



CHARACTER FOUNDATION ASSOCIATION

Sangam Chowk, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal, Phone: 977-1-4474334, Website: www.cfanepal.org

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Monthly Bulletin



Maharshi Vishuddhadev

The Boon

Tears thrust out from the eyes while we remember the glory of our spiritual master 'Swamiji' who was the lump of love and peace. Swamiji was always emitting love through him like the shower of light emitting

from the full moon at night. We always become harmonized and spell bound while our perception towards the spiritual master gets denser.

It is the mind which always wanders outwards on a worldly level, but what about us? The true introvert exists

on the inside, in the depths of the Self, the deep. Swamiji is the source of love; under his guidance we learnt only love, forgetting the material world. Under Swamiji's guidance our true nature became unselfishness. This unselfishness comes out of love. True love is not lust and

luster, but a deep internal urge to become the edict to serve. We now face high responsibility—the boon—The Character Foundation Association—this incredible gift given to us by our beloved. We, the disciples of Swamiji, must force our mind to remember to fulfill the responsibilities towards the dependents (CFA). The world believes we are now 'Budhu' (Ignorant), because of our lack of skill in balancing materialism, but the target was to become 'Buddha' (Realized) and this will prevail as unselfishness becomes our true nature.

In the early training days with Swamiji we were lovingly leaded by our master to 'Shapodhar' going back to our origin. By going inside of each of us, Swamiji brought out our tears towards the world, and because of this we could understand the theory of Sacrifice, that is, the serving of mankind, the creation of god, which leads

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An Appeal to the World

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Er. R. K. Thakur (Ramsheel)
GS, CFA-(rktakur51@yahoo.com)

3. Ashan (Posture): Postures should be static and pleasant. During Asan (Postures) and Pranayam (Breathing) exercises, one should have a firm seat. **Firmness of seat** means that one does not feel the body at all. Ordinarily, when a man sits for a few minutes, all sorts of disturbances come into the body. When he has mastered the concept of the concrete body, he will lose all sense of the body. He will feel neither pleasure nor pain, and as he takes his body up again, he will feel totally rested. It is the only perfect rest that he can give to his body. When he has succeeded in conquering the body and keeping it firm, his practice will become stable, but while he is disturbed by the body and his nerves Remain Active, he can not concentrate his mind.

Postures become static and pleasant by lessening the natural restless tendency and meditating on the unlimited. We can retain a firm seat while thinking of the infinite. We can not conceptualise the absolute infinite, but we can imagine of the infinite sky when static seat has been conquered, then the dualities, good and bad, heat and cold, and all the pairs of opposites will not disturb us. Any posture which is easy and steady is an Asana.

The types of posture and its benefits, pranayam, pratyahar, attitudes

(concentration), meditation, super-conscious state, realization and temperance, are all explained in individual chapters in 'Character Science' and reader wanting /desiring more detailed information are requested to get a book from the CFA office in Kathmandu or from a book stall.

For the Raj Yoga, 'Character Science' invoked by Swami Schchidananda Vishuddhadev is the best, systematic book among many of the world.

One should choose the easiest posture in which he can remain in for a long period of time. A certain posture may be very easy for one man, while for another it may be very difficult. One will find later on that during the study of these psychological matters, a good deal of activity goes on in the body. Nerve currents will have to be displaced and given a new channel. New types of vibrations will begin; the whole neural network will be remodeled, as it were. The main area of activity will lie along the spinal column. It is absolutely necessary to hold the spinal column free, sitting erect, holding the three parts – chest, neck, and head – in a straight line, while the whole weight of the body remains supported by the rib. This is said to be easy posture, with the spine straight. It is obvious that we can not focus very deep thoughts with a crooked slouched posture.

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Temperance

– Swami Vishuddhadev

The Sanskrit world *samadhi* (realization, trance) is made up of *sam* (equality, equality with good behaviour), and *dhi* (wisdom), which does not show any partiality but unity. Such wisdom is extremely pure. Wisdom, which is for equality and unification, becomes formless and achieves eternity. This is the science of temperance. Wisdom, in realization, never, in any situation, loses its quality of temperance.

To know about realization and be able to attain its state is the real achievement of life and this is possible only through the yoga practices of your eight body parts. It is after the mature state of realization that the practitioner gets temperance. While heating water, the pot is placed over the fire but is not melted by the water, rather it makes its condition regular and constant to function properly. In exactly the same way, an individual, who has attained temperance, performs his tasks skilfully and, maintaining his conscience, unites himself to God. When an individual reaches this stage, he will be outwardly active, keeping his internal peace intact. As a consequence of this, he will enjoy the wealth of the body and the senses and the blessings of civilization, mind and intelligence, culture, soul etc. This is a complete building of character. He lives as Higher Self, not as a lower self. Only a divine individual, who has built such a character, can be called 'pious' and the creation of such a divine person is known as the world of Gods or the world of truth.

