only then the act of walking is qualified to be *bhava-kriya*. Though our sensory outposts would continue to send innumerable signals to the brain through the sensory nerves of vision, audition, etc., the *sadhaka* should remain indifferent to them, and keep his mental function fully engaged in walking. When the mind is fully associated with the vocal and physical activities, they become not only more efficient, but also more purposeful, because the power of the psyche itself is inherent in them. Then and then alone, the activity is *bhava-kriya*.

Perception of Thoughts-Equanimity

The psyche itself is not directly perceptible. Its characteristic being conscious activities, "to know" and "to perceive" are its performances. The body and the mind are the instruments of its performance. All spiritual disciplines aim at unadulterated conscious performance, i.e. pure knowledge and pure perception. This is also a state of infinite bliss and pure happiness. Delusion, however, perverts our perception and makes our knowledge fragmented and piecemeal. Then, our perception, being contaminated with the emotions of likes and dislikes, cannot be impartial. Equanimity, can be achieved by impartial (uncontaminated) perception, or we can say that pure perception is equanimity itself.

We hear, see, smell, taste and touch, through our respective sense-organs and mind. Our mind is also the instrument of conceptual thinking. Attachment is produced towards what we like and aversion is produced towards what we dislike. One who is impartial to both, i.e. like as well as dislike, is equanimous. That is to say, only he is equanimous whose perception is pure and uncontaminated by attachment and/or aversion. Practice of *Preksadhya* progressively develops equanimity. As we progress, pleasant and unpleasant sensation, fail to produce the emotions of like and dislike. Consequently the feelings of attachment and aversion, gradually disappear. This, in turn, further develops our capacity for purer perception.

Our mind functions in many ways. At times a train of thoughts is running; at times some conceptual planning occupies it. All these activities can be perceived impartially during the meditational practice. The significance of such perception is that the "spiritual self" is distinguished from the "thought". The "Self" is the "spectator", while the mental activity is the object of the awareness. This is not a mere imagination nor auto-suggestion but a reality. As soon as one commences the perception of thought as an impartial spectator, the train begins to slow down, (and if the perception continues), it ultimately comes to a halt. Regular practice of thought-perception develops the perceptive capacity to a degree, where it is able to divulge other's thoughts also.

As stated earlier, the conscious self in its purest state is capable of experiencing the entire universal reality at once. Delusion drastically reduces this innate capacity, and our knowledge is fragmented and piecemeal. Delusion is nourished by the emotion of attachment and aversion. To develop and ultimately unobfuscate the inherent capacity of omniscience, one has to commence diluting the emotions of like and dislike, pleasure and pain. And to dilute these contaminating emotions, the impartial perception is the only available tool. Though obfuscated, our conscious self is always capable of executing its authority, which can be used to further develop equanimity. Thus equanimity begets purity of perception and purer the perception, higher is the level of equanimity. The cumulative result of the successive exchange of cause and effect ultimately brings about purest perception and instant cognition of the entire reality.

Self-Discipline: Development of Will-Power

Infinite is the potential power of our Will. A large portion of the power, however, lies dormant; some portion is supine and only a very small fraction is active. Once we commence to will the Will, not only the supine portion but the undeveloped dormant one can also be activated.

Our primal drives constantly demand appropriate action, and we continue to satisfy the need of the urges. The narcotic of the sensual pleasures further weakens our willpower. Only way then to awaken and develop it is to stop feeding it with the befogging narcotics through the exertion of self-discipline.

When the Will is supine, we nourish sensual desires and delude ourselves in believing that pleasure is happiness. When the Will is partly awakened, a desire for self discipline

and spiritual awareness is born. We begin to discriminate between what is good and what is evil. True, we would still be affected by external temptations and may sometime succumb to them; but in due course the Will will be fully awakened and our attitude, thought and perception begin to rotate round the nucleus of reasoning and rational conduct. Once we stop succumbing to our sensual desires, our supine Will begins to awaken from its stupor. The strangle-hold of delusion will be first weakened, and then destroyed. We shall become alert and vigilant towards truth and discipline. Then the vigilant rational mind becomes strong enough to regulate the responses to the insistence of the instinctive drives and demands of carnal desires.

