

ANANDA RAJA YOGA SCHOOL OF EUROPE



ENERGIZATION EXERCISES

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Chapter One: Yogoda Course by Yogananda

Yogoda Lesson: Introduction

Yogoda: Or Tissue-Will System Of Body And Mind Perfection

And

The highest technique of concentration and meditation

General principles and merits

By Swami Yogananda, with Dhirananda, 1923

Foreword

Swami Yogananda, the discoverer of the system described in this pamphlet, has consecrated his life to the cause of world education. His one great aim is to help the people to make their bodies and minds strong and efficient, - true vehicles of soul expression - through higher technique of what he calls the attainment of "Body Perfection by Will" and "Highest Technique of Concentration and Meditation." This is his doctrine, and by the establishment of schools and institutions for all-round training he expects to see his aim realized.

The first schools to teach this new method, two in number, were founded by the Swami in India. Both are residential schools, one of them being located at Ranchi and the other at Puri. The Ranchi Residential School has as its patron the Hon. Maharaja of Kasimbazar, one of the wealthiest princes in Bengal. From a small school of seven pupils it has grown to be a large and flourishing institution, with capacity for 300 students, of whom half are non-residential. So great has been the demand for admission into this institution from all parts of India that at the end of its first year there were over 2,000 applicants for admission to the school, only 300 of whom could be taken in. It has grown to be an international institution of great repute for all-round education.

In this school the Swami conducted the first experiments with his new system. The results were nothing short of astounding. Children under ten years of age developed the strength and minds of adults. A common "stunt," among others, was for a boy of seven to allow a man weighing 200 pounds to jump on his back, and then carry him about for several minutes with perfect ease. (Such feats were beyond the strength of boys of fourteen who had not taken the course), or sit in perfect poise in a difficult body-posture and remain three and more hours motionless, deeply concentrating on or introspecting anything. Results with adult pupils were equally astonishing.

In this country the Swami has established a SatSanga summer school for advanced adult students at Waltham, Mass., where his system is being taught with the same surprising results as attended its operation in India. Situated on the shore of a beautiful lake, in a spot of great natural beauty, the school has become a veritable summer Mecca for those who seek to build up the physique and uncover the hidden treasures of the mind through "Yogoda and Concentration lessons." Hundreds of students attended the sessions during the past Season. In addition, the Swami's teachings and methods are being widely accepted and followed in other parts of the country. Local clubs or organizations with a view to organizing Yogoda schools have

been established in New York, Philadelphia, Denver, Seattle, Portland and San Francisco.

As the knowledge of the results produced by this system spreads, the science of bodily and mental and spiritual development cannot fail to be revolutionized. The fact that all necessity for apparatus is done away with puts the system within the reach of everyone. So little time is required each day for the exercises (ten minutes spent with this system will yield results far surpassing those of an hour's exercise in the old way) that there is no sense of the monotony and irksomeness which sooner or later develop in gymnasium work. On the contrary, results from the new system are so fascinating and exhilarating as to sustain in the pupil an unflagging enthusiasm in his physical as well as mental development. The further fact that the exercises, being directed by will, can be taken anywhere, in any position-standing, sitting or reclining-makes them adaptable to persons in all situations of life. In a word, "Yogoda" for the first time offers to the world a practical means for attaining the highest possible degree of physical, mental and spiritual well-being at the minimum expenditure of time and effort.

Yogoda: or Tissue-Will System of Body and Mind Perfection

"Feel your life in every limb, and health in every tissue "

What is "Yogoda"?

The Yogoda System constitutes an epoch-making discovery in the science of physical and inner culture. The word Yogoda is derived from "Yoga," meaning harmony or equilibrium, and "da," that which imparts. Hence "Yogoda" means that particular system which imparts harmony and equilibrium to all the forces and faculties that operate for the perfection of body, mind and soul.

"Yogoda" revolutionizes all previous ideas of the evolution of bodily tissues and mental faculties. It causes the resurrection of dying tissue cells and worn out faculties and the formation of billions of new cells and fresh faculties all through the right exercise of conation or will. "Yogoda" supplements and completes other systems of exercises. Through it all the various tissues-bony, muscular, connective, nerve, adipose, etc.-are proportionately formed and the mind strengthened. The circulation, respiration, digestion, and all other involuntary processes of the body are harmonized and invigorated, and the mind clarified.

"Yogoda" will be found to be the surest and most effective remedy for bodily diseases and inharmonious conditions of the mind. It acts as a healing balm for nervous affections and abnormalities. Stomach and abdominal troubles quickly yield to this treatment. It cures constipation by accelerating the peristaltic action of the intestinal muscles and quickening the secretions of the liver, pancreas, etc.; it cures headache, gout, and rheumatism by regulating the circulation; it eliminates colds, bronchitis, etc., by properly exercising the air cells. By its aid the general vitality is markedly raised, resulting in a wonderful development of tissue strength and unexpected nerve vigor, thereby insuring greater longevity. Memory and brain power are also increased through greater blood supply. "Yogoda" teaches the art of consciously sending the curative life energy to any diseased body part.

"Yogoda," once known, never forgotten. The Simplest, Best, and Most Practical System.

"Yogoda" can be your constant companion. It is the housekeeper's tonic, the business man's boon, the rich man's real riches. One can easily neglect exercises requiring apparatus or paraphernalia because of their artificiality or cumbersomeness, but one cannot neglect "Yogoda." Indeed, it is especially for those who neglect other forms of exercise.

When "Yogoda" is once learned, ten minutes' daily practice will give results unequalled by those of most other forms of exercise. It avoids the bad effects of most systems, such as exhaustion of the heart and other organs and failure to give an all-round development. It teaches one to detach the scattered attention, from the senses of touch, sight, sound, etc., and the vagrant thoughts occasioned by memory and restless habits and concentrate the whole of it on one thing at a time. The increased power of focused attention borne of "Yogoda" burns all chronic failures in life, and produces all kinds of bright success.

"Yogoda" is for all.

It is for the old and the young, the weak and the strong. It is for men of sedentary occupations, middle-class people, professional or business men, men performing intellectual labor, doctors, and above all for those who desire the best of health, and limitless mental power, but cannot devote much time to its culture.

**"Yogoda" is not a so-called Muscle Exercise but an Organic Exercise
Not Imaginary Thought-force, but the Trainer of Dynamic Will**

Do you want strength or do you want health? You answer, "I want both." But have a care; too much attention given to the getting of strength will make you miss real health; for thereby heart, lungs, and other vital organs will be overworked and thus weakened, just as when a motor is overworked. Not every one wants to be a world-champion in wrestling and other contests of strength. "Yogoda" will give wonderful health, vim, vigor, a feeling of freshness in every tissue, and more than sufficient strength. A world-champion will be doubly sure to retain his championship and a man will be a better wrestler or weight-lifter by taking up this system. "Yogoda" makes one the undefeatable willing wrestler with all difficulties.

Will Governs the Universe.

Does it not therefore govern the physique? Coercion or compulsion can never bring about growth. It is freedom that accelerates evolution.

Too much dependence upon what is external or objective throttles the possibility of progress and nips in the bud the potent factors of evolution. Evolution presupposes the existence of a power of growth from within, and of a subject that will grow by adjusting itself to its environment and adjusting the environment to itself. Without the technique offered by "Yogoda" the will remains untrained and atrophied. The exercise of will by it opens up limitless possibilities for all-round success. No body-movement or

thinking is possible without willing. We must will to move or to think or to imagine before we can move or think or imagine. Direction of physical activities and thought-force by the development of conscious will tends to the accomplishment of that which might be considered impossible by most people.

"Yogoda" Based on Eternal Truths.

It is not the evolution of the materialists nor the science of physical culture as taught in gymnasiums and practiced in calisthenics clubs. On the contrary, it is a training of the motor potentialities of the body and the mind. It is the seizing of the paramount factor of ordered progress. It is not thinking away disease, or mystic body or mind regulation. It promotes all-sided growth of voluntary and involuntary processes, as well as of the mind. It is a nervous re-integration of tissue energies into a comprehensive whole. Physics cannot comprehend it; chemistry is far away from it; physiology has not caught up with it; biology is groping for it; hygiene and the science of physical culture have yet to learn it; modern psychology has not dreamed about it yet. For this system is based on conation or will, which springs out of the Ultimate Spirit.

Doctors, physiologists, physicists, and psychologists are unconsciously seeking it. It combines induction and deduction. It is not a dreamy-but an active-idealism in the sphere of the Real. It tunes one with the universal law of growth. It is as much a regulation of nature as a following of it.

It is the psycho-physiological clue, with a metaphysical touch, to the all-round growth of man.

It is not only a method of cure-but a method of prevention-of disease and mental weakness and suffering. More than that, it furnishes a system of all-round growth.

"Yogoda" is not a method for the evolution of tissues only, but for the evolution of the whole life. It is a system-a whole, not a part.

Who can dispense with "will" in his life? No one. For the very essence of life is will. Will is the determining factor of evolution. It is not the "blind will" of the philosopher Schopenhauer, nor the "exploding will" of the excited, nor the "unthinking will" of the whimsical. It is an ordered will, regulated and guided, crystallizing into tissue adjustments and a harmonious integration of the psycho-physical factors of life.

It is not like the hope of the so-called religious-a mere craving for the unknown. It is based on truth corroborated by experience and strengthened by persistence.

"Yogoda" teaches conscious use of will to grow and strengthen tissues and mental faculties. It teaches the utilization of the basic force of unconscious growth (will, or Conation) for conscious growth and evolution. It is the conscious organization of the elements which determine growth from the spermatozoa onwards.

"Yogoda" is the non-mechanical, scientific, natural means for the strengthening of all living or atrophying muscle fibers and tissues. It revives, enlarges, and strengthens them. It awakens interest in lazy muscles and other tissues.

It forms osseous or bony tissues.

It accelerates involuntary functions, such as those of the heart, the lungs, the stomach and intestines, the capillaries, the lymphatic glands, the veins, the cerebrospinal

axis (brain and spine), etc., without exhausting or over-working them, as is the case in most of the mechanical forms of exercise.

"Yogoda" combines control of voluntary muscles with the conscious harmonious adjustment of involuntary processes, which is so overlooked in the current forms of physical exercise.

"Yogoda" insures the strengthening and multiplication of all cells. It spiritualizes the body cells, converting them into undying soul and electrical life-force. It produces an indefatigable state of even the most active mind. It teaches one to disconnect with the senses and restless thoughts and successfully concentrate on anything. By its greatest technique of meditation (or specific concentration applied to God) it bridges the imaginary gulf existing between human and cosmic consciousness due to ignorance.

Some More Facts about "Yogoda."

- It charges and releases the body battery any time, at will.
- No change of dress nor place is required. It can be practiced without attracting attention-and while on chair or sofa-lying, standing or moving.
- It can be most profitably applied to all forms of physical and concentration or meditation exercises.
- It improves (a) Beauty of Form; (b) Grace of expression; (c) Centre of consciousness; (d) The power of mental receptivity.
- It prevents hardening of arteries and insures lasting youth by stimulating an even circulation and helping to eject foreign matter from the system.
- It drives away headaches instantly. It harmonizes all muscle actions.
- It is an important accessory to art-improving voice (a help to musicians), steadying the nerves in violin playing, etc.
- While waiting for the trolley car you will not catch cold, if you know this
- Exercise.
- It exercises those parts which you think you cannot exercise.
- IT PUTS ON OR TAKES OFF FAT, JUST AS YOU DESIRE.
- It teaches you to make success out of failure.
- It teaches you to control your material and spiritual destiny by tuning with cosmic consciousness or the inexhaustible storehouse of cosmic supply.

Yogoda: Its Fundamentals

Ordinarily we have no direct control over circulation, digestion, and other involuntary processes of the body. But we can indirectly influence them by the exercise of voluntary muscles over which we do have control. The exercise of voluntary muscles, otherwise known as physical exercise, takes two forms:

1. Circumstantial Physical Exercise.

This includes exercises performed not for their own sake, but under the compulsion of circumstances, i.e., securing livelihood or doing the labor of love. A stenographer, a housekeeper, a waiter, a pianist, a violinist, a singer, a grocer, a mechanic, a mason, an autoist, a lecturer, a writer, a social worker,-each uses some sets of muscles more frequently than others. But such exercise is haphazard, incomplete, and unsystematic. Many muscles remain unexercised. Many parts are kept ill-nourished, weak, susceptible to exhaustion and disease. Circulation being uneven and devoid of vigor all over the body, foreign matters easily accumulate in those parts, sometimes breeding functional or organic troubles. Further, useless or unexercised parts or organs are by and by demolished by nature.

Will, in these forms of circumstantial physical exercise, is more or less passive, it is not applied to the active exercise of muscles, but to the work which calls forth their mechanical exercise. Will, which is the most powerful determinant of growth, is made subsidiary. Hence results only partial health and some strength. In many cases even that is absent.

Health does not mean mere existence, or clinging of life to the body. Keeping out of the hospital for a number of years is not health. To be able to resist disease, to bear strain, and stimulate mental vitality, to feel the body as a luxury, as a bird feels when shooting through the air, and as a child does always is health. The Swami feels the heyday of youth almost every day.

2. Ordinary Forms of Physical Exercise.

The second form of physical exercise is that which is taken for its own sake, not under compulsion: (a) football, cricket, baseball, tennis, riding, walking, running, etc; (b) The conscious exercise with the help of outward apparatus, such as dumbbells, bar-bells, chest-weights, Indian clubs, and calisthenics, gymnastic or acrobatic appliances, etc. There is, of course, an element of pleasure in these which makes them attractive, but it is for their benefits that we incline to adopt them. We would not have taken them up had they been of no bodily use. Still, how few take exercise after leaving school!

Their Defects.

Active will is partially applied to these forms of exercise; hence they are good up to a certain point. But the possibility of over-exercise is their greatest drawback. "Excessive development of the muscular system, through athletics, calisthenics, etc., is not only not advantageous, but is absolutely harmful. It causes the weakening of other vital parts of the body."* It is sheer folly to try to obtain strength, great big, brawny muscles at the cost of health and longevity.

"The action of the muscles has limits and so has every organ of the body as well. If the muscles and the heart are taxed too severely permanent derangements follow. Spitting of blood, congested lungs, weakness of the heart often occur. Greek gymnasts had short lives. Modern athletes and acrobats and people exercising their muscles too much greatly suffer from strain."

Exercises with apparatus, that is, dumb-bells, etc., are mechanical. They produce shocks and jerks in the system. They lack spontaneity and the accompaniment of the full, active will, hence are one-sided. Because the determining power of the will is discarded in favor of the mechanical they do not give ease or consciousness of smoothness.

Further, we often do not know the exact strength of our muscles and nerves. So when we begin to use the prescribed apparatus indiscriminately, we often injure our nervous systems and muscles. The absent-minded or perfunctory manner in which exercises are performed does substantial injury to the system; for in that case will is denied the chance of preparing the muscle for the acceptance of these exercises.

Importance of Will.

The factor of will is paramount in life. Without it evolution is impossible. It is the dynamo of existence. Will rules supreme in every sphere. Will is the initiator. Will is the executor. Will is the genius-maker. It creates things that are worth-while. Intellect is its servant. Man can not think without willing to think; far less can he act without willing to act. Will may be blind without intellect, but intellect is powerless and worthless without will. Will is the chief condition of growth. The motive power is will-power. The world of science, politics, literature, history and philosophy testifies as much to the power of our willing to think as to the capacity of thinking itself. Is it not a wonder and pity then that we should ignore or belittle this factor of will and extol the importance of outward aids-dumb-bells, etc. in physical culture, when in every other department of our conscious activity we use the energy of will so much at every step? If will or attention alone regulates and quickens our thought processes, it can also build tissues and muscles independently of all exterior aid-if we only know how to apply it.

Will Sends Down Nerve Energy.

It is a physiological fact that the more we apply will to a particular spot of the body, the greater is the flow of the electric nerve current to that spot, and the stronger is the muscular movement caused thereby. A man fighting with another for life has much greater force in his muscles than he is wont to have. A cat or a tiger, cornered, has its muscle energies doubled. Why? Because the instinct of self-preservation is so strong in man and animals that before imminent death it can not but call forth the greatest energy of the will and cause much stronger nerve force to flow along the nerves to move the muscles. Will thus has independent capacity for imparting power to the muscles.*

Health and Strength not Synonymous.

Again, Health and Strength are not synonymous terms. A person may have cultivated great strength in his limbs or in certain muscles by the use of mechanical appliances, but he still may not have good health. It is altogether a mistaken idea to suppose that physical exercises have for their sole object the attainment of strength. There are other tissues and organs in the human system besides the muscular. The healthy action of the lungs and the stomach is far more important than great strength in

the anus, legs, or back. "Health is the uniform and regular performance of all the functions of the body, arising from the harmonious action of all its parts." It is therefore foolish to cultivate strength of muscle alone while neglecting the important organs, and especially the "Will," which alone vivifies them all.

Yogoda Harmonizes Muscular with Organic Growth.

What is desirable in body-culture is the harmonious development of power over the voluntary action of muscles and the involuntary processes of heart, lungs, stomach, etc. This is what gives health. Hence, that process of body-culture is scientific which utilizes the voluntary action of the muscles and other bodily processes for their own growth and for the promotion of the activity and growth of the involuntary processes. This cannot be done simply by using outward aids or apparatus, or by haphazard exercises which are too mechanical, too crude, too far divorced from growth from within to be in line with natural evolutionary growth.

*It should not be supposed there is no other source of muscular energy. #Dr. Nathan.

This is why "Yogoda" will be found to be the true solution of the problem. It recognizes and seizes the opportunity for an all-round growth from within. Ignorance of this fact has led to the application of unscientific methods to the cultivation of the physique, while every department of art and culture is utilizing this principle for its growth and development. If mental states of the diseased play a most important part in the cure or intensification of the disease, as is beginning to be recognized by distinguished modern doctors, is it not foolish to think that with the formation of muscles and tissues the mental states have nothing to do? If in abnormal conditions of the body or in disease, mental suggestion shows its influence, either for better or for worse (as is known among medical men), how much more must be its influence on the body while in its normal condition? If medical science can take cognizance of mental factors as affecting the condition of the body, surely the science of hygiene and body-culture can and must take most careful notice of these principles. Especially is this true since will or conation not only underlies all true body-culture and hygiene but accounts for our very origin as well.

Yogoda Recharges Body Battery.

Another important point about "Yogoda." When your automobile battery is used up you get it re-charged, otherwise your car will not go. But when you are using up the Life Current mainly lodged in the medulla oblongata and the grey matter of your brain and in the nervous system by doing bodily and mental work, how are you going to renew it? Of course, nature does renew it in sleep; but ordinarily we use up much more of it in waking hours than we store up in sleep. Hence we get run down in body and mind at an age when we shouldn't. "Yogoda" teaches how to help nature to generate and store up more Life Current than is used up and how to send it down to all tissues of the body, to promote their health.

"Yogoda" is a comprehensive system. It constitutes a link in the chain of world evolution manifesting in each individual on earth. It is as a missing link replaced. This is a method designed to bring us into line with the balanced factors of Evolution. There are many forces at work seeking to destroy the balance-to produce disease, etc. This is a method to restore the balance.

The opinion seems to prevail that respiration, circulation, and other involuntary processes will take care of themselves, if only people will throw their arms back and forth or take some form of muscular exercise; that the involuntary processes will be invigorated, whether they think of them at all or not; and that there is no need of local attention. But there can be no more serious mistake than this.

"Yogoda" teaches how to surround each body cell with a ring of super-charged electrical vital energy and thus keep them free from decay or bacterial invasion. It keeps not only the muscles, but all the tissues of the body, bones, marrow, brain, and cells in perfect health.

This Body-Battery an Inexhaustible Supply of Life Energy.

How do we get a supply of fresh energy by a little rest or sleep after complete exhaustion or overwork? The plain logical fact is before us that something does not come out of nothing. If a short nap or rest alone, without the help of food or stimulants, can revive the vitality, the question arises as to how it so happens. The energy did not drop out of the balloon of nothingness-it must have come from some definite source. If it can be generated in a passive state, it can also be generated consciously in the active state, but one must know how to do it. Yogoda teaches this method.

We have seen that menial unwillingness to work is always followed by a lack of bodily energy. Similarly, willingness to perform actions is always accompanied by a fresh supply of energy. From these facts we can deduce that there is a subtle relationship between energy and will power. Without willing we cannot make any motor movement, or even think, for before we think we must will to think.

For these reasons, Yogoda teaches that the body is a reservoir of Infinite Strength and Life Energy which can be commanded for unlimited use by the power of conscious will. The special psychophysical technique of Yogoda enables one to connect the specific Life Current existing in the Medulla Oblongata with the Cosmic Life Energy which surrounds and permeates the body, thus insuring an inexhaustible supply.

Suggestions for Yogoda Students

- Never feel tired.
- Never suggest tiredness.
- Never talk fatigue.
- Never say "I am tired."
- Work willingly. - Work untiringly.

- Work, thinking and feeling the eternal energy flowing in you ceaselessly.

What Does "Yogoda" Do?

1. It harnesses the conscious "willing" for adjusting the unconscious "willing" as operating through the life force of the body, and thus brings about the proportionate growth of all the cells and tissues, including the muscular.
2. It teaches how to re-charge the body battery with fresh life current by increasing the power of will.
3. It gives specific methods to strengthen and re-charge the muscles, not only collectively but individually, with vital force.
4. It points out specific methods for invigorating separately the functions of the lungs and other involuntary organs.

It thus establishes a harmony between the working of the voluntary muscles and the involuntary processes. And this harmony gives wonderful health and strength.

When formerly there was a rush to California for gold, people of the East wished to reach there in a couple of days, but could not. Now the airplane can take them there within twenty-four hours. Every one wishes to be great in his own line, but often he can not realize his wish. Why? Because people have no control over their bodies. "Yogoda" enables one to scientifically control all parts of the body, limbs, muscles, vocal organs, etc. "Yogoda" is an indispensable help to the realization of the greatest efficiency in all branches of activity-wrestling, boxing, running, football, baseball, dancing, lecturing, painting, art of expression, opera singing, surgery, craftsmanship, etc. For "Yogoda" teaches the master technique of direction of human effort. It increases conscious vitality and conscious health. It keeps muscles and tissues and the whole body disciplined, awake, and ever ready to act according to the directions of the Emperor Will.

In conclusion, "Yogoda" is the result of years of research and experiment. It is entirely simple and practicable, and is quickly learned and easily applied. Once learned, it is never forgotten. It is applicable to people of all ages, from children of five years to the nonagenarian. Its effects are vital and uplifting to a degree hitherto unknown. It is bound, as it becomes known and practiced, to prove one of the greatest boons ever conferred upon mankind.

*Dr. Kellogg. *Domestic Hygiene*. 1905, p.98.

#Dr. Coleman, Dr. Lankester, Dr. Skey and Dr. Hutchison have also written to the same effect.

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Yogoda Lesson 1925 by Swami Yogananda

Yogoda System Of Physical, Mental, And Spiritual Perfection, Yogananda

"Yogoda" Course (1925): Lesson 1

by Swami Yogananda

Affirmation to be repeated before the exercises:

“O Eternal Energy! Awaken within me Conscious Will, Conscious Vitality, Conscious Health. Good-will to all, Vitality to all. Good Health to all.

“O Eternal Energy! By Thy Power I know that in tension I put forth energy into the body and in relaxation I withdraw it. I am a tenant in the body sent here by Thy Grace to rule it, but never to be identified with it.

“O Eternal Energy! Impart to me Spiritual patience that I may regularly practice the exercises both morning and night to the best of my ability.

“Eternal youth of body and mind abide in me forever, forever, forever!

“My mind, awake! Sleep no more, awake! Sleep no more, wake, sleep no more! Peace! Peace! Peace!

“I am strong, I am strength, I am healthy, I am health, I am successful, I am success, I am blessed, I am bliss, I am peaceful, I am peace, I am Immortal, I am Immortality. Peace, Bliss, Peace!”

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Mechanical exercises generally teach one to concentrate on the muscles and to consider oneself a muscular being only. They help stimulate the animal consciousness in man and not his subtle nature.

"Yogoda" System teaches the science ignored by most exercises. It teaches its students the maximum use of conscious will and life energy, in exercising and vitalizing not only muscles but all tissues and cells of the body. It teaches its students to concentrate on their life energy and will, awakening the consciousness of their subtle spiritual nature. It teaches its students that strength comes from within and not from the muscles, and that life does not solely depend on food and exercise but is sustained from within.

E.g. a dead man artificially made to exercise by dumb-bells does not become strong, nor does he live if his stomach is stuffed with food, since his life energy is absent.

Yogoda teaches one to spiritualize the body—which is the reflection of Spirit. It teaches one to consider himself as the life energy and not a body consisting of bones and muscles with a certain weight. It shows how by tension, energy can be put forth in the body, and by relaxation withdrawn from it.

It teaches that the seat of life energy is the medulla oblongata. It teaches that this life energy can be continually supplied in the body, by stimulating it by the power of conscious will. The will serves to bridge the gulf existing between the life energy in the body and the cosmic energy surrounding it. It teaches one how to work without fatigue by keeping in touch with cosmic life energy.

1. Raise your right arm parallel to the ground. Hold it.

Q: (a) Do you know what forces are employed to hold your right arm up?

Q: (b) Can you lift your right arm with willing?

Q: (c) Can you lift a paralyzed arm by willing only?

A: (a) Will and life energy are the forces employed in holding your right arm up.

A: (b) No.

A: (c) No.

2. Hence all limbs or muscles are moved by the exercise of will and life energy. The flow of life energy into the sensory nerves is caused by Divine and your own will; into the motor nerves by your own will.

Greater the will, greater the flow of life-energy into a particular body part. Angry men or angry cats manifest abnormal strength. This abnormal strength is not due to their muscles growing stronger within the short period of their anger. Their will is stimulated by anger and causes an extra flow of life energy or strength into their muscles and bodies.

E.g., lift your right arm parallel to the ground. Imagine you are holding a five-pound weight. Then imagine that this weight is increased to twenty-five pounds. What do you do? You send into your arm more life-energy by an increased amount of will.

Most mechanical physical-culture systems ignore the above facts. And because they use only unconscious mechanical will, their exercises consist of muscle bumping. Such exercises do not cause a sufficient flow of life energy into the muscles and tissues used. "Yogoda" vitalizes every body cell.

YOGODA EXERCISES

Exercise slowly with eyes closed.

Exercise A: Quickly tense (i.e., charge with will) feet to hands. Vibrate. Then quickly relax in reverse order. Note the three stages in tension and relaxation. Repeat three times. (Tense means to charge with energy.)

"Tense with will, Low, Medium, High; Vibration

"Relax and feel" Medium and complete relaxation.

Exercise B:

1) Relax 1-20 body parts (down-up) generally and scientifically. (Relaxation—vibrate the part in question and then relax, keeping it still.)

2) Tense one by one and hold 1-20 body parts (slow).

- 3) Re-tense 1-20 body parts (quick), vibrate gently. Hold breath.
- 4) Exhale, then relax from 20-1 body parts (up-down). (Exercise twice daily—once on bed early morning and once out of bed standing. Then repeat this in the evening or when you are tired.)

Exercise C:

- 1) Make big circles with left and right arms, then with both palms hitting.
- 2) Raise head backwards—relax and drop.

Use Exercise A on alternate days, B daily, C daily.

Stomach Exercises

These stomach exercises will help peristaltic movement and digestion, eliminating constipation, reducing obesity. To be practiced daily in the morning after leaving bed.

Exercise D:

- 1) Stoop forward grasping arms of chair.
- 2) Hold arms straight.
- 3) Exhale completely and quickly.
- 4) Close nostrils and mouth with fingers of left hand.
- 5) With breath expelled, slowly cave in abdomen as far as possible, then push it out as far as possible.
- 6) Repeat (holding breath out all the time) twice.
- 7) Then inhale. Repeat the above entire exercise five times—in case of stomach trouble repeat ten times.

Exercise E

- 1) Stand erect.
 - 2) Close eyes.
 - 3) Pressingly place both hands on abdomen one above the other.
 - 4) Contract and tense (high) lower portion.
 - 5) Hold while contracting and tensing (high) upper portion. Relax both.
- Repeat six times.

We want earnest students only who are really willing to master our highly practical techniques by faithful and regular practice for their own knowledge and benefit. Each step of Yogoda exercises will give definite results which everyone can experience for himself-satisfactory and invigorating results in body and mind—if he is regular, faithful, minute and correct in his practice.

Individual Charging of the 20 Body Parts

"Yogoda" Course (1925): Lesson 2, by Yogananda

(Exercise slowly and with eyes closed)

"Tense with will, relax and feel."

A. Slowly tense up to high tension, then vibrate, and then relax each body part, *individually*, two times or more from 1-20 up and down (beginning from feet).

B. **Cross tension**—Tense (high) 1, relax, and then tense (high) 2, in **quick** succession and relax, and so on 1-20. N. B. Repeat each part three-times.

C. **Lengthwise tension**: tense left calf (high) and relax, followed by tension of left thigh and its relaxation. Left calf and left thigh. Right calf and right thigh. Left forearm, left upper arm. Right forearm, right upper arm. Repeat each part three times.

D. **Memory medulla exercise**. *Bend head down, chin touching chest*. Touch the three middle finger tips of one hand with those of the other hand, then pressingly place these six fingers on the medulla. Give a circular massage from left to right, five times. Then keep the fingers well pressed on the medulla. Bend head backward toward the spine, *tensing the 20th part (back of neck)* as far as possible. Relax. *Then quickly drop head toward the chest*, still keeping fingers in position. Exercise three times

E. Make big circles with each foot separately while standing on the other foot.

F. **Throat exercise** for getting rid of colds, and for stimulating the vocal cords. Exercise four times. With mouth closed roll your tongue backwards and forwards. Thus exercise the 19th part: Put chin on chest. Tense the 19th part (front neck). Then force chin upwards, relax and drop chin on chest. Repeat once.

G. Plant feet firmly on ground. Then make a perfect cross with arms. Then swing body and arms left and right, hitting breast with left and right palms alternately. Exercise five times. This exercise helps the spine and brain.

Exercise A, B or C daily, E on alternate days, F daily, G daily.

HELPFUL HINTS

Yogoda Lessons are 12 in number, the first five lessons being the key to all others.

Lessons 1, 2, 3 teach how to recharge and spiritualize the body. Rules to observe in practicing them are:

1. **Exercise very slowly**, willingly and pleasantly, with eyes closed. By keeping the eyes closed, concentration is keener, and energy currents are prevented from escaping through the eyes.
2. More than one or two repetitions of any exercise are unnecessary if the above rule is observed.

3. No results are obtained if the exercises are done quickly. It is better to omit several exercises, if you are pressed for time, and only do the *most important* ones, which are: Exercises B and D of Lesson 1, Exercises A, D, F and G of Lesson 2, Exercises 1, 2, 5a and 6 of Lesson 3.
4. Practice regularly upon arising and whenever tired.

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Mechanical Movement and Tissue-Will Exercises Combined, Yogananda

Yogoda" Course (1925): Lesson 3 by Swami Yogananda

"Tense with will—relax and feel."

- 1) Imperfect motor relaxation, which unconsciously everyone knows;
- 2) Perfect motor relaxation, the method taught by Yogoda;
- 3) Conscious sensory relaxation, as in sleep;
- 4) Conscious sensory relaxation, as taught in the 4th Yogoda lesson;
- 5) Complete involuntary relaxation, as in death, and
- 6) Conscious relaxation from inner and outer organs, or the whole body. This last method is learned only by continued practice of Yogoda and the higher lessons.

Relaxation is consciously or unconsciously withdrawing the life-energy from a body part or the whole body. *Tension* or life consists in pouring energy into a body part or the whole body.

