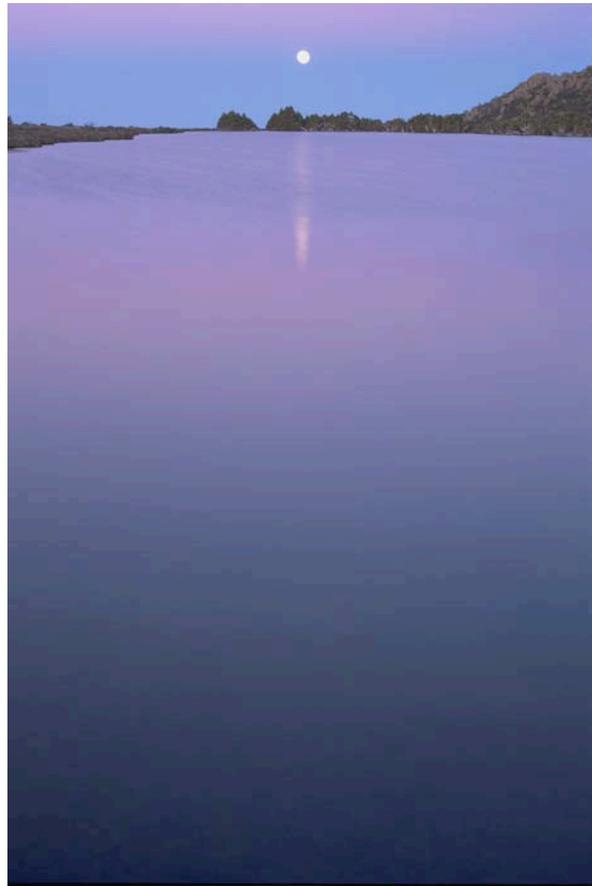


ÁNANDA MÁRGA
MEDITATION:
RÁJÁDHIRÁJA YOGA –
THE MOST SUBLIME AND
KINGLY TANTRA YOGA



Ácárya Cidghanánanda Avadhúta

ÁNANDA MÁRGA
MEDITATION:
RÁJÁDHIRÁJA YOGA –
THE MOST SUBLIME AND
KINGLY TANTRA YOGA

by
Ácárya Cidghanánanda Avadhúta

Originally published in *Prajiṇá Bhárati* magazine ca. 1973
by Ánanda Márغا Pracáraka Saṁgha (Central)
Ánanda Nagár, Purulia, W.B., India

First digital edition
Copyright © 2007
All rights reserved by
Ánanda Márغا Publications

DEDICATION

The author of these seven short articles, Ác. Cidghanánanda Avt., passed away in October 2006. Dádáji was one of the most senior avadhútas of Ánanda Marga, having joined the Mission in the year 1961. Dádáji was able to practice intensive sádhaná for many years during his service at the Ánanda Nagár high school and degree college. Some modest details of his experiences are revealed in the seventh article.

After extensive effort, the seven essays contained in this little book were recovered from a personal archive in the United States. Apparently typed from the original articles, to our knowledge they are as originally published in our *Prajiñá Bháratí* magazine thirty or more years ago. We determined to publish these articles both as a tribute to the author and as a valuable source of spiritual guidance in the practice of Ánanda Marga meditation.

Readers may find in these articles some technical or philosophical points with which they may not fully agree. We did not take up a task of commentary but rather presented the articles as written. If debate and discussion is a result, then that will certainly be a good result. We did, however, conform the listing of the various vrttis, their spelling, definitions and respective acoustic roots to that found in Bábá's discourse *Plexi and Microvita* in the most recent edition of *Yoga Psychology*.

Finally, we wish to state that a primary motivation in publishing these articles is to support on-going efforts to maintain the dignity and sanctity of the oaths taken upon our instruction in Ánanda Marga sádhaná. These oaths respect the practices given by Marga Gurudeva as precious and personal treasures to be nurtured and developed through years of careful, silent, internal effort. While we do have external aspects to our spiritual practices, Marga Guru specifically admonished that the details of our personal practice are not to be openly discussed with others.

These seven articles thus provide a most important benchmark for what can be openly discussed about each of the six lessons learned in Ánanda Marga's system of meditation practice. So it is with great pleasure that we are able to provide these articles to practitioners as both a source of guidance as well as inspiration.

Editors:

Ác. Manavendránanda Avt.

Ác. Guñamuktánanda Avt.

Ác. Dhiirendra Brc.

Special thanks to Avk. Ánanda Laliitá Ac., who recovered the articles, and to Ac. Dhyánesh (Austin, Tx.), who kept the articles in his personal archive for the past many years. Thanks also to Rámakrśhá for the cover photograph.

ÁNANDA MÁRGA MEDITATION: RÁJÁDHIRÁJA YOGA – THE MOST SUBLIME AND KINGLY TANTRA YOGA

This is the first part in a series of articles written by Ácárya Cidghanánanda Avadhúta, which explain some of the subtleties of Ánanda Márga meditation. Each part concerns one of the lessons.

PART 1: FIRST LESSON (IISHVARA PRAÑIDHÁNA)

First lesson of Tantra Yoga is known as *Iishvara Prañidhána*. In Iishvara Prañidhána, during the first phase, three factors are very, very important: *mantra diipanii* (withdrawal), *mantra ághát* (repetition of the mantra), and *mantra caetanya* (ideation on the meaning of the mantra). In this process the principle of one's conversion of subjectivity into objectivity is applied. Oneness with objectivity results in oneness with subjectivity. Mind is a most restless thinking entity. The very existence of the mind is due to the expression of "I"-ness. This "I"-ness remains scattered all over a person's body and mind. So, first of all the withdrawal of mind from objective physicality, then the expansion of the mind, are taken into account.