Once we have fully awakened our supine Will, we have to reinforce its power with determination and self-discipline. Thus strengthened, our rational mind will establish its supremacy. It will then be able to regulate our responses to even the most powerful urges and drives. Environmental conditions may temporarily influence our behaviour, but the power of the Will and rational mind is supreme.

Self-discipline acts as a defending fort against the onslaught of contamination through carnal desires. Ultimately external environment also fails to influence the behaviour of one who is self-disciplined.

Reflection, Contemplation & Concentration

It has already been stated that when our supine Will begins to awaken from the stupor, the stranglehold of delusion is first weakened, and then destroyed.

Contemplation (*anupreksha*) of the pernicious nature of the narcotic of the sensual pleasures is necessary to maintain the vigilance and reinforce the power of the Will.

Practice of repeated reflection (*bhavana*) further strengthens the Will and keeps it awake and alert. We have already discussed the process of developing the inherent capacity of omniscience in a previous chapter. While some are capable of developing, this capacity by awakening their own supine Will, some others need constant moral support of reflection of truth, as experienced and propounded by the supremely wise ones.

The human mind has the capacity to project itself. An object of deep concentration can, therefore, be perceived by projection. A mental image of a "pure consciousness" can thus be realised by the process of auto-suggestion as well as repeated recitation of slogans or chanting the *mantras*. For instance, one can progressively develop purity of consciousness by the recitation of "*arham*" or "*soham*".

The *modus operandi* of *bhavana*, is to generate, counter-vibrations. Thus practice of forbearance, humility, honesty and contentment generates vibrations which countermand the impulses of cruelty, pride, deceit, and greed respectively. Hence, the generation of counter-vibrations is a positive tool for the ultimate eradication of the evil, and establishment of the total goodness. Practice of repeated reflection may be resorted to both pre- as well as post-meditation practices.

Fourfold contemplation is recommended as post-meditational practice

- (i) Contemplation of *ekatva*- "Solitariness".
- (ii) Contemplation of *anityata*- "Impermanence".
- (iii) Coritemplation of *asarana*- "Vulnerability".
- (iv) Contemplation of *samsara* - "Reality".

(i) Contemplation of "Solitariness"

Man is a social being. His perception are constantly influenced by social, economic, political and other environments. In spite of being subjected to all sorts of external influences, transcendently he is "himself"--a solitary individual. To protect oneself from the injurious effect of the environments one should frequently contemplate on his solitariness. Such a contemplation will blunt the onslaught of the external forces.

(ii) Contemplation of "Impermanence"

Beginning with fragile and mortal nature of the body, contemplation can reveal transitional nature of the entire physical existence.

(iii) Contemplation of "Vulnerability"

We seek security in wealth, power, production, etc. But, in reality, none of these is capable of providing transcendental security, which is inherent in one's own "SELF". Contemplation of one's vulnerability, therefore, leads to the development of one's own innate protective mechanism.

(iv) Contemplation of "Reality"

Metaphysically nothing is absolutely permanent nor absolutely changing. Only that which is "permanent" can change. Reality by nature, is characterised by the non absolutist principle of permanence through change. Our existence also is not an exception to this universal truth. We are born and we die, and during the life's span undergo innumerable changes. Contemplation of this eternal truth immensely assists us in our meditation.

Preksa generates vigilance. And as the intensity of vigilance increases, the capacity of concentration also increases. Vigilance and perception are important in their own right, but their efficiency can be increased manifold by sustaining them for long uninterrupted periods of concentration. Agitated and vulnerable mind is incapable of practising deep meditation. Uninterrupted concentrated perception of a single object for a period of fifty minutes can be achieved by constant practice. This is the ideal period of the most successful meditational practice. An experienced practitioner can meditate for even longer periods by reanalysing his perception.