- 1) Tense the whole right arm (fore- and upper arm). Vibrate. Keep elbow at side. Lift forearm to shoulder as if lifting weight of 5-25 pounds. Relax (withdraw energy) and drop. Repeat exercise with left arm and then both arms together.
- 2) Stretch arms parallel to the ground with palms upward. Tense both arms and vibrate. Bend them at elbows slowly as if pulling a heavy weight from both sides. Relax; then drop arms at side. Repeat twice.
- 3) Stretch arms parallel to the ground. Exhale and bring arms together, palms touching, and relaxing all body parts. Then inhale, tensing body parts 1 to 20, stretch arms backward, vibrate. Relax, exhaling slowly. Repeat twice.
- 4) Hold arms of chair, standing. Exhale—stoop down quickly, relaxed. Inhale and tense 1 to 20 and stand up. Hold, vibrate, exhale, relax and stoop down. Repeat twice.
- 5) Lie down on floor, balance on hips with head and feet up about twelve inches

from floor. Hold breath, mentally counting one to six. and placing hand pressingly on stomach. Exhale, relax and drop hands and feet on floor. Repeat thrice. This exercise is wonderful for the spine, as it adjusts the vertebrae.

Lie down on your back on floor. Balance on hips with head and feet up from floor—then rock up and down and sideways first on one shoulder, then on the other, like a rocking chair or boat. This is very strengthening for the stomach muscles, also gives great spinal strength.

- 6) Indoor walking or running, bending the legs backwards, heels touching haunches.

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Chapter Two: Swami Kriyananda Teaches the Energization Exercises

Swami Kriyananda Teaches the Energization Exercises of Paramhansa Yogananda, 1979

**1979 – Crystal Hermitage
(Transcribed from the DVD)**

Introduction

The energization exercises are a wonderful system that was originated by Paramhansa Yogananda. It's actually his contribution to the science of yoga. They are based on the ancient teaching that the whole physical universe is a condensation of energy. Scientists have long known now that matter is energy: We can explode the atom and convert matter into energy.

We live surrounded by cosmic energy, draw on indirectly through the food that we eat, and also through oxygen and sunlight. And yet, these sources of energy, as Paramhansa Yogananda explained, are akin to the water that you put in a car battery. When the battery runs down completely, then no amount of water is going to bring it back. You've got to recharge that battery from another source.

Our bodies, similarly, are sustained only indirectly by food, but directly by this cosmic energy, which comes in through the medulla oblongata, at the base of the brain in that little dip there at the bottom of the skull. This is the energy we live by. As Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God." Well, God doesn't really have a mouth: this is a mystical teaching. As Jesus also said, "Destroy this temple and God shall rebuild it in three days." What he meant was not the temple where people worshipped, but his own body. He often talked about this inner relationship.

This is the mouth of man, because this is where we eat physical food; it's the mouth of the physical body. But the medulla, on the other side of the head, inside at the base of the brain, this is where we draw to ourselves divine energy.

We draw more or less energy according to our mental attitudes. You've found probably that when you feel reluctant to do something, you don't have the energy to do it, even if you've eaten a full meal. Whereas if you really want to do something, even if you have been fasting, you still will have all the energy you need to accomplish it.

Yogananda's axiom is, "The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy." Now, will can be understood rightly or wrongly. When it is proper, it is not that kind of tensed effort that says, "I'm going to do it if it kills me!" Rather, it is that kind of effort that can be called willingness, enthusiasm, joy. When you have willingness, when you are happy, when you want to do things that make you cheerful, you find that you have energy. You can even have the energy to heal yourself. People who are happy are far less prone to be ill.

These energization exercises are a means of using the will to draw energy into the body at will. The movements are physical, but their purpose is to feel the consciousness

behind them, to feel the flow of energy, to be conscious of that flow, and then by the use of will power, (“the greater the will, the greater the flow of energy”) to direct energy and make it act upon the body. As you become aware of that energy, you will be able to increase its flow.

What you’ll feel first is the inside of the muscle. Then you’ll become aware of the flow of energy in that muscle. And then you’ll become aware of how you can direct that flow.

Another aspect to these exercises is their mental and spiritual benefits. The more you are aware of energy, the more you can direct that energy by will power not only to the body, but toward God in meditation, toward your work, toward the desire to be inspired at will, toward anything that you do. All success depends ultimately on energy. Energy is really the differentiating factor between genius and mediocrity. So, these exercises are much more than physical. They are an important cornerstone of Yogananda’s teaching, and, in fact, of spiritual progress.

Introduction to the 1992 Guided Practice Session, Lotus Lake

Remember, “The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy.” Often when we use the word will, we think of tension. I prefer to use the word *willingness*. The greater the *willingness*, the greater the flow of energy. Because will, as Master defined it, is desire plus energy, directed toward fulfillment. In other words, it’s something you should *want* to do. When a master performs a miracle, it just happens so naturally, you just wonder if it really did happen. It seems so normal. When you will a thing truly, you’re not working against yourself: your whole energy goes in that direction. So do these exercises with willingness; with the desire that your body be filled with energy. I’ve always loved an expression Master used in his lessons. He said, “When you wake up, give your body a breakfast of energy.” Just inhale, tense the body, exhale and relax, before you even get out of bed.

Double Breathing

When you do these exercises, you will sometimes use double-breathing. This oxygenates the blood and the lungs more, and improves circulation and assimilation. These exercises are good for the whole body. So double-breathing means inhaling a short and long breath through the nose, and exhaling a short and long breath through the mouth and nose.

Teaching Session:

Learning the Energization Exercises

The important thing is to feel the energy, not so much flowing in through the medulla as going to the parts that you're tensing. Remember, "The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy." This requires two things: will power, and an awareness of the flow of energy. In the beginning you might not feel that energy flow: What you'll feel is the muscular tension.

We don't do a lot of physical movement in these exercises, because then we'll be thinking of the movements, and of the physical body. Paramhansa Yogananda taught the practice in this way: Concentrate in the center of whatever body part you're tensing. Feel that tension. The more aware you become of the tension, the more aware you'll become of the energy animating that tension. Then when you can actually feel that energy, concentrate more on the energy.

I want you to tense hard while doing the practice: tense to the point of vibration-- see my arm vibrating? You should tense that hard, until the muscle vibrates.

So remember that you want to concentrate on flow of energy to the body parts. If you don't feel that energy yet, then concentrate on the tension: the greater the will, the greater the tension; the greater the will, then the greater the flow of energy to cause that tension. So there are two things: the first is the will power, the second is the awareness of the tension, the awareness of the flow of energy to the tensed muscles.

You're supposed to look up here at the point between the eyebrows, and yet you're not concentrating at that point. That's merely to get you more into the flow of superconscious energy. *Your concentration is going to be on the actual flow of energy to the body parts.*

Double-breathing

Bringing the hands together, flex the knees, relax the body. Then when you tense, you inhale with double-breathing--that's a short and a long through the nose. Exhale through mouth and nose. So inhaling through the nose, tense in a flowing motion upwards from the feet to the arms. And as you tense and inhale, bring the knees up and the arms out to the side. It'll be like this: you tense upwards, you relax downwards

Calf recharging

Lift the leg up as if you were pulling it up against weight. Then push it down. Relax briefly up here (you can't relax perfectly because you're holding your leg up, but relax a little bit up here), and then push down and relax at the other end. Pull upward, relax; push downward, relax. I bring the leg up, push it down. Up, push it down. The foot just brushes the floor lightly. Then you rotate the foot, with tension in the ankle, three times one way, then three times the other way. Then the other side of course, the same way, two or three times, then rotating the ankle.

Calf and forearm; thigh and upper arm

Stand on your right foot, and put your left foot out in front of you, so that the weight is on the right foot. Tense the left calf and the forearm together. Relax. Left thigh and left upper arm together. Relax. Calf and forearm, thigh and upper arm.

Now stand on the left foot, put the right foot out in front so your weight's on the left foot. Tense the right calf and forearm, relax, right thigh and upper arm, relax. Calf and forearm, thigh and upper arm.

Then put both feet together and tense both sides together: calves and forearms, thighs and upper arms. Calves and forearms, thighs and upper arms.

Buttock and chest recharging

Tense the left buttock and the left chest simultaneously, and then the right buttock and the right chest, alternating sides. Left, right, left, right.

Back recharging

Divide the back into left and right, and into three segments: lower, middle (between the shoulder blades), and upper (above the shoulder blades). Tense the lower back, left side, right side; left side, right side. Then the middle: left side, right side; left side, right side. Then the upper: left side, right side; left side right side. Three segments, three times each.

Shoulder rotation

Put your hands on the shoulders and rotate with tension. Tensing the shoulders, rotate in large circles forwards and then backwards.

Throat recharging

Tense the throat, and alternate sides of the throat.

Neck recharging

Then, as if the chin were tied to the chest, tense and pull the head up, so there's tension in the neck, and then relax so that the head comes down. Don't let the head snap back too hard: the relaxation should be gradual. You don't push the head down, you let it drop by its own weight because you've relaxed the neck. But if you let it snap too hard, that could cause a little damage to the nerves in the neck over a period of time. So let it be more gradual. Inhale coming up, exhale coming down. Remember that you're supposed to tense to the point that you vibrate the muscles. It should not be a casual thing. Put all your will power in it: "the greater the will, the greater the flow of energy."

Neck rotation, cervical adjustment

Now with tension inside the neck and outside--total tension—rotate like this, to help adjust the neck. Paramhansa Yogananda used to explain that the neck is the bridge

between the brain and the body. The neck should be aligned, and in good shape for the energy to flow properly between the two. So now, rotate with tension, and try by will power to bring all the vertebrae in the neck into adjustment. Do it three times, and then the other direction. Then, without tension, one direction and the other.

Lower spinal adjustment

Put the feet roughly sixteen inches apart. You're adjusting the lower spine by keeping the hips more or less straight, or even moving them in the opposite direction to the twist of the shoulders. So that it's like this: with the arms bent a little bit at the elbows, there's a bit of a snap in the hips, the opposite direction to the movement of the shoulders and the arms. I'll do it once more, because many people get this in very distorted ways. For a side view of that same exercise let me turn this way, so that you can see how my hips are being kept straight, or rather twisting in the opposite direction to the shoulders.

Spinal rotation

Now you put your hands on the hips, and bending forward, arch the spine backward. Then rotate with tension in the spine, three times one way and then three times the other, relaxing only momentarily in between. To get an idea of what I mean by the backward arch, let me turn to the side and arch my back. Keep the back arched backward like this.

Lateral spinal stretching

Then with tension again in the spine, bend left, and right; left, and right.

Vertebrae adjustment

Putting your hands at the base of the spine, with your feet together again, bend forward and then back with a thrusting motion to help adjust the spine, bringing the hands slowly up the spine, like this.

Upper spinal adjustment

Put the feet apart again, bring the hands out in front of the body. Then with tension, bring the arms back to this point and relax. Tense them again, relax. There should be tension as you draw the arms back, and then you relax as you bring them back in front of you. Keep the hips straight all the time so that you get a twist in the spine.

This exercise is not so much to adjust the spine, as I understand it, but rather to energize the spine. Bring the hand that's not outstretched against your chest, while following the outstretched hand with your eyes. Then you come in the opposite direction, bring the other hand to the chest, the other arm outstretched, the eyes following it all the way out. All the time keep your hips straight ahead, so you get a real twist in the spine.

Brain cell recharging

This next one is to stimulate the cells in the brain and to get the energy flowing to the brain from the medulla. Rap the skull all over, with a fair degree of vigor (not so hard as to produce insensibility!). All over.

Scalp massage

Then you place the fingertips on the scalp, but don't move the fingertips on the scalp, don't let them slip on the scalp. Loosen the scalp all around. Put the fingers together on top of the scalp and move it forwards and backwards, and left and right, and then rotate it one direction, and then the other direction.

Medulla memory exercise

Then you take these three fingers--the forefinger, middle finger, and ring finger—and putting them together you place them over the medulla oblongata, which is that little depression at the base of the skull. Push them in there, to help stimulate your awareness of the medulla. “Medulla Memory Exercise,” Paramhansa Yogananda called it.

Rotate three times one way, and three times the other way, and then with tension in the arms, push back against that tension so that you're pressing the fingertips into the medulla. Then relax and snap the head forward, but not hard – that could injure the nerves in the neck. At the end of the exercise you push the head gently down, like this.

Biceps recharging

You tense the biceps, alternately. You can either have the hands up above the head, or rest them on the head. I think it's better to keep them up above.

Twenty-part body recharging, phase one: whole body

The next exercise is to tense the entire body. Remember: inhale, tense up to the point where you're vibrating the body, exhale, relax. In this exercise, and in all of them, don't tense suddenly: tense low, medium, high. As Yogananda put it, don't strip your muscle gears, but make the tension gradual, and then gradually relax.

“Tense with will, relax and feel.” You tense with will, and then you feel the energy flowing when you relax. Feel the muscles and the energy in the body, as if your body were made of energy at that point.

Now then, inhale, tense low, medium, high, until your body vibrates, holding that for a while, and then relax-- medium, low, completely. The whole body is now relaxed.

Phase two: individual muscles

Now we divide the body into twenty parts: feet, calves, thighs, buttocks, abdomen below the navel, stomach above the navel, forearms (to tense the forearm you'll have to also tense the fist, because in fact the muscles that tense the fist are mostly in the forearm anyway), upper arms, chest, neck (the neck is divided into four parts, as we'll explain as we go along).

Tense the left foot by curling the toes under the foot. You should be curling them inward. Relax, then the right foot.

Then the left calf, and the right calf, relaxing after each one,

Left thigh, right thigh,

Left buttock, right buttock,

abdomen below the navel, stomach above the navel,

left forearm, right forearm,

left upper arm, right upper arm,

left breast, right breast,

left side of neck, right side, front, and back.

Phase three: tense upward, maintaining tension in each muscle

In this next phase, you keep the tension in each part as you go up, inhaling all the way. So you're tensing as you're coming up and inhaling slowly, (because it's a continuous inhalation you've got to do this one quite quickly). So it's this speed: left foot, right foot, left calf, right calf, left thigh, right thigh, left hip, right hip, etc. I'll do it for you.

Phase four: relax downward

Then you exhale, drop the chin on the chest, and relax the right chest, left chest, right upper arm, left upper arm, right forearm, left, stomach, abdomen, right buttock, left buttock, right thigh, left thigh, right calf, left calf, right foot, left foot.

Those are the twenty part body recharging exercises. There are four parts to them. In the first one you tense the whole body, and relax. In the next one you tense each individual part, and relax it individually. In the third one, you tense upward holding the tension as you come up; and the fourth one, you exhale and then relax the different parts as you go down. When you drop your chin to your chest and begin to exhale, you relax the entire neck simultaneously, so that the relaxation of the individual parts begins with the chest.

Weight lifting in front

With the arms down at your sides and the hands fists upwards, bring the arms up as if you were pulling a heavy weight, and then relax momentarily, and then push them down, as if you were pushing down a weight. Imagine yourself lifting weights up, and then pulling pulleys down, inhaling and exhaling.

Double breathing with elbows touching

This next one is similar to the first exercise, but you bring the elbows together. Then, with the body relaxed, you inhale with double breathing, and bring the energy and the tension, upwards, as you bring your arms out to the sides. In the first exercise we did this way (with arms straight). In this one we're doing with the arms bent, and that's essentially the only difference--it helps to tense different muscles.

Weight pulling to the side

With the arms out to the side, and parallel to the floor, push the arms out and then pull them in again, as if you were pushing and pulling weights, relaxing at each end. You can do double breathing if you like, exhaling as you go away from the body, inhaling as you come toward the body.

Arm rotation

With the arms extended, rotate them in small circles, tensing harder and harder all the time. Then relax momentarily, and go in the opposite direction. The fists should be turned up in this exercise.

Weight pulling to the front

This one is with the arms out in front, the upper arms parallel to the floor, the fists should be turned outward, resting the back of the hand against the forehead. Tense outward, relax, and then come inward.

Finger recharging

You open and close the fists at your side a few times with tension, then out to the side. Then forward, then up above the head.

Arm recharging in four phases

Bring the arms up with tension. Relax momentarily, then push out and relax momentarily. Then bring the arm in, relaxing momentarily, and then push them out in front, relaxing momentarily. Now bring the arms in and with a double-breath extend them high above the head, coming up on the toes. Then relax, bringing the arms down, first to the chest, and down again.

Let me repeat that. You bring the arms up to the chest (without tension, let's see. No, you can tense). Bringing the arms up to the chest, relax momentarily; out, relax momentarily; in, relax momentarily; forward, relax momentarily; back again, relax momentarily; and then up above the head and down.

Overhead weight lifting

Raise your hands up in front of your body, as if you were pulling up a great weight, and with double breathing come up on your toes, and then exhale coming down.

Lateral weight lifting

Put the feet apart, parallel, do the same thing stretching sidewise, feeling as if you were lifting a weight. In this case you don't drop the head over to the side. You keep the head up against the arm. Inhale with double-breathing as you come up, exhale as you come down.

Walking in place

Walk in place walking in place, bringing the knees high so that it's an exaggerated motion. Try to keep your concentration more on the flow of energy. Remember that the movement in these exercises is secondary to becoming aware of the energy in the different body parts, and sending that energy to the parts you're tensing.

Running in place

Run in place, with the same movement except you also kick the heels up against the buttocks. I can't do that perfectly because I have big thighs. But the heels should come up to the buttocks. Some people do that exercise with the knees down. I think it should be the same walking gesture, with the knees coming up, but also kicking the legs back, like this. Don't move your arms in this one.

Fencing

With tension in the chest and forearms and legs, exhale, keeping the arms and fist at about this angle. There's tension in the back leg, in the chest, and in the arm that's stretching out. Exhale as you come out, inhale as you come in. Keep the heel of the back foot down on the floor: you don't come up on the toes. Both feet are in fact flat on the floor.

Arm rotation (in large circles)

Move the arms in large circles, with tension as you come up and relaxation as you go down, inhaling as you come up, exhaling as you go down. A previous exercise was with small circles; in this one they are large. Tense as you come up, relax as you go down. Then reverse.

Stomach recharging: introduction

The stomach exercises are a little difficult to explain. You have to exhale completely and then close the throat so that you can't inhale, but expand the lungs so that you create a vacuum. Since the air can't come down, and there's no way to draw air up, what you do is create a vacuum in your stomach that draws the stomach in against the spine and up somewhat into the chest cavity.

This is a very good exercise for stimulating the digestion, and the internal organs, getting them to function with more vigor. The stomach is almost as important a part of our body as the brain because if the stomach is out, the whole system seems to feel moody, and you feel unable to concentrate clearly. The stomach has to be kept in good shape with right diet and so on, but exercise too is important. This is a wonderful exercise for that.

The way that you create that vacuum is to put your feet somewhat apart, and then rest the weight of the heel of your palm on the upper thigh, or on the lower thigh just above the knees. Generally the books on hatha yoga will say to rest the heels of the palm on the upper thigh. It doesn't much matter, though.

Phase one

Resting the heels of the palm on the thighs, you exhale completely and then draw the stomach inward. This is known as *udiyana banda*, where you push the whole stomach outward, then draw it in, out and in alternately. In this first phase here, you just pull it in.

With the breath held out, you can only do this movement a few times. That's *udiyana banda*.

Phase two

Now you push the whole stomach out. This is really a variant, and you might say a kind of compromise, with another one that I'll show you a little bit later. But many people don't know how to isolate the different muscles that hatha yoga talks about, and that Yogananda recommended our doing. There are two muscles here called rectus abdomini. And if you can isolate those (this takes a little bit of extra pressure, on the heel of the palm, and a little bit of concentration, not much, really), then you'll find that you can isolate them instead of pushing the whole stomach out.

Phase three

The next phase, if you can do it, is to isolate the rectus abdomini separately.

Phase four

Finally is an exercise that is known as rotation of the stomach. You get the sense of rotation by alternately isolating these rectus abdomini muscles, left side and right side. This helps very much to stimulate the peristalsis.

This rotation is something that takes more practice. The essential exercise is simply the first two phases that I told you about: (a) draw the stomach in with your breath held out. Spend some moments only holding the stomach in, and trying to stimulate that energy that way. (b) keeping the breath out, push the whole stomach out, then pull it in and push it out alternately.

Double breathing

The next exercise is the same as the first one.

Calf recharging

Then the same as the second one, drawing the foot up, tensing the muscles in the back of the calf, pulling a weight up, and then pushing it down. Then rotate the ankle, three times one way, three times the other. Then the right leg the same way.

Hip recharging

This is a very good exercise for the hips. Stand on one foot, trying to keep your foot parallel with the ground, and rotate the leg three times one way, three times the other. Then the right leg, three times one way, three times the other way. Keep the leg straight.

Double breathing without tension

The final exercise is double-breathing without tension. Keep your mind here at the point between the eyebrows, looking upward with your eyes closed. Your fists are lightly closed, not with tension, up against the chest as you inhale with a double breath. Then exhale with double breathing, extending the hands outward and keeping the mind at the point between the eyebrows, relaxing all the time. Then inhale with double breathing, bringing the fists to the chest, then exhale again, extending the arms. Do this several times.

Swami Kriyananda Teaches the Energization Exercises of Paramhansa Yogananda, 1991

Practice Session: Doing the Energization Exercises

Prayer: Heavenly Father, recharge my body with Thy cosmic energy, my mind with Thy concentration, my soul with Thy ever-new joy. O eternal youth of body and mind, abide in me forever and forever. Aum, Amen.

- Double-breathing.
- Leg recharging. Ankle recharging. Leg, the other side. Ankle, three times one way, three times the other way.
- Calf and forearm, thigh and upper arm, alternating left and right sides.
- Both sides together, calf and forearm, thigh and upper arm; calf and forearm, thigh and upper arm. Remember to relax gradually, and tense gradually.
- Left buttock and chest, relax; right buttock and right chest, relax. Alternately left side, right side, left side, right side.
- Then do the back, lower part of the back: left, right, left, right, left, right.
- Middle back between the shoulder blades: left, right, left, right, left, right.
- And then upper part, above the shoulder blades: left, right, alternately, left, right, left, right.
- Then place your hands on the shoulders and rotate with tension, forwards, and reverse.
- Then, tense the throat, alternately, and then the inner throat.
- Then place the chin on the chest, bring the head back, relax.
- Rotation with tension. And relax, and then reverse, with tension. And relax.
- Without tension, two times one way, two times the other way.
- Lower back adjusting.
- Hands on hips, rotation. Three times one way, three times the other. Hold your breath while rotating.
- And then, with tension in the back, bending from side to side.
- And then forwards and backwards, bring the hands up a little higher each time. Breathe normally. Hips straight ahead.
- Twisting the spine.
- Awakening the brain cells, awakening energy in the brain.

- Massage the scalp, place the fingers on the scalp, move them, don't let them slip on the scalp, move them about in different positions on top of the scalp, forwards, then sideways, then rotating.
- Hands, finger tips, on the medulla: rotate three times one way, three times the other way then draw the head back, and exhale and push the head down. Tense as you come up, relax as you go down.

Tense the biceps alternately, sending energy to them. Remember, "the greater the will, the greater the flow of energy." Let it be a feeling of willingness. You want the energy to flow.

- Alright, hands down and let's do the twenty-part body recharging. Inhale, double-breath, and tense low, medium, high. Tense harder and harder when you tense. Relax.
- Left foot, relax. Right foot, relax. Left calf, relax. Right calf, relax. Left thigh, relax. Right thigh, relax. Left buttock, relax. Right buttock, relax. Abdomen, stomach. Left forearm, right forearm, left upper arm, right upper arm, left chest, right chest, left neck, right, front, and back.
- Tense upwards, inhaling all the way and hold the tension as you come up.
- Arm lifting.
- Double-breathing, elbows touching.
- Out to the side.
- Rotation, tense harder and harder. Relax. Reverse. Relax.
- Arms in front.
- Finger recharging.
- Four-part arm recharging.
- Arm lifting alternately.
- Up to the side.
- Walking.
- Running.
- Fencing.
- Arm rotation. Reverse.
- Stomach. Once more. Try rotating if you can.
- Double-breathing, palms touching.
- Leg recharging. It may help your balance to hold your elbow with one hand. Not necessarily. Rotate the ankles. The other leg. Rotate.
- Rotate the leg in large circles, three times one way, reverse. Other leg.
- Then double-breathing without tension.

Sequence of Energization Exercises

GROUP I – Body from feet to neck 1 – 10

- 1. Double-breathing*
- 2. Calf recharging, with...*
- 3. Ankle rotation*
- 4. Calf and forearm; thigh and upper arm*
- 5. Buttock and chest recharging*
- 6. Back recharging*
- 7. Shoulder rotation*
- 8. Throat recharging*
- 9. Neck recharging*
- 10. Neck rotation, cervical adjustment*

GROUP II – Spinal Adjustments 11-15

- 11. Lower spinal adjustment*
- 12. Spinal rotation*
- 13. Lateral spinal stretching*
- 14. Vertebrae adjustment*
- 15. Upper spinal adjustment*

GROUP III – Brain 16 – 18

- 16. Brain cell recharging*
- 17. Scalp massage*
- 18. Medulla oblongata massage*

GROUP IV – 20 Parts

- 19. Biceps recharging*
- 20. Twenty-part body recharging, phase one: whole body*

GROUP V – Weights 21 – 29

- 21. Weight lifting in front*
- 22. Double breathing with elbows touching*
- 23. Weight pulling to the side*
- 24. Arm rotation*

25. *Weight pulling to the front*

26. *Finger recharging*

27. *Arm recharging in four phases*

28. *Overhead weight lifting*

29. *Lateral weight lifting*

GROUP VI – Aerobic 30-31

30. *Walking in place*

31. *Running in place*

GROUP VII – Conclusion 32 – 39

32. *Fencing*

33. *Arm rotation (in large circles)*

34. *Stomach recharging*

35. *Double breathing*

36. *Calf recharging, with*

37. *Ankle rotation*

38. *Hip recharging*

39. *Double breathing without tension*

Chapter Three: Energy

Energy and Energization, (Raja Yoga), Kriyananda

From The Art and Science of Raja Yoga, Chapter Nine

In the last two lessons we considered how, with the aid of affirmations, one can change his subconscious reactive processes, thereby enlisting the support of his entire being in anything he undertakes.

What is the nature of this support? Certainly it is no mere acquiescence, but a source of phenomenal power. Initially, it releases for positive use energy that has been held trapped by old habits. Then, as this inner supply of energy becomes directed and focused, it begins to be supplemented by the energy of the surrounding universe. In this simple fact may be found the key to all human greatness. It is from the infinite source primarily that all our strength comes, even-and far more so than most people realize-before we attain any marked degree of spiritual development. To endeavor to live more and more by that divine power, even from the beginning of the spiritual journey, will save you from wandering endlessly on bypaths of ignorance. That is one reason Jesus said, "Seek ye the kingdom of God first, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Wisdom, love, joy, peace-all divine qualities, as well as energy, are implied in the flow of divine grace. But they are perceived first, and most easily, in their lower manifestation, as energy. By learning how to attune oneself to the cosmic energy, one learns the secret of divine attunement on all levels. That secret is will power.

Let us suppose to begin with that you have had a party. The guests remained late, so you decided to put off washing the dishes until the next day. But in the morning you had to leave early for work. It was an unusually bad day at the office. Unreasonable demands were made of you by your employer. Your phone went out of order in the middle of an important call. There were delays, misunderstandings, frustrations. By the time you got home that evening you were exceptionally tired.

Bad enough? Not quite! You had forgotten about that large stack of dishes in the sink. The moment you stepped into the kitchen and saw them, your fatigue increased to exhaustion. "No dishwashing tonight!" you vowed, as you collapsed limply on the couch.

And then it was that the phone rang. An old and good friend of yours, whom you hadn't seen in years, had just arrived in town, and wanted to invite you that very evening to a concert you had been very much wanting to attend, but hadn't been able to afford.

Where did all that sudden energy come from? Five minutes ago you hadn't had enough strength left to sit up. Now you felt eager not only to go out again, but even to stay up half the night!

Obviously, your degree of energy depends not only on the amount of food you have eaten, but upon your measure of will power. People have, in fact, been known to work energetically for long periods of time without either food or rest. The only thing sustaining them was their determination to keep going.

When I was new in the Self-Realization Fellowship monastery, Master, to give some of us an excuse to be with him while he worked on his writings at Twenty-Nine

Palms, had us construct a swimming pool. (I think he used it all of once!) To save money, we mixed and poured the concrete ourselves. To avoid seams (though, it turned out, leakage was no problem; water wouldn't even seep out through the drain), we poured the whole pool in one day. It meant working almost non-stop for twenty-three and a half hours. But to work willingly for God is a joy. Far from complaining at the long hours, we took them as a chance to show Him what a blessing it was to be serving Him. Every shovelful of sand or gravel went into the cement mixer to the accompaniment of joyous mantras.

One monk, however, after three or four hours sat down, grumbling, "I didn't come here to pour cement}" The rest of that day he tried to talk us out of being such "fanatics".

At the end of the day all of us felt full of divine energy and joy all of us, that is, but one. The reluctant "devotee", though having done nothing all day but complain, was exhausted!

Doctors have often noted that patients who want desperately to live may pull through even medically hopeless diseases, while others, no longer wishing to live, may die even though there seems no medical reason for them to do so.

A friend of mine worked as a physiotherapist in a polio clinic. He told me he had noticed that poor patients, unable to afford a long convalescence, often got well quickly, while rich patients more often accepted their paralysis long enough for it to become a permanent habit. I once met a woman, tall, strong, very active, but poor, who had had polio and had been told by her doctor that she would never walk again. By sheer will power and dogged perseverance, dragging herself on the floor by her hands when her legs refused to obey her, she had been able to overcome her paralysis completely.

I myself had an experience where sheer necessity, born of poverty, hastened my recovery. It was in a hospital in Mexico City, when I was nineteen years old. I had streptococcus, tonsillitis, and dysentery, and had been told by the doctor that I would be bedridden for at least two weeks. My parents, to whom I could have appealed for financial assistance, were in Rumania. Discreet inquiries convinced me that a two-week stay there was almost two weeks more than I could afford. In my desperation to get well quickly, I was out of that hospital, cured, in two days.

I read statistics some years ago to the effect that people who are habitually cheerful, who devote themselves to helping others, and who generally keep themselves constructively busy, are less likely to become ill than gloomy, selfish, and lazy people. Mothers, for example, who must stay on their feet to nurse their sick children through an epidemic, are far less likely to become ill themselves. They simply haven't the time to indulge themselves.

Energy, endurance, health-even our actual physical strength-depends on the amount of will power we can bring to bear on any situation. I remember once reading of a woman whose house caught fire. In the desperation of the moment she picked up the piano and ran out of doors with it. (Talk about attachment!) Doctors attribute such displays of strength to a sudden flow of adrenalin, but I have seen cases where no emergency was present, only an extraordinary will to succeed, and in these cases, too, the strength was phenomenal. My guru demonstrated such strength sometimes publicly. Once in Symphony Hall in Boston, though he was short by American standards, he

toppled six burly policemen from the stage into the orchestra pit, simply by arching his back as they tried to press him against a wall. These men had come on the stage in answer to his invitation to anyone to test the strength he claimed yoga practice made possible. When the audience saw six such brawny men stride up to meet his challenge, they thought that this time he faced certain defeat, but his victory was apparently effortless. Yogis claim that such feats of strength depend not so much on a flow of adrenalin as on harnessing the natural energy of the body and of the surrounding universe. "There is enough energy in one gram of flesh," Master used to tell us, "to keep the city of Chicago supplied with electricity for a week." In a recent experiment at some Western university (I think it was Stanford), one human cell was converted into energy. The resulting flash of light was reported to have been many limes brighter than the sun.

Yet we complain that we are too tired to do the supper dishes!

We ARE energy. The very atoms of which our physical bodies are made are but energy. All matter is a manifestation of that energy. The more we maintain a consciousness of this reality, the more we can rise triumphant over the bondage of matter. Fatigue, weakness, disease these have no part of our true nature. Even in little ways, once we learn this truth, we can demonstrate its usefulness. Whenever I feel a cold coming on me, for example, unless it catches me unaware in sleep, I tell it firmly, "Be gone!" and in five minutes I am quite rid of it. A brother disciple of mine, fifty-five years old and weighing only 145 lbs., easily performed jobs that a couple of the young monks, 225 lbs. each and ex-weight lifters, found difficult.