It is a must to withdraw the mind from objective physicalities, because a scattered mind has neither the strength nor the capacity to achieve anything. When the mind is withdrawn from the objective physicality, it remains within the limits of the body, but even then it has not been withdrawn totally. It is still scattered throughout all parts of the body. Hence, it first has to be withdrawn from the body by concentrating it in a point. This giving of a point is a most essential factor, because when the mind gets concentrated in a point it gains in strength and power. Secondly, the point must be in that part of the body which is dominated by the sentient force. This is simply because the static and mutative forces are the causes of restlessness, sleep and drowsiness, and the sentient force is the cause of stillness and peace. Hence the mind is given a point in the sentient part of the body on which to focus. This "I"-ness, once it has been seated at this point, is now to ideate on the Infinite Entity to convert itself into that. Therefore this most sublime idea is given to it.

The withdrawal of mind from matter – from objective physicality – is known as *bhúta shúddhi* (*bhúta* means "five factors" and *shúddhi* means "purity"). *Bhúta shúddhi* means the withdrawal of the mind from the external vibrations of the five fundamental factors. Next, the "I"-ness is systematically withdrawn from each portion of the body, then it is given a suitable point. This giving of the suitable point is known as *ásana shúddhi*. *Ásana shúddhi* means that the mind is situated at a pure seat. Just as a person makes a temple or mosque neat and clean and pure for worship, so the mind, in a natural way, is focused at the purest place wherefrom it can ideate on the Lord. Here it must be born in mind that the point which is given must touch the controlling nucleus of all three parts of the mind, viz. the conscious, the subconscious, and the unconscious, otherwise complete control of the mind will not be possible. This is simply because this point is the nucleus of the mind,

and thus controls the mind just as the sun, as the nucleus of solar system, controls the solar system. So this controlling point must be taken into consideration.

The more people are able to withdraw, the more they will be able to link themselves into the domain of divine bliss. People often fail to withdraw or to take time to withdraw, and this is one of the vital reasons that they are not able to feel bliss in *sáadhaná*. So this withdrawal from objective physicality is known as *mantra diipanii*. A mantra is a holy word – one charged by a realized soul. *Diipanii* means “light” or “torch”. So the withdrawal enlightens one’s mind and thereby aids in both *mantra ághát* (repetition of the mantra) and *mantra caetanya* (ideation on the meaning of the mantra). The awareness of the mantra and the repeated forcing of the mantra uncoils the serpentine. A *sádhaka* must, therefore, devote considerable time to withdrawal in order to master the successive steps of repetition and ideation. By doing more of the *shúddhis*, the other techniques are greatly facilitated. Suppose a spiritualist practices meditation for half an hour. S/he ought to ideally spend at least fifteen minutes in withdrawal (the practical technique of withdrawal is taught personally by an *ácárya* of *Ánanda Marga*). This withdrawal, however, is not complete by fixing the mind in a suitable point alone; after this, one must also withdraw from the ideas and varieties of thoughts that are passing through the mind. To achieve this end the same technique is sufficient. Thus, withdrawal has three steps: withdrawal from the external world, the body, and the thoughts. Then comes mantra *ághát* and mantra *caetanya*.

Mantra *ághát* is of three kinds: Speaking loudly (which is known as *vácasika* in Sanskrit) is the first. Secondly, there is whispering where the words are not clearly audible. This is known as *upañsu* in Sanskrit. The last and best kind of repetition is psychic repetition. This psychic repetition, however, does not come under the category of *japakriya* (repetition); rather it is in the category of *dháraña* and *dhyána* (concentration and meditation). This is because by repeating psychically one tries to establish parallelism between the word itself and its meaning. One wants to get into ideation of the mantra. This kind of repetition at the suitable point (*cakra*) creates mantra *ághát* and is then followed by mantra *caetanya*, which is full awareness of the meaning of the mantra. If one does not include mantra *caetanya*, the mantra cannot be effective, and one is instead just like a parrot repeating words it cannot understand. This mantra *caetanya* of an *Íśa Siddha Mantra* is of vital importance. Hence it is rightly said in the *Kularnava Tantra* that a mantra without *caetanya* is nothing but a general word which cannot yield positive results. It is just like an ordinary word.

This mantra *caetanya* has two aspects: First the *Sadguru* has charged it with power. Secondly, it is taken with the awareness of its meaning. Therefore, mantra *caetanya* are collectively able to arouse *kula kuñḍalinii* (the coiled serpentine), the spiritual potential which normally resides in the lowest *cakra* or psychic centre. This spiritual potential, also known as the *jivabháva* (unit existence) or the force of fundamental negativity, is seated at the lowest part of the spine of every person and varies from individual to individual, depending on how much it has been awakened. This *jivabháva*, in some individuals, has come into close contact with the Infinite Cosmic Entity through spiritual practices and service; it has, therefore, taken on subtler and more subtler qualities. In other individuals

their *jivabhavas* have different qualities because their *kuṇḍaliniis* are unawakened. The *kuṇḍaliniis* of all people are not one and the same. Now, the *kuṇḍalini* remains seated at the base of the spine. This base is known as the *kula* and the person who raises this *kuṇḍalini* from *kula* is known as *Kulaguru*. *Kula* generally means family, but here it does not mean family in the common sense. It is the base of the spine and the Sadguru can arouse it. Hence the Sadguru is also known as the *Kulaguru*: the preceptor who is able to arouse all *kuṇḍaliniis*.

Ishvara Prañidhāna, however, is not finished here. It also includes within itself the moral principles (*Yama* and *Niyama*) and psycho-physical exercises known as *ásanas*. Following the moral guidelines helps one in the withdrawal of the mind; otherwise one may suffer from guilty conscience and his/her withdrawal will be disturbed by the subsequently imbalanced state of the mind. *Yama* and *Niyama* are the base for spiritual practices, and spiritual progress in turn helps to raise the *kuṇḍalini* which thereby strengthens the moral code. So morality and spiritual practice are interdependent. Morality, however, is just the base and not the end.

Ásanas are also included in the first lesson. These yogic *ásanas* are not just ordinary exercises; rather they are subtler in their effects, and they influence the mental state as well as the physical state due to their effects on the glands. Analyzing the different psychic tendencies of human beings, different *ásanas* are then prescribed. Seeing the particular posture and benefit, the particular name of the *ásana* has been given. *Mayurásana* (peacock pose) is done, for example, like a peacock. By doing this posture one can be able to digest even a snake like the peacock does, but this is not the reason for doing the pose. This *ásana* helps a great deal in digestion, and any heaviness of the body or in the stomach can be removed by the practice of this *ásana*. *Gomukhásana* is a posture where one assumes a shape similar to that of a cow's head, so it is known as the "cow's head" posture. It brings about the kind of gentleness we generally find in a cow, and so like this with many of the *ásanas*. All the *ásanas* have been researched by the seers and are a very vital part of *Hatha Yoga*. Generally the psychic exercises such as meditation cannot alone bring purity of both mind and body quickly of and by themselves. So *ásanas* are given so that the glands and nerves are regulated and made balanced by their practice.

Ásanas by themselves cannot give realization, because they remain confined to physicality and to some extent the psychic sphere: that is, *ásanas* primarily purify the *Annamaya Kośa*. This *Annamaya Kośa* or physical body is susceptible to impurity, i.e. dominance by mutative and static principles. *Ásanas* regulate the secretions of the glands, and because of the balanced secretions of the glands the mind is not overpowered by the propensities (*vrttis*). Hence, for controlling the *vrttis*, *ásanas* play a vital role. All physical postures are variations of one *ásana* or another. There are innumerable *ásanas* but in our system there are 40-50 main exercises that have been selected. As these *ásanas* are not just crude exercises but subtle movements, there are certain rules prescribed so that one can derive the maximum benefit from them. In the absence of following these rules, however, one may invite harm or disease because they are so powerful in their effects. Moreover, to insure that they are practiced correctly, it is preferable for one to get personal instruction. The *ácáryas* of *Ānanda Mārga* teach these *ásanas* in the proper way.

Body and mind may both be purified by meditation alone, but in that case it will take much longer and the aspirant may lose patience and leave the path.

Along with practicing ásanas there is also a need for a sentient diet, i.e. vegetarian food, as it has a definite effect on the formation of both the physical and mental bodies. Therefore, without being vegetarian it is not good to practice ásanas except for just a few specific ones taught by the ácárya.

The first lesson, if done precisely, can lead a person to *Savikalpa Samádhi*. Here one feels oneness with the Cosmic Mind and experiences divine bliss. All the fetters (hatred, doubt, fear, shame, censure, sense of family prestige, vanity of culture, and false sense of prestige) and the six enemies (desire/passion, anger, greed, attachment, vanity/pride, and backbiting/envy) of one's mind are controlled. The culmination of the first lesson is the pinnacle of sentient force and under this sentient force all of the static and mutative forces remain controlled. As such they are not able to disturb the mind. It is difficult to describe in writing the state of mind of this attainment. In short, it can only be said that the mind is completely steeled, it remains internally unaffected, though externally it may seem to be affected. The first lesson can lead a person to Savikalpa Samádhi but the Sadguru then, for the sake of the disciple, keeps the door of occult powers closed. This is because if one exhibits those powers the exalted state of *Nirvikalpa* may get disturbed. In the first lesson of Tantra Yoga's Rájáhirája Yoga which we have now discussed, the *Íśa* mantras have been given by Lord Krśńa, Bhaerava (the son of Shiva) and by Lord Shiva Himself. Different mantras are given to different people according to their reactive momenta (*samśkáras*). However, these matters are known specifically only to the ácáryas and it is thus prohibited to reveal them here.

ÁNANDA MÁRGA MEDITATION: RÁJÁDHIRÁJA YOGA – THE MOST SUBLIME AND KINGLY TANTRA YOGA

This is the second part in a series of articles written by Ácárya Cidghanánanda Avadhúta, which explain some of the subtleties of Ánanda Márga meditation. Each part concerns one of the lessons.

PART 2: SECOND LESSON (GURU MANTRA, MADHUVIDYÁ OR HONEY KNOWLEDGE)

The first lesson of Tantra Yoga teaches a person to realize what s/he actually is. The second lesson teaches the person what the universe is. Really speaking, meditation begins with a sense of second lesson and ends in second lesson. One who is established in second lesson is a *siddha*. Therefore it is said in Sanskrit: *Guru mantré yaha, pratisthitah saha siddhana*.

The first lesson is practiced a few times every 24 hours, generally twice for most people, in the morning and evening. However all day long the psychic wave of a person remains in contact with physical waves and is away from spiritual practice. Therefore the *Guru Mantra* is given to allow a person to remain in the idea of *Brahma* (the Supreme Entity) all the time. Second lesson repeatedly hammers the mind to feel that all is Brahma.

Generally people are guided by name and form and these names and forms of different animate and inanimate objects are the cause of relative vision (*Maya*). Where there is the vision of many there is bondage. The vision of diversity and difference is the cause of worry and anxiety. The vision of one harmonious and indivisible unity is the cause of peace and bliss. By the constant occupation of the mind with Guru Mantra, the wave of diversity and differences goes away from the mind and one realizes the singular entity Brahma. Really speaking nothing exists as separate from the whole, neither the world nor objects of the world. However, due to Maya, objects with various colours and shapes appear separate from one another. When Maya is removed from the mind a person sees that all is one and only one. One beginningless, middleless and endless entity can never be two or more than one. One who has the experience of this is a liberated person. Therefore in *Yoga Vashiśta* it is rightly said:

*Náhambrameti drih
Samkalpata badho vavati manah
Sarvabrahmeti drih
Samkalpata mukto bhávati manah*

(“By the strong faith and determination in the idea that I am not Brahma, the mind is bound up, and by the strong faith and determination that all is Brahma, mind is liberated).

King Janaka also said the same thing in *Sukhadeva*, that in this universe there is nothing other than *Paramátma* (Cosmic Soul or Cosmic Consciousness). The *Bhagavad Gita* says

that untruth (*asat*) never does exist in the universe, and that truth (*Sat*) never lacks in this universe. As a result of these ultimate truths, only ignorant persons think there are things other than Brahma and thereby they get disturbed, after which follow clash and cohesion.