Energy is the connecting link between consciousness and matter, between mind and body. For energy is, in its turn, but a manifestation of consciousness. In the last analysis, all things are but manifestations of Spirit. When you will your arm to move, it is energy, not matter, upon which your will acts directly. The energy, in its turn, acts upon the muscles of the arm, tensing them and making them move. If you will your arm to move, but don't send any energy to it, it will remain motionless.

The amount of energy flow, as well as the simple fact of its flow, depends on the exertion of will. If you go to pick up what you think is an empty bucket, the energy you exert will not be enough to lift it if in fact it is full, in this case, you must exert more will, and send more energy; you will then be able to lift the bucket easily. To put it simply, the greater the will, the greater the flow of energy. There is, literally, no limit to the degree of will, and therefore to the measure of energy, that one can summon in any undertaking, simply because a strong will is not limited by the actual energy potential of the body; rightly applied, it draws directly on the energy of the universe. I say rightly applied, for to many people an exertion of will power suggests a grim, tense kind of determination, an exaggerated awareness of obstacles and difficulties that implies a "no" vote from the subconsciousness even while the conscious mind is affirming "yes". Willingness, then, might better suggest the kind of will power intended here. In this sense, the axiom is as true for man's relationship to the cosmic energy as to the energy of his own body: The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy. Remember it.

Emblazon it in your mind. Repeat it to your self several times a day. This single truth can revolutionize your life.

My guru pointed out, in his great book, *Autobiography of a Yogi*, that the principal "doorway" by which the energy of the cosmos enters the human body is through the medulla oblongata at the base of the brain. This, he says, is the seat of the

life force in the body. He told me that this is also the seat of ego in the body (notice how often a proud person draws his head back, as if with exaggerated consciousness of this region), and the point from which the united sperm and ovum begin the process of self-division which results in the human body. The medulla oblongata is the only part of our bodies that cannot be operated upon. Were it even touched lightly with a feather, it would produce instantaneous death. This medulla is the doorway through which the body receives energy from the universe. The positive pole of this center is the ajna chakra, or Christ center, between the eyebrows. It is through this, the medulla's positive pole, that we send energy out into the universe. In both cases- in receiving as well as in sending the axiom holds true:

The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy. The positive, will center in the body is the Christ center. By strong concentration at that point, or by centering one's determination there and acting from that point, will power can be exerted to draw a limitless flow of energy through the medulla oblongata.

Athletes have found that if they exert themselves to what seems the limit of their endurance, they develop what is often spoken of as "second wind." It is so indeed, but only in the sense that breath is energy. (In Sanskrit, the word for breath and energy is the same: prana.) Those athletes, by their extra exertion of will, have succeeded in tapping the universal source of energy.

I had an interesting experience once, similar to theirs. I was working to build a geodesic dome. It was my first effort to build a home at Ananda Meditation Retreat (the first of three that failed to survive the strong autumn winds). The plans called for stapling plastic onto a large number of wooden triangles. My staple gun was stiff, so unusually so that another person working on the project, a girl, was unable to make it work even once, using both her hands. After about the 500th staple, I felt I simply could not press the release one more time. Then I thought, "But I must finish this job before the autumn winds come." (I little knew what those winds would do to the completed dome!) With an extra effort of will, I squeezed the release just one more time, then again, then yet once again. By about the sixth time it began to seem easier. By the tenth time, no extra effort was required at all. I went on stapling almost effortlessly for at least another 500 times. A little added exertion of will, and the energy of the infinite had begun to flow into my hand.

Consciously or unconsciously, all of us live at least partly by (his energy. It is, my guru taught, the direct source of our energy. Food and oxygen, by contrast, must be converted into energy by the body; the energy they give us comes to us indirectly. Without the direct source of energy to act upon the food, we would not long survive. A car battery needs not only distilled water (which, in our bodies, is comparable to the food we eat), but also to be recharged occasionally. When the battery runs down, no amount of distilled water can reactivate it. Similarly, when a person dies, no amount of food can revive him. Man is a sort of wet cell battery. It is actually possible for him, as several Indian yogis and Western mystics have demonstrated, to live for years by this energy alone. A modern exemplar of this power was Theresa Neumann, of Konnersreuth, Germany, about whom numerous books have been written. Submitted to repeated and prolonged medical observation over a period of more than fifty years, she was never discovered to eat a single morsel of food, nor to drink even a drop of liquid.

Many other seeming miracles are possible to yogis, once they have learned to control the flow of divine energy. The energy we send to the different parts of our bodies can also be projected beyond our own physical limitations, to heal others, or to alter circumstances as we choose. This same principle can be used to attract subtler kinds of energy to ourselves: inspirations, answers to our questions, divine blessings and love. These aspects of the subject will be discussed in the next lesson, on magnetism.

But to apply this principle on every level, the subtlest as well as the grossest, one more faculty is needed besides will power. This second ingredient is awareness. Until sufficient awareness of love, for example, has been developed, it will be simply impossible to direct the will correctly in such a way as to draw to oneself more love. Without some divine awareness, no divine work is truly possible; usually any attempt at such work only manifests itself as fanaticism. With such awareness, however, divine work of some kind, if only the steady flow in the heart of divine love and harmony, is inevitable. This, then, is a deeper meaning of the oft-quoted Biblical statement, "Faith without works is dead." St. James was referring to people who pity the naked and the hungry, but who offer them no practical help. Not to express one's pity in some soil of positive action indicates a lack of awareness. (For in fact it is we who suffer when others suffer; we are those sufferers.) But St. James' statement is true also on a subtler level. To believe in Christ, for instance, and yet feel nothing of his presence (the inner manifestations of his divine "works"), is an example of dead faith; it is not true Christianity. If one's belief is not accompanied by some sort of definite awareness, it is really nothing but superstition. Any activity based on such "faith" will be merely an imposition on the Infinite Kindness.

"The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy." The greater the will to love, the greater love's flow. The greater the will to joy, the greater the flow of joy. The law governing the expression of energy may be applied on all levels of spiritual truth. But on all levels, awareness also is necessary. To will to express love or joy while one feels no awareness of these qualities will scarcely tap their divine source within oneself, and may, according to one's actual awareness, draw only an added consciousness of hatred or misery. (Consider how often people are prone to make negative wishes, such as: "I wish I weren't so miserable!" Their desire is for joy, but in fact their affirmation, their real act of will, rests on an awareness of misery. It is their misery, not joy, that they are feeding.)

The principle that underlies the energization of the body, then, is vitally important on all stages of spiritual growth. Yet it is easiest to master it on the level of energization. The awareness one develops as a result of this mastery can then be applied on subtler levels. For all spiritual experiences are related to this flow of energy. While it may be difficult even to visualize divine joy, the simple flow of energy in the body is easy to experience. This experience can be made the foundation for increasingly subtle perceptions. Yet energy itself may at first be a difficult word for beginning yogis to understand. What is energy? How does one feel it?

In higher states of awareness, it is possible simply to see the inner divine light and command it to charge one's body with energy. For the energy of the body is actually a manifestation of that light. In the beginning, however, it is necessary to focus on one of the results of that energy flow.

When you move your arm, it is because you have sent energy to the arm muscles, commanding them to become tensed. You are to some extent familiar already with this energy (low). You experience it, for instance, when you stretch your arms on waking in the morning. That "good feeling" in the muscles is the breakfast of energy you are giving them to prepare them for the day's activities.

Even when you cannot feel this flow, you can always feel the tension of your muscles, and can make this feeling the starting point for your developing awareness. By inward concentration on the tension of your muscles, you will gradually become conscious of the source of that tension in the flow of energy to those muscles. Muscular tension can thereby be utilized to stimulate the energy flow.

These truths have always been implicit in the yoga teachings, and proved useful long before they were formulated as definite principles, even as the force of gravity was useful to man long before its governing law was discovered. The discovery of the law of gravity, however, made possible the more exact application of this force. Similarly, once these truths relating to the energization of the body had been reduced to exact principles, it became possible for even beginners to benefit from them, and also for more advanced yogis to utilize them more easily, and more completely.

These principles were discovered by my great guru, Paramhansa Yogananda, in 1916. They constitute a priceless contribution to the ancient yoga science, not only because they enable yoga students to recharge their bodies with energy at will, thereby driving away fatigue and disease, but also because they give him an invaluable tool for developing divine awareness in its most subtle aspects.

The stimulation of awareness of the energy by means of physical tension requires a calm, inward awareness. Muscular tension is involved in running or in throwing a ball, but here the concentration is engaged in outward movement. It is necessary, for development of an inward awareness of energy as the true force behind muscular tension, that all corresponding physical movements be slow, harmonious, and deliberate. To use this principle for the energization and toning-up of the entire body, a complete system of exercises is needed, that every body part receive due attention.

My guru invented such a system. I have practiced it virtually every day since I first learned it in 1948. I have found it truly wonderful. Some days, owing to the pressure of duties, I have omitted doing them in the morning. The rest of that day I have felt as if there were cobwebs in my muscles. And I have thought, "This is how most people must feel all the time. They accept their condition only because they know nothing better!"

I remember one time, many years ago. A group of us went camping in the mountains. I had been told that our destination, a small lake, was an easy twenty-minute stroll from the end of the road. Anticipating no problems, I took with me not only a sleeping bag and light clothing, but a harmonium for chanting, a gallon bottle of fruit juice, and a knapsack full of useful, if unnecessary, things, including a heavy book that I had been reading. Instead of a twenty-minute stroll, unfortunately, it turned out to be a six-mile climb, much of it on steep gravelly terrain. My daily work was in an office. This climb, at 9,000 feet, was more than my body was prepared to enjoy. Back in the office the next Monday, it was an effort for me even to lift a pencil.

"I must think up some excuse", I thought, "to get out of practicing the energization exercises this evening." Being in charge of other people affords certain disadvantages. As the head of the monks, I was expected not only to join, but to lead them in their exercises. Others of them, too, had been with me on the hike. They, too, were sore, though perhaps none of them had been so foolish in burdening themselves as I had. I could think of no excuse that might justify my sitting on the sidelines while they exercised.

As long as I was going to suffer through those exercises, I decided, I might as well put my whole will into the act. This I did, bearing in mind more desperately than usual my guru's principle: "The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy."

Amazingly, after ten minutes of exercise I felt not a trace of pain in my muscles! Instead, my body actually felt better than it would have had I spent the entire weekend at home, resting. As I walked off to meditation, it seemed almost as if I was floating.

I have had numerous other occasions, though perhaps few as dramatic, to demonstrate to myself the value of these energization exercises. I simply cannot recommend them highly enough.

It would not be proper for me to present this complete system here in these lessons, for they form a part of the correspondence course lessons that are sent out by my guru's organization, Self-Realization Fellowship. Not only is it in the fitness of things that I recommend those lessons to you, but I also believe it will help you immeasurably to study my guru's teachings in his own words. He was one of the great exponents of yoga of all time. His presentation was especially geared to the needs and the understanding of modern men and women. More than that, in studying his words one is brought more closely into attunement with his subtle spiritual influence, which of all aspects of a true guru's teaching is the most important.

I remember my guru's asking me, on the occasion of our first meeting, how I had liked his autobiography. This book had changed my whole life. Because of it I had crossed America to offer my life to his guidance as a disciple. Autobiography of a Yogi was, in fact, the greatest book I had ever read, and still is. I tried lamely to say how deeply it had affected me. "That", Master remarked, simply, "is because it has my vibrations." A new thought to me at that time! It left me fairly bewildered. But over the years I have realized its truth. For words convey more than ideas. They are channels of actual magnetic power by which a writer's soul can touch the souls of his readers. That, especially, is why it is good to read the writings of true saints: Their words convey some of the power of a direct, physical blessing.

Visitors to The Expanding Light, Ananda's guest facility, also learn these exercises from us in person.

For now, and as a good introduction to this system of exercise, let me suggest that you practice tensing the muscles of your body all together, then separately not hastily, but gradually increasing the tension until the muscles actually vibrate. Concentrate on the inside of the muscles—in the center, as it were, of any part you are tensing. Become keenly aware, first, of the sensation of tension. Then try to feel, behind that tension, the causative flow of energy. Repeat mentally as you practice: "The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy. **I will my energy to flow to every cell!**"

Energy: The Missed Link, Kriyananda

From Awaken to Superconsciousness

Chapter Ten

Energy is the link between mind and body—between consciousness and material creation.

When Spirit first manifested itself as cosmic creation, it projected itself outward into a state most closely resembling pure consciousness in the form of thoughts and ideas. Vibrationless in itself, it set part of its undifferentiated being into vibratory movement. Thus was manifested the ideational, or causal, universe: causal, because from the level of thought forms were projected the vibrations that made grosser levels of manifestation possible.

Pure Consciousness, after creating the universe of ideational vibrations, worked through them to produce denser vibrations. Causative ideas became energy and light. Thus appeared the second stage of creation: the astral universe.

Pure Consciousness, finally, filtering, or stepping down, its vibrations as if through a transformer, descended through the stages of ideation and energy to manifest such dense vibrations that they appeared solid. Astral energy became matter. And thus was manifested the third and last stage of creation: the material universe.

Science, working backward from material appearances, has discovered that matter is not really substantial at all: It is a vibration of energy.

The astral universe is a projection of ideas—specific, not vague—that were formed in the causal universe. The material universe, similarly, is a projection of specific light and energy forms in the astral universe. In appearance, the astral universe is much like our own. Lacking matter's density, its vibrations are freer to separate themselves into individual, coherent spheres of consciousness and energy. Good and evil are not mingled in close proximity as they are on earth.

Even on earth, people tend somewhat to separate themselves into areas of compatible interests. Those whose natures are more refined tend to settle in neighborhoods with vibrations similar to their own. People of coarser natures gravitate toward other neighborhoods, compatible with themselves. I've been astonished to see how quickly often, within hours- newcomers to a city will be drawn to their own vibrational milieu and meet people of whose very existence many long-term residents were completely unaware.

In the astral universe, whole planets have their own vibratory integrity. There are astral heavens, and astral hells. Differences among astral beings are understood to have nothing to do with skin color or other outward characteristics: They are entirely a matter of individual vibrations.

The material universe is no mere copy of the astral: It represents, rather, the necessary end product of cosmic creation. Without it, the subtler manifestations of energy, light, and thought would dissolve back again into Pure Consciousness. The material universe is, so to speak, the anchor of creation. It is like a stage play, written, rehearsed, and finally produced. Without final production, the energies of the actors,

stagehands, director, and others would scatter and the play itself, lacking final commitment on the part of the cast, would, as it were, be reabsorbed into the playwright's personality. The existence of matter is necessary for holding it all together. Matter ensures that the cosmic play will have a long run to packed houses.

It is said that even the gods (13) consider experience of the material world a blessing, for it grounds the understanding and enables the soul thereby to evolve more quickly toward the highest wisdom. Truths often have to be brought "down to earth" before they can be fully understood. Teachers and writers, also, find that giving outward expression to their ideas helps to clarify them.

Creation, Paramhansa Yogananda wrote in *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam Explained*, is like a building.(14) The causal universe is like the architect's blueprint. The astral universe is like the energy necessary for constructing the building. And the material universe is like the building itself.

The outward movement of Pure Consciousness into vibration is more like a cosmic dance than a static tableau. It has momentum, the force of which brings clarity to its causative ideas, then passes on from there to activating the ideas as light and energy. Finally, it crystallizes that activating energy in material forms. The planning and energy that went into the creation of the physical universe, though invisible now behind a thick screen of illusion, are nonetheless present at the heart of everything.

Few people give a thought to the skill and energy that went into constructing a building. Fewer still ponder the nuances of meaning in the architect's vision. Similarly, people rarely pause to wonder how and for what purpose the universe came into existence.

A small child, knowing nothing of the process by which a building is constructed, might assume that buildings simply appear wherever people want them. In the same way, the children of Brooklyn used to believe that milk simply appeared on their doorsteps in bottles. At that time a cow was the most popular exhibit at the Bronx Zoo. To the children, it represented a miracle explained.

What Is a Miracle?

There are two common explanations for the Creation. One is, "There was this Big Bang, see, and it all just happened. Why? Well, it just happened, for no reason at all." The other explanation is that God simply "made" everything. How? Well, it was a miracle. Who needs an explanation for miracles'?

Yet the mind isn't satisfied with either explanation. If the universe simply exploded into being, why is there not chaos? Why are there natural laws, such as gravitation, that maintain order among the galaxies and star systems? And why are the same laws operational everywhere? Doesn't it seem that the laws themselves predated the very existence of matter: that ideation preceded form?

As for miracles, what is a miracle? It is simply a phenomenon waiting to be explained. Television would have been a miracle to the people in medieval times. For that matter, the fact that it doesn't seem miraculous to us now isn't because most of us understand it. We accept it because it is commonplace. There is no such thing, really, as a bona fide miracle. There are only different workings of cosmic law.

If the mysteries of creation seem irrelevant to our present human needs, my purpose in discussing them is not abstract, but practical and immediate. Even the discoveries astronomers have made regarding distant stars and galaxies have had many practical consequences for mankind.

Science will never be able to trace the genesis of the universe to its ultimate source, for it is obliged by its own disciplines to approach reality from its periphery, not from its center. Creation, on the other hand, is like a living tree: It is a radiation outward from its center in Pure Consciousness. The mysteries of cosmic creation can be solved only by people who, in deep meditation, succeed in penetrating to the core of their own being—which, they find, is the center of Being everywhere.

Creation, as the great masters explain it, puts into perspective certain vitally important aspects of our own lives. Their explanation clarifies how we can heal ourselves and others; how we can be more creative; how we can attract inspiration at will, and generate the magnetism by which to draw success to ourselves. Above all, it explains how we can develop spiritually without waiting passively for a benign Providence to make it all happen for us.

The "missing link" between mind and body, between an idea and its fulfillment, and between aspiration and success is in every case the same thing: energy.

Energy and Will

Try a simple experiment: Raise your right arm. Sec? All you need do is mentally tell it to rise, and it rises.

Now then, try something else. Tell your arm to rise, but don't send any energy to make it do so. What happens? It hasn't moved, has it?

Try something else: Send energy to the arm, but don't tell the arm to rise. Again, you see? No movement.

We all know that the mind acts upon the body. Medical science accepts that it can sometimes heal the body, too. Happiness has been known to cure. Depression has been known to make people ill.

What is not generally known is the way the mind acts on the body. Moving a limb is so commonplace an act that people take it for granted. What makes it obey our commands? We don't even bother to ask.

Yet nothing purposeful occurs on its own. There is a missing link here. Why can I tell my arm to rise, and expect it to obey, whereas if I tell a cup on my kitchen table to rise, it won't? It isn't only that my nervous system connects the brain to the arm. It's that I can send energy through the nerves to the arm with my command that it rise.

The mind cannot act directly upon the body. It must act through the medium of energy. The will first acts upon the energy. The energy then acts upon the body. This process is basically like the process of cosmic creation itself. It is the way our bodies were made: Cosmic thought, through cosmic energy, and finally through the agency of our individual karma, willed the creation of the body.

The mind continues to control the body through the medium of energy. Automatic functions, such as digestion and breathing, are carried on for the most part without our conscious involvement, but under the guidance of the subconscious mind.

When we become ill, the cause of our illness lies primarily in a disruption of the energy-flow from the mind. The metaphysical cause of disease, Paramhansa Yogananda stated, is a conflict between the upward and downward movements of energy in the spine: the one, toward affirmation; the other, toward negation. The greater this conflict, the more it weakens the flow of energy in the body, and projects subtle vibrations of disturbance.

As the How of energy depends on the mind, so the strength of that (low depends on our mental strength. The elimination of the inner conflict Yogananda described results in a greatly strengthened will, and therefore in a greatly increased How of energy. For the will is like a rheostat: It can diminish the energy-flow by our unwillingness or disinterest, or increase that flow immeasurably by our willingness and enthusiasm.

Paramhansa Yogananda put it axiomatically: The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy. You can test the truth of this statement very easily. Simply tense your biceps. The more you will energy to the biceps, the harder it will tense. The same principle acts in reverse, also: The more you withdraw your will from the muscle, telling it to relax, the deeper will be the relaxation.

The analogy of a rheostat is helpful for another reason also. A rheostat reduces the lighting in a room by obstructing the flow of electricity; it doesn't increase that flow by augmenting the natural voltage in the line. Many people make the mistake of trying to increase their will power by straining the mind, as though it were a muscle. Their effort is evident in their furrowed foreheads and fiercely knitted eyebrows. Strain is counterproductive. You may find it helpful to emphasize willingness, rather than exerting your will power grimly. For the will, to be maximally effective, must be relaxed. Simply focus your mind with complete concentration on anything you want to accomplish. Paramhansa Yogananda defined will power as "desire plus energy directed toward fulfillment."

You can energize your body at will. For its energy doesn't depend on food, air, and sunlight alone. We live surrounded by an ocean of cosmic energy, and draw on it to a greater or lesser extent all the time, depending on our will power, or willingness, and on the clarity of our awareness. This energy enters our bodies just as it did in the creation of the body, through the medulla oblongata. For this reason, too, you will find it helpful during meditation to deepen your awareness of the medulla.

The Importance of Energy

Energy is the cornerstone of the yoga teachings. Many meditation teachings insist that to rise above body-consciousness one should ignore the body altogether. In so doing they demonstrate philosophical purity, but fall short of rational clarity. The fact is, we cannot afford to ignore the body. We must eat to stay alive. We must breathe, sleep, and in many ways respond to the body's needs. Even if our goal in life is to meditate, we may as well accept that our bodies are real to us in our present state of existence. They can be ignored only at our peril.

An airplane pilot, before flying, may be mentally already soaring in the heavens, but he knows that to fly safely the essential parts of the plane must be checked carefully to make sure they are functional.

Vagueness in meditation produces vague results. Similarly, vagueness in our interaction with the body produces only vague success in our attempts to rise above body-consciousness. Better than ignoring the body is to understand how body-consciousness obstructs meditation, and then to remove the actual cause of that obstruction.

Energy is the link, usually missed, between body and mind. For lack of awareness of the energy, many meditators never get off the ground, metaphorically speaking. That is why Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, addressing this particular controversy, says, "O Arjuna, be thou a yogi!"

Energy, the communicating link between body and mind, also ties the mind down to the body if we simply ignore its existence. Imagine a balloon secured to the ground by guy lines. The balloonist, to rise in the air, must release the guy lines.

In meditation, trying to rise while ignoring the energy-link between mind and body is like increasing the quantity of helium in a balloon in the hope of eventually bursting the guy lines. Why not do both? Increase your rising devotion, of course, but at the same time take practical steps to withdraw the energy from the senses.

Meditators do occasionally achieve success in meditation without taking practical steps to withdraw their energy from body-consciousness, but it is because they have inadvertently brought the energy under control by their devotional fervor. Such results, for lack of practical awareness of the process involved, are uncertain. The very process of bursting the guy lines of energy by strengthening the upward pull upon them damages the body. Why not take a little extra trouble? Simply untie the ropes!

Let me take another example: If a garden hose is bent double, the hose may be damaged if the flow of water is increased. We see in the lives of many saints that they underwent great physical suffering as they developed spiritually. So common is this occurrence that physical suffering has been made almost a demonstration of sainthood! It needn't be so. Much of this suffering—not all of it, for suffering is also necessary to the development of wisdom—would have been avoided had they been more cognizant of the way the energy (flows in the body).

The Fourth Stage: Pranayama

The fourth stage of meditation is called Pranayama in Sanskrit. Pranayama means "control of the body's energy." This stage is important because, to attain soul-freedom, the energy must be calmed, then directed inward from the senses to the brain.

Two things are important for bringing the energy under control: awareness, and will power. The greater the will, the greater the flow of that energy. And the greater the awareness of that energy, the easier it will be for us to redirect it toward the Spiritual Eye.

Paramhansa Yogananda created a unique system, which he called "energization exercises," to help people in attaining this energy-control. His system helps to direct energy to the body and, afterward, to withdraw it again from the body in meditation. These exercises give awareness of the energy, and, by means of that awareness, the ability to manipulate its flow in the body at will.

By practicing these exercises daily, you'll develop exceptional ability to heal your body, and even—a subject I'll discuss in the next chapter—to achieve success in your outward undertakings. You'll find it possible to attract desired opportunities, and to draw inspiration at will.

I've experienced the effectiveness of these exercises many times, in little ways and in great. Here is one example a little one.

Five months ago, I underwent open heart surgery to replace a faulty valve. The day before surgery, as I was being prepared for the operation, I addressed an urgent task: the editing of the foreword to a new book of mine, which was due to go to the printer immediately. The day following surgery, my mind still wanting to accept the cloudiness caused by the general anesthesia, I brushed aside the fog and completed the task. It would have been much more difficult for me to cut through the mental mist had I not known and practiced these principles for many years.

The energization exercises, to be learned effectively, require demonstration. If you'd like to learn them (the entire set requires about ten to twelve minutes to complete), I suggest you visit or write to Ananda Europa, info@ananda.it, www.ananda.it.

For now, let me suggest you practice just one exercise from this system:

Stand upright. Inhale slowly, gradually tensing the whole body (low, medium, high) to the point where it vibrates. Gaze upward at the point between this eyebrows, and with concentration feel the energy flowing into the body through the medulla oblongata. Hold the tension for a few moments, and consciously fill the whole body with energy. Then exhale and slowly relax (medium, low, completely), feeling the energy as it withdraws from the body parts. Always tense with will, then relax and feel.

Anytime you feel a need to energize, or to heal, an individual body part, tense that part with will power, sending energy to it from the medulla; then relax it, as I've described doing with the whole body, and feel the energy withdraw.

While tensing, be aware of the body inwardly, not outwardly. Concentrate in the center of any part you are tensing. Once you become inwardly aware of that tension, you will gradually become aware of the energy creating it. The more aware you are of the energy, the greater will be your control over it.

Meditation Exercise

I suggested earlier that you begin your meditation by tensing and relaxing the body two or three times. Let me now suggest that you bring greater will power and deeper awareness to this practice.

The best way to relax the body in meditation is consciously to withdraw the energy from it. Pranayama techniques in yoga books usually focus on breathing exercises. Prana is also, in fact, the Sanskrit word for "breath"; there exists a close connection between the breath and the energy, or li le-force. Those breathing exercises are particularly useful in helping to raise the energy in the spine.

For now, try again the exercise I recommended earlier: Inhale, gradually tensing the whole body until it vibrates. Be fully aware of the energy behind that tension and

vibration. Then exhale forcibly and relax, releasing the energy from the muscles. With relaxation, feel the energy withdrawing from the body. Repeat this exercise two or three times. Then take several deep, slow breaths, as I've suggested before: Inhale counting to 12, hold counting to 12, exhale counting to 12. Then, with deep relaxation, draw the energy up the spine by concentration at the point between the eyebrows.

Meditate on space, and on the feeling of freedom from body-awareness. Direct your energy with joyfull will power and devotional fervor through the Spiritual Eye in the forehead, out into Infinity.

The Divine Magnetic Diet, Yogananda

(from Yogoda Super-advanced Course, Lesson 5, 1930)

Physical and mental methods to rejuvenate body cells and awaken the latent powers of the mind and the inner forces of the soul

What distilled water is to a wet battery, food is to the body battery. The life energy in the body battery is derived from Cosmic Energy through the medulla, and from food. The life energy in the body breaks up the foods and converts them into energy also. It is the intricate task of the life force to distill more life force from the nourishment taken into the body. Therefore, one's dietary should be confined to foods which are easily converted into energy, or which are productive of fresh energy. Oxygen and sunshine should have a very important place in people's lives, because of their direct energy-producing quality. The more you depend on the will and on Cosmic Energy to sustain you, the less your food requirements; the more you depend on food, the weaker your will and the less your recourse to Cosmic Energy.

The magnetic diet consists of such food substitutes as rays and oxygen which can be easily assimilated and converted into energy by the latent life forces in the body. Magnetic foods give energy more quickly than solids and liquids which are less easily converted into life force.

When you are tired or hungry, take a sun bath, and you will find yourself recharged with ultraviolet rays, and revived; or inhale and exhale several times outdoors or near an open window, and your fatigue will be gone. A fasting person who inhales and exhales deeply twelve times, three times a day, recharges his body with electrons and free energy from air and ether. Contact of food and oxygen with the inner bodily system is necessary if the life force is to convert the food and oxygen into energy. The life force can assimilate oxygen more quickly than it can assimilate solids or liquids.

Practice the following exercise three times a day: Exhale slowly, counting from 1 to 6. Now, while the lungs are empty, mentally count from 1 to 6. Inhale slowly, counting from 1 to 6. Then hold the breath, counting from 1 to 6. Repeat eleven times.

Just as electricity passes through a rod made of a conductive substance, and electrifies it, so the body battery becomes fully charged with life force derived from oxygen. People who perform breathing exercises always have shining, magnetic eyes. One hour's sun bath is also a part of the magnetic diet.

The ultraviolet rays which one absorbs in one whole day on a bathing beach exert a beneficial vitalizing effect on the body, which lasts about three months. Sores and wounds can be cured by exposing them one-half hour daily to the sunlight.

Treatment with artificially produced ultraviolet and infrared rays also supplies the body with magnetic nourishment. Much benefit may be derived from it if it is taken under the guidance of a specialist.

Ordinary window glass prevents the sun's ultraviolet rays from penetrating into a room. Living in a sun room enclosed by yellow quartz glass, through which the ultraviolet sun rays penetrate, would supply the human body with magnetic spiritual nutriment and make it in turn spiritually magnetic. A man living in a room enclosed by red quartz glass would find brute force developing within himself.

Each one of the many billions of cells within the human body is a tiny mouth taking nourishment. The life force, identified with the body, creates within us a desire to derive energy from the circulation and from meat and other foods taken into the stomach. The life force must be trained to draw energy from subtler sources. The body's energy requirements can be supplied partly by sunshine and oxygen, which are absorbed by the pores. For this reason, the surface of the skin must be kept scrupulously clean at all times.

Exercising with will and concentration produces excellent results because it creates energy directly, by will development. This energy is quickly absorbed by the muscles, blood, bones, and sinews, for cellular rejuvenation. Therefore, the highest degree of energy accompanied by the least tissue destruction is derived from the Yogoda will exercises (Lessons 1 to 3).

Occasionally charging the body with electricity by holding on to two electrodes of a battery is a good method for supplying the body with free energy. (The electric current should be very weak.) Bathing in sunlight-heated or ultra-violet-ray-saturated water is very beneficial.

Rubbing the whole stripped body vigorously and rapidly with the palms before taking a bath generates life force and is also very beneficial.

If a weak man wrestles or lives in the same room with a strong, vital individual, he absorbs some of the latter's vital and mental magnetism. For this reason young and old people should mingle and thus exchange magnetism. Different people have different kinds of vitality. Always try to discover new methods for getting direct energy qualities from different individuals.

As a rule, the word "food" is used only in connection with material nourishment, but there are other kinds of food: mental energy, or concentration, and Divine Wisdom. The first (material food) recharges the body battery; the second (concentration), the mind battery, the third (Divine Wisdom), the soul battery.

Not only are proper material foods in the right combinations necessary for the sustenance of the body, but they exert a decided influence on the brain. The spiritual brain, the active brain, and the material brain are all affected by food, and can form different combinations: (1) spiritually-active brain, (2) intellectually-active brain, and (3) material-active brain.

All food that is eaten produces a sensation on the palate as well as certain chemical effects in body and brain. Food sensations determine a specific mentality. Foods such as dried meat produce gross material reactions which develop the material brain and animal mind. Likewise, the eating of active, vital foods, such as onions, garlic, fresh (not dried) meat, etc., produces an active brain. Eating raw fruits and vegetables produces spiritual qualities in the consumer and develops a spiritual mind and brain.

The quality of the food's taste and color is all reported to the brain through the nerves of taste and sight, and is experienced as specific pleasant or unpleasant sensations. These sensations are elaborated into perceptions and conceptions. Repeated conceptions about foods form definite mental habits and manifest themselves as material, active, or spiritual qualities.

While we know that material foods supply the body with energy, we must also remember that good thoughts are nourishing food for the mind, and thoughts of any other nature are poisonous to the health of body and mind.