Brahma has three phases: *Akśara Brahma*, *Kśara Brahma* and *Nirakśara Brahma*. The expressed universe is Kśara Brahma and it perishes. Akśara is imperishable and Nirakśara Brahma controls all, Kśara and Akśara. Though everything is Brahma, the object of concentration must be Nirakśara, who is capable of bringing a person to Akśara. Truly speaking all is Akśara, but generally people see only body and mind, Kkśara. They do not see the soul, which is Akśara. The soul is everywhere. All is soul and from the highest and broadest point of view there is also no question of Akśara, Kkśara and Nirakśara.

He is the act of controlling, the controlled and the controller which is the cause of bliss. A *Brahmajīṇāni* (one who concentrates on Brahma) does not feel separation from Him at all. So He is always eternally like Him, as He is He alone. This truth can only be uttered by a realized soul. Just like bhūta shūddhi (withdrawal from the world) and āsana shūddhi (withdrawal from the body) of the first lesson, so the second lesson helps a person to withdraw the “I”-ness from and to remain unaffected by physical waves. Secondly, when the idea of Cosmos or Infinity is taken as the object, attachment and hatred flee away from the mind because all attachment and hatred linger only when the idea is not of the Whole or Infinity. Fear complex is also abolished so that when this is established one goes into *Dharma Megha Samādhi*. Dharma Megha Samādhi is attained when the mind is saturated by Dharma or Infinity. The external objects and internal feeling all become saturated with Dharma. They become also one indivisible Cosmic Consciousness. So all objects are He; all ideas are also He. All, right from Soul to so-called matter, is He.

At this moment the aspirant realizes there is nothing crude or material in this universe. For a realized being, One exists and never more than One. Here, I must say that in one’s practical or worldly behavior, a person must be careful and cautious because the realization of One is rare. Almost all people are under bondage and hence have fear complexes, guilt feelings and other complexes still to be conquered through spiritual practice. Without attainment, complete fearlessness does not come. So one must try to attain realization rather than just speak theoretically, although theoretical speaking will also help because as one thinks so one becomes.

Realized persons are like lions. They do not fear anything because that which created fear has been conquered. It is the state in *Ajñā Cakra* and above it. Those who are below *Ajñā Cakra* will not have unflinching faith. Such persons who have got *Brahmajīṇāna* (realization of Brahma) feel some effect of physicality but know that He is not that, and secondly that the effect is because of billions of protozoic and metazoic minds in the whole body. He or she becomes the witness of these minds and remains separate.

In Guru Mantra, the ideation is far more important than the repetition of the mantra. Here the mind is given the highest ideation, and since the highest is the Singular Infinite Entity, a spiritualist dances in rapture when s/he realizes everything as the Supreme. Then

whom will s/he accept? Whom will s/he turn away and whom will s/he embrace when all are One? It is said in Bengali verse:

Sáp Baneya Káto re bandá
Djhá Baneja Jharo
Rhub kamal ganove bandá
Khurn Kamal Jáno

(“You come in the form of a snake, and as the bite, and You alone cure the poison by becoming the snake charmer – You know the great trick, the great trick”).

By the grace of Guru and practicing sádhaná, one can realize this state.

ÁNANDA MÁRGA MEDITATION: RÁJÁDHIRÁJA YOGA – THE MOST SUBLIME AND KINGLY TANTRA YOGA

This is the third part in a series of articles written by Ācārya Cidghanānanda Avadhūta, which explain some of the subtleties of Ānanda Mārگا meditation. Each part concerns one of the lessons.

PART 3: THIRD LESSON (TATTVA DHÁRAÑÁ – CONCEPTION)

Tattva Dhārañá is conception on the different factors of the body, which have their centres at the different plexi or cakras. The whole physical body is made out of five fundamental factors: solid, liquid, luminous, air (gaseous) and ether. These factors remain all throughout the body but are controlled from different centres of the body. *Mūlādhāra Cakra*, which is at the base of the spine, controls the solid factor. *Svādhiśthāna Cakra*, which is six finger-widths above that point, controls the liquid factor. The luminous factor is controlled by the *Mañipura Cakra*, which is at the navel. *Anāhata Cakra*, at the heart, controls the aerial factor and *Vishuddha Cakra*, at the throat, controls the etherial factor.

First, it is essential for the preservation and vitality of the body to keep all these factors balanced, to keep control over them. By doing third lesson humans develop this quality of control and keep balance in these factors. Secondly, the feeling of “I”-ness is associated with these cakras. Hence the need for a concentration practice which applies moderate mental force on different cakras. Simple thought or withdrawal of the mind does not serve the purpose however, and so the mind is not actually withdrawn. So this process of conception has been given very scientifically to allow this sort of withdrawal to be stronger and control over the five factors to be achieved.

This third lesson is known as *dhārañá*. *Dhārañá* is dynamic in character, with changing objects, and is based on the five factors mentioned above. Here a long concentration is not done. This is simply because *dhārañá* relates only to the five fundamental factors. It in itself is not able to liberate the mind, because liberation is beyond the five factors and even beyond the mind. However *dhārañá* does help the mind to withdraw itself from the five fundamental factors; hence concentration or *Ishvara Prañidhāna* is helped a great deal. One then has to continue with the first lesson or with the sixth lesson, because the first lesson has the goal in itself of a very high stage, and the sixth lesson is the goal for the very highest stage.

The third lesson also enables one to go beyond attachment. This is because by controlling the five fundamental factors one transcends all objects to which one gets attached, since they're nothing but combinations of the five fundamental factors. *Tattva Dhārañá* thereby gives a lot of mental force to bear the pains and suffering created in the everyday world by the five fundamental factors. This tremendous mental force ultimately brings about many occult powers.

These powers come automatically through practice, and the effect of the conception is felt on the body in a positive way. Generally pains and sufferings arising from physical objects are controlled, among other things.