Have you ever analyzed your magnetic mental diet? It consists usually of the thoughts which you are thinking as well as the thoughts you are receiving from the close thought contact with your friends. Peaceful thoughts and peaceful friends always produce healthy, magnetic minds. It is easy to tell whether a person feeds on a quarrelsome or a peaceful environment. Inner disquietude and worries, due to the wrong sort of friends or unappreciative immediate relatives, produces an unwholesome, gloomy mind.

"The Five Pranas" Outline Notes, Yogananda

Advanced Course on Practical Metaphysics (1926)

Prana means Life Energy. There are two kinds of Prana.

- the Cosmic Energy, the source of all living things.
- the specific Prana or energy pervading each human body.

The Cosmic Energy is the cause of the creation of planets and all living organisms.

The Life Energy in the body of all organisms is secretly supplied by the Cosmic Energy. But the Life Energy loses this contact the more it becomes individualized, selfish, body-bound, ignoring its Cosmic Connection.

The Cosmic Energy is finer than Electrons or any other vibratory force existing in Nature, and is conscious (but not self-conscious). It is the missing link between Consciousness and matter.

The Spirit vibrating outwards first becomes Cosmic Consciousness, then as it vibrates into grosser states, it becomes Conscious Cosmic Energy, followed by the grossest material vibration or matter. Hence the connecting link between the human consciousness and the gross body is established by the specific Life Energy.

The Soul vibrates into Consciousness, Consciousness vibrates into Life Energy, which in turn vibrates into the gross human body. Hence those that do not understand

the functions of Life Energy find a great difference between mind and matter, or ignorantly deny the existence of matter.

Mind exists, matter exists, both are vibrations of Spirit. Invisible mind vibrating as Life Energy is converted into gross matter. Matter does not exist as it appears to us, it is nothing but vibrations of Life-Energy which in turn are vibrations of Consciousness.

To be able to understand the five functions of Life Energy is to be able to dematerialize the body into its original constituent principles.

The Life Energy in general as present in the human body is spoken of as Prana in Sanskrit; it is conscious Energy, it builds the human body out of a spermatozoon. Its seat in the human body is the Medulla.

- Pran Current - helps crystallization
- Byan - circulation
- Saman - assimilation
- Udan - metabolism
- Apan – elimination

What Sustains the Body? Yogananda

Question: What sustains the body besides food'?

Answer: The word "food" is usually used in connection with material nourishment, but there are other kinds of food, namely, mental energy (or concentration) and divine wisdom. Material food recharges the body battery, concentration, the mind battery; divine wisdom, the soul battery.

What distilled water is to a wet battery, food is to the body battery. The life energy in the body battery is derived from cosmic energy as well as from material food. In reality, the life energy in the body breaks up the food and converts it into energy.

Each one of the many cells in the human body is a tiny mouth taking nourishment from various sources. All foods that are eaten produce a sensation on the palate as well as certain chemical effects in body and brain. Food sensations determine a specific mentality. While we know that material foods supply the body with energy, we must also remember that good thoughts are nourishing for the mind, and evil thoughts are poisonous to the health of body and mind.

Oxygen and Sunshine

Oxygen and sunshine should have a very important place in our life because of their direct energy-producing qualities. Just as electricity passes through a rod made of conductive substance and electrifies it, so our body battery becomes fully charged with life energy derived from oxygen.

On the other hand, the more you depend upon your will power and upon cosmic energy to sustain you, the less you will require material food; the more you depend upon material food, the weaker will become your will power and the less your recourse to cosmic energy.

--Inner Culture, September 1939

The Art of Rejuvenation, Yogananda

We come now to the Instructions on Recharging the Body Battery, by which you may learn how to draw more and more life-sustaining energy from the ether, and depend less and less upon solids, liquids, sunshine, and gases for sustenance. However, we shall first give a few hints about the outer sources of energy for sustaining the human body battery, before passing on to the method of recharging the body with energy from the Inner Source.

With the knowledge furnished you in this series of instructions, you will be able to eliminate the interruptions which might otherwise come through the demands of your body, and gradually become perfect physically as well as mentally and spiritually. Instantaneous perfection in body, mind, and soul must inevitably appear when perfect understanding is reached. It is the inevitable law of God.

Change does not mean annihilation. It means certain changes of motion which we, as human beings, fear and dislike. The nature of matter is change. The nature of Spirit is changelessness. The first process in rejuvenating the physical body, is to supply it with the sixteen elements of food chemicals which it needs, plus sunshine from regular sun baths and good oxygen, and from regular, proper breathing. While walking

every day, inhale, counting one to twelve. Hold the breath twelve counts, then exhale, counting one to twelve. This may be done up to twenty-four times every time you walk. Everyone must have at least a half-hour sun bath twice a week, or preferably every day. (This amount of time for sun bathing should be gradually built up to one-half hour, and regulated according to your skin tolerance for sun rays.)

The human body, which looks so compact and solid, is in fact nothing but a bundle of motions. It is a bundle of forces whirling together in ultra-rapid motion. The solid flesh is made of very tiny cells, blood corpuscles, and particles. The bones are made of small cells, particles of water, and other chemicals. This superstructure of flesh and bones has, on the external side, been made dependent upon the ultra-violet rays in the sunshine, and upon oxygen, good food, and pure liquids, such as water, fruit juices, and so forth.

Ordinarily, people concentrate upon food, air, and sunshine only in order to keep the body well, but a time comes to everyone when health fails in spite of all the outer means of good food and air supplied to it. Then it is realized that the body battery has to be recharged by the Inner Source also.

“Man Shall Not Live By Bread Alone ”

Jesus said: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word which proceedeth out of the Mouth of God. ”

“Bread”, or, in other words, any kind of food, alone does not support life. If it alone supported life, you could put it into the body of a dead man, lay him out in the sun, and expect him to come to life. The power which creates life, the force which enables the body organs to be converted into energy — that is the direct source of life.

An automobile battery depends for its life not upon its indirect outer source of distilled water alone, but upon the vibrating electric current which flows into it from the dynamo through the mouth of the wires (the direct inner source). Jesus centuries ago, gave utterance to the great Truth when He said that man's body battery is charged by “The Word of God”, (Inner Energy) and not by outer sources alone. Like the automobile battery, it can be said: “Man's body battery does not live by the indirect outer source only of bread, oxygen, solids, and liquids, sunshine, and so forth, but by the vibrating life current which flows into the body from the invisible Dynamo of Cosmic Energy surrounding the body, through the “Mouth of God”, or through the medulla oblongata and the will (the direct inner source) .

The Original Praecepta Lessons teach that just as an automobile battery needs both distilled water and electricity to keep it alive, so the body battery needs recharging with life force through the medulla as well as food and the physical means of sustaining life.

It is electricity that charges the distilled water into the force that recharges an automobile battery, and it is life energy that converts oxygen, solids, and liquids into the force that keeps us alive; solids and liquids develop into what they are by this same energy and when you put them into your stomach, they must again be converted into energy before they are of any use to the body: furthermore, when the energy that is in them is taken out, the residue of this mass of material is forced out of the body as waste material, through the pores, the intestines, and the kidneys. Just as distilled water, the outer source of sustenance, alone will not sustain life in the automobile battery or bring

life back, so oxygen, solids, liquids, and sunshine alone will not help a dead body battery. It must also have life energy.

God The Original Source Of Energy, Or Life Force

The medulla is the original source of intake of the Life Force as it comes from God. The medulla is the “Mouth of God” because that is where God breathes the Life Force into you. Do not confuse this with the passage that says: “God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul”. You shall learn all about that in the Praeceptum on the “Garden of Eden”.

Every part of the body can be operated upon by the surgeon, except the medulla. Have you ever heard of a surgeon suggesting even the possibility of operating upon the medulla? No. If you were to touch it with the tiniest point of the smallest needle, you would be dead instantly. Heart? Of course the heart is quite commonly operated upon. The brain? Cerebral operations are far from rare. The spine? Yes, they puncture the spine sometimes and get what they call good results occasionally. But the medulla? Never. Why? Because it is the center of all the Centers of Life. It is the one center through which the life force enters the body, All other centers — heart, brain, and the centers of the spine, such as cervical, dorsal, lumbar, sacral, and the coccygeal, are but minor centers, receiving the life force through the medulla, and acting merely as distributing centers.

How To Recharge The Body With Energy

Science has proved that everything is being recharged by Cosmic Energy. The human body is surrounded by a halo of Conscious Cosmic Energy. The medulla oblongata is the antenna of the receiving station which receives the radiographed energy from the Cosmic Consciousness, and Cosmic Energy, through the human body radio operator -- the will. Just as ships on the sea, without wire connections, can be controlled by radio, so God's Intelligence, through vibrations of Cosmic Energy, is supplying our bodies with life force without visible connections.

God originally created Cosmic Vibration of Energy which, when once started, became perpetual, and you can, by your wireless will power, draw upon it and bring it into your body through the medulla. This Cosmic Energy, the same energy through which you and everything else in the universe were created, surrounds and permeates all Creation within and without all the time. It enters through the “Mouth of God” and is the invisible “Word” which sustains life of all kinds.

You will find in this series of Lessons the knowledge by which you will learn to live more and more by calling upon the eternal supply of Cosmic Energy, which is ever available to us, which is within and without, and is always all about us, and thus recharges the body at any and all times with vitality. With this knowledge, the body may be made fit in all respects, and a perfect body, free from disease, presents less resistance to the methods and practices by which self realization is reached, and by which the human consciousness, as well as the body, is raised to the fatigueless state.

The material human consciousness cannot grasp the Universal Christ Consciousness within itself, no matter how desirous it is to do so, but when the student, by the methods of self realization, through concentration and meditation, enlarges the caliber of his consciousness and raises its quality, he can perceive the Universal Consciousness in all atoms. This is what is meant by “received Him”. Thus, according

to Jesus, all souls can actually find their souls one with Christ consciousness, by intuitive self realization. They can know themselves as “sons of God”.

On the internal side, these living cells, which constitute the flesh, bones, and all tissues, are kept rejuvenated by thoughts and by biological forces. In the inner spiritual source, including subconsciousness, superconsciousness, Christ consciousness and Cosmic consciousness. The vital sparks are condensed sparks of God's thoughts. Therefore we see that the physical body is really a bundle of motions.

You should depend more and more upon the limitless supply of the inner source of Cosmic consciousness and less and less upon the other sources of the body energy. Eating all the time will make your body get old quicker, and the only way to keep the body really rejuvenated is to unite human consciousness and Cosmic consciousness through meditation. The mind must never have suggested to it the human limitations of sickness, old age, and death, but it should be constantly, inwardly told: “I am the Infinite, which has become the body. The body as a manifestation of Spirit, is the ever-youthful Spirit.”

Rejuvenation Of The Soul

Self realization is the KNOWING, in all parts of the body, mind, and soul, that we are now in the possession of the Omnipresence of God; that we do not have to pray that it comes to us; that we are not merely near it at all times, but that God's Omnipresence is our Omnipresence; that He is just as much a part of us now as He will ever be, and that all we have to do is improve our KNOWING.

Self realization may be, and is, attained by some people who are struggling with sick and otherwise imperfect bodies, but it cannot be attained unless you learn to concentrate and meditate uninterruptedly with God. Since it is difficult to concentrate and meditate while the aches and pains of the body continually have the attention of the mind, the path of self realization is made much easier if the imperfections of the body and the harmonious operations of its functions are arranged so that the mind need not at any time be interrupted in meditation through the demands of the physical body.

By constantly holding the peaceful after-effects of meditation in mind, by feeling immortality in the body, by believing in Eternal Life instead of beholding the illusory changes of this life, and by feeling the ocean of Immortal Bliss God underlying the changeable waves of experiences of past lives, and the waves of perceptions of childhood, youth, and age in this life, the soul can find not only perpetual rejuvenation in the soul, but also in the body, Just as soon as the body is found to be, not isolated from Spirit, but a number of rising, falling waves of vibrating currents in the ocean of Cosmic consciousness, then the perpetual rejuvenation of the Spirit can be implanted in the body if so desired.

Healing Laws

God wants His children to enjoy health and happiness, but they create disease and sorrow by breaking His laws. God is harmony, and when man, made in His image, tried to lead an inharmonious life, he hurts himself. God never punishes man. Man punishes himself by reaping the results of his self-created wrong actions.

There are diseases which result from breaking hygienic laws and the consequent bacterial invasion. There are maladies which result from disobeying the mental laws of Being, and the consequent attack of mental bacteria of fear, anger, worry, greed,

temptation, and lack of self-control. There are diseases which arise from the soul's ignorance.

Do not forget that ignorance is the mother of all physical, mental, and spiritual diseases. Abolish ignorance by contacting God; and forthwith body, mind, and soul will be healed of all maladies.

Dietary Hints

1. Fast one day a week on orange juice and take a suitable laxative (which is not a drug) prescribed by your doctor.

2. Observe the following suggestions as a dietary regime: In the morning, use orange juice and ground nuts. Luncheon should be the heaviest meal of the day. Combine for your lunch, 16 leaves of uncooked spinach, any fresh salad, any kind of cooked vegetable, any protein, except beef or pork, and whole wheat bread and butter. Milk should be taken between meals. At night use fruits of any kind and nuts.

3. A three-day fast once a month on orange juice with a laxative each day, will expel almost all poisons, and will do much to make the body strong, healthy, and youthful to the last days of life.

Weekly Inspiration

O, Conscious, Cosmic Energy, it is Thou who dost directly support my body. Solid, liquid, and gaseous foods are converted and spiritualized into energy by Thy Cosmic Energy, and it supports my body. Help me to learn, O Spirit, to live more and more by direct Cosmic Energy and less and less by food. Being energy, burning in the bulb of the senses, I recharge myself with Thy Cosmic Energy

Weekly Affirmation

“O Eternal Energy! Awaken within me Conscious Will, Conscious Vitality, Conscious Health, Conscious Realization. Good-will to all, Vitality to all, Good Health to all, Realization to all. Eternal youth of body and mind abide in me forever, forever, forever.”

--Praecepta Lesson 5, 1938

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The Art of Rejuvenation Part IV, Yogananda

We now come to the technique of recharging the hotly battery, by which you may learn how to draw more and more life-sustaining energy from tire ether, and depend less and less upon solids, liquids, sunshine, and gases for sustenance.

Food contains a limited part of Life Energy, hence we can extract strength from food, but if the internal supply of Life Energy is exhausted, food is of no use. Therefore, we should not only utilize the advice presented in the health culture division of the weekly Praecepta for the sustenance of the human body from the outer source of energy, but should also emphasize and daily apply the method of recharging the body with energy from the inner source.

Inner Source of Energy

The exercises in "The Art of Rejuvenation" show how to recharge the body battery by will, thus supplying energy from the inner source. Now comes the question: "How can we recharge the body battery?" First, lift your arm, then drop it. What lifted your arm? Will power and energy. Now close your eyes. Can you lift your arm without willing to do so? Can will power alone do it? No. It requires will power and energy. But do you know how will power and energy do this? The answer is: By flowing into the different parts of the body. We want healthy muscles, bones, marrow, blood, and tissues, and in each of these the energy is like a battery. The supply of energy depends upon the chemicals you take into the body and the energy taken in through the medulla. Good health does not consist in energization of the muscles alone. The cells in every body part must be energized. To teach you how to recharge the cells in every body part is the purpose of this series of Praecepta.

Now lift your arm. What is holding your arm up? Will power and energy, you say. Good. If you do not use will power to keep it up, it will drop. So also with energy. Will power is the switch which controls the flow of energy.

Exercise In General Tension

Sit on a chair. Tense the whole body and then relax, keeping the body motionless.

Then bend forward with arms down, and, clasping your hands together, hold an imaginary cord which is tied to an imaginary weight of 25 pounds. Now tense the hands and add the strength of the tensed hands to that of the tensed forearms. Then add the tensed upper arms; then add to them, tensed chest, abdomen, haunches, thighs, legs, and feet. Then will to lift the 25 pounds and *send* enough energy and will power to lift it one inch from the ground. Now tense harder and continue lifting the weight higher. It is very heavy. Now the imaginary weight has left the ground about an inch, two inches, six inches, on to one foot. Then drop your imaginary weight, relax your whole body, and sit back in your chair, relaxed and motionless.

When you grow stronger, lift imaginary weights of 30 to 40 pounds. The best way to know the exact amount of energy required to lift an imaginary weight of 25 pounds (or any amount) is to lift actually that weight and feel how much will and energy are required. Then relax. Then try to employ the exact amount of tension required to lift an imaginary weight of the same number of pounds.

Scientific Tension And Relaxation

Tension results when energy is sent by will power to any muscle. There are varying degrees of tension, depending upon the amount of energy sent to the muscles. We shall consider three degrees, which we shall call low, medium and high tension. Low is a small amount of energy; medium is more; and high is as much as possible. The withdrawal of energy from the muscles is called relaxation. This may also be in three stages or degrees; resulting in partial or complete relaxation.

Usually, you must relax before you tense. The popular method of relaxation results when you tell a person to relax while he is sitting, standing, or lying down, and he usually moves his limbs, and while keeping them tensed tries to rest. Then he thinks

he is physically relaxed. Even as an automobile standing at your door with the engine running, burns energy, so also, many people while sleeping, sitting, or lying down, are partly tensed, (low, medium, or high) according to their degree of mental nervousness, and are thus burning energy even when their bodies are apparently at rest.

When you move your body or arm to relax it, and keep moving it, you have not relaxed (withdrawn energy) but are really tensing (sending energy) to it instead.

Now after learning the art of producing relaxation and tension in any of the 20 body parts, the student must learn the greatest exercise for recharging the whole body.

--Praecepta Lesson 8, 1938

Christian Science and Hindu Philosophy, Part Two, Yogananda

Being mentally identified with food and body, man forgets that if the inner life-energy fails him, no amount of dieting or oxygenating the body can enable him to live. If the stomach of a dead man is stuffed with good food and his lungs are inflated with oxygen, he does not revive. Outwardly, food helps to keep life in the body, but life-force is maintained from within, and when the Cosmic Current fails to supply from within, no outward aid is of any avail.

Those who never fast do not know that man can live by the word of God, or energy flowing from God. Jesus fasted forty days in order to convince himself that his soul had risen above the bodily conditions. That's why he uttered when he was tempted by the material hunger-consciousness, "Man shall not live by bread alone," etc.

Hence the earlier stages of a week's fasting are marked by hunger, but as the days of fasting multiply, less hunger and more freedom from food are distinctly felt. Why? Because the soul is unconsciously made to depend on the inner source of supply by a forced denial of the external source of supply of food. But this method of fasting is only one of the physical methods of rising above the consciousness of matter. No spiritual aspirant should indiscriminately indulge in long fasts without expert advice. Partial fasting, by omitting one or two meals a day, or by a day's fasting every week, done with the sole purpose of forgetting food, and followed by deep meditation, is helpful in spiritual realization.

The Christian Scientist generally employs strong imagination, developed by study of Science and Health, in order to heal his physical diseases and convince himself of the non-existence of matter. But there is a more powerful element in man, says the Hindu teacher—the Will—by development of which man can convert his body into a dry battery, charging his body with life-current from within by the cosmic source, and living without food, chemicals or medicine. This requires long practice, and is difficult, but the easiest way is to learn to treat the body like a wet battery and live more by the vital force charged by the will from within, and less by material food.

The Will is the great inner generator of energy into the body. When one is unwilling to do his daily work one feels a lack of energy in the system. Whereas when one works incessantly but willingly, he feels full of energy within the body. Imagine if a man lying down quietly on a sofa does not will to move his limbs or muscles or does not will to imagine or think or feel, and goes on remaining in that passive state, can he live? No.

Hence the body movements and physical processes are initiated by will, consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, when one learns the higher metaphysical method, living by conscious energy and will, he can then know that mind-power is self-contained and may live without being conditioned by the requirements of the body.

--East-West magazine, July-August, 1926

Chapter Four: Will Power

“The will may be described as a single-pointed intention of the intellect, reinforced by energy”

Affirmations for Self-Healing: Will Power, Kriyananda

Will power, and not the vague abstraction luck, is the secret of true achievement. Will power, on subtle energy levels, generates what only looks like luck, by magnetically attracting to us opportunities. Our will is strengthened by removing from our minds the "no-saying" tendency: the obstructions of doubt, of laziness, and of fear-yes, even of the fear of success!

Will power is developed by persevering to the conclusion of whatever one attempts. One should start first with little undertakings, then proceed to bigger ones. Infinite will power comes from harnessing the little human will to God's infinite, all-powerful consciousness.

Affirmation

My will is to do that which is right to do. Part, all you mountains that stand in my way! Nothing can stop my progress!

Prayer

O Infinite Power, I will use my will, but guide Thou my will in everything I do, that it reflect Thy will.

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From The Art and Science of Raja Yoga – Chapter nine, Kriyananda

...To increase the energy flow to the brain is the chief purpose of yoga practice. For this purpose, many teachings are given, including right diet, postures, and breathing exercises. In the next lesson another aspect of this important subject will be explored, in a discussion of magnetism. But chiefly it must be said that both of the factors determining one's degree of awareness—the amount of energy flow to the brain, and the direction of that energy once it reaches the brain—depend upon one thing only: one's power of concentration. It is as necessary to concentrate one's available energy in the brain as it is to concentrate that energy, once it reaches the brain, on a single object, or state, of awareness.

Concentration is necessary also to the exercise of will power. The will may be described as a single-pointed intention of the intellect, reinforced by energy. The will, the intellect, and the power of concentration, all have their center in the ajna chakra, or Christ center, at the point between the eyebrows. They are, therefore, interrelated. Concentration applied to the question of what is, becomes intellect. Concentration applied to the question of what ought to be (as determined by the intellect), becomes will power. Intellect by itself is a more or less static faculty; generally it reflects one's feelings, and must therefore, on the spiritual path, be purified by devotion. When the will, instead of being focused on doing or accomplishing anything, is united inwardly to the purified intellect in a simple act of becoming, divine enlightenment ensues. That is

why the Bhagavad Gita says that during meditation, one should forsake all mental planning. So long as the will is engaged in thoughts of doing, even when the doing seems to be related to self-improvement, the mind will be directed outward from its true center. For we are already the Divine Truth itself. We have only to realize our true selves. The very act of becoming, spiritually speaking, implies only a complete recognition of, and identification with, realities which the intellect alone might hold impersonally at a distance. But in fact, where the will and the intellect are directed inward toward the soul by the power of deep concentration, their functions are no longer really separable from one another...

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The Art of Rejuvenation, Part II: Relation Of Will Power To Energy, Kriyananda

Praecepta Lesson 6 (1938)

Self realization is the knowing, in all parts of the body, mind, and soul, that we are now in possession of the Omnipresence of God; that we do not have to pray that it may come to us; that we are not merely near it at all times, but that God's Omnipresence is our Omnipresence; that He is just as much a part of us now as He ever will be, and that all we have to do is to improve our knowing.

To those who can consciously realize this every moment, no instruction can be given, for all knowledge is theirs; this is all there is to religion. For those who are not immediately able to comprehend this and consciously yield their existence to the recognition of this Truth, the simplicity of which forms the greatest bar to its acceptance and understanding, certain suggestions and methods are available by which complete understanding may be realized, and these methods comprise the work of the Original Praecepta Lessons.

The material human consciousness cannot grasp the Universal Christ Consciousness within itself, no matter how desirous it is to do so, but when the student, by the methods of the Original Praecepta Lessons, through concentration and meditation, enlarges the caliber of his consciousness and raises its quality, he can perceive the Universal Consciousness in all atoms. This is what is meant by "Received Him." Thus, according to Jesus, all souls can actually find their souls one with Christ Consciousness, by intuitive self realization. They will know that they are "Sons of God".

The Physical Body

The physical body is a combination of cells which are made of moving molecules. These cellular molecules are made of whirling atoms, protons, and electrons. These cellular and molecular atoms and electrons in turn are made of semi-intelligent sparks of God's thoughts. Therefore, we see that the physical body is a bundle of motions. On the surface of this body are found the chemical motions and dance of cells. Below the surface of the waves of chemical and cellular motions are found the dancing waves of molecular motion. Below the molecular motion move the waves of atomic motion. Below the atomic motion is found the electro-protonic motion. Below the electro-protonic motion are found the dancing waving sparks of vital forces. Below the

surface of the vital sparks lie the waves of sensation. Below the waves of sensation lie the waves of thought, feeling, and will-force. Below all the above layers of waves the Ego is found to remain hidden.

On the surface, the body appears to be a solid mass, occupying a small portion of space, but we see that these cellular waves are manifestations of a vaster area of dancing molecular waves. Likewise, the molecular waves are manifestations of a vaster area of atomic waves. The atomic waves are manifestations of vaster electro-protonic waves. The electronic waves are manifestations of vaster waves of vital force. The vital force is a manifestation of the vast forces of all forms of subconsciousness, superconsciousness, Christ Consciousness, and Cosmic Consciousness.

On the surface, the body as chemical motion is small and dependent upon chemicals drawn from the earth, and upon food, water, and sunshine, but on the internal side the body and its chemical cellular motions are nothing but condensed waves of Cosmic Consciousness. Therefore, the body as a solid substance occupies a very small space, but since the body on the internal side is condensed Cosmic Consciousness, it is very vast and ever omnipresent.

Tissue is the general name for all the different forms of materials of which the body is composed. Then again, the same invisible force biologically so arranges the cells that some form into hard bones wonderfully worked into a skeleton frame, around which the flesh can cling.

This superstructure of flesh and bones has, on the external side, been made dependent upon the ultra-violet rays in the sunshine, and upon oxygen, good food, and pure liquids, such as water, fruit juices, and so forth. On the internal side, these living cells, which constitute the flesh, bones, and all tissues, are kept rejuvenated by thoughts and by biological forces,

It is very strange that the chemical motions of the body have to be kept alive and dancing by the forces of food, chemicals, and sunshine, while it would be entirely possible to keep them alive and flooded with vitality from the inner source of Cosmic Consciousness, but the body, being motion, cannot live without motion: hence, it has to be kept stirred with life externally by food forces, and internally it has to be kept dancing with vitality derived from Cosmic Consciousness.

The Power Of Will

Mechanical exercises generally leach one to concentrate upon the muscles and to consider oneself a muscular Being only. They help to stimulate the animal consciousness in man and not his subtle nature. The Original Praecepta Lessons teach the science ignored by most exercises, it teaches its students how to concentrate upon their life energy and will power, awakening the consciousness of their subtle spiritual nature. It teaches its students that strength comes from within and not from the muscles, and that life does not depend solely upon food or exercise, but is sustained from the powers within. For example, a dead man artificially made to exercise with dumbbells does not become strong, nor does he live if his stomach is stuffed with food, since his Life Energy is absent.

The Original Praecepta Lessons teach one to spiritualize the body, which is the reflection of the Spirit. They teach one to consider himself as Life Energy and not a body consisting of bones and muscles with a certain weight. They show how by tension,

energy can be put forth in the body, and by relaxation it can be withdrawn from the body.

Since expenditure of Life Energy is involved in all processes of thought, feeling, and physical activity. Original Praecepta Lessons show one how to replenish the reckless expenditure of energy by tapping at its source. They teach that the seat of Life Energy is the medulla oblongata. They show that this Life Energy can be continually supplied to the body by stimulating it by the power of Conscious Will. The Will serves to bridge the gulf existing between the Life Energy in the body and the Cosmic Energy surrounding it. They teach one how to work without fatigue by keeping in touch with Cosmic Life Energy.

All your limbs and muscles are moved by the exercise of Will and Life Energy. The flow of Life Energy into the sensory nerves is caused by Divine Will and your own Will; into the motor nerves by your own Will. The greater the Will, the greater the flow of Life Energy into a particular body part. Angry men and angry animals manifest abnormal strength. This abnormal strength is not due to their muscles growing stronger within the short period of their anger. Their Will is stimulated by anger and causes an extra flow of Life Energy or strength into their muscles and bodies.

Most mechanical physical culture systems ignore the above facts, and because they use only unconscious mechanical Will, their exercises consist of muscle-bumping. Such exercises do not cause a sufficient flow of Life Energy into the muscles and tissues used. If you follow the teachings of Original Praecepta Lessons, you will learn how to vitalize every body cell.

Relaxation and Tension

The activity of life consists principally in expressing motion and consciousness in the muscles, limbs, and bodily organs.

Relaxation means the release of the energy and consciousness which have been employed by the entire body, or any of its parts, during mental or physical activity.

Man receives sensations coming from outside stimulation through his eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin surface by means of the impulses which travel through the sensory nerves, and he responds to sensations by sending energy back through the strings of motor nerves which causes tension or contraction of the muscles.

Tension results when you will to send energy to any muscle. Lift your right arm. Now ask yourself what powers are used in the lifting of the arm. You will say: "Will Power". But think, if your arm became paralyzed, your Will to lift it would still be present, but still you would not be able to raise it. Why? Because the energy could not flow freely through the nerves into the muscles of the arm. But if the arm were healed, you would again, be able to lift it by will power.

Look at your right arm resting at your side, throbbing with energy. Can you lift it without using will power? No, you cannot. Therefore, remember that you use both ENERGY and WILL POWER in the lifting and moving of the limbs or any part of the body .

Energy And Will Power

Experiment: Lift your right arm forward, shoulder high, parallel to the ground with palm up. Close your left hand and place it on your up turned right palm, pressing downward as if your left hand weighed about five pounds. Resist this pressure by tensing the right arm. Increase the pressure of the left hand to ten pounds. Will to hold it and increase the tension by willing to send more energy to the right arm. Now increase the pressure with the left hand to fifteen pounds and will to hold it by increasing the tension in the right arm to hold the greater weight. You can do this weightlifting exercise mentally, without pressure or use of weights, as explained below:

Relax and drop your arms to your sides. Again lift your right arm parallel to the ground with upturned palm. Hold it there. Now realize that a certain amount of will and energy holds your arm in this position. If you take the will power away from the uplifted right arm, the arm will fall, drawn by gravity, and will hang by your side, or it will fall if the nerves are suddenly cut or paralyzed, or if the energy is withdrawn.

Now raise your right arm and tense it as much as is required to hold an imaginary weight of five pounds. Then tense it stronger, to hold an imaginary increased weight of ten pounds. Then tense stronger still to hold an imaginary increased weight of fifteen pounds. Now relax and drop your arm.

When holding an actual or imaginary pressure or weight of five pounds, you have to will to hold it, and accordingly you use the amount of energy necessary to hold it. Likewise, when you will to hold an increased weight of ten pounds, you increase your will power and the amount of energy sent to the arm in order to hold the greater weight.

It may now be seen that we experience weight according to the degree of will power and amount of energy spent in lifting it. This experiment of lifting imaginary weights proves that an act of pure consciousness or Will produces actual energy in a body part. Will power is the invisible switch of consciousness which sends energy to any body part and produces tension in that part.

If you touch the two poles of an electric battery, your hands will be energized and tensed. If you drink milk or eat food when tired, you will feel added energy in your body. You produce this energy in the body through electricity or food, or through some outward material agency introduced in the body. But in tensing or energizing your right arm, or any body part, with Will, you produce energy in the arm or the body part purely by the power of consciousness or Will. By imagining that you are sending energy to the right arm, you may succeed in sending a faint current there, but it is only by will power that you can perceptibly send energy. By energizing through tension, the great link between consciousness (Will) and the body is found. By willing to energize the right arm, you (1) arouse energy felt as power, and then (2) you create tension in the muscles. This shows that consciousness (Will) is the prime factor in creating changes in the flow of energy to muscles or to any body parts.

Also, in lifting weights by will power, the great relation between Will and Energy is found. "The greater the Will, the greater the amount of energy and Tension in any body part."

Healing Laws

All that is necessary in rejuvenating the body is to supply it with the sixteen elements of food chemicals which it needs, plus sunshine from regular sunbaths and good oxygen, and from regular, proper breathing.

While walking every day, inhale, counting one to twelve. Hold the breath twelve counts, then exhale, counting one to twelve. Do that twenty-four times every time you walk.

Everyone must have at least a half hour sunbath twice a week, or preferably every day. The mind must never have suggested to it the human limitations of sickness, old age, and death, but it should be constantly, inwardly told: "I am the Infinite, which has become the body. The body as a manifestation of Spirit is the ever-youthful Spirit."

Breath and Life Force

This Lesson teaches the approach to God especially by harmonizing breath, Life Force, and mind. It also teaches that a balanced character is helpful in knowing God and in getting the best results from the practice of Spiritual exercises.

The breath is not life, but it is necessary to life because the red blood needs it and the dark blood has to be purified. Breath is the cord which ties the Soul to the physical body. One who can live without breath, as Jesus did in the tomb, can separate his Soul from breath slavery and body slavery.

The function of Life Force is to directly supply energy through the medulla and to store it up in the brain, and from there directly to give power to the heart, lungs, and diaphragm, and to every cell in the body. It is direct electric power in the cells which keeps them energized, working and functioning in a living way. The Life Force is the electricity of each body cell-battery, and breath, food, sunshine, and so on. are the distilled water of the cell-battery. Food and oxygen stuffed in a dead body cannot bring back life. Yet, in the state of suspended animation, the body can be kept alive indefinitely by spinal and mental energy only, without food and oxygen. Hindu saints have been buried alive beneath the ground for several months and have lived without food or oxygen, and after disinterment have regained consciousness and lived again.

The Life Force is the direct power which changes oxygen into Life Energy, but as dry batteries do not require electricity and distilled water, so by higher training the body is known to have been sustained by Life Force only (as in suspended animation).

But, because the Life Force, instead of drawing from its source in Cosmic Energy flowing through the medulla, draws energy from food, in mortal life it becomes sustained by food. Food is not the cause of the Life Force in the body, but it is one of the conditions by which life exists. In the same way, light helps in the reading of a book, and without light, reading is impossible, but the reading matter is not caused by the light. Likewise, without food it is hard to exist, yet Food is not the cause which creates life. Through habit, the body becomes used to depending upon food and breath. The more the body lives by Life Force, the less it needs to depend on food and oxygen.

From The Essence of Self-realization - Chapter eight, Kriyananda

"...To understand karma, you must realize that thoughts are things. The very universe, in the final analysis, is composed not of matter but of consciousness. Matter responds, far more than most people realize, to the power of thought. For will power directs energy, and energy in turn acts upon matter. Matter, indeed, is energy.

"The stronger the will, the greater the force of energy—and the greater, consequently, the energy's impact on material events. A strong will, especially if combined with awareness of the cosmic energy, can effect miracles. It can cure diseases, and make a person well. It can ensure success in any undertaking. The very seasons are obedient to the man of strong will power and of deep faith.

"Even unenlightened human beings shape their destinies, more than they themselves realize, according to the way they use their power of will. For no action is ever an isolated event. Always, it invites from the universe a reaction that corresponds exactly to the type and the force of energy behind the deed.

"Action originates in the will, which directs energy toward its desired end. This, then, is the definition of will power: desire plus energy, directed toward fulfillment.

"Energy, like electricity, generates a magnetic field. And that magnetic field attracts to itself the consequences of action.

"The binding force between human action and cosmic reaction is the ego. The consciousness of ego ensures that a person's actions will have personal consequences for himself. These consequences may be delayed, if the will power engendering a thought or deed was not powerful enough to have immediate results, or if its thrust was thwarted by other, conflicting energies. Sooner or later, however, every action, whether of body, of thought, or of desire, must reap its final reaction. It is like a circle completing itself.

"Thus, man, made as he is in the image of God, becomes in his turn a creator.
"...

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How to Work Without Fatigue, Yogananda

To work without fatigue is a universal desire of mankind. Some people can work hard with little fatigue; others tire easily. In the absence of any other cause, it is often assumed that persons who have abundant energy must have been born strong; and that those who suffer from fatigue must have been born weak. There is some truth in this theory, that our normal energy level is the result of hereditary or congenital causes that have trailed us since birth. But when we begin to understand the total being that is man, we realize that he is no simple physical organism. Within him are many powers whose potential he employs in greater or lesser degree in accommodating himself to the conditions of this world. Their potential is vastly greater than the average person thinks.

Man learns to work with whatever energy is at his command, usually without understanding whence it comes. He only knows that when he becomes fatigued he wants to rest or to have something to eat or drink, because these measures give him some relief. It is generally true that a tired person feels better after eating or resting; but as the body grows older, a time comes when no amount of food or rest restores strength. Clearly, something happens to the body that causes the material sources of life to fail us. Hence we should analyze and understand the physiology of the body, that we may know how it recuperates, and from what sources it derives energy and strength.

The most commonly thought of source of bodily energy is food, which consists of solids and liquids. When they are taken into the stomach, the bodily machine breaks them down into simpler chemical substances, and finally into energy. Solids can be converted into liquids, liquids into gas, and gas into energy. Therefore all food, whether solid or liquid, is essentially energy. Fatigue means that too much bodily energy has been spent; it must be restored, and nourishing food is one source of energy replacement.

God created in nature an abundant variety of edible vegetables, fruits, grains, and other foods, everything necessary for man. Man cannot bring forth even a grain of wheat, much less a new plant or fruit. Only God can do this, he has to originate the species first. Man can only modify what already exists, as Luther Burbank did.

Cultivated Tastes Versus Natural Hunger Instincts

God also gave man water, in the mountain spring; and milk to nourish him, in the cow and in the human mother. From the moment of birth man instinctively seeks these natural sources of sustenance. The impulse of hunger stirs the impulse to eat. Had God not given us the hunger-impulse, we would not eat at all.

Man unwisely perverts his natural hunger and sense of taste through misuse. The theory that hunger is the result of the habit of eating is true, at least, of the greedy person. Greed is a mental hunger. If one lives naturally, he has no desire to eat more than a normal diet, and his taste preferences are also normal. The abnormal appetite created by greed kills untold numbers of men and women. During the era of the Roman Empire great feasts were indulged in by the wealthy. A special room was provided where, after eating, they could go to vomit so that they could continue their feasting. Such is the debasement of greed!

We see all kinds of eccentricities in man whenever he becomes a criminal against his own welfare through misuse of the senses. When man forgets the purpose of

an action and clings rather to the action by which the end is to be accomplished, he makes a grave mistake. Hunger and taste were given to man to help him select the proper quantity and right type of food to sustain his body in a healthful way; but wrong habits of living and eating have distorted this natural dietary instinct, creating preferences that are not always best for him. Something that tastes good and fills the stomach doesn't necessarily satisfy bodily needs. Since food is an important carrier of energy into the body, it is best to ensure a good supply of energy through proper eating. In a boiled dinner most of the vitamins have been destroyed; you will tire easily on such a diet. Fresh raw food is better because the vitamins are still present. Many vitamins are destroyed by the heat of the cooking and canning process. Hence a diet in which such foods predominate is not sufficiently nourishing to fill the needs of the body.

The stomach and digestive tract distill the chemicals from our food and distribute them to the proper types of cells throughout the system. The body is composed of various chemical elements, and you should see that your diet replenishes these elements every day. A good diet should contribute as many of the necessary elements as possible at every meal. Get sufficient protein, many vitamins and minerals, some fats and oils, and some natural carbohydrates (but few refined starches and sugars).

Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Vital to Health

Meat protein is not the only vital source of energy. Some of the mineral salts that are found in fresh uncooked vegetables and fruits are important sources also. A large serving of steak will give plenty of energy, it is true, but a preponderance of meat in the diet, if continued for a long period of time, ceases to give strength. Overmuch heavy protein results in protein poisoning, a cause of fatigue and also disease. Too much protein is just as harmful as too little.

If you want to be rid of fatigue, then one remedy is to eat properly. Remember that meat may give strength temporarily, but it loads the body with poisons. By eating more raw foods you will have less cause for fatigue, and therefore an abundance of energy. Whenever the body feels tired, drink a glass of pineapple or orange juice; it will give you much energy. Whole fruits and vegetables are even more nutritious than their juices, but most people won't take the time to consume them this way. An excellent energy provider is orange juice with finely ground almonds mixed in. Nuts are more readily assimilated in combination with orange juice.

Remember, it is important to drink an abundance of liquids. When good water is unavailable, fresh fruit juices, coconut water, and watermelon provide an excellent supplement and partial substitute. In the future, more and more people will drink fruit and vegetable juices, to their benefit.

Do not forget to include some butter and milk in your diet. Milk should be taken separately from meals; best not to drink it with other food. Milk has helpful laxative properties, but its mucus-aggravating tendency is not good for those who have sinus trouble. Orange juice, also, can be an irritant for those who have sinus problems or frequent colds. In some cases, too much orange juice may even cause colds. Many persons afflicted with these troubles have found great improvement by omitting regular intake of orange juice from their diet, upon my advice. Although lemon has excellent disinfecting qualities, it similarly aggravates sinus irritation.

There is nothing more satisfying than bread made from freshly ground whole wheat. Although persons with a tendency toward phlegm should generally avoid starches, whole wheat bread may be taken, if thoroughly toasted.

Constipation is another cause of fatigue, which is related to the accumulation of poisons in the body as well as to the energy from food. If you are constipated, use some kind of laxative, preferably a natural one. If you keep your body free from poisons you will not be fatigued. It is the poisons in the body that make you feel tired.

Any kind of drug, also, will fatigue you, just as the narcotic opium saps the work initiative of its addicts. They don't want to do anything but sleep and dream.

A most important way to eliminate fatigue is to conserve the sex vitality. The single person should be fully self-controlled, and married couples should be moderate in their sexual relations. Tremendous vitality, both physical and mental, is lost through promiscuity or overindulgence.

Exercise Removes Fatigue

Exercise daily. Lack of exercise causes fatigue; regular exercise removes fatigue.

When you exercise, you expend some energy, but you get back much more—if you don't overdo it. Proper exercise vitalizes the body; over exercise and violent exercise cause fatigue. The body should be charged with only as much energy as it can stand. For example, 2,000 volts of energy sent through an ordinary electric bulb will burn it out, but will not harm a bulb made to stand that much current. Similarly, the body absorbs a beneficial amount of energy from proper exercise, but over exercise causes fatigue because it creates toxins faster than they can be handled by the system.

After forty you should be careful not to undertake any form of exercise for which your system has not been kept properly conditioned. Walking is good, and swimming is excellent; but strenuous exercise should be avoided. It will only cause greater fatigue, because it overstrains the capacity of the body to handle the sudden expenditure of energy. By gradually strengthening your body you can enjoy strenuous exercise, but a person of lifelong sedentary habits should not try to be an acrobat at sixty; he will burn out his system.

Sufficient sleep helps to give energy. I think six or seven hours of sleep is enough.

After that you don't actually sleep; you drug the body. It loses energy instead of accumulating it. Sleep ten hours and you will feel depleted of energy. You won't want to work the rest of the day; you will just drag yourself around.

Fatigue can also be removed by oxygenation. When you are tired, instead of heading for the kitchen for a snack, go out in the fresh air for ten to fifteen minutes and exhale and inhale deeply, off and on, several times. Don't breathe hurriedly, or with force, but in a relaxed way, very slowly and deeply. After this time spent in the fresh air, your fatigue will be gone.

If you were to fast a whole day, and every hour get out in the fresh air for about five minutes and do some deep breathing during that time—exhaling poisons, and inhaling oxygen—you would not miss food at all. Because of habit, it may seem in the beginning difficult to feel satisfied without food, but after you get used to it you will find that you have received from the oxygen all the energy you need.

Lahiri Mahasaya and other great masters knew how to operate the law that renders food totally unnecessary in sustaining the body. But he used to say that eating serves a good purpose, for God has created food in abundance and variety, and hunger is part of the plan that keeps the cosmic show going.

Avoid Wasting Energy

Energy is continually wasted in useless activities, unrestrained emotions, and improper living habits. When you are at peace you use little energy, but when you are angry or hateful or otherwise emotional, you use a great deal of energy. Proper care is necessary in operating a delicate machine; the same consideration ought to apply in using the body-machine.

When you work you employ your muscles, nervous system, mind, thoughts, feelings, and spiritual perceptions. Currents of energy are required in all these areas in any kind of work. When you are running you are using about four or five horsepower of energy. If by removal of gravity you no longer felt the weight of your body, you would use very little energy in running. The greater the body weight, the greater energy required to move it. A very practical reason to avoid overweight!

The battery of an electric wheelchair will move the weight of the chair and its occupant about fifteen miles before its energy is exhausted. Did you ever stop to think that your body-battery is wheeling this physical vehicle around all the time? Its energy powers not only the muscular motion of the limbs, but all other actions as well. When you are talking, for example, you are using thought force as well as muscular force, and thought requires energy. Without it you cannot think or transmit thoughts into speech. When you are thinking deeply you burn up a tremendous amount of energy, exhausting the brain's reserves. Let us suppose you have sixty thoughts per minute. In a month, allowing eighteen hours of wakefulness daily, you would have had nearly two million thoughts. In a lifetime of sixty years you would have produced more than a billion thoughts. Alter that many thoughts, most people would be dead; the brain's stored energy from food and cosmic sources would have been used up. When we ponder how much energy-current we are using all the time, the wonder is how we live as long as we do! Nevertheless, by adequate replacement of expended energy, we can live longer and more efficiently.

There are two sources from which man draws energy for his body: from food (which includes oxygen) and from the medulla or "mouth of God." The energy thus imbibed is distributed to the body cells; any excess goes to the brain, to be stored there for use as needed.

Food is only a secondary source of energy supply. The greatest flow of energy into the body comes from the intelligent cosmic energy that is all around the body and omnipresent in the universe. It is drawn into the brain storehouse through the medulla.

This intelligent cosmic energy or vibration is the basic "substance" of all matter. Scientific experiments conducted by Dr. Crile have shown that the brains of dead calves continue to emanate considerable current. In death the cosmic energy loses only the physiological channel of the nervous system.

The Secret of Vitality

It takes hours for the body to convert food into energy, but anything that stimulates your will generates energy instantly. Will draws vitality from the electro-protonic center of the bodily cells and from the reservoir of the brain, where energy that has already been distilled from food is stored. Will also draws new energy from the cosmic source into your system through the medulla.

The secret of vitality, therefore, is to conserve the energy you have and to bring new energy into the body by will power. How? First, you must act willingly. If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing willingly. When you work willingly, you have more energy because you not only draw upon the reserves in the brain, but also attract a greater flow of cosmic energy into the body through the medulla. A woman preparing an elaborate dinner for her beloved is happy and filled with vitality; but if compelled to cook when she doesn't want to, she feels tired from the start. Remember: will brings energy.

The system of Energization Exercises that Self-Realization Fellowship teaches is based on the principle of using will to draw energy from the cosmic source, and to distribute that energy by will to the trillions of cells in the body. We draw most of the current for our actions from the physical supply of the body battery-energy distilled from food, oxygen, and sunshine. We don't draw enough energy from the invisible cosmic source, through the conscious use of will.

Will and Energy Go Hand-in-Hand

There is a difference between consciously applied will and imagination. Imagination is a conception of something that one desires to manifest. By imagining day and night that you are feeling more vitality, you will gain some strength, because imagination requires at least a small degree of will. By contrast, when one wills vitality, the energy is actually there at once. Suppose you are angered and strike at someone violently; the will, stimulated by emotion, draws energy for that action; but immediately afterwards the energy is cut off, and your vitality is depleted. But if in a positive way you continuously will energy into your body and apply the principle of the Self-Realization Energization Exercises, conscious life-force control, you can draw, by the use of will power, unlimited energy from the cosmic source. Since the body is simply a cluster of cells, if it lacks energy and you thus energize the whole body with will, those cells are recharged instantly and continuously. Will is the switch that lets more energy into the body from the divine source.

Will is thus a potent factor in maintaining youth and vigor. If you convince yourself you are old, the will becomes paralyzed and you do become old. Never say you are tired; it paralyzes the will and then you are tired. Say, "My body needs rest." The body must not be allowed to dictate its limitations to your soul. The soul must rule the body, because the soul is neither caused by nor dependent on the body. In the soul's will lies all power. God willed, and there was light-the cosmic creative energy that condensed into the heavens, into our bodies, and all other forms. Will is light, for light was the first manifestation of God's will. And He saw that this light, or electrical energy, was a satisfactory unit out of which life forms could be created.*⁽²⁾ The scientist ponders whether matter is light or whether light is matter. Light came first, and constitutes the essential structure of matter.

Therefore, we must realize that energy and will go together. It is a very simple formula. We have been so conditioned to the idea that energy comes only from material

sources, that we fail to believe in and draw upon the cosmic source, which responds instantly to will.

If you learn the Self-Realization method by which you use your will to draw energy directly from the boundless cosmic source, you will not suffer from fatigue anymore. Those who know me know that I take only two or three hours' sleep at night; and even if I don't sleep at all, I don't miss it. I can remain awake for days without fatigue. While I was writing *Whispers from Eternity*. I once went without sleep for five consecutive nights, and my body felt no weariness at all.

You must awaken your will. As you begin to draw energy from the Infinite, you will require less food as well as less sleep. You will begin to rise completely above the need for material methods of sustenance. You need not be limited by material laws. The magic method of working without fatigue lies in the use of your will power. When you can draw energy from the cosmic source, you can eat breakfast or go without, and it won't make any difference; you won't feel any lack. You will be above that consciousness.

Love Is One of the Greatest Stimulants to the Will

Whatever I do, I do with the greatest love that I have in me. Try this, and you will see that you do not become fatigued at all. Love is one of the greatest stimulants to the will. Under the influence of love the will can do almost anything. You can demonstrate this in your life if you depend more on will power. Your body will not need eight hours of rest; you will find that six hours of sleep will be plenty, along with one balanced meal a day, and perhaps fruit juice now and then. You will remain always well. Through God's grace I feel the same—and I think I look almost the same!—as I have throughout these nineteen years that I have been in this country. I obey nature's laws insofar as I can; I am not unswervingly orthodox or fanatic in anything. But I do believe strongly in will power. I have proven it works.

When I am with people, I am with them wholly, with the greatest joy; and when I am alone, I am alone with that joy. When I work, I work with the greatest will and happiness. No matter what your task, do it joyously and willingly. If you don't you only devitalize yourself. And remember to be always sincere. Through sincerity you can work more harmoniously with others. Develop sincerity along with will power.

Do some creative work every day. Writing is good for developing creative ability and will power. I have never cared to do merely mechanical work. I am always seeking to accomplish something new. Being creative is more difficult, of course, than following a mechanical existence, but when your will battles with new ideas it gains more strength. When it becomes stronger still, so that it can work changes not only in your body, but in the universe, your will has become divine will. That power of divine will is what Jesus referred to when he said, "If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done."*(4") Why not? The Lord is whirling untold tons of universes through space by His will—divine will. Don't look on yourself as a weak mortal. Incredible amounts of energy are hidden in your brain; enough in a gram of flesh to run the city of Chicago for two days. And you say you are tired?

A revolving wheel generates electrical current. When your will power revolves around an idea, it too creates a current of energy that can be directed to heal, materialize objects in front of you, or make any other kind of change in the atomic structure of the universe.

When your will becomes strong, united with divine will, you can indeed, as Jesus said, lift mountains and cast them into the depths of the sea. Our will is part of the divine will; and when we develop the will that is within us, we can create universes, and we can

demonstrate that there is no death, no decay, but that all matter is eternal energy. Then there can be no fatigue.

The purpose of life is to find God. Under no circumstances allow yourself to become buried in the debris of mortal habits and limitations and all the other humiliating experiences of delusion. Use your determination to wrench your will free, and attain mastery over your body and the universe. In the development of your will lies the ability to discover the hidden image of God within you.

-- From a talk given on March 28, 1940

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Art as a Hidden Message - Chapter nine, Yogananda

Will power is the key to awakening energy. Yogananda used to say, "The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy." We can apply this principle to the task of keeping the body in good health and healing our illnesses. We can apply it also to drawing inspiration at will. For energy in the body, like electricity in a copper wire, generates a magnetic field, and that magnetism attracts to itself its own affinities, and repels that for which it has no affinity. A strong thought, when directed by will power, can generate the magnetism necessary to attract solutions to any problem one faces. That magnetism can attract true friends, hoped-for opportunities, and success in any undertaking.

Will power, combined with faith, directs a clear, unwavering flow of energy. Doubt, on the other hand, interferes with that flow, weakening it, for it creates vortices of indecision. "Is this really what I want to do?" people ask themselves even as they strive for achievement. "Am I capable of doing it? What if I fail? What if better ways exist for approaching this problem? Am I sure this way is the best?" Energy vortices of this nature interrupt the flow of energy, and disturb the flow of inspiration.

--From Art as a Hidden Message, chapter nine

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Excerpts from A talk given on October 19, 1939, Paramhansa

In Will Power Lies the Germ of Success

Most people become extremely nervous or tense when they are trying to accomplish something that means a great deal to them. Anxious, nervous actions do not draw the power of God; but continuous, calm, powerful use of the will shakes the Infinite. The germ of success in whatever you want to accomplish is in your will power. Will that has been badly battered by difficulties becomes temporarily paralyzed. The resolute man says, "My bones may be broken, but my head of will power remains unbowed." That is the greatest expression of will.

Will power is what makes you divine. When you give up using that will, you become a mortal man. Many people say we should not exercise our will to change conditions, lest we interfere with God's plan. But why would God give us will if we are not to use it? I once met a fanatical man who said he did not believe in using will power because it developed the ego. "You are using a lot of will now to resist me!" I replied. "You are using it to talk, and you are obliged to use your will to stand, or walk, or eat, or go to the movies, or even to go to sleep. You will everything you do. Without will power you would be a mechanical man." Non-use of the will is not what Jesus meant when he said, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." (Matthew 26:39) He was demonstrating that man must learn to bend his will, which is governed by desires, to the will of God. Therefore right prayer, when it is persistent, is will.

You must believe in the possibility of what you are praying for. If you want a home, and the mind says, "You simpleton, you can't afford a house," you must make your will stronger. When the "can't" disappears from your mind, divine power comes. You will not have a home dropped to you from heaven; you have to pour forth will power continuously through constructive actions. When you persist, refusing to accept failure, the object of will must materialize. When you continuously work that will through your thoughts and activities, what you are wishing for has to come about. When your will persists, even if there is nothing in the world to conform to your wish, the desired result will somehow come to you. In that kind of will lies God's answer; because will comes from God, and continuous will is divine will.

Cauterize the "Can't's" in Your Brain

A weak will is a mortal will. As soon as trials and failure cut it off, it loses its connection with the dynamo of the Infinite. But behind human will is the divine will that can never fail. Even death does not mean anything to divine will. The Lord will definitely answer that prayer behind which the will force is continuous. Most people are mentally or physically lazy, or both. When they want to pray, they think instead of sleep, and when the head nods, they dive into bed and that is the end of prayer. The will is buried. Mortal man's brain is full of "can't's." Being born in a family with certain characteristics and habits, he is influenced by these to think he can't do certain things; he can't walk much, he can't eat this, he can't stand that. Those "can't's" have to be cauterized. You have within you the power to accomplish everything you want; that power lies in the will. Whoever would develop will power must have good company. If you desire to become a great mathematician, and your customary associates all dislike mathematics, you will certainly be discouraged. But when you mix with accomplished mathematicians, your will is reinforced; you think, "If others can do it, I can do it."

Don't suddenly jump into big things, in your eagerness to develop your will. To succeed, first try out your will on some little thing you thought you could not do.

If you work hard at it, you can be successful. I remember all the goals my friends and many others told me I could never accomplish, but I did! Such “well-wishers” can do much harm. God save us from their kind! Company has the greatest influence on will. If every Thursday, instead of coming here, you went to a drinking party, you could not help but pick up something of that worldly vibration. Your will is definitely inspired or weakened by your company. To develop will by yourself is impossible. You require an example before you. If you would be an artist, surround yourself with good paintings and artists. If you would be a divine man, surround yourself with spiritual company.

Belief and experience are quite different. A belief comes from what you have heard or read and accepted as fact, but experience is something you have actually perceived. The convictions of those who have experienced God cannot be shaken. If you had never tasted an orange I could fool you about the characteristics of an orange; but if you had already eaten one, I could not deceive you. You would know; you would have had the experience of it...

Surcharge Your Will Power through Concentration

The way to become receptive is to sit quietly and concentrate your thoughts on a worthy wish until your mind and thought become completely dissolved in that idea. Then will power becomes divine—omniscient and omnipotent—and can be successfully applied toward realizing your goal. You can't just sit there and wait for success to fall into your lap; once your course is set and your will is firm, you have to make a practical effort. Then you will see that whatever you require for success starts coming to you. Everything will push you in the right direction. In your divinely surcharged will power is the answer to prayer. When you use that will, you open the way through which your prayers can be answered. This is my experience. I used to attempt certain things just to test my will power; but I don't do that anymore. I know it works...

Every day undertake something that is difficult for you, and try to do it. Though you fail five times, keep on, and as soon as you have succeeded in that direction, apply your concentrated will on something else. You will thus be able to accomplish increasingly greater things. Will is the instrument of the image of God within you. In will lies His limitless power, the power that controls all the forces of nature. As you are made in His image, that power is yours to bring about whatever you desire: You can create prosperity; you can change hatred into love. Pray until body and mind are completely subjugated; then you will receive God's response. I constantly find that my slightest wish is answered!

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The Greater the Will, the Greater the Flow of Energy

Learn to keep your will strong—a calm will, not a nervous will—and your body will then be full of energy. It is by the power of will that you bring energy into the body and utilize it. The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy. Learn how to draw that energy not only from food and oxygen, but from the Infinite as well, because a time will come when no matter what physical measures you take, your body will be weak.

Food and oxygen are useful to the body only when acted upon by the inner life current. If this grows weak from physical and mental abuse, the outer supports of life become ineffective. The methods I teach show you how to recharge every part of your body with life energy coming direct from the omnipresent vibratory power of God that surrounds you and is within you. It is that power which has created your body and which sustains it. By the practice of the Energization Exercises and especially by Kriya Yoga you can enliven your whole being with Divine Life.

Every gram of flesh has within it enough energy to light the city of Chicago for two days. You feel heat and vitality in the flesh generated by that energy, but not the tremendous energy itself within the atoms of the flesh. Each atom is a dynamo of power. You can vitally recharge every cell of the body by Kriya Yoga meditation, and by the exercise of will to tap the cosmic source of power. If you keep your will intact, and use that will to perform all your physical and mental actions with cheerful willingness, your body and mind will remain vitally youthful.

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Creating Happiness, Yogananda

If you are a slave to the senses, you cannot be happy. If you are a master of your desires and appetites, you can be a really happy man. If you eat against your will, if you wish anything contrary to your conscience, if you act wrongly, forced by your senses, against the wish of your inner self, then you cannot be happy. People who are slaves to the senses find that their evil habits compel them to do things which will hurt them. Stubborn bad habits bludgeon your will power down every time it tries to take the lead and guide your thoughts to the kingdom of right action. The remedy lies in rescuing your will power from the imprisoning power of the senses.

Remember, one can lead a horse to a lake, but no one can make him drink unless he wants to. Try to develop “won’t” power if you haven’t enough will power. When you are at the dinner table and Mr. Greed lures you to eat more than you should and tries to chloroform your self-control and cast you into the pit of indigestion – watch yourself. After partaking of the right quality and quantity of food, just say to yourself, “I won’t eat any more,” and get up from your chair at the table and run. When somebody calls, “John, come back and eat some more. Don’t forget the delicious apple pie (or strawberry shortcake),” just call back and say, “I won’t.”

Remember, when thoughts of dishonesty, temptation, or revengefulness come to you, they are the soldiers of the dark misery-making senses. They want to conquer the kingdom of your happiness and keep you prisoner in the dungeon of unhappiness and misery. As soon as the soldiers of wrong thoughts rally together to attack your inner peace, wake up the Soul soldiers of light, honesty, self-control, and desire for good things, and wage a furious battle.

Remember, it rests with you whether you want greed, sense-slavery, anger, hatred, revengefulness, worries, or inharmonies to rule your life, or whether you will let the Divine soldiers of self-control, calmness, love, forgiveness, peace, and harmony rule your mental kingdom. Drive away the rebel sense habits which have brought misery to the empire of your peace. Be a King of Yourself, letting the soldiers of goodness and good habits rule the Kingdom of Your Mind. Then happiness will reign within you forever.

Attunement to God's Will, Kriyananda

by Swami Kriyananda

from Rays of the Same Light, Week 40/Bible

This passage is from the Gospel of St. Matthew, Chapter 26, Verses 39-43:

“And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

“And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?”

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

“He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.”

“And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.”

Commentary

This memorable scene occurs in the Garden of Gethsemane, on the night Jesus was betrayed. Jesus' firm will to accept the will of God, regardless of the consequences to himself, is an inspiring lesson for us all. The strength revealed by his obedience stands in poignant contrast to lack of it in his disciples.

The Master condoned their weakness, out of compassion for them. How, indeed, could he have scolded them on this night of all nights, except lovingly? At the same time, he was showing by his example what determination one must develop, to be worthy of knowing God.

Success on the spiritual path is not for the merely well-meaning. “The road to hell,” it is said, “is paved with good intentions.” Will power, never wishful thinking, is essential to success in any field. For will generates energy, and energy is what it takes to move mountains, whether with machinery or with the power of faith. “The greater the will,” Paramhansa Yogananda used to say, “the greater the flow of energy.”

Will power is a spiritual quality, essentially. Even worldly people with strong will power often have the potential for great spiritual development.

In normal everyday life, the will manifests itself less overwhelmingly, as willingness. Willingness was, above all, what Jesus demanded of his disciples. His very

teaching said Yes! To life—especially to a life lived in God. The magnetism of his presence was a constant affirmation of the tightness of living for God.

Willingness on the spiritual path means to say Yes! To God's will. By this attitude, one attunes himself ever more deeply to God's consciousness, thereby attracting unceasing blessings and joy.

It must be admitted, however, that the Lord tests His devotees! How else, indeed, could we perfect our willingness?

Often it seems as though, out of all possible choices, only that one indicated by God's will for us is sure to lead to disaster! In the end, the opposite invariably proves true: It is the other avenues, if taken, that lead to disaster. God's will leads infallibly not only to success, but to that fulfillment which we ourselves craved. His tests—sometimes administered, one can't help suspecting, with a touch of heavenly humor!—make our faith in Him eventually unshakable.

Because Jesus knew of his impending death, one might assume that his anguish in the garden of Gethsemane was a natural reaction to the approach of physical suffering. Yet he never showed himself attached to the body. The pains of his heart must have had a deeper cause. His sorrow, like his soul-consciousness, was universal, not personal. Weighing on his heart can only have been the remembrance of man's eternal rejection of God's love.

If at such an hour as that at Gethsemane Jesus could show compassion for others, as he did for his sleeping disciples, how much ought we to forget ourselves and be compassionate of others in the trivial hurts of our lives! And if, even at such an hour, he could show perfect willingness to accept God's will, how ready and willing ought we ourselves to be when we face the relatively petty trials of our own lives!

Habitual unwillingness is a common human condition, suggesting to the mind endless mountain ranges of problems in the discharge of the simplest duty; For just as willingness draws a constantly fresh supply of energy to the body, so also does unwillingness block that supply. "The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy." The corollary of that axiom is, "The greater the unwillingness, the feebler the flow of energy." We've all met people of such deep-seated unwillingness that, when merely answering the doorbell, they heave themselves groaning and sighing to their feet as if certain they were off to meet their martyrdom!

The greater the flow of energy to the brain, also, as a result of habitually willing oneself to think deeply or creatively, the greater one's mental capacity. This is, indeed, the simple secret of genius—an abundance of mental energy.

The weaker the energy-flow to the brain, on the other hand, the duller a person's awareness becomes. And this is the simple secret of stupidity.

Neither stupidity nor genius, however, can be achieved quickly. It takes time for energy to open up new channels in the brain, or for a lack thereof to close existing channels.

Here are a few simple rules for developing will power:

1. Never allow yourself to dwell on the no-saying principle. Learn always to say Yes to life!
2. Look always for solutions, instead of concentrating too much on your problems.