There is a special posture known as *Viirásana* (brave pose) which is given. This brave posture is very scientifically prescribed, because in no other posture is one able to focus the mind with the strength and power one is able to generate in this posture. Therefore this posture has been selected because it is best suited to bring about the most positive results.

I said earlier that third lesson gives some occult power, but in no way must a *sádhaká* be conscious of it or attach any importance to it: otherwise there is immediate downfall. This is because, first, to do this gives rise to ego, and secondly, this ego deviates a person from *Brahmabháva* (one which knows no complex, whether superiority or inferiority). Those who move ahead quickly on the path of God become quiet, egoless, and most benevolent. Here benevolence does not mean attachment. It has been seen that many spiritualists have been punished for using occult powers, and ultimately they deviated from their goal, which is *Mukti* and *Mokśa*.

In third lesson the acoustic root sounds of the different fundamental factors are also applied, along with specific descriptions of the true nature of each of the fundamental factors and their resulting expressions. All this helps in the withdrawal and control over the five fundamental factors.

There are some people who feel some pain in the head when first beginning to do this lesson. This is for two reasons: firstly, the body is not able to tolerate the force generated, and secondly, the body is in an impure state. By following the instructions of the *ácárya* from the beginning and continually doing the lesson, one is able to conquer the pain.

One more important thing which the Sadguru does is that, even if power comes, He will not let the spiritual aspirant become conscious of it, and by doing so He helps in saving the disciple from downfall and degeneration.

ÁNANDA MÁRGA MEDITATION: RÁJÁDHIRÁJA YOGA – THE MOST SUBLIME AND KINGLY TANTRA YOGA

This is the fourth part in a series of articles written by Ácárya Cidghanánanda Avadhúta, which explain some of the subtleties of Ánanda Márga meditation. Each part concerns one of the lessons.

PART 4: FOURTH LESSON: PRÁÑÁYÁMA (CONTROL OF PRÁÑA)

The fourth lesson is known as *Práñáyáma*. It is said: *Indriyánám rnanonathah manonathastu marutah* (the mind is master of the senses, and the master of the mind, *marutah*, is the wind).

We know that when respiration is controlled and balanced and in a paused stage, the mind is able to think deeply and do something. A person who is excited is not able to think deep thoughts nor to keep the mind peaceful. This is because when the respiration is disturbed or becomes full of motion, the mind is also affected. When respiration is rapid, one is unable to rest or sleep, not to mention think about some subtle idea. By doing *práñáyáma* the respiration is extended.

We know that after every inhalation (*púráka*) and exhalation (*recaka*), there is a pause (*kumbhaka*). This pause is the cause of some higher intellectual or spiritual thoughts or experiences. In the first lesson there is some kind of *práñáyáma*, which happens naturally, but in the fourth lesson *práñáyáma* is prescribed for controlling the breathing system. Thus, by the increase of this pause period *práñáyáma* is able to help in quieting the wanderings of the mind. Hence, it is a very, very important lesson.

Secondly, there are five external and five internal *váyus* (or subtle “airs”): *prána*, *apána*, *samána*, *vyána*, *udána*, *nága*, *kúrma*, *krkara*, *devadatta* and *dhanainjaya*. These *váyus* are responsible for the maintenance of life, and doing *práñáyáma*, one is able to bring all these *váyus* under control. Therefore it is said that it is *práñáyáma* which is life. By *práñáyáma* one becomes the controller of life. *Práñáyáma* also gives a lot of energy, and thus the physical body gets glamour and strength. The lifespan of people who practice *práñáyáma* is extended, since such people get by with fewer respirations. The body has to work less than in other people, and so the period of life is extended.

Thirdly, *práñáyáma* of different types make different sleeping nerves awaken and work properly. Impurity in the nerves, and consequently the glands and the body, is also removed because everything remains connected in the body. In *práñáyáma* a very great caution is necessary, since it gives a lot of physical and psychic force. A suitable point and ideation on the Great are of vital importance. If neither a suitable point nor the correct ideation are there, *práñáyáma*, instead of doing good, is able to do harm; the mind’s strength gets quickly converted into the objects of its thought at the time of doing *práñáyáma*. Hence *práñáyáma*, like the other lessons, also must not be done without the

guidance of an expert because there is a special technique and some guidelines and regulations to follow.

Práñáyáma is of various types, such as *Sadháraña Práñáyáma*, *Sahaja Práñáyáma*, etc, and these varying types of práñáyáma can be given along with the primary one. However if higher práñáyáma is done in the beginning it will tell upon the body and the mind. Therefore in the first through third lessons this separate práñáyáma is not given. A system of práñáyáma or the práñáyáma-like thing which happens naturally in these lessons prepares the body and mind for a special, separate, práñáyáma. Hence práñáyáma is given in the fourth lesson. Of course, if the Sadguru wants He can change the sequence of the lessons and give them as He wishes, but generally, if the Sadguru is not present, there must be a strict sequence in giving of the lessons. The point of concentration and the ideation in práñáyáma are given by the ácáryas.

Práñáyáma, like all the lessons, is also a great help in withdrawing the mind and making it subtle and peaceful. In deep concentration, *kumbhaka* is automatically done and thereby one is able to have various spiritual experiences during this time. Therefore its name is práñáyáma. *Prána* means life or respiration, and *yama* means exercise; in this case the exercise of respiration, or regulation of respiration. Concentration helps práñáyáma by enabling it to have some sort of patience and steadiness, which is essential in práñáyáma. The breath is inhaled and exhaled very, very slowly. Práñáyáma helps concentration in the sense that the mind is withdrawn or becomes still because of the regulation of the respiration. Práñáyáma is done in a particular posture because the regulation of breath, the point, and the ideation are all taken to concentration. One who does práñáyáma must keep away from smoke and dust, and too much sun, and must (in the beginning at least) increase the intake of healthy food. This is because the matter in the body gets quickly converted into mind and the practitioner could become lean and thin. Hence healthy food must be taken. Práñáyáma also develops intelligence and opens the more expanded layers of the mind, and it increases appetite by assisting the digestion of food quickly, like the first and third lessons.

ÁNANDA MÁRGA MEDITATION: RÁJÁDHIRÁJA YOGA – THE MOST SUBLIME AND KINGLY TANTRA YOGA

This is the fifth part in a series of articles written by Ácárya Cidghanánanda Avadhúta, which explain some of the subtleties of Ánanda Márga meditation. Each part concerns one of the lessons.

PART 5: FIFTH LESSON (CAKRA SHODHANA – PURIFICATION OF THE CAKRAS)

The fifth lesson is known as *Cakra Shodhana*. Cakra Shodhana is so named because the cakras need purification, and by this particular process they get purified. So this is the lesson for purifying the cakras.

What is impurity? Impurity in all cases is nothing but the domination of the static and mutative forces. Something dominated by these forces of inertness and mutateness becomes impure, while the same thing becomes most pure when these two forces are gone. Here “gone” does not mean that these two forces are absent, since this is not at all possible because these three forces of *Prakrti* (that is, the sentient, mutative and static) remain together. Rather, going away means the dominance of the sentient force over the mutative and static forces. So it is clear that impurity is static and mutative (restless) and purity is sentient.

The cakras are purified because, first of all, the static and mutative forces have waned. Secondly, because of this dominance of the sentient force, the “I”-ness is easily withdrawn. Under the static force, the “I”-ness remains in an inert, sleeping state. By the mutative force it is made completely restless. Both inertness and restlessness check the withdrawal of one’s “I”-ness, which remains strongly associated with the cakras. So “I”-ness is withdrawn by the practice of the fifth lesson.

Thirdly, this fifth lesson is vibrated in such a rhythmical way with the ideation of the Great. This rhythmical vibration of the Great creates a thrill and bliss in the whole body, because the Supreme idea is given to the different plexi which control the five fundamental factors of which the body is made. So it creates a thrill and joy.

Next, when the mind is withdrawn it gains in concentration. Different vrttis are located at different cakras. For example, there are four vrttis in Múládhára Cakra and six in the Svádhiśthána Cakra. The chart of the vrttis is given below:

Múládhára Cakra (four vrttis)	Sound
1. Dharma (psycho-spiritual longing)	va
2. Artha (psychic longing)	sha
3. Káma (physical longing)	śa
4. Mokśa (spiritual longing)	sa

Svādhiśháana Cakra (six vrttis)

Sound

1. Avajiná (belittlement of others)
2. Múrcchá (psychic stupor, lack of common sense)
3. Prashraya (indulgence)
4. Avishvása (lack of confidence)
5. Sarvanásha (thought of sure annihilation)
6. Kruratá (cruelty)

ba
bha
ma
ya
ra
la

Mañipura Cakra (ten vrttis)

Sound

1. Lajjá (shyness, shame)
2. Pishunatá (sadistic tendency)
3. Iirśá (envy)
4. Suśupti (staticity, sleepiness)
5. Viśáda (melancholia)
6. Kaśáya (peevishness)
7. Trśná (yearning for acquisition)
8. Moha (infatuation)
9. Ghrná (hatred, revulsion)
10. Bhaya (fear)

dá
dha
ná
ta
tha
da
dha
na
pa
pha

Anáhata Cakra (twelve vrttis)

Sound

1. Áshá (hope)
2. Cintá (worry)
3. Ceśtá (effort)
4. Mamatá (mine-ness, love)
5. Dambha (vanity)
6. Viveka (conscience, discrimination)
7. Vikalatá (mental numbness due to fear)
8. Ahamkára (ego)
9. Lolatá (avarice)
10. Kapatatá (hypocrisy)
11. Vitarka (argumentativeness)
12. Anutápa (repentance)

ka
kha
ga
gha
uṅa
ca
cha
ja
jha
iṅa
ta
tha

Vishuddha Cakra (Sixteen Vrttis)

Sound

(These are psychic propensities, acoustic expressions whose vibrations influence the mind. Some of their names are animal names whose sounds they resemble. [Dádá's note])

1. Śádaja (sound of peacock)
2. Rśabha (sound of bull or ox)
3. Gándhára (sound of goat)

a
á
i

4. Madhyama (sound of deer)	ii
5. Painçama (sound of cuckoo)	u
6. Dhaevata (sound of donkey)	ú
7. Niśáda (sound of elephant)	r
8. Onm (acoustic root of creation, preservation, dissolution)	rr
9. Hummm (sound of arousing kulakuńdalínii)	lr
10. Phaf (translating theory into practice)	lrr
11. Vaośaf (expression of mundane knowledge)	e
12. Vaśaf (welfare in the subtler sphere)	ae
13. Sváhá (performing noble actions)	o
14. Namah (surrender to the Supreme)	ao
15. Viśa (repulsive expression)	ań
16. Amrta (sweet expression)	ah

Ajińá Cakra (two vrttis)

1. Apará (mundane knowledge)	kśa
2. Pará (spiritual knowledge)	ha

Vrttis are the occupation of the mind. Mind always remains occupied with something or other; it cannot normally remain in vacuity but if, through intuitional practices, it remains in vacuity it is no mind but rather has its parallelism with the soul. So it is rightly said in the *Upanishads* that the mind of a realized soul remains still without any thought, like in a vacuum. It can be compared to a flame which is steady and still even in a tempest. Here, tempest stands for innumerable favourable and unfavourable vibrations coming from the external world and impacting the mind. So the mind in a still state does not waver.

Fifth lesson brings about perfume in the body, which is a spiritual perfume. It comes into existence because the unit mind tries to vibrate the spiritual consciousness in every cakra, and the cakras start losing their static and mutative momenta. They start becoming sentient. Hence this perfume is felt. Fifth lesson also brings about lightness in the body. Here lightness does not mean that a person becomes thin; rather, lightness here means freshness and joy. It seems as if some heavy burden or covering from the body is taken off and the body feels fresh and light. Together with this freshness and lightness, fifth lesson brings thrill and bliss, because the ideation is imposed in a rhythmic way and this creates a vibration whereby one starts feeling joy and bliss.