3. Look for goodness in people; don't concentrate on their faults.
4. Train yourself to face life's challenges vigorously, always affirming, "I can!"—even when your mental habits cry out in protest, "Don't be ridiculous: How can you possibly?"
5. Set yourself specific tasks to accomplish—small ones at first, then increasingly challenging ones. Be sure to see each one through to completion.
6. Here is a technique that can help you to develop all-conquering will power: Concentrate at the point between the eyebrows, and around that point revolve the thought of increasingly powerful will power. Then affirm, with ever-greater conviction and magnetism, "My will is one with Thy will. United to Thine, my will can move mountains!"

When Jesus said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak," he was referring to his disciples' spiritual debility in identifying themselves with their bodies. But he was also showing by his own example how all weakness can be overcome—never by accepting it, but by deepening one's attunement with the divine will. An attitude of willingness is the first, and forever essential, step in attuning our will to God's infinite will.

Thus, through the Holy Bible, God has spoken to mankind.

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Questions and Answers: Will Power, Yogananda

Question. How can I strengthen my will power?

Answer. First, you must know the difference between "wish" and "will." "Wish" is a desire, but "will" means desire plus energy. If you did not use your will power, do you know what you would become? You would have to lie down and not move at all. Even if you were to move your hand, you would be using your will power.

In order to develop will power, you must first realize that behind your will is the will of God. Then set out to do one little thing which you think you cannot do. When you have accomplished that, go on to something bigger. Keep on exercising your will power in this way. Use this will power both in business and in meditation. It is will power that has created everything, even your body.

The human will, when guided by error, is very bad, but when you will is tuned in with wisdom, it is guided by Divine Will. Carrying a thought with dynamic will power means entertaining that thought until it becomes an outward form. When your will power develops that way, and when you can control your destiny by your will power, then you can do tremendous things. Before you will to do a thing, reason about it. Make sure that you are directing your will toward accomplishing something good and helpful to yourself and others.

--from *Inner Culture*, November 1938

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Questions and Answers: Developing Will Power
by Paramhansa Yogananda

Question: How can I use my will power for success?-M.T.

Answer: The human brain is the storehouse of life energy. This brain energy is constantly being used up in muscular movements, the working of the heart, lungs, diaphragm, cellular metabolism, chemicalization of blood, and in carrying on the telephonic sensory motor system of the nerves. Besides this, in thinking, feeling, and willing a tremendous amount of brain energy is required.

Everything that you see in this world is the result of will power, but it is not always used consciously. There are mechanical will and conscious will. Only by using your conscious will power rightly can you contact God's will, which is guided by wisdom. If you tune your will with wisdom, it is God's will by which you are being guided, but God's will often becomes buried beneath the conflicts of human life and we do not see His will for us.

When Jesus said, "Let Thy will be done," what did he mean? He meant that when you tune your will with God's will, which is guided by wisdom, then you are using divine will. You will not know what divine will is until you have developed your own will. This divine contact is gained through meditation.

You must never use blind will, and you must be sure that your will power is used constructively, not for harmful purposes or trifling things. Always be sure that what you want is right for you to have, then use all the forces of your will power to accomplish your object, [objective??] all the time keeping your mind on God. No other desire must be in your heart but to know God; then all things will come to you. To create dynamic will power, determine to do all the things in life that you thought you couldn't do, and devote your entire will power to accomplishing one thing at a time. Be sure that you have made a good selection, then refuse to submit to failure. Use your will power to perfect yourself in this life. You must depend more and more upon the mind because mind is the creator of your body and your circumstances.

--from Inner Culture. July 1940

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Questions and Answers: What Is Freedom?
By Paramhansa Yogananda

Question: "When are we really 'free'?"

Answer: There can be no free expression of soul without freedom of thought. You must never forget that you are a free agent. Your will power is always free. If you use your will power, it will create new karma for you, but most people don't want to make a change. They don't want to make the effort, so they give up.

We Are Slaves to Customs

To do everything that you want to do does not mean that you are free. Man is usually bound by his desires, which is not freedom at all. To do all things, guided by wisdom, is freedom. You can only change your karma if you are guided by wisdom and use will power. If you guide your actions by will power and wisdom, the power of your past wrong actions will grow weaker and your habits of good actions will grow stronger.

Established customs enslave us more or less. We never live in real freedom. We are always wanting something we do not already possess. We become attached to non-essentials. As soon as we become a slave to something, we have lost our will power and freedom, for the time being at least. Just as the Orientals are slaves to old customs, so the American people are slaves to new customs. We chalk out our destiny in the past and to that destiny we make ourselves slaves.

Why is it that one person is born into an evil family and another person is born into a good family? Each one used his freedom to live in a certain way in past lives and thus attracted to himself those conditions in this life.

There is no real life without God. There is no real freedom without God. You must put your mind on the God-Center within you. Whatever you do or think, God must always be uppermost in your mind. When you are in tune with God, you can accomplish anything at any time. You must always remember this. You must not cease activity; instead, you must increase the power of your activity, so that in spite of bad influences your will power will speed up things for you.

God's methods are not those of an Almighty Being always punishing us. He has created us. He has given us freedom. We must work out our own destiny with His help.

--from Inner Culture, April 1941

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Self-Improvement to Develop Will Power, Paramhansa

From Metaphysical Meditations

I will reason. I will will, I will act, but guide Thou my reason, will and activity to the right thing that I should do.

§

O eternal Energy, awaken in me conscious will, conscious vitality, conscious health, conscious realization.

§

Teach me, O Spirit, to cooperate with Thy will until all my thoughts shall conform to Thy harmonious plans.

§

I want to use my own will, but lead it, O Father, for use in the golden paradise of all fulfillment.

§

O Spirit, teach me to make my will unceasing in its performance until the little light of my will burns as the cosmic blaze of Thine all-powerful will.

§

Strengthen my will power, O Father. Teach me not to be enslaved by bad habits.

§

Beloved Father, I know that by strong will power I can overcome disease, failure and ignorance, but the will vibration must be stronger than the vibration of physical or mental disease. The more chronic the disease, the stronger, steadier, and more unflinching must be my determination, faith, and effort of will.

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Divine Father, this day I will make an effort to understand the great importance of using my will power at all times.

§

I will use His wisdom-guided will to direct my habit-guided will.

§

I will tune my free will with the infinite will of God and my only desire shall be to do the will of Him who sent me.

§

*Celestial will of Thine, as human will of mine, doth shine, doth shine in me.
"Sintonizzerò il mio libero arbitrio con il volere infinito di Dio e il mio unico desiderio sarà quello di fare la volontà di Colui che mi ha mandato."*

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"May Thy heavenly will shine in me as my human will."

Chapter Five: Magnetism

From Rays of the Same Light, Kriyananda

Introduction

A flow of electricity generates a magnetic field. The stronger the flow, the stronger the magnetic field. In human terms also, a powerful energy-flow is more important to the end results of an undertaking than any material force one can set into motion. For one's energy-flow generates the magnetism by which he attracts whatever good or ill is his lot in life. Within every human being lies the true source of all his success or failure.

On a subtler level even than that of energy, success depends on how consciously we relate to the realities in our lives. Great masters have always said that the ultimate reality is divine consciousness; that matter and energy both are essentially manifestations of consciousness. What is needed above all, then, to attract success to ourselves is a strong mental expectation.

Paramhansa Yogananda declared, "The greater the will power, the greater the flow of energy." From this axiom one may infer another: "The greater the flow of energy, the stronger the magnetic field it generates." By the quality and strength of that magnetic field, we can change our so-called destiny.

--from Rays of the Same Light, Chapter 28/Bhagavad Gita,

"All power flows from God."

§

From The Art and Science of Raja Yoga – Chapter Ten, Kriyananda

You have no doubt met people in your life whose very presence emanated an indefinable power. Perhaps you persuaded yourself that their strange-seeming influence was due to something perfectly ordinary: physical stature, or good looks, or worldly reputation. To speak of a person's aura would strike most people, steeped as they are in the dogmas of a materialistic age, as merely superstitious.

What then of the reactions of animals to human beings? How instantly your own dog may sense the kindness of some people, the animosity of others. There are some people to whom animals flock like filings to a magnet. Other people can hardly get an animal to come near them. It may reasonably be said that animals are not influenced nearly so much by the outward manifestations of human consciousness as by a kind of telepathy. Years ago I was told of one man, slight of stature and not particularly strong, whose very presence made even lions and tigers cower in fear. At the other end of the spectrum, countless tales have been told of saints who, by the sheer purity of their love, befriended wild beasts, and converted hardened criminals to a spiritual life.

I remember once sitting with a group of other monks in the presence of my guru. The conversation was of purely mundane matters, as of course it must be sometimes even in the presence of a master. He was giving instructions regarding some holes that

had to be dug (or filled; I forget which) the following day. Since I wasn't directly involved, I sat behind a few of the others and meditated. The conversation itself was an entirely neutral influence. Nor could I have been influenced by anything in Master's gestures or facial expressions: My eyes were closed. Yet suddenly I felt as if my forehead was opening; my consciousness soared out into a freedom it had never tasted before. The uniqueness of this experience lay in the unsupportive circumstances in which it occurred. On other occasions too, though not often so unexpectedly, I and my fellow disciples experienced our guru's uplifting influence. One had only to sit in his presence for a few minutes to feel the weight of problems and worries lift mysteriously, to be replaced by a deep peace. Whenever I meditated with him, I felt as if a strong magnet were drawing my consciousness to the Christ center between the eyebrows. Sometimes he would merely look at me, and a strange power entered my heart, thrilling it with divine love.

It would help you to be aware that your own power, too, is not limited to your command of words or to your outward appearance-that you affect others (more, perhaps, than either you or they realize) by a much subtler quality. I remember a brother disciple of mine who was going through a test, and not taking it very well. He would sometimes come into my room and sit on the edge of my bed for a few minutes, his back bowed in misery. After he left, a cloud of gloom always remained behind him. I could only dispel it by a determined attitude of cheerfulness, and by japa (continuous mental chanting).

Reducing these various influences to their simplest possible terms, we may say that some people attract us, while others repel; that some people's power to attract or repel, is greater than that of others; and that this power is conveyed not only through the senses, but perhaps even more so by some subtler medium.

In objective nature, the closest observable phenomenon to this may be found in the principle of magnetism. For a long time it was not known why the poles of two bar magnets attract or repel one another. Then it was discovered, as every high school student now knows, that a magnet emits subtle lines of force that can be actually traced by iron filings on a piece of paper. By means of these emanations, the north pole of one magnet will attract the south pole, but repel the north pole, of another. Two south poles also, placed together, will repel each other.

The principle of magnetism affords us more than an analogy. It was long thought that only metals could respond to magnetic influences. Then, in a series of experiments conducted at Northwestern University, in Illinois, it was found that snails are influenced in their movements by the earth's magnetic polarity. The experimenters found also that snails can be made to change their normal patterns of movement if bar magnets of similar magnetic strength to the pull on a compass are buried in the ground, and pointed away from the North Pole. More recently, other experiments have shown that mollusks open and close in rhythm with the movements of the moon, that people's moods may be affected (magnetically, it would seem) by the phases of the moon, and that animal organisms have their own magnetic field very similar to that which has long been known in metaphysical circles as the aura. Magnetism, like the power of gravity, is a definite force, and, though not perceived by the senses, can definitely be cognized. The way it operates in the material world is very similar to the way it operates on subtler, spiritual levels, for matter is but a lower manifestation of spiritual realities.

To understand how a living organism may have a magnetic field of its own, we have only to consider the fact that a magnetic field is created every time a current is passed through an electric wire. The nervous system, too, transmits scientifically measurable electrical impulses; in so doing it sets up its own magnetic field. As a matter of fact, electricity is a relatively negligible aspect of this energy-flow, an almost physical effect (gross enough for physical instruments to detect) of energies far subtler, and far stronger. "Electricity", my guru said, "is the animal current in the energy world." The subtler the manifestation of reality, the greater its potential for power on even the grossest material level. Consider, for example, the enormous power that is achieved when atomic energy is released. The more clearly the energy-flow in the nervous system can be perceived, or realized, on its actual, subtle level, the greater one's power to control his life and the physical world around him. Even more important, such realization enables one to control his own spiritual destiny.

The essential feature of magnetism is its power of attraction and repulsion. The material manifestation of this force, in the behavior of magnetized pieces of metal, is only the most outwardly observable effect of a power that is essentially divine-like the janitor in an office, whose function is limited to the simple act of cleaning, and who even in this function acts only on behalf of the office head. Divine love, too, is a kind of magnetism. So also, on grosser levels, are human love, and happiness, and hatred, and fear-in fact, every state of consciousness in active manifestation. For energy, as a vehicle for different kinds of awareness, assumes innumerable aspects, and thereby generates innumerable kinds of magnetism. Love attracts love. Fear excites more fear. If one's energy-flow is directed toward a particular person, and if there exists on any level in that person a similar state of awareness (and therefore of magnetism), one can attract or repel him depending on whether the interchange is sympathetic or antipathetic. Thus, while hatred is negative and might therefore seem to exert only a repelling force, if it is reciprocated in the other person the magnetism between them becomes attractive. Love, on the other hand, although apparently purely attractive in its influence, if in no way reciprocated can become a repulsive force, causing mutual separation.

In any sympathetic interchange between human beings, a positive-negative interaction may be observed similar to the north-south attraction between two magnets. The most obvious example of this action lies in the attraction of male and female of any species for one another. To speak of the female as the negative pole need in no way imply passivity. Rather, in any sympathetic relationship it is the function of this negative "magnet" to draw from, and of the positive magnet to be drawn towards. In this way the yoga teachings speak of woman, in relationship to man, as being his shakti, or divine energy, for it is her magnetism above all that draws man's energy on every level into outward, creative manifestation. (Therefore it has often been said that no man becomes great in the eyes of the world without the aid of woman.) Therefore also the shunning of female companionship by monks whose sole aim it is to direct all their energy and attention toward the divine Self within. Women, too, may shun the company of men if their aim is to draw power only from the highest source, God. Yet it should be added that once the soul is perceived, distinctions of male and female disappear. Put in other terms, it may be said that we are all female before God; it is the soul's function, by divine devotion, to draw grace from the Lord, and thereby to become like Him.)

A magnet does not interact with unmagnetized iron in the same way that it does with iron that has been magnetized; yet it does act upon it, drawing it to itself. In the

same way human magnetism draws to itself even objects that, in themselves, have no magnetic power, except as man attributes such power to them. A person may feel himself irresistibly drawn to buy a house that he has seen, but of course the magnetic attraction is not in the house itself, but in his own mind. Yet his desire for it may succeed not only in drawing him to the house (which would be the obvious and expected outcome of his energy output), but also in drawing the house to him. For example, if his desire for it is very strong, the owner may suddenly decide to sell, or an unexpected turn in business may give him the money he needs for it, or any one of a number of things may happen to bring coveted opportunity to his doorstep.

During my sophomore year in college, I developed a theory that luck is more a question of attitude than of blind destiny. “If you want to be lucky,” I told my friends, “expect to be lucky. Then make your expectation dynamic by going out and meeting luck halfway; don’t wait passively for it to come to you.” Amazing things started happening to me as soon as I myself began living by this principle. The only chapter, out of many, that I studied for a Greek exam turned out to be the one we were asked to translate. I entered an essay-contest for a \$100 prize, not because I knew the subject (I didn’t), but because I needed the money. The subject was, “The Basic Principles Underlying the Government of the United States”; it must have sounded as formidable to others as it did to me, for (“luckily”!) the history, law, and political science majors among my fellow students kept out of the fray, and I was the only contestant. I also won a \$15 first prize in a poetry contest, but that was more in my line. Then with \$115 in my pocket, I set off to spend my summer vacation in Mexico. Hitchhiking, I started from Boston. The next day I was offered a ride from Philadelphia all the way to Mexico City—3,000 miles! My benefactor was going to Mexico on behalf of his company, and was kind enough to put me on his expense account as a second driver. And so it went, consistently. Among my relatives, my so-called luck became legendary.

But then my attitude changed. I had gone to Mexico thinking maybe in travel to find the understanding and inspiration in life that I longed for, and that I later did find in yoga. But travel turned out to be, as Emerson called it, “a fool’s paradise.” Inspiration abandoned me, and with it my luck. For a time, things went poorly. Only the gradual return of positive spirits brought a return of my “luck.”

One often hears the expression, “beginner’s luck.” While I was in Mexico that summer, a family I met told me of an outing they had made to the race tracks. The father went regularly; for the others, it was their first time. To the father’s amusement, his wife and daughter bet simply because they liked a horse’s color, or its name. “That old nag hasn’t won a race in years!” protested the father, as he bet with more seasoned wisdom. Yet he lost, while his wife and daughter won consistently. Surely it was because, in their utter ignorance of the odds against them, they bet with so much cheerful expectation that they actually attracted success. Beginners on the spiritual path, too, attract more inner experiences, and advance more rapidly, than many a more seasoned seeker. The reason can only be that they haven’t yet any idea how very difficult the path is. If one could only keep the buoyant faith that he felt at the start of the spiritual journey through the plodding “middle ground”—that period of hard, often agonizing work that intervenes between the inspiration born of one’s first enthusiasm and that born of dawning divine perception—one might find God very quickly.

Whatever one holds strongly in his mind, that he attracts to himself. This is as true for circumstances and events as it is for things. It is even true for inspirations.

“Thoughts,” my guru said, “are universally and not individually rooted.” (Autobiography of a Yogi, p. 154 in Crystal Clarity Publishers’ reprint of the 1946 first edition) If, instead of waiting passively for the muses to smile, one will strike out bravely in the direction of thought that he wants to take, he will find inspiration coming to him from he knows not where, literally drawn to him by the magnetic power of his faith.

It is important to understand that human magnetism of all kinds is never the outcome of mere wishful thinking. Two people may think positively in an undertaking, yet one will attract success, and the other, failure. There are weak magnets, and strong ones. Any current passed through an electric wire will generate a magnetic field, but it takes a strong current to generate a strong magnetic field.

In the last lesson you learned the law of energization: “The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy.” To this law may now be appended another: “The greater the flow of energy, the greater the magnetic field.”

The principles of energization, therefore, apply also to the development of magnetism. When you send out a strong thought, a ray of energy goes out from you toward the object of that thought. This energy-ray creates its own magnetic field—strong or weak according to the relative strength of your will. If your will, and its resultant flow of energy, are powerful, there is nothing that you cannot draw to yourself. You will be able to perform feats that to others will appear miraculous.

But once you understand this principle of magnetism, it is important for you to realize that it can also be /misused. Be careful what it is that you want, for wrong desires, even fears, can put this subtle law into operation just as surely. The devotee would do well always to try to unite his will, not only to cosmic energy, but to the , divine will. In seeking grace, he should also seek guidance.

For one draws divine perception, too, by the magnetic power of his will. The will, when offered confidently to God, becomes faith. If your faith is kept pure and free of any self-interest, you will know when the will is misguided by the inharmony that suddenly develops between your will and its sense of steady development into divine faith.

We influence others by our magnetism, and are in turn influenced by them. It is possible by negative thoughts to harm them, and similarly, in turn, to be harmed by them. To think negatively about another person, especially if one does so with magnetic power, constitutes a grave misuse of the law, and invariably results in far greater harm to oneself as the instrument of such inharmony. (Similarly, to bless others attracts to oneself the greatest blessings.) Nothing would be gained from teaching students how to harm others by magnetic power. Yet much good may come from knowing how to protect oneself against possible harmful influences from others, and this knowledge demands some understanding, at least, of how magnetism can be operated for evil.

Remember, there must be an openness to magnetism of any kind before one can receive it. For this reason, black magicians in various primitive cultures try to instill fear in their victims, or try in other ways to find a vibrational opening for their harmful energies. It is important, then, to know how to close oneself against the wrong kinds of magnetism.

Magnetic self-protection may be accomplished by refusing, on the one hand, to respond on a negative level (for example, with fear, anger, or hatred), and by surrounding oneself, on the other hand, with strong positive magnetism. It may help you to surround your self-styled enemy mentally with divine light. It is possible, however, if his influence is strong, that your very desire to help him will only constitute an emotional opening through which his vibrations can harm you. Remember, the desire to help must be truly impersonal. Unless it is so, you may find it better to place a cross of light mentally upon your ill wisher. Imagine that you are using your thumb for this purpose. (Of all the fingers the thumb is the most related to will power.) If you practice this technique with great will and strong faith, any evil coming toward you from others will be arrested at its source, and only good vibrations will be able to reach you. In this way also, while protecting yourself you will not in any way be harming your opponent, though his own negative thoughts may indeed rebound upon him since they cannot reach their intended goal in you.

It may sometimes be necessary by specific thoughts to seal individual chinks, so to speak, in your magnetic armor (for example, to break any attachment that you feel towards a particular individual whose influence you fear). Generally speaking, however, what is most needed is simply to surround your self on all levels with harmonious vibrations. Remember, no negative energy will be able to penetrate a powerful positive force field, unless indeed you make yourself vulnerable in some particular, to a specific ray of thought or emotion.

Emotion it is especially that creates weakness in one's magnetic "armor." Harmonize your emotions, therefore, by deep meditation. Then, with a conscious effort of will, radiate harmonious feelings outward from your heart center in all directions to the world around you. Another technique for strengthening your magnetic field will be given in the next chapter of this lesson.

Remember also that it is wise always to remain open and receptive to good magnetic influences. Do not, therefore, seek to protect yourself against the harmful thoughts of others by assuming an attitude of coldness or indifference to them. Indifference, though it may indeed protect you, will also deaden you to the finer vibrations in the world around you; it will make you less divinely receptive. It is better always to respond with a consciousness of light and of impersonal, divine love. Remember, the good thoughts that others send you must also find an opening in you, to influence you. Therefore is it said that spiritual healing requires not only power on the part of the healer, but also dynamic, receptive faith on the part of the person to be healed.

The principle of magnetism, and of energization itself, will be more deeply understood if you consider what it is that magnetizes a bar of iron. Every iron molecule possesses a magnetic polarity of its own. The reason, then, that a bar of iron may manifest no overall magnetism is that its molecules may be turned every which way, in effect canceling one another out. The more these molecules can be oriented in a north-south direction, the more magnetism the bar of iron will manifest.

This simple fact opens up important doors onto the yoga teachings, some of which we shall explore in lessons to come: the need for a guru, and the similarity

between a bar magnet and the spine, with its positive-negative polarity in the brain and at the lowest spinal center.

A bar of metal becomes magnetized when it is placed next to an already-magnetized piece of iron. Similarly, to acquire strong magnetism oneself it is important to mix with people who already have the kind of magnetism that one wants to develop. To develop success-magnetism, mix with successful people, not with failures. Mix with artists to develop an artistic magnetism; with devotees, to develop spiritual magnetism. Every kind of human activity manifests a magnetism of its own. For success in that activity, the most important requirement is that one develop the appropriate type of magnetism. Once this magnetism has been well developed, indeed, one may achieve success even if his formal training in that field has been limited. (In fact, the greatest benefit from any kind of training-greater even than factual knowledge-is that the confidence born of such knowledge develops in one the magnetic power to attract success.)

Mixing with others to acquire their magnetism requires not physical proximity so much as an attunement of consciousness. Without this attunement, physical nearness may result in little or no true exchange. If such attunement exists, on the other hand, a magnetic exchange may occur even at a distance. In every case the amount of the exchange will depend on one's own magnetic drawing power, which in turn depends, of course, on a deep, sincere effort of will.

To draw rightly in this way, don't be a sponge, passively soaking up whatever magnetism you can get. It is possible thereby to deplete another person without truly gaining anything yourself. Remember, as you draw his magnetism you, too, must become a magnet, giving to him in return. The more your own magnetism increases, the greater will be your drawing power, but magnetic development of this kind is always an interchange. Forming a broader vortex of energy, it draws to itself increasing magnetism from the surrounding universe, or (if the magnetism is spiritual and uplifting) from God. A teacher with true students gains from the association even as they do.

As the molecules in a bar of iron, when turned every which way, cancel out its overall magnetic effectiveness, so the "molecules" of human desire, when conflictly directed, cancel one another out, rendering human magnetism ineffective. To will something strongly, one must will it also with one's entire being. To draw anything to yourself, learn to put your whole self into the energy-flow you are directing.

In this way it will be seen that certain attitudes are automatically more magnetic than others. Willingness, cheerfulness, kindness-all wholesome, spiritual attitudes are magnetic. Unwillingness, discouragement, and similar negative attitudes, on the other hand, are like iron molecules turned conflictly-or like toxins in the nervous system; they impair the free flow of energy. And while hatred and other strong negative emotions can develop a magnetic power of their own, if they are one-pointedly directed, in the end the inner heaviness they produce impairs the free flow of one's energy, and thereby destroys that kind of magnetism.

Even the foods we eat can be magnetically strengthening or depleting. If they load the system with toxins they will impair one's energy-flow, and therefore one's magnetism. If they assist the flow of energy in the body, they may rightly be called magnetizing foods. This aspect of the subject will be discussed more fully in the chapter on diet.

A strong, positive magnetic aura around your body will prevent not only people's negative thoughts from affecting you, but also negative or harmful circumstances and happenings, even disease, from coming to you. When you yourself are good, only goodness will affect you. Or if, owing to the darkening influence of past karma, anything comes your way that in most human contexts would appear negative, you will find it either minimized, or becoming turned to good account.

Finally, it must be remembered that everything originates in the Infinite Spirit. Magnetism of every kind is born of the magnetic power of God's love. Like the light emanating from an electric bulb, this power is strongest at its source. Like an object held up to a light, and reflecting the light more brightly (even at a distance) the closer it is held to the light, divine power is greatest, even on low levels of manifestation, when its point of origin is closest to the Divine Source. In this material world, the highest realities often appear insignificant. Yet the hidden atomic energy in a bar of iron is far greater than that which one could generate from wielding the bar as a club. Kindness and fair-mindedness, similarly, can solve differences more effectively than can brutal tactics. And divine love, though perhaps the least-known force in the universe, and the one most apt to be scoffed at by men as "impractical, unrelated to mundane affairs, ineffective," is in fact the most powerful-indeed, in the last analysis the only-force in the universe. By the magnetic power of divine love, all things can be accomplished-even that most seemingly impossible of all tasks, our salvation from delusion.

What man by his own power alone cannot accomplish, divine love accomplishes easily. And its task, once accomplished, is accomplished forever. The most important thing, therefore, is for us by meditation to attune ourselves to that subtlest ray.

Offer your love to God. You will create a magnetic field thereby which will in turn draw His love to you. In this way, gradually, you will become ever more perfectly a channel for His love, drawing Him to you on higher and higher levels of divine awareness until your love attains perfection in Him. Remember, God's love flows to you always. It is you, by your love, who must complete the circuit, thereby generating the magnetism that can draw to yourself the very consciousness of Infinity.

Again, therefore, remember the law governing magnetism: *The greater the flow of energy (as awakened by will), the stronger the magnetic field.*

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From Awaken to Superconsciousness - Chapter Two, Kriyananda

The Spine as a Magnet

The pathway of spiritual attainment is the spine. This pathway may be compared to a bar magnet, the molecules of which are aligned north and south. The larger the number so aligned, the stronger the magnetism in that bar of steel. In human beings, the more the energy in the spine is directed up toward the brain, the stronger is its own magnetism. If the magnetism is strong, these people can attract to themselves all good things, including the more subtle benefits of spiritual insight and understanding.

Magnetism in physics is also generated by an electric current. The stronger the current, the stronger the magnetic field. The flow of energy in the spine, similarly, generates a magnetic field—animal, or spiritual, depending on the quality of consciousness behind that energy. This power functions on much the same principle as electro-magnetism, but is, in its own way, far more powerful. As the strength of electromagnetism depends on the strength of the electric current, so our personal magnetism depends on the strength of our will, the determinant also of the strength of our energy-flow.

The stronger our magnetism, the more infallibly we attract to ourselves whatever it is we seek in life. As cosmic energy is a vibration of divine consciousness, so our bodily energy, and the energy we project into the world around us, is the projection of our human will. The stronger that will, the greater also will be the flow of energy. Consequently, the greater also will be our magnetic field.

As a person evolves spiritually, it becomes vitally important for him to harbor thoughts that are benign and uplifting. For by negative thinking he may attract to himself, and to others, the very things he fears for himself and them.

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From Awaken to Superconsciousness - Chapter Twelve, Kriyananda

There are many fascinating correlations between spirituality and the physical sciences. Newton's third law of motion ("For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction") has its counterpart in the spiritual law of karma, according to which every deed attracts to the doer a just and compensating result. The force of gravity has its counterpart in the power of love. Magnetism, too, is a spiritual as well as a mundane principle.

Electricity flowing through an electric wire generates a magnetic field. The stronger the electric flow, the broader and stronger the field.

Energy flowing through the nerves of the body also produces a kind of electromagnetic field. This field is much subtler than any with which science is familiar, but it has much greater power to affect people and events.

The will determines the strength of the energy-flow (“the greater the will, the greater the flow of energy”). If the will power is strong, the body will be filled with energy. As a consequence, the body’s magnetic field will be extensive and powerful. But in this context there is another important consideration: the quality of that energy, and therefore of that magnetism.

For there are many different states of consciousness, and therefore many different kinds of subtle energy. If our consciousness is strongly positive, our magnetism will be positive also, and will attract good things to us. It will, in addition, create a “buffer zone” around us, protecting us from harm; like an umbrella in the rain, it will fend off much of the suffering we might otherwise attract by negative karmic vortices (vrittis) of energy in the spine. Sri Krishna referred to this protection in the Bhagavad Gita: “Even a little practice of this spiritual discipline will free you from dire fears and colossal sufferings.”

The laws of magnetism can work in extraordinary ways. I was told a story about Theos Bernard by a friend of his. Bernard was an American who went to Tibet some sixty years ago and there studied certain esoteric teachings, including laws that govern spiritual magnetism. Thinking to instruct the Los Angeles police force in non-violent methods of self-defense, he went and offered to teach them something of what he knew.

The police officers laughed at him. Finally, exasperated, he challenged them: “All right, come to me one at a time and take a swing at me.” There were fifteen men in the room. This was an invitation they could accept happily. One by one they stepped up, drew back and let fly with a “haymaker.” Each in turn passed out before his fist even touched Bernard, who calmly walked out of the room, leaving fifteen insensate bodies on the floor behind him.

Paramhansa Yogananda was once meditating in his upstairs bedroom when, in vision, he saw a burly young man, extremely hostile to the spiritual teachings, on his way up the stairs to give him a beating. The young man’s intention was to broadcast to the world his boast that spirituality was no match for physical force.

The master prayed for guidance. He didn’t want to hurt the young man. At the same time, he asked if God wanted this lie spread about the spiritual teachings he’d been sent to disseminate in the West. The answer he got was to defend himself without physical violence.

As the youth appeared in the doorway, Yogananda said, “I know why you’ve come.”

“Go on, prophet!” sneered the young man. “I’m going to beat you up!”

“I want you to know,” the master replied, “that I could easily beat you, physically. I’m much stronger than you know. But God doesn’t want me to use physical force. Nevertheless, I warn you: Don’t cross that threshold.”

“Go on, prophet!” the youth sneered again. Boldly he crossed the threshold. A moment later he fell screaming to the floor. “I’m on fire!” he cried. “I’m on fire!” Leaping to his feet, he raced down the stairs and out of the building. Yogananda hastily descended the stairs, and found the man rolling about on the lawn in front of the building still crying, “I’m on fire!” Touching him, the master banished the pain

instantly. “Don’t touch me!” cried the man, panic-stricken. He wouldn’t reenter the building, but got his sister, who lived there, to gather his things. Within the hour he left the property, and never returned.

So as not to leave the reader thinking that human magnetism is only a kind of spiritual weapon, I’ll tell one more story about Yogananda.

One evening on a street corner, three holdup men approached him and demanded his money. Giving them all he had, he told them, “I’m happy to give you what is in my wallet. But I have another treasure that you’ll never be able to take from me, unless I give it to you freely.”

“What’s the matter with this guy?” they demanded of one another. “Is he crazy?”

The master then looked at them with the magnetic power of divine love. The three of them began to tremble. “We can’t take your money!” they cried. “What have you done to us?” Terrified of this unexpected experience, they ran away into the night.

One simple principle for developing positive magnetism is to keep your will positive and harmonious. It will help you to attune yourself to superconsciousness.