Cakra Shodhana also brings about easing of the tension of the mind. A person attacked by innumerable conflicts and ideas, experiencing great tension, can get ease and comfort of his or her mind. A person suffering from hypertension (high blood pressure) is also helped a lot by this. The nerves, the glands, and the whole body together with the mind, enjoy rest and ease. Since different nuclei of the different cakras are also touched and vibrated, a lot of force is created in the mind and a spiritualist feels most energized after doing this lesson.

The first lesson is helped a lot by doing the fifth lesson. Because of the cosmic ideation of different cakras, one is transported into a different, more expanded realm of joy and bliss. When bliss starts coining, people do not want to lose it by opening their eyes and attending to different things. The rhythmic vibrations in the cakras have different experiences which, on the whole, are very blissful and joyous. Since vrittis are also touched at different cakras by this vibration, they are also controlled by doing fifth lesson. Therefore it is said that if by chance one misses ásanas, one must do fifth lesson in their place to check the retardation happening because of not doing them. It does not mean that ásanas are irrelevant and fifth lesson will do the job. Because they are physical yogic exercises, ásanas leave a direct and positive physical impact on the practitioner. Fifth lesson is only psychic, whereas ásanas are physical, the latter of which has a definite effect on the regulation of the secretion of the glands and the purity of the nerves.

The difference between the third and the fifth lessons is that the former greatly increases one's capacity for retention and conception whereas the latter gives more joy and thrill. Also the third lesson is done only up to the Vishuddha Cakra while the fifth lesson is done up to the *Sahasrára* Cakra. So we can say very clearly that the third lesson deals especially with the five fundamental factors, whereas the fifth lesson deals with the five fundamental factors plus the mind and soul. The seat of the mind is the Ajiñá Cakra and the seat of the soul is in the Sahasrára Cakra. Hence this Cakra Shodhana deals with the physical, psychic and spiritual spheres because it directly touches all the points and plexi, and indirectly all the subsidiary plexi and glands, thereby the whole body is made blissful. The third lesson gives strength to the mind and the fifth lesson gives joy to it.

By the rhythmic vibration of the mantra, the innumerable protozoic (cellular protoplasmic) and metazoic (ectoplasmic) minds are also helped indirectly, and they get developed more. It does the great work of a tranquilizer, which lulls one to ease and then to sleep. Fifth lesson must not be done by applying one's mental force, but must instead be smoothly and easily practiced by giving complete relaxation to the body. The best and most enjoyable posture for doing this lesson is *Shavásana* (corpse pose). Of course it can be done in all the postures that keep the spine straight, of which the *Baddha Padmásana* (bound lotus) is especially suited and helpful. The only trouble in doing the fifth lesson in *Shavásana* can be that the person might fall asleep, against which one has to guard carefully because sleep is static in character. Hence, half-sleep or full sleep are not able to give the thrill derived from this lesson, which is not a thing which need be done only a particular number of times; it can be done any amount of times, as the practitioner desires.

The main difference between the first and the fifth lessons is that in the former, one tries to establish oneness with the meaning of the mantra, whereby one can get into Savikalpa Samádhi. In the latter, this ideation of oneness with the mantra is not so much there. But because of the vibration of the *Iśá Siddha Mantra* the cakras get purified and one's "I"-ness is easily withdrawn. When the purity of body is achieved, the ideation can also be brought about and then it supplies more thrill and joy. Some centres and points in the body are touched by this vibration, and then the body starts feeling rapture.

ÁNANDA MÁRGA MEDITATION: RÁJÁDHIRÁJA YOGA – THE MOST SUBLIME AND KINGLY TANTRA YOGA

This is the sixth part in a series of articles written by Ácárya Cidghanánanda Avadhúta, which explain some of the subtleties of Ánanda Márga meditation. Each part concerns one of the lessons.

PART 6: SIXTH LESSON (GURU DHYÁNA – MEDITATION ON THE GURU)

Just as the first lesson helps a person attain a very elevated stage of meditation, that is, Savikalpa Samádhi, so the sixth lesson helps one attain the highest stage, that is, Nirvikalpa Samádhi. Truly speaking, the lessons themselves do not give liberation and salvation. Rather, it is the power of the Guru behind the lessons which serves this purpose. When the power is withdrawn from the lessons, they are as good as dead. Therefore, it is said: *Gurushakti dáyakah na tantra na mantra* (the Guru, and nothing else, is the giver of force, liberation and salvation).

The lessons have importance, but without the Guru they have no importance at all; they become dry and barren. So we see that the Guru plays an especially vital role in the life of a spiritualist in particular.

The sixth lesson is done in *Guru Cakra*, which is above the Ajiñá Cakra and below the Sahasrára Cakra. It is rightly said that the root of dhyána is the figure of the Guru, that is, one is to meditate on the figure of the Guru. By singular love to Him and complete surrender, one can get achievement in the sixth lesson.

Who is the Guru, and what is singular love for Him? Gurus are of three types:

1. *Uttama* guru (who is known as a first-class guru, or Sadguru)
2. *Madhyama* guru (second-class guru)
3. *Anyá* guru (third-class guru)

Anyá guru is that guru who comes to the disciple, gives something, and goes away. He does not concern himself with the rise and fall of the disciple. Madhyama guru comes and gives guidance to some extent, but he also leaves. Uttama Guru, on the other hand, is *Mahákaola*, who is not only a God-realized personality but can impart God-realization in the twinkling of an eye to any number of people by His mere wish. He is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. Really speaking there is no difference between Sadguru and God. *Ánanda Sútram* says: *Brahmaeva Gururekah* (the Guru and Brahma are one and the same and not different).

Actually, the physical body with an all-pervading manner is the Guru. The Guru in true form is without shape, and sometimes Mahákaola takes the help of the five fundamental factors and comes to the world for the sake and welfare of humanity. When He takes the help of the five fundamental factors He is known as *Mahásambhúti*. This Mahákaola or

Sadguru has no spiritual guru; He is born a realized personality, He is *nirvanacitta*, that is, He has taken the promise to come to the world for the sake of its welfare.