The Law of Magnetism

We affect others by our magnetism. They in return, by their magnetism, affect us. It is vitally important to understand the principles of magnetism, how they can be used for our own and others’ benefit, how to benefit from others’ magnetism, and how to protect ourselves against harmful magnetism in others.

Sat-sanga (good company) is almost as important on the path as meditation itself. Mix more with spiritually minded people. Tune in consciously to their vibrations. As you draw from others, so give love and appreciation in return. By thus closing the energy circuit, you will help bring about a mutual increase of magnetism. (To draw on others like a sponge is to drain their energy without in any way increasing your own. For your energy increases only if you raise your vibrations, never if you lower them.)

A negative human magnet can actually sap the power of a positive magnet, if the latter is inattentive, and especially if the negative magnetism is the stronger. On the other hand, if the positive magnet is the stronger it won’t be deeply affected, especially if it is attentive and consciously maintains a magnetic shield. If it is much stronger, it may actually succeed in converting the negative flow in the other person to a positive one. Here is an earnest suggestion, however: Don’t, in the name of loving all, take chances with your own magnetism.

I had an interesting experience in Jerusalem, twelve years ago, that illustrates this principle for me. I took a quick photograph of an Arab woman seated on the street, selling vegetables. My thought was simply to get an interesting photograph. The woman, however, perhaps taking me for a Jew, or perhaps responding to some religious stricture against being photographed, reacted with extreme anger. Shouting some imprecation, she hurled some small object at me—a nut, or a small vegetable: whatever it was, she missed me. Her hatred, however, remained with me. It took me several hours to shake off the disturbing impression it made on me.

Had I been able to offer her something, perhaps I would not have been so adversely affected. As it was, I prayed for her. Divine love is our greatest protection.

You will grow faster spiritually if you try to serve others. Don't serve them, however, beyond a realistic appraisal of your own magnetic strength.

Sat-sanga is important for another reason also: When spiritually inclined people get together, especially for meditation, they increase the magnetism of everyone involved. Yogananda called this phenomenon "the law of invisible vibratory exchange."

There are ways of protecting yourself from negative magnetism, and ways also of developing positive magnetism. Beware, however, of using spiritual power for ego-gratification. I'm sure it is just as well the Los Angeles police rejected Theos Bernard's offer to teach them his techniques of magnetic self-defense. Yes, there are words of power (mantras, they are called) by which you can affect objective reality. You can also, by concentrating at the point between the eyebrows and rotating the will powerfully around the thought of self, learn to send powerful thoughts from your own spiritual center to that center in others whom you want to affect. But beware of hurting anyone. In such cases there is a boomerang effect. The action must be for their welfare, and must proceed from higher consciousness. Beware, above all, of reawakening the delusion in your own subconscious that an outward direction of energy is desirable.

If you are faced with negative influences, and can't avoid them, here are a few helpful suggestions for how to cope with them:

1) If those influences come to you unsolicited, remember: They may have been sent to help you grow stronger in yourself. A hothouse plant grows larger and more luxuriant than its cousins out of doors, exposed as they are to wind, rain, and cold, but it has less stamina. What I am saying about magnetism, then, mustn't make you cowardly. Take it only as a reminder to be prudent.

2) If you know you are going to be exposed to tamasic vibrations, take the time to meditate beforehand. Then harmonize the vibrations of your heart. Next, consciously emanate peaceful vibrations outward from your heart center to your environment. For human energy has two modes of expression; one of them is giving, the other, receiving or absorbing. If you can consciously enter the giving mode, you will find yourself much less affected by outside influences, whether good or bad. (For this reason it is wise also, as much as possible, to sleep and eat in a harmonious environment. For at such times, your energy is in the absorbing, or receiving, mode.)

3) Mentally chant, according to the sincere call of your heart: for example, "I am Thine. Be Thou mine," or, less personally, "I am light. I am love. I am a fountain of unending peace!"

4) Send the heart's energy upward to the point between the eyebrows. Feel yourself surrounded and embraced by the divine light.

5) In the privacy of your meditation room, place your arms down at your side. Then, mentally chanting AUM, bring them upward, straight out to the side, with your palms up, until you join the palms high above the head. Mentally create an aura of upward-moving light around your body.

6) Extend your arms before you, your palms touching. Then move them out and around your body in a broad circle until the palms or fingers touch once again behind your back. Mentally, while repeating this process, chant, "AUM-TAT-SAT." (The as in TAT-SAT are pronounced short, with an "uh" sound: "TUT-SUT.") Repeat this

process at least three times. After you've finished it, feel yourself surrounded by that protective vibration.

7) Try not to look into the eyes of, or shake hands with, people whose vibrations are negative. This avoidance may prove a little socially awkward at times so I don't insist on it, but I should state that these are two of the strongest ways by which magnetism is exchanged between people. (This is one little-known reason for the palms-folded greeting, the namaskar, which Indians customarily use in place of the handshake.)

8) When you find that you must enter a disharmonious environment, keep a spiritual "bodyguard" with you: someone who is on the same spiritual wavelength as you, to help keep your magnetism strong.

9) If you feel yourself under psychic attack from anyone, use your thumb to place a cross of blue light mentally on the attacker. Do it with sufficient will power, and harmful energy will be unable to reach you, but will return to its sender. Direct good energy along with the blocking energy, that your attacker be cured of his anger. A mantra to repeat in such circumstances is "AUM hreeng kleeng Krishnaya namaha." (The first a in Krishnaya is pronounced as in our "ah." The other as are pronounced as in "uh.")

Good company, as I said, is extremely important on the spiritual path. Seek out the company of others of like mind. Mix with them lovingly. If you know someone whose spiritual magnetism is particularly strong, spend time with that person. If outward good company is not available, keep good company mentally.

One of the best ways of surrounding yourself with good vibrations is to listen to uplifting music.

Most important of all, try to keep the company of saints. They will help you, even from a distance, by their subtle magnetic influence. If you know no such people, read their lives; visit places where they have lived; mix with those who knew them. If possible, listen to recordings of their voices.

Be conscious, above all, of your own developing magnetism. Feel it surrounding you as you walk, flowing through you as you converse with others. Expand it to the people in your vicinity; include them in your aura.

The more you act as a channel of blessing to others, the more you yourself will be blessed. Your magnetism will be enhanced, and your efforts to reach God greatly accelerated.

§

From Money Magnetism, Kriyananda

Chapter Two: Seek Security Within Yourself First

The teachings of Jesus Christ were intended primarily for the salvation of men's souls. Nevertheless, because truth remains true no matter on what level of reality we seek it, many of Jesus' sayings can be applied effectively even on ordinary levels of human life.

Take this saying, for example: "To him who has shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him who does not have, even that which he has shall be taken away." (Matthew 13:12) At first glance, this may seem a very unfair teaching, no matter on what level of truth we apply it. If, however, we think of abundance as something one attracts to himself, rather than waiting for it to be doled out to him by a whimsical Destiny—an uncertain blessing over which he has no control—then we can see that Jesus is addressing the issue in another spirit altogether.

Quite simply, what he was emphasizing was the importance of our own responsibility in the quest for abundance. Abundance, in other words, is something we must draw to us. Abundance of all kinds. For success, too, is a kind of abundance. So also is emotional fulfillment. So also are friends. We draw these to us. We can also repel them.

A consciousness of abundance attracts abundance. It's really that simple, though it may help to explain this principle a little further. A consciousness of poverty, on the other hand, attracts poverty.

You've probably heard people speak of "poverty consciousness." There is negative power in negative attitudes. Our expectations of life, whether positive or negative, determine to a great extent the wealth or poverty, the success or failure, the fulfillment or disappointment, that we receive from life.

An important point to consider is that we can increase or decrease the influence of these expectations by the intensity with which we focus our thoughts and feelings on them.

A cornerstone of the teachings of the great spiritual teacher, Paramhansa Yogananda, is the aphorism, The greater the will, the greater the flow of energy. Will power it is that directs energy to the body, and outward from the body toward any object of fulfillment. And the effectiveness of our expectations of life depends on the energy we focus upon them.

A person of weak will power will inevitably be also a person whose energy-flow is weak. By contrast, a person of great will power always finds reserves of inner energy from which he draws the ability to attain his objectives.

Willingness generates energy. Unwillingness, on the other hand, depletes one's supply of energy, no matter how much he tries to replenish it with sufficient rest and a good diet.

Energy is, indeed, the link between mind and body—between Divine Consciousness and the material universe. Science has demonstrated that matter is energy, essentially. Many leading modern physicists go further and state their belief that

energy is a manifestation of consciousness. In this they concur with the ancient teachings, which state that the Divine Will manifested the material universe through the medium of cosmic energy.

When we direct our hand to raise, say, a stone, we do so not merely by visualizing it as raising the stone. We also send energy to it by the command of our will, and we direct the energy to raise the stone.

Yogananda created a set of psycho-physical exercises to develop a person's awareness of, and control over, this flow of energy in the body. I myself have practiced this system of exercises daily for many years, and have found it to be enormously beneficial not only physically, but also in its application to the principles being discussed here.

Even without this system of exercises, one can acquire great power to influence events that more passive people think of as beyond our control. He can exert this power by simply understanding the influence of right attitude over the flow of energy. For energy doesn't merely act upon matter through the muscles of our bodies. It exerts a magnetic force beyond our bodies to attract to us whatever we want (or, just as effectively by strong negative expectations, what we don't want) in our lives.

Energy may be compared to electricity. Indeed, electricity is a form of energy. (Yogananda called it, quaintly, "the animal current in the energy world.") Electricity is a lower manifestation of the same energy as that which moves the body. It is a particular manifestation of the cosmic energy which created the material universe.

When electricity flows through a wire, it generates a magnetic field. The stronger the flow, the more powerful this field.

Similarly, whenever we will something to happen, or to be drawn to us, a ray of energy goes out, projected by the power of our thought, or will. The energy, in its turn, generates a magnetic force-field. It is this magnetic force that attracts to us the object of our expectations.

Thus, to attract money, we must be confident that we have a right to our fair share of the abundance of the universe. And, indeed, we have that right, all of us.

Don't be passive in the demands you make on the universe. Don't wait for good fortune to smile on you. Be secure in yourself, and know that you, yourself, are an integral part of the cosmic reality.

When you have that consciousness of living already in abundance, then, as Jesus said, you will attract more abundance.

§

What is magnetism? Yogananda

Yogoda: Corso Super-avanzato

Lezione 7 (1930)

The definitions of magnetism are, on the whole, quite similar. The following are typical: Magnetism is:

(1) that property possessed by various bodies . . . of attracting or repelling each other;

(2) the force to which this attraction is due;

(3) the science that treats of the laws of this force;

(4) personal attraction or charm.

There is also what is known as animal magnetism, hypnotism, and so forth.

Now let us see what can be learned about magnetism by an intuitional, metaphysical study, which differs from the investigations of physical science in its ability to scale dimensional boundaries.

Originally there was nothing by Undifferentiated Spirit. In order to make possible the creation of dualities and multifarious objects, Spirit had to project; that is, fling forth vibratory force. This repulsed force became Cosmic Energy, out of which the universe and all that is in it materialized.

The origin of evil

After the universal creative force "fell from heaven"--after it was cast out of the bosom of the Cosmic Spirit and became independent--it began creating delusive, finite dualities contrary to the pattern of Spirit. In the Spirit was perfection when It was divided into the many. The part could not manifest the quality of the whole. This conscious, independent force is "Satan," or the satanic creator of all evil and misery-producing finite objects.

Why we are bound to matter

Satan wants everything to reincarnate and remain in its finite state through the laws of material attachment, instinct, desire, and so forth. If this force were not conscious human beings--in fact, all creation--after a certain interval would be able to cast off Satan's bonds and return to Spirit. Because Satan deludes all creatures with the consciousness of finiteness and unspiritual duality, they must go through the process of evolution. Thus, souls must reincarnate through the law of cause and effect, and the power of desire born of contact with finite matter.

What is spiritual magnetism

The Spirit, through its force of universal attraction, is gradually absorbing all objects created out of It by the misguided force of satanic delusion. In other words, living beings and souls have allowed themselves to be lured away from God and become attached to matter through the influence of the creative force projected by God, who is calling His truant children back to Himself.

The tug-of-war of divine and evil forces in man

Satan is opposing Spirit's emancipating magnetism which expresses itself in all of creation as an urge toward perfection. Each individual feels within himself the tug-of-war between God's attracting, divine magnetism and Satan's outwardly repelling magnetism. Satanic magnetism keeps objects attracted to matter. Through man's discriminating and intuitive faculties he feels and responds to the call of Spirit, while through his senses and mind he is drawn to matter.

Kinds of Magnetism

Electronic Magnetism.

Electrons and protons are held together to a nucleus by the power of universal magnetism. This is termed electronic magnetism. Because the Spirit is in everything and possesses this drawing power, all things created out of It also have the individuality of the Spirit and Its drawing magnetic power which pervades every heart, permeates all things.

Solar Magnetism.

The sun's power of attraction, which causes the planets to revolve around it, is called solar magnetism.

Atomic and Molecular Magnetism.

All atoms and molecules have a nucleus which holds their tiny particles together. The cohesive power in atom and molecule is called atomic magnetism and molecular magnetism, respectively.

Chemical Magnetism.

The power that holds together the constituents of, say, H₂SO₄, or sulphuric [sic] acid, is called chemical magnetism.

Material Magnetism.

The power that holds together the rocks and like natural objects is called material magnetism.

Plant Magnetism.

The power within plants, which draws nourishment out of air and sod and keeps plants from disintegrating is called plant magnetism.

Animal Magnetism.

Animal organisms are held together by animal magnetism. Animals also have within themselves the power by which they attract other animals. The snake, for example, charms and draws little animals to itself by its animal magnetic power.

Magnetism in Man.

Man, being a rational, aesthetic, spiritual animal, possesses intellectual, moral, aesthetic and spiritual as well as animal magnetism.

The right kind of magnetic power has expanding, uplifting and spiritual qualities. Some people are so magnetic that they inspire us and expand our

consciousness. This is the sort of magnetic power that we all want not the stupefying kind of hypnotic or animal magnetism.

Hypnotism vs. spiritual magnetism.

Hypnotism is a spiritual crime, as the hypnotist robs his subject of free will, judgment and consciousness. An individual under the influence of hypnotism is unconscious of his surroundings and aware only of the suggestion of the hypnotist. The conscious mind of the hypnotized person is inert. A person upon whom hypnotism is practiced repeatedly for any great length of time becomes weak-willed and loses all natural forcefulness, being guided by enslaving suggestions. Now let us see what can be learned about magnetism by an intuitional, metaphysical study, which differs from the investigations of physical science in its ability to scale dimensional boundaries.

How to develop moral, aesthetic, business, spiritual and divine magnetism

As you know, a magnet has a positive and a negative pole through which it draws toward itself pieces of iron or steel within a certain range. When a magnet is rubbed against a piece of non-magnetic iron or steel, the latter also becomes magnetic. People, too, can become magnetized through close association with magnetic personalities to whom they give their deep, loving, respectful attention. They should, however, first decide what kind of magnetism they want and then choose the particular persons who possess it.

Exchanging magnetism in shaking hands.

For instance, if you are a failure and you want success, associate and shake hands as much as possible with those who have attained success in their business, art, or profession. (Of course, it is not always easy to make such contacts, but "where there's a will, there's a way.")

In shaking hands, two magnets are formed: the upper--spiritual--magnet with the two heads, and the lower--physical--magnet with the two pairs of feet as poles. The junction of the hands in the handshake forms the common neutral point as well as the curve for the upper and lower magnets.

Let us see what happens when a spiritual man, who is a failure, and a prosperous business man, who is spiritually weak, attentively shake hands. Through the two pairs of feet, forming the two poles of one magnet, they exchange physical qualities; and through the two heads, forming the two poles of another magnet, they exchange mental qualities. If such men come in close mental contact, besides soaking hands frequently and attentively, the business man becomes more spiritual and the spiritual man becomes more prosperous, by virtue of the upper magnet. They exchange their bad qualities also, through the power of the lower magnet formed by the feet. Both the spiritual man and the business man may be affected in their vocational qualities.

We will now take a different case, that of a reformer of weak character who endeavors to influence a stubborn, confirmed evil-doer, by close association and oft-repeated handshaking. It is quite likely that the reformer will become a positive pole, drawing evil qualities, and the evildoer will become a negative pole, passively drawing good qualities in a very limited way. In this case, the reformer would be the one to be changed. Therefore, unless one has grown very strong spiritually, he should not attempt to reform the very wicked.

From the foregoing, it becomes evident that indiscriminate handshaking may prove detrimental. It is harmful to associate constantly with undesirable individuals with whom frequent handshaking is unavoidable, though an occasional handshake is not of much consequence and may be necessary for courtesy's sake.

Young people of opposite sex, living on the material plane, often exchange animal magnetism, blind one another by emotions and passions, and draw unto themselves all kinds of destructive, evil mentalities.

The range of influence of material magnetism is very low except in unusual cases. Successful business men can but rarely influence failures from a distance.

For the purpose of exchanging moral, mental, aesthetic, or spiritual magnetism, personal contact is not always necessary. When one visualizes a spiritual man and deeply meditates on his mentality and character, one can attract and imitate his spiritual magnetism.

Developing spiritual magnetism by self-effort.

One who continually lives, thinks and dreams of spirituality and friendship, contacts the Spirit's own magnetism and feels Its ennobling influence. One who meditates on Om and God day and night and intuitively perceives all-attracting Divine Magnetism, develops spiritual magnetism of limitless range and power and can draw unto himself whatever he wants, uplifting people either by personal contact or from afar, through his powerfully directed concentration. By this power, one is able to draw unto himself his true friends from previous incarnations; he can command the elements to do his bidding; he can draw all creative, luminous forces, and can invite angels, saints and savants who have passed on, to come and dance in his joy. Such a person can attract to himself the rays of all knowledge so that they will sparkle and scintillate around his being.

Never permit yourself by anyone's animal magnetism or semi-hypnotic power, which differs but slightly from hypnotism. When an individual exercises his animal magnetism over another, his subject is blinded and unable to perceive clearly the danger to which he is exposed. A person so influenced may seem to be a free agent, but in reality he is guided entirely by another's instincts and habits.

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Acquiring Magnetism, Questions and Answers, Yogananda

Question: "How can I acquire magnetism?"—S.T.

Answer: There is within us a magnetic force by which we attract those who have a living relationship to our magnetic power. Thus, a human being cannot attract a stone because a stone has no relation to a human being. We know that an ordinary magnet has a certain range and power. Small magnets draw small things. Larger magnets draw larger objects. The human magnet draws according to its power of attraction. Some people attract physical things, some attract mental things, and some attract spiritual things. It depends on what kind of a magnet one wishes to be.

We must develop two kinds of magnetism—one to attract God and another to attract our material necessities. If we use all our magnetism to gain material things,

sooner or later we shall be disillusioned. It is true that God gave us bodies, and we must look after them; but if we first develop spiritual magnetism, it will guide us in the proper ways to supply all our material needs.

Body Must Obey Commands

We must develop physical magnetism in order to have a body that is strong and conscious of itself—not to the point of vanity, but a body that obeys our command. Recharging the body with energy develops great magnetism. Keep the body magnetized by right eating. Too much protein and starchy foods retain the poisons in the body. Eating freely of fruits and vegetables has a tendency to develop magnetism. Fruits have a great magnetic quality. Overeating is bad. Fasting often is very good, as it gives the stomach a rest.

To acquire mental magnetism, we must do everything with deep concentration. People who have reached the top in any profession or business have great magnetic power. If one is a slave to any of the senses, he is losing magnetism. If he has control over them, he is developing magnetism. To maintain and develop an even mind without getting emotional is the way to magnetic living. Emotionalism must be converted into power and be governed by wisdom; then one has great magnetism.

We must be careful with whom we associate, because we are continually exchanging magnetism with other people through our thoughts, through shaking hands and through looking into the eyes of another person. As soon as we shake hands with someone, a magnet is formed. The person who is the stronger gives his vibration to the other person. We become like the people we mingle with, not through their conversation, but through the silent magnetic vibration which goes out of their bodies. When we come in the range of their magnetism, we become like them.

If a man wants to become an artist, he must associate with artists. If he wants to be a good business man, he must associate with successful leaders. If he wants to become a spiritual giant, he must associate with devotees of God.

Develop Cosmic Magnetism

One can develop cosmic magnetism by thinking of God and saintly people. By concentrating deeply upon a certain personality, one can attract that personality. That is why one should think only of great individuals. If we concentrate on thoughts of wicked people, we will attract their qualities unless we are stronger than they are. If our whole heart is with someone, we draw all the defects and all the good qualities of that person.

If one is a material magnet, he notices that power in others he meets. If he is a moral magnet, he notices that power in others. If he is a spiritual magnet, he notices that magnetism in others.

Divine magnetism is the power of all powers. When our prayer bursts out of our heart and God gives up His vow of silence and speaks to us, then we have gained divine magnetism. We must use our time to develop spiritual magnetism in order to attract the Imperishable. Develop power to attract the highest thing—then we can easily attract all lesser things.

We must detach ourselves from this body—this physical residence. Each of us is a spark of the Infinite. We must differentiate between perishable objects and imperishable possessions. Anything that belongs to the body is perishable; anything that belongs to the mind is semi-perishable; anything that belongs to the soul is imperishable.

Keep in tune with the Divine Magnetic Power. Think of God so constantly that He will be with you wherever you go. Then all your good desires will materialize, even those formed in the distant past.

--Inner Culture magazine, July 1941

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Chapter Six: Energy Healing, Yogananda

Magnetic Healing Exercises

From the writings of Paramhansa Yogananda

Vital Healing Exercise

Inhale and hold the breath. Visualize the air in the lungs transforming into Energy. Send that energy to the medulla and the spiritual eye. Concentrate at the spiritual eye, feeling a warm force there. As you exhale, direct that warm force to the diseased body part and saturate it with warm, vital healing energy.

To Improve Digestion

- Bend over and hold the arms of a chair. Expel the breath quickly and completely. With the breath held out, draw in the abdomen as far as possible, and then push it out as far as possible. Do this 3 times without inhaling. Repeat exercise 5 times.
- Stand straight, with eyes closed. Place both hands on abdomen, one above the other, with slight pressure. Contract and tense the lower portion of the abdomen. While holding this tension, contract and tense the upper portion. Relax completely. Repeat the exercise 6 times.
- Exhale and hold breath out. Contract the abdomen and stomach while concentrating deeply on the navel, to a count of 20. Release and inhale. Repeat 4 times.

For Headaches

Press the palm of one hand against the back of the head and press the other palm lightly on the forehead. Inhale, hold the breath, and with deepest attention gently contract the muscles at the top of the head. Exhale and release contraction. Repeat 4-6 times.

For Brain Power

Exhale and keep the breath out. With full concentration contract the muscles of the head gently to a count of 15. Inhale and release the contraction.

For Toning Nerves

Inhale and hold the breath. Gently contract the entire body, all the muscles at once. Hold to a count of 20, with deep attention on the entire body. Exhale and release the contraction. Repeat 3 times whenever you feel weak or nervous.

For the Eyes

Exhale and keep the breath out. With the eyes closed, contract the eyelids and brows very lightly. Hold the contraction, with deep concentration, to count of 20. Release the contraction and inhale. Repeat 7 times morning and night.

For the Knees

Squat down, exhaling, and sit on the heels. Quickly stand up and inhale. Holding the breath, gently contract and tense the muscles of the entire body. Exhale and relax. Repeat 10 times, morning and night.

To Strengthen or Heal Limbs or Muscles

Close your eyes and focus with deep attention on the limb or muscle to be healed. Contract the muscle gently, while exhaling, to a count of 20. Release the contraction and inhale. Repeat 6 times.

Superconscious Healing Technique

In deep meditation, gather all of your energy and focus it at the spiritual eye. Transform that energy into a laser beam of blazing light and shine that light first on your brain, instantly burning all negative mental thoughts and habits. Then mentally shine this light throughout the body and to any specific part needing healing. Bum away all diseased cells and replace them with healthy cells.

§

Self-Healing Through Heliotropic Techniques, Yogananda

These are methods of simultaneously using the Cosmic Life Force and sunlight to effect self-healing. Practice them whenever you are in the sun - not only to cure disease or heal a part of the body, but regularly to vitalize the body and thus prevent disease.

For Colds - Optimum Practice Time: 15 minutes daily

Daily, at any time, lie flat on back on a woolen blanket in the sun, exposing chest, thighs, and feet.

Open mouth wide and turn head so that sunlight can penetrate nostrils and mouth. Gently quiver head by tensing. Concentrate on the mucous membranes of the nose and throat. Visualize that the energy you are sending by vibrating is absorbing and transmuting the sunlight into a hot, healing force that is passing through these passages and banishing disease germs.

For Chest Colds - Optimum Practice Time: half hour, twice daily when stomach is empty

Sit or lie in the sun, letting the sunlight fall on your chest. Rapidly but gently rub the chest, consciously injecting energy into the chest through your fingers and hands. "Mentally visualize, and gradually become aware of by feeling, that the energy in your hands is acting on the sunlight falling on your chest to create a new, healing force. As you experience the sensation of the sunlight and the rubbing, consciously absorb this energy into the chest and use it to destroy the disease germs in the respiratory organs.

For Headaches - Optimum Practice Time: 10 minutes

Sit so that the sunlight falls freely on your head and face. Keep your eyes closed. With your fingers rapidly rub your entire scalp, forehead, back part of head, and sides of head. As you rub, think that you are mixing the Cosmic Life Force flowing through your fingers with the sunlight shining on your head, and feel that you are pouring this

mixed solution of healing light into your head, saturating your pores and brains cells. Practice for 10 minutes and then sit quietly while you experience the great power of the healing force you have just channeled.

For Eyes - Optimum Practice Time: Once daily, either morning or evening

Early in the morning, during the first hour after sunrise, and early in the evening, during the last hour before sunset, the destructive rays of the sun are filtered out by earth's atmosphere, and the healing rays pass through. At either of these times it is safe to practice the following exercise.

- Stare into the sun with the eyes open and unwinking as long as you can without discomfort. Practice this a half minute to a minute at first, gradually increasing the time to not more than nine minutes.
- Then blink the eyes rapidly for one full minute.
- Close the eyes and turn your back to the sun.
- Put the right hand over the eyes and the left hand over the right hand.
- You will see the image of the sun, which is still retained on the retina of the eye.
- Concentrate on that image and visualize all the healing rays of the sun coming into your eyes through that sun which you see with closed eyes. That is actually what happens.
- Keep the hands over the eyes. When the image of the sun begins to fade, move the eyeballs up, to the right, down, to the left, and so on, repeating this rotation with a little tension, and visualizing energy from the sun flowing into the eyes and strengthening them.
- Take the hands away and squeeze the eyes shut, holding them shut to the count of twelve then relax. Repeat twice more, tensing to the count of twelve and relaxing, making a total of three times.

For Rheumatism - Optimum Practice Time: two minutes, five times daily

Expose affected body part to the sunlight. Gently contract the part and hold. Then while the part is contracted, rub it rapidly with the fingers, visualizing the Cosmic Life Force in your fingers, in the contracted body part, and in the sunlight are mixing together creating a healing force which will eliminate the trouble. Do this for two minutes, and then relax, quietly experiencing the healing force at work in the body part.

For Anemia & Nervousness

Optimum Practice Time: two minutes each, ten times

- Sit facing the sunlight with your chest, arms, and thighs exposed. Gently tense the entire body, energizing it; and then relax.

- With your palms rapidly rub your: forehead, throat, chest, abdomen, and thighs for two minutes.
- Now turn so that the sunlight is falling on your back. Tense the entire body, energizing it, and then relax. Briskly rub back of neck, shoulders, back, and buttocks.
- Feel the Cosmic Life Energy in your hands, your body, and the sunlight combining to make a powerful healing light which will soothe and rejuvenate the entire body.
- Repeat this exercise ten times. It is also beneficial to contract the feet and rub the soles with the fingers while exposing them to the sunlight.

For Wounds, Sores and Skin Troubles - Optimum Practice Time: ten minutes

Expose the diseased or injured part to the sunlight. Gently contract and relax that part for ten minutes. During the exercise think that the Cosmic Life Force is healing the sore.

Obstructors of Sunlight

- Glass windows. Sunlight coming through a closed window is of no value as the vitalizing rays are shut out. It is necessary to use the direct rays of the sun.
- Clothing.
- Clogged pores. Exercise often and bathe frequently, rubbing the skin vigorously.

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Evaluation of the Science of Curative Methods, Yogananda

Disease is generally considered a result of external material causes-few realize that it comes through the inaction of the Life Force within. When the cell or tissue vehicle of the Life Energy is in any way affected, the Life Energy withdraws from that place and trouble consequently starts. Medicine, massage and electricity only help to stimulate the cell in such a way that the inactive Life Energy is induced to return and resume its former work of repair.

We must not be extremists in any way. We should adopt whatever methods of healing are suitable according to individual conviction. One fact should be borne in mind-medicine, food, poisons, etc., all have a definite chemical action on the blood and body. As long as one eats, why should he deny that medicines or other material aids are without effect on the body? They are useful as long as only the material consciousness is present. They have their limitations, however, because they are applied from outside. The best methods are those which help the internal Life Energy to resume its healing activities.

Medicine chemically helps the blood and tissues. Use of electrical devices is also of benefit. But neither medicine nor electricity can cure disease; they can only stimulate or coax the Life Energy back to the neglected diseased body part. Hence the introduction of a different foreign element, be it medicine or electricity or any other external aid, is undesirable if we can manage to directly use the Life Energy to effect a cure without employing any intermediary agent.

In massage, osteopathic treatment, adjustment of the vertebrae, Yoga postures, etc., no introduction of an outside influence is involved, and by these methods we can remove or relieve the congestion in the nerves or vertebrae and permit the free flow of Life Energy.

On the other hand, mental cure is superior to all methods of physical cure because will, imagination, faith, etc., are the different phases of consciousness which actually and directly act from within and are the motive powers that stimulate and direct the Life Energy to accomplish any definite task.

We, therefore, see that both physical methods and mental methods of cure are useful only insofar as they can influence and awaken the Life Energy. It is the Life Energy that will cure, and that method which exerts the most power over the Life Energy is the superior method. The Yogoda system teaches one to harness and direct the will to assist the actual vibrating Life Energy to any body part required. Neither physical culture methods nor mental healing can equal the marvelous results of Yogoda, which employs the will and the Life Energy directly. It is not imagination one can feel the tingling energy throughout the body by the use of the Yogoda exercises.

Medicine may be used for little itches, sores or accidental cuts, etc. If the arm has been fractured, it is foolish to give God the trouble of joining your displaced bones when a doctor (a child of God) can fix it by a little use of his skill and knowledge of God's own laws as applied to matter. If you can instantaneously heal your broken bones by mental power it is admissible, but don't wait.

Matter does not exist in the way we usually conceive it, nevertheless, it does exist as a delusion. Dispelling delusion requires a definite method. You cannot cure a dope-fiend in a moment. Material consciousness possesses man through a law of delusion and only by following the opposite law of undoing the delusion can the material consciousness be dispelled.

The rabid medical man and the mental healer both are extremists. They are wrong because they draw a dividing line between matter and Spirit. Spirit through a series of processes of materialization became matter, hence matter proceeds from and cannot be different from its cause, the Spirit. Matter is a partial expression of Spirit—the Infinite appearing as finite, the Unlimited as limited. But since matter is nothing but Spirit in its delusive manifestation, matter cannot exist without the Spirit. Hence the Spirit exists; matter does not.

--From *Scientific Healing Affirmations*, 1924 Edition

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The Evolution of Healing Methods, Yogananda

Diseases may be classified as physical, mental, and spiritual. Maladies which affect the blood, bones, brain, nerves, and tissues are physical. Mental disease springs from the invasion of the mental bacteria of fear, worry, anger, dissipation, greed, and bad habits. Ignorance is the cause of spiritual disease. It is the sin of all sins, according to the Hindu Scriptures, because it is the root from which all other miseries spring. Lack of inner peace, want of harmony with one's fellow Beings, and bewilderment about life are some of the spiritual diseases.

But it is with the methods of physical healing that we are directly concerned now. All methods of healing are conditional and incidental to the existence of disease. Prevention of diseases, and their absolute non-existence, is the goal and desire of humanity. It is well known that the Chinese pay their doctors to keep them well, and make the doctors pay the bills if they become sick. A world-wide adoption of this rule would insure great progress.

Dependence Of Man's Body Upon Cosmic Forces

What is it that heals? Is it medicine, X-Ray, massage, or the mind? If it is any of these, why don't they heal all diseases? Can medicine or mind heal the disease of a dead man? Why not? Because Life Force is the only supreme, invariable power by which any or all methods of healing can be made effective. A method of healing is inferior or superior insofar as it is capable of rousing or stimulating the inactive Life Force in any diseased body part, thus electrocuting the disease. Therefore, all methods of healing are really indirect ways of rousing the life energy, which is the real and direct healer of all diseases.

The conception of man as a "dynamo," being recharged by an electrical force, or Prana, as the Hindus call it, is in line with the facts as expounded centuries ago by the sages of India and confirmed today by modern scientific research. It is the life energy, the cosmic electrical force in all cases, which cures. An understanding of this point is of far-reaching significance, for, while it will not make a natural diet seem any the less important, it does establish a consciousness in man's mind of the identity of his own life with a cosmic life or undying all-embracing force, and destroys the false belief that life is dependent upon outward sources, such as food.

It may thus be seen that man is not only a bundle of nerves, muscles, and bones — the dead man has these too. The difference between a dead body and a living one is the absence or presence of this Cosmic Life Force. Living man is so because life energy sparkles in the bulb of eyes, ears, all the senses, stomach, liver, brain, and all organs.

The method which can directly and quickly rouse the life energy to effect healing I term "Life Therapy," or direct healing by the rays of the inner Life Force. In all forms of muscular exercise, the concentration is on the muscles and not on the force which moves in the muscles, What is this force, moving through the motor nerves into the muscles? What is the force in the sensory nerves, carrying sensations of touch, smell, and so forth, into the brain? What is the force which works the pump of the heart, moves the diaphragm, and carries on the process of digestion in the stomach through the release of the digestive juices and the peristaltic action? It is by concentration on this force, and not on the passive agent which is merely being acted upon by this dynamic

life energy, that healing of disease can be effected through direction of life energy by will to any part of the body.

All Matter Charged With Life By Conscious Cosmic Ray

Hindu Scriptures and ancient Aryan scientist-sages of India promulgated the theory long ago that all matter was being charged with life by the Conscious Cosmic Ray. In accordance with this reasoning, I maintain that the human body is similar to a wet automobile battery. Its twenty-seven thousand billion cells are all little batteries, depending upon the principal batteries of the brain, which in turn are recharged from the Medulla Oblongata.

Just as an automobile battery depends for its life upon two sources, the chemicals and the electrical recharge, so the body-battery depends for its existence upon two sources 1. Solids, liquids, sunshine, oxygen, and similar outward sources. 2. The charge of Life Force and consciousness. The latter constitute the primary indispensable condition of life, while the former are secondary.

Adding chemicals and water to a dead battery does not revive it. Similarly, if a dead man is put in sunshine, his stomach stuffed with good food and his lungs inflated with oxygen, he nevertheless does not live. Why? Because his body-battery is dead. Although food is one of the conditions by which life ordinarily exists, life itself is directly charged in the sperm from some unknown cosmic source.

It is when this life electricity begins to get low that food is of little use. Some people may say: "I follow every hygienic and dietary rule possible, yet my health is failing," Such a person has never learned to recharge his body-battery from within, and has depended only upon external sources for his health.

Chemicals cannot help a dying battery, which then cannot function without electrical recharge. It is the electricity reacting in the chemicals which constitutes the life of a battery. Similarly, in man, a cosmic electrical force is the direct source of life. It is this power which converts food, oxygen, and sunshine into living energy. It is this force that has the tremendous intelligence which converts the same food materials into different forms of osseous, nervous, adipose, epithelial, and other tissues of the body. Minus this force, food is powerless to support life. The future food of advanced mankind will lie in absorbing rays directly from within or from Nature, and mankind will not then have to rely upon the indirect method of receiving energy by the transmutation of food elements.

Healing by electricity and rays are of a finer nature because they use a more subtle force than solids or liquids for healing. These finer forces affect the electronic constituency of the body and harmonize the wrong vibratory condition, which medicines are too gross to reach. The rays can penetrate into the germ-disturbed atomic composition of the affected cells, where liquids cannot reach.

--From Praecepta Lesson 64 (1938)

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Converting the Hands into Healing Batteries of Life Force, Yogananda

Converting the hands into healing batteries of life force

Healing like Jesus by the laying on of hands

Healing stricken people from a distance

The body's sources of energy

The human body may be compared to the wet battery of an automobile. Just as the proper functioning of an automobile battery depends upon distilled water from without and energy from within, so the proper functioning of the human body battery depends upon food from without and life force from within.

Will draws energy from the cosmos into the body.

This life force is stored mainly in the medulla and distributed through the sub-dynamos in the five plexuses. The medulla is fed by conscious Cosmic Energy which surrounds the body and which is drawn into the body by the power of will.

Cosmic Energy is converted into life force by the will which is the radio as well as the main dynamo of the body. Very often, however, people become discouraged and permit hereditary inhibitions in the subconscious mind to hamper the will. The suggestions of old age, accidents, diseases, heredity, instincts, etc., demoralize the will in many individuals. During a serious illness, for instance, memories of previous ailments as well as memories of past failures, frustrations, and disappointments which were due to weakness, fill consciousness with the fear that the body cannot recover. Death occurs if one "gives up"; if he refuses to be disheartened, the will produces life force which can repair and remodel all tissues, including bones, organs, etc. Therefore, if one refuses to become discouraged or to take seriously illusive body changes and thoughts of hereditary limitations, bodily disintegration is arrested. Different degrees of will power develop corresponding degrees of sensitiveness to pain or death. Some combat injuries and live; others resign themselves "to their fate" at the slightest indisposition. Thus it becomes evident that the duration of life is dependent upon the will.

Many people die mentally long before they die physically. When one ceases to have ambitions and to be interested in life, the will becomes paralyzed. When this will radio is untuned or destroyed, Cosmic Energy ceases to supply the reserve dynamo of the medulla, and physical health slowly fails from want of life force. This is the principle cause for the symptoms of old age. The stronger the will, the greater the flow of energy into the tissues and body parts.

Will is the life-sustaining factor.

Food cannot rejuvenate the body of an individual whose will is weak, for it is the inner energy, or life force, which converts food into energy. Solids, Liquids, and gases cannot be assimilated after the supply of life force, which is dependent upon the will, has ceased. When one has a strong, unflinching will, he grows more and more independent of food. He can absorb the consciousness of changelessness and inject it with Cosmic Energy into all the cells, making them neutral and free from decay, or

growth. Then these cells become electrified and live only by the vibratory power of intelligent Cosmic Energy, or the Word of God (which is God according to the Bible).

Thoughts of fatigue shut off the supply of energy

Cosmic Energy, through the will, feeds the medulla which in turn feeds the five plexuses. The life force in the plexuses carries on the telephonic work of the five senses through the sensory nerves and of the muscles and joints through the motor nerves. The same life principle charges the circulation, vitalizes each blood cell, and also feeds every nerve, all of which in turn recharge the other cells of the body. As the cells are but condensed will and energy, they can be instantaneously renewed by the power of strong, unflinching will. Therefore, one should never say or think he is tired, for by doing that one becomes twice as tired and paralyzes the will which must be active in Order to draw Cosmic Energy into the body.

Acute and chronic diseases result from lack of life force, a faulty diet, overwork, or other bad habits.

Medicine cannot affect the mental behavior and "disease notions" of the somatic cells

Food and medicine have but an indirect, limited effect on the simple germ cells, and are very slow to change the nature and behavior of the somatic cells and specialized organs. Medicine and the proper food can bring about many cures, but they cannot recreate an organ. Why? The sperm and ovum, drawing nutrition from the mother's body, develop from boneless specks of protoplasm into a baby with hard bones and nerves and organs, etc. Life force and food created all the specialized organs from the sperm and ovum, because they contained the mind-obeying germ cells. However, as the organs were formed, the cells changed. It is because these changed (somatic) cells, constituting the organs, are very unyielding and hard to control that food and chemicals are unable to recreate organs. Originally, mind and life force induce the germ cells to create organs, but once the germ cells change into somatic cells they begin to rule the mind and life force. Hence humanity can regain the power to recreate lost limbs, organs, etc., only by learning to convert the somatic cells back to their original obedient germ-cell state. By freeing life force and mind from bodily slavery, by increasing vitality and mental power, the somatic cells can be made to change into germ cells.

Why do germ cells change into obstinate somatic cells?

The vital organs are maintained and guided by the subconscious mind which contains the record of our experiences and behavior throughout all incarnations. Therefore, though the human body develops from changeable germ cells, subconscious, fixed designers slowly transform these germ cells into somatic cells which, make up the specialized organs and limbs of the human body. In other words, the somatic cells are governed by specialized organic designers. These are the result of our past actions, and are born and die with the organs and limbs which they consciously design and build. When one of the lungs or an arm is lost, the specialized designer in that lung or arm dies with it. Therefore, the body is unable to recreate these lost body parts.

Can lost organs and limbs be recreated?

In order to recreate lost organs, etc., the following is necessary:

- The life force must be made to obey the will instantaneously;
- The will must be changed to all-creating Divine will;
- The life force must be supplied with psychological designers of human organs when such organs are lost through disease or accident. One must visualize a lost designer until it is born again. To be able to do that, one must know how to materialize thoughts;
- The will must be able to float them in the life force, and the life force must be charged continuously with Cosmic Energy. The will must be kept free from, and unhampered by, discouraging hereditary suggestions;
- Lastly, when the will can overcome all hereditary instinctive prejudices regarding the recreation of human organs, and create living psychological designers, then these designers begin to use the extra charge of life energy and condense the semi-conscious life force into electrons which are further condensed into gases, etc. Then the designers begin to use the new protoplasm created by condensation of energy, food chemicals, and blood from the body, to recreate and replace a lost organ.
- Buried in the human mind is the evil, weak suggestion of powerlessness of millions of years, and it will take years to learn how to put the above methods into practice.

The efficacy of medical healing methods is limited as other methods are

Therefore, scientific healing can be effected unfailingly by the development and strengthening of will power and life force. Moreover, this human will power must be impregnated with the invincible, all-creating, unlimited healing power of the Almighty. Neither medicine nor any other material agency has managed to obtain control over the electronic, vibratory force and recreating power of the body cells. If the body is deprived of energy and consciousness, it cannot live. There is no denying that *materia medica* has its uses. However, the more you depend on the limited power of drugs, the weaker your will and access to God's unlimited healing power, and the more you depend on God, the less need you depend on drugs. Organic defects and chronic diseases can be dealt with successfully through divinely charged will power and life force, which alone are the almighty creators and rebuilders of all new or decayed body tissues. Bones, blood, marrow, nerves, brain tissues - everything in the body is directly materialized out of the sperm by the latent will power and life force.

Adam and Eve reproduced themselves by materializing will & energy

Of course, originally Divine Will had to create especially, and materialize, human sperm and ovum, and these contained God's most perfect design. The primeval sperm cells and ova were materialized into the organism of the original man and woman, Adam and Eve, before propagation by the law of cause and effect was instituted. They could recreate their bodies, and propagate themselves, by materializing their vitality and tendencies and clothing them with materialized limbs and flesh. They were in constant communion with the Almighty. Therefore, their will force was in tune with the Infinite will, and they could create human beings out of the ether in the same

manner as God. Only after their will became subservient to the ego and the senses/instead of being guided by wisdom, did they develop sex and sex creation. This was their fall from heavenly powers to earthly ways of creation and living. Their will, no longer guided by wisdom, opposed the Divine Will which is guided by wisdom only. Ever since, misguided, obstinate self-will and satanic ignorance—being concentrated on the changeable body instead of the unchangeable, -infinite Spirit in the body—have created defective, limited mental designers of bodies and their organs. These defective mental designers, inherited from the original erring parents of all humanity, are thus perpetuated in the countless human sperm cells and ova. In this manner did man lose the power to materialize spiritual children and to create perfect bodies in which any organ or limb, etc., could be recreated at will.

The breaking of bones, the loss of limbs or organs, or even injury or loss of the brain would be of no consequence if they could be restored or recreated painlessly by superconscious methods and Divine will, during conscious relaxation or under anesthesia. The territory of the will and energy is the entire human body. The ordinary individual who is a slave to his body finds that he has only imperfect control over the muscles.

First learn to control the muscles and the body by will and life force; then leave to feel the living relation between will and life force and the vital organs by relaxation of the sensory nerves and involuntary organs, i.e., by "switching off energy from heart, lungs, etc. The purpose of tension and relaxation is dissociation of life force and mind from the consciousness of the body. When that is accomplished, the will and life force actually own the whole body and can, through their healing rays, remove chronic defects from any body part.

The astral body, in appearance like a vast nebula or the tail of a comet, charges the physical body with Cosmic Energy through the medulla.

As material science has demonstrated that a piece of chicken heart can be kept alive and growing by the administration of food and chemicals, so Hindu Yoga has shown that the human body and heart can be kept alive in a suspended state, without food, oxygen, or chemicals.*(1)

By practicing the exercises given in the second Yogoda lesson, one can leave, with absolute faith in the almighty power of will, slowly, conscientiously, and patiently to tense and relax, i.e., alternately to put forth and withdraw life force, several times, from any body part that is diseased.

A body part may be recharged without tension.

This method is not effective for the involuntary organs which can be recharged only by practicing the fourth Yogoda lesson. In order to heal cardiac or cerebral disorders, one may send energy mentally to the affected area by merely concentrating on it, without tensing. By this method one can send a feeble current of energy to any body part. Actually tensing with will, of course, produces more energy than concentration alone, but very gentle conscious tension and relaxation of the whole body also sends healing energy, vitality, etc., to heart and brain. It must be remembered, however, that in tensing and relaxing the whole body with a view to curing heart or brain disorders concentration must be centered on the affected organ.

There is also another method of healing:

Sit erect. Gently tense and relax the whole body. Calm yourself. Touch the medulla once, in order to make it easier for you to concentrate on it. Then visualize Cosmic Energy surrounding and entering the body through the medulla and at the point between the eyebrows, and pouring into the spine. Feel the energy flowing down the whole length of the two arms into the hands. Continue tensing and relaxing and feeling the life force flow from the medulla and the point between the eyebrows through the spine to the hands. Then stop tensing and relaxing, and firmly rub the entire bare left arm with the right palm (up and down, several times). Do the same to the right arm with the left palm. Then relax, continuously visualizing and willing Cosmic energy to descend from the medulla through the arms into your hands. Now, with closed eyes, rapidly but gently rub your palms together about twenty times. Then separate the hands, and lift the arms upward. You will feel the life current flowing from the medulla into the spine, especially through both arms and hands, with a pricking, tingling sensation.

Your energy-magnetized hands may be used either for curing any diseased part of your own body or some other person's who need not be in your immediate vicinity, for it is not necessary to touch your patient. This life force passing through your hands has infinite power of projection.

The human will and energy imperfectly control the human body, but the divinely transmitted will can work perfectly, not only in healing your own ailments, but also those of others, even though they be far away. You must, however, visualize your patient, and he must have faith in you. You must broadcast the healing force by moving your hands, electrified by the above method, up and down in space while willing the current to pass over your patient's diseased body part. Do this in a quiet room for fifteen minutes until you feel that you have accomplished your object.

Convert yourself into a divine battery, sending out through your hands divine healing rays whenever and wherever they may be needed. Then your hands, charged with divine power, will throw healing rays into your patient's heart and brain. Thus his seeds of ignorance will be destroyed, and he will smile with the health of God-love.

SUMMARY

Learn to convert your hands into healing batteries, so that divine currents will flow through them at will. Through this means when properly administered diseases of body and mind, as well as the malady of soul ignorance, have vanished under this benign touch, whether administered at close quarters or from afar. Thus one becomes the fisherman of souls, that he may catch them in the net of his divine healing wisdom and present them unto God.

If the heart were stopped and energy distributed throughout the body, the latter would not decompose; but if the heart were stopped and energy withdrawn from the spine, bodily decay would be inevitable. Yogis know how to stop heart and lung action voluntarily yet keep physically alive by retaining some Cosmic Energy in their bodies to sustain the cells in a suspended state.

--Super-Advanced Course No. 1 (1930): Lesson 11

Chapter Seven: Addendum

Addendum I: What is the medulla oblongata?

The **medulla oblongata** (or medulla) is a long stem-like structure located in the **brainstem**. It is anterior and partially inferior to the cerebellum. It is a cone-shaped neuronal mass responsible for autonomic (involuntary) functions ranging from vomiting to sneezing. The medulla contains the cardiac, respiratory, vomiting and vasomotor centers and therefore deals with the autonomic functions of breathing, heart rate and blood pressure.

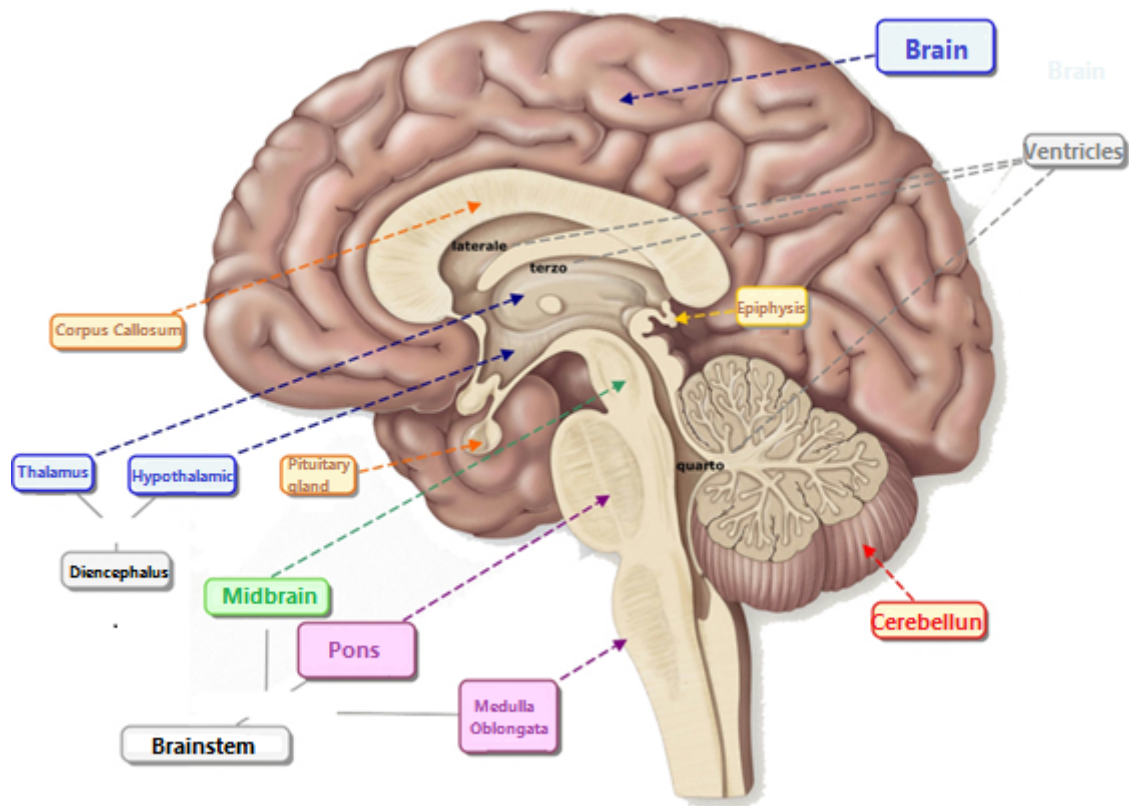
The average length of the bulb is 30 mm and its transverse diameter varies from 10-12 mm at the bottom to 22-25 mm at the top; the thickness is 14 mm. The trunk's apex of the bulb continues down with the first cervical neuromere of the spinal cord, in a section called the collar of the bulb which represents its narrowest portion.

The brainstem is the most primitive region of the brain; it is a center for sorting nerve signals, as the fibers that pass through it travel towards the spinal cord and the rest of the brain.

Furthermore, almost all the cranial nerves are born in the brain stem, which establish contacts with the muscles and organs of the head, neck, chest and abdomen.

It is partly contained in the skull, where it relates to the body of the occipital bone, but extends somewhat into the vertebral canal.

Image of the brain stem



(The epiphysis is also called the pineal gland)

Addendum II: Articles of Interest

Exercise can extend survival even in old

From Internet Yahoo news service 2009

CHICAGO – Even in the "oldest old," a little physical activity goes a long way, extending life by at least a few years for people in their mid- to late 80s, Israeli researchers found.

The three-year survival rate was about three times higher for active 85-year-olds compared with those who were inactive. Getting less than four hours of exercise weekly was considered inactive; more than that was active.

The results "clearly support the continued encouragement of physical activity, even among the oldest old. Indeed, it seems that it is never too late to start," the researchers wrote in Monday's Archives of Internal Medicine, which published the study.

They noted that exercise reaped benefits even for previously sedentary 85-year-olds; their three-year survival rate was double that of inactive 85-year-olds.

Oldsters didn't have to be super-athletes to live longer; walking at least four hours weekly counted, even if it was just in 15-minute strolls a few times daily.

"As little as four hours a week was as beneficial as more vigorous or prolonged activity," said study author Dr. Jeremy Jacobs, a geriatric specialist at Hadassah Hebrew University Medical Center in Jerusalem.

Active octogenarians also reported less depression and loneliness and a greater ability to perform daily tasks.

Similar benefits have been shown in people in their 60s and 70s, but there has been little research about exercise benefits in people in their 80s.

The study involved 1,861 Jerusalem residents who were 70 years old in 1990. Participants filled out questionnaires about their health and activity levels through 2008.

At age 85, 64 percent were physically active, a relatively high percentage that reflects the Israeli lifestyle, Jacobs said. But he said similar benefits from exercise likely would be seen among the very old in other countries.

There were 512 deaths. Slightly fewer than 7 percent of the active 85-year-olds died by age 88, versus about 24 percent of those who were inactive.

Jacobs said the researchers took into account factors that also affect survival, including participants' overall health and whether they smoked, and still found that activity levels were strongly related to longevity.

Dr. James Webster, a professor of geriatric medicine at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, said the study can't completely rule out that participants who were able to exercise were already healthier than the others, and thus likely to live longer.

Still, Webster said the link between octogenarian exercise and longevity appears valid. He was not involved in the study.

Laura Thorp, a researcher at Chicago's Rush University Medical Center, said very old patients who want to increase their activity should do so under a doctor's supervision. Still, Thorp said, "Even those who are not exercisers or athletes can start and still see substantial benefits."

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Is Exercise the Best Drug for Depression?



By Laura Blue Laura Blue

At his research clinic in Dallas, psychologist Jasper Smits is working on an unorthodox treatment for anxiety and mood disorders, including depression. It is not yet widely accepted, but his treatment is free and has no side effects. Compare that with antidepressant drugs, which cost Americans \$10 billion each year and have many common side effects: sleep disturbances, nausea, tremors, changes in body weight.

This intriguing new treatment? It's nothing more than exercise.

That physical activity is crucial to good health - both mental and physical - is nothing new. As early as the 1970s and '80s, observational studies showed that Americans who exercised were not only less likely to be depressed than those who did not, but were also less likely *become* depressed in the future.

In 1999, Duke University researchers demonstrated in a randomized controlled trial that depressed adults who participated in an aerobic exercise plan improved as much as those treated with sertraline, the drug that was marketed as Zoloft, and was earning Pfizer more than \$3 billion annually before its patent expired in 2006.

Subsequent trials have repeated these results, showing again and again that patients who undergo aerobic exercise regimens see comparable improvement in their depression as those treated with medication, and that both groups do better than patients given only a placebo. But exercise trials on the whole have been small and most have run only for a few weeks; some are plagued by methodological problems. Still, despite limited data, the trials all seem to point in the same direction: Exercise boosts mood. It not only relieves depressive symptoms, but appears to prevent them from recurring.

Molecular biologists and neurologists have also begun to show that exercise may alter brain chemistry in much the same way that antidepressant drugs do - regulating the key neurotransmitters serotonin and norepinephrine. At the University of Georgia, neuroscience professor Philip Holmes and colleagues have shown that over the course of several weeks, exercise can switch on certain genes that increase the brain's level of galanin, a peptide neurotransmitter that appears to tone down the body's stress response by regulating another brain chemical, norepinephrine.

The result is that exercise primes the brain to show less stress in response to new stimuli. In the case of lab rats and mice, that stimuli include being plunged into very cold water or being suspended by the tail. And while those are not exactly problems that

most people face, the thinking is that the human neurochemical response may well react similarly, with exercise leaving our brain less susceptible to stress in the face of harmless but unexpected events, like a missed appointment or getting a parking ticket. A little bit of mental strain and excess stimulation from exercise, in other words, may help us to keep day-to-day problems in perspective.

Researchers also wonder whether this interaction between body and brain may, evolutionarily speaking, be hard-wired. "It occurs to us that exercise is the more normal or natural condition, and that being sedentary is really the abnormal situation," Holmes says.

Humans (and lab rats) never evolved to be cooped up, still, all day long. Our brains simply may not be built for an environment without physical activity. Research has also suggested that exercise may be an effective treatment not just for depression, but also against related anxiety disorders and even substance dependence.

Other scientists have found that, in mammals, exercise also boosts the production of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), a substance that supports the growth and maintenance of brain cells. In depressed patients, BDNF has been shown to help repair brain atrophy, which can lift symptoms of the disease.

Back in Dallas, Smits says his exercise treatment appeals to patients for two main reasons. First, exercise doesn't carry the same stigma among patients (and some providers) that depression medication and psychotherapy do. Second, the mood-enhancing benefits of exercise can kick in fast - a lot faster than, say, its impact on weight loss or cardiovascular health. "By and large, for most people, when they exercise 30 minutes - particularly when it's a little bit more demanding, and they get their heart rate up - they feel better," Smits says. "You get an immediate mood lift."

That effect doesn't reflect the longer-term changes in the brain that Holmes studies. But Smits uses the immediate mood boost as a way to motivate patients with depression (which, of course, manifests in a chronic lack of motivation) to get moving. Instead of a barrier to exercise, Smits suggests, depression becomes a reason to exercise. "You feel crappy, so you get on the treadmill, and you look back and you say, 'Wow I feel much better,'" he says.

Yet for all the potential clinical benefits, the big questions about exercise treatment remain unanswered: How much? How long? In which patients? In their recent book for therapists, *Exercise for Mood and Anxiety Disorders* (Oxford University Press, 2009), Smits and co-author Michael Otto at Boston University suggest precise exercise doses that they hope will aid psychologists and primary-care doctors in prescribing exercise as treatment, which can be administered in combination with other treatments, of course.

Smits and Otto recommend the familiar 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise, like walking, five times per week, or 30 minutes of high-intensity aerobic exercise three times a week. These doses, which are regularly recommended for physical fitness, are the only ones that have been well tested for depression. "But we can't say at this point that more wouldn't be better," Smits says. "Or maybe less would be better. We really don't know." Too few tests have been run. It is also unclear whether anaerobic exercise, like weight lifting, would have the same mood-lifting effects - or

whether exercise works as well in severely depressed patients as it does in sufferers of mild or moderate depression.

For now, then, data on exercise are only suggestive. The clinical literature on antidepressant drugs is massive, since large-scale, rigorous studies are required for market approval from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The trials on exercise have all been smaller, perhaps in part because it needs no government approval. "If you look at FDA standards [for evidence], it's not clear that exercise would meet that standard," says James Blumenthal, the Duke University professor of medical psychology who ran Duke's 1999 exercise study, as well as a 2007 follow-up with more than 200 patients, which Blumenthal believes is the largest-ever such trial to date.

But the evidence is mounting, and it's hard to argue with a free treatment that is exempt from side effects for a pervasive and debilitating mental health scourge - especially when so many other health benefits of exercise are incontrovertible. "I think that we have reason to be optimistic. For people who at least want to consider exercise as a possible treatment, and for whom exercise is safe, it's definitely worth a shot," Blumenthal says.

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Addendum III: Testimonials

Yogananda's students write about their experiences with the EE

About 1935

"The physical exercises are without precedent in effectiveness. To one who has endured much both physically and mentally, the spiritual unfoldment involved in the Course has brought tremendous consolation and peace."

—Bessie Wilcox (Catholic), Minneapolis.

"Permit me to say that I have benefitted very greatly by your lectures and lessons and will carry forever the sweetest remembrance of what you taught me of the real power of the Yogoda System. It gives me more power as a physician, and opens wider and more extended vistas of usefulness."

—Joe Shelly Riley, M.D., Washington, D.C.

"My body has been energized, my mind made peaceful. My outlook on life is clearer and I have acquired an understanding of spiritual truths and how to make them practical in my everyday life."

—Baroness Thelma Moldeska, Minneapolis

"I have been cured of cancer in the stomach and growth on side. Heart trouble, and pain in the eyes and head have been relieved."

—M.C. Sherrard, Minneapolis

“A dry, hacking, nervous cough which I have had for forty years has almost disappeared. The former strain and pressure of my eyes has diminished quite noticeably. For over thirty years I have read occult and Oriental literature, but I did not come into consciousness of the real inner meanings until coming under your three-fold illuminating teachings.”

–Ernest Wykes, Minnesota

“Through Yogoda I have recovered almost entirely from nervousness; my eyesight is better, and I am now able to have the use of my right ear for the first time in three years.

–Mrs. R.L. Race, Minnesota

“I have suffered for twenty years with stomach trouble, and had become almost a nervous wreck. Now my stomach is cured, and my nerves much better. Yogoda is all.

–Mrs. A. Andresen, Minneapolis

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

MY INJURED ANKLE

On evening I was playing in a soccer game and I seriously sprained my ankle which had to be restrained for twenty-five days. As I fell to the ground, in a fraction of a second I placed all of my attention and energy in the spiritual eye. The ankle began to swell and turn a beautiful shade of purple on both sides, but I must say that I did not feel the strong pain that I had felt on other occasions when I had hurt myself in a similar way. I am sure the reason is due to the principle of will power taught in the Yogoda. If I had not responded with will and focus, I would have felt much more pain. When I let my focus wander away from the spiritual eye, it wanted to hurry down to the ankle.

I believe that the Yogoda principles enabled me to avoid the suffering. I try to make this way of responding instinctive now, using it consciously in my daily life.

A friend of my commiserated with me saying: “I don’t know how you managed to keep still and not say anything. I would have been screaming with pain!” My response was actually immediate, as though I did not want to accept the pain, and my mind immediately fished around for the solution.

--Giorgio

OVERCOMING MY ALLERGIC REACTIONS

In these past months I have had a kind of allergic reaction to I don’t know what. It covers by body with red spots and strong itching, I have a fever, sore throat and headaches, and get so tired that I am not able to do work.

This condition lasted about 4-5 days and it went away without my having to do anything. I still don't know what caused it.

This has also happened to me during the Energization Training course. It started Wednesday evening and I couldn't come to the meditations on Thursday and Friday because the itching was too strong for me to remain still in meditation. But the worst thing is that I thought I would not be able to complete this course because I felt dead tired in the evening and in the mornings.

Evidently this was a good chance to test my will power, and so I decided to oppose this aggressive allergic reaction of my body.

I continued to do the Energization many times each day in addition to the sessions we practice together in the group. With will power I decided to combat the tiredness and maintain my study commitment.

Thursday and Friday were two difficult days for me, but to my surprise I was able to maintain my Energization commitment. By Saturday all trace of allergy had disappeared, as had the red spots and the itching and I felt recharged and in good condition.

That to the Energization Exercises I have been able to conclude the course successfully. It would have been a shame to have to back out half way through the course and have wait another three months for the course to be repeated.

Thus in only two days I have completely overcome this health problem, for which I had no idea what to do.

-- Lorenzo Mantovani