Mahásambhúti touches all spheres of life and wants to bring about a radical change in the whole human society. Human beings are compelled to hear Him. They are just like puppets in His hands. As mentioned earlier, He is an all-powerful personality. Hence the real Guru, the Uttama Guru, is the Sadguru who has unlimited powers. In Tantra, such a One is known as *Táraka Brahma*. The abode of Táraka Brahma is the transit or tangential of *Saguña* and *Nirguña* Brahma. The philosophy of Táraka Brahma is a universal, practical one. He is the Cosmic Father to whom the devotees pay homage for the sake of His benediction and kindness so that the people of the world can have the real path of development and fulfillment.

In sixth lesson such a personality is meditated upon. While meditating on Him many blissful experiences take place and ultimately one establishes oneself in oneness with Nirguña Brahma. Here the “I”-ness also loses itself. It is neither fainting nor sleep but the losing of the “I”-ness into Consciousness. Therefore, when this state is ended an inexpressible joy and a unique and particular state of mind are experienced. In *Ánanda Sútram* it is stated about this: *Abhávottaránanda pratyayálambaniirvrttih tasya pramáñam* (the after-state of Nirvikalpa Samádhi is one of inexpressible bliss, and then one knows that the previous state must have been the state of *Nirguña*).

In this lesson, there is upward movement of all the tendencies (*vrttis*) and their subsequent merger in the Supreme. The whole mind and everything whatsoever in it merges into that Supreme Consciousness. Therefore, the flow of this lesson is an upward one. That is, the mind, leaving the static part, the mutative part and even the sentient part of the body, wants to merge into the Attributeless Consciousness in the Sahasrára Cakra. *Puruśottama*, who is the witness of the different activities of the mind, is not this state. This state is completely attributeless. With *Puruśottama* remains controllership and authority, but in this state nothing remains except the Attributeless Entity, that is *Nirguña Brahma*.

First lesson brings about a smoothness and thinness of one’s skin, while the sixth lesson brings about a brightness and glow. *Dhyána* gives joy and bliss inexpressible, and it is also rightly said that *dhyána* is not done but rather it happens. Practical spiritualists know quite well that it is too difficult to bring the Sadguru in totality into the mind. Even if one has seen Him many times, He does not come; and even if He comes, He comes very partially and for a very short period of time. The strength of the human mind is unable to catch His vibration, but the very trial to meditate on Him and to catch Him is beneficial. So this effort must never be abandoned.

Modern minds with their intellectual development take it to be idol worship, but it is never so. This is because, first of all, the Sadguru is *nirvanacitta*, and by concentrating on Him one can get *nirvana* or salvation. His is no ordinary mortal body; hence this is never idol worship. An idol is made of clay by some artist and is put in a temple, but it is never *nirvanacitta* since it has the dominance of the static force of *Prakrti*. Hence the persons

ideating on idols pave the way of their crudification because these idols, being made of clay or other materials, can neither speak nor guide nor have any other value other than sentimental. Therefore it is said that idol worship is the lowest kind of worship. The Infinity who is subtler than mind can never be confined to the four walls of a temple. No one and nothing are able to hold Him. Even the whole universe is held inside of Him. So how can He be held by it? Therefore it said that God is He from whom grace has come, in whom it finds its subsistence and to whom it goes. That which is the Beginningless, Middleless and Endless Imperishable Non-changing Entity alone is God, and That can never be given a human form. It is clear that idol worship is defective, but not the worship of or the meditation upon the Sadguru.

Complete surrender means constant occupation of the mind with God and accepting the pains and pleasures of life ungrudgingly. It is becoming a machine in the hands of the Supreme and remaining cheerful in all the pains and pleasures of life, leaving everything on Him.

“Clean or unclean, if one remembers the sandals of the Guru with devotion, he obtains, effortlessly, fulfillment in truth – life, health, desire, and liberation.” (*Kularnava Tantra*)

ÁNANDA MÁRGA MEDITATION: RÁJÁDHIRÁJA YOGA – THE MOST SUBLIME AND KINGLY TANTRA YOGA

This is a special supplementary article to the sixth part of the Rájádhirája Yoga series of articles written by Ácárya Cidghanánanda Avadhúta, which explain some of the subtleties of Ánanda Márga meditation. Each part concerns one of the lessons.

PART 7: MY EXPERIENCE

Almost from the beginning of joining Ánanda Márga, I had the desire to realize God. In the course of time I was posted first in Mysore, India, and after that to Patna. Following this, I was posted to Ánanda Nagár. There I remain to this day.

Things were okay, but still I was feeling that I must realize God. So I decided within myself that I must attain liberation, and for this reason I was ready to do anything. With this resolution I started doing meditation 12, 13, even 14 hours daily, and the result was that even when going out of my room for a few minutes, when I returned I felt a vibration full of bliss there.

All of a sudden, one day, after I had passed like this for a week or so, while doing dhyána I found that everything was futile. My spiritual power and all my psychic and physical energy were completely gone. I lost everything. Yet, strangely, I was remembering each and every relation; I was remembering each and every thing; but nothing was happening. Whenever I stood, my legs trembled. I was unable to move.

Now, this I know as a certainty: that Bábá had done this. Yet, I also know that Bábá does not want this. So, there is a code word which *kápálikas* know, and with this code I mentally called Bábá. I told Him what was happening and surrendered to Him. Everything which I previously had was immediately restored.

So from that time onwards I began to feel and say to the margiis that it is not the sádhaná, nor is it the practices that a person does, but in actuality it is the Guru who does something. If the Guru does not wish something, it simply will not happen.

Whatever sádhaná a person does, whatever practices s/he does, whatever things are there, without the Grace of Guru nothing will happen. It is the Grace of Guru first, and then sádhaná. Sádhaná is futile if the Guru's Grace is not present.

So I was convinced practically that it is not the sádhaná which does something. It is the Guru alone who does everything.

Bábá Náma Kevalama