The Boon...

to the theory of Responsibility on Shoulders, **Swamiji emerged from the caves, after 18 years, with three apples, gifts, for us.** Swamiji is the 'ocean of love', 'the source of karuna-mercy', and the sacrifice'. The first apple–**Understanding of head**–which targets our clear concept of the illusion 'life is temporary, not permanent'– 'life is to sip the honey not to stick to it', 'soul is eternal, the lump of joy'. The second apple Swamiji brought from the caves for the world address the individuals–**Responsibility on**

Shoulders. Because of the sacrifice towards the mankind and god, we are given the third apple–**Honesty in Heart**–to be digested. Swamiji left us all a most cherished gift – the Character Foundation Association – "the boon". We are all invited to share in this gift, to join with all of Swamiji's devotees in furthering the zeal of future super creations. Please free yourselves from "sticking to lower selfishness" and devote yourselves in service towards humanity, as our beacon of love and peace, our beloved Swamiji, did all of his life.

■ **General Secretary**

The Devotees of Lord Vishuddha are Hearty requested to send their articles (both in English and Nepali) related to Character within 21st of the Month to our office or send in our mail for the Publication in the Bulletin.



Character Power — Swami Vishuddhadev

All the laborious great men of the world have proved one true fact through their thoughts, contemplations and good behaviour, reaching the highest ideal of life, and that is Character. The teachings and experiences of perfect meditators and sages, who have studied and analysed the Vedas, Vedanta Philosophy, mythologies and entire religious scriptures of the world, encourage and inspire all the human family to walk on the same path, and that is the path of Character. Thus, it is proved that the name of the supreme power of beautiful human life is every aspect is character. Character is a divine power as well as the head-jewel of human life. This is regarded as the best among all the treasures of the world. Attaining character is attaining everything. It is only after accomplishing the Goddess, the greatest treasure called character, through the power of body, mind, and heart that one can get this supreme jewel. It should be kept in mind that “I” or “self” is the greatest treasure of man. There is no purer element in the universe than this.

“Self” is the second name for “everything”. The human body is better than the supremely pure and revered universe. The senses of action are better than the human body. The senses of knowledge are better than the senses of

action. The mind is better than the senses of knowledge and intelligence is better than the mind. Lower self is better than intelligence. The pure and bright consciousness (Higher Self) is supremely better than the lower self. This is the supremely proved immortal Godly element with semen, strength and light. This is the element representing “everything”. Conscientious and knowledgeable great men have admired this element as “Character”. This is the state of truth and enlightenment. Thus, it is evident that the attainment of character is the attainment of everything.

The word used in Sanskrit for character is Charitra, made up of two elements: Char and itra. Char means to move and itra indicates fragrance. The fragrance that spreads when you move is character. Here, to move signifies moving on a true path with good intention, good feeling and good work as indicated by good education. Good intention is a quality of the brain. Any man, who does his duty conscientiously and with devotion, has good intentions. In the same way, good feeling is a quality of the heart. When consciousness becomes pure with the mercy of the Goddess of good intentions, respect and devotion spring up in the human heart. All the great values like knowledge, good determination, generosity, forgiveness, tolerance,

modesty, and social service come to the fore. With the coming together of good intentions and good feelings, a human being becomes a good worker. Then a person earns his wealth working hard with his bodily strength and spends it conscientiously on fulfilling his good desires. Serving guests, doing something good for society, and service to one's nation become part and parcel of one's lifestyle. Such an individual keeps good thoughts in both sufferings and joys, losses and gains, and in every kind of circumstances and moves onward on the path of duties. It is this kind of an individual that we should regard as being truly educated. The meaning of guided education is strong determination and good feeling. Such a person is always engaged in good deeds. He will never go astray. A good character means accepting true or good things and putting oneself to service with good manners, and to digest bad things in exactly the same way as Lord Shiva digested the poison.

A person of good character is always involved in good deeds, for his healthy body is saturated in his brain with the purity of his heart. The first and the last duty of a man is to adopt the lessons of character and to move on the righteous path with devotion and humility. He will make his life and the world fragrant and offer fragrant joy to all.

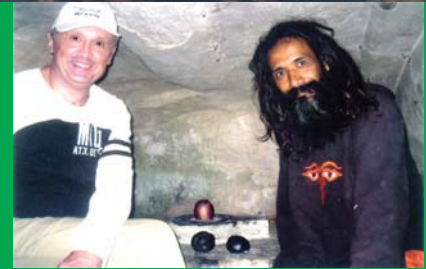




Mahatma with his foreign devotees

Pilgrimage to MUKTINATH

Mahatma Sushil



The Shivalinga and black smooth stone in the caves of Muktinath between Mahatma and Alex

Nepal is the spiritual destination of entire human being. Amongst manifold holy places Muktinath is the best one which is conducive to the well-being of entire human race. In the Godly creation, Muktinath is fraught with natural beauty and is infinitely spiritual whose worship makes human life successful (blessed). The devotee worshipping the lord Muktinath with loving faith, good character and piety as well as spirited soul towards its spiritual and natural beautiness gets rid from the veil of Maya. **Veil of Maya** means ignorance, darkness, and to get ensnared in materiality without realizing the eternal essence of one's own existence. Finally, without knowing "who am I?" one gets trapped in the eternal cycle of birth and death.

Yog Sadhana is one of the ways to be free from the veil of Maya which, too, is a divine gift to the mankind by the creator to merge into the universal spirit. In the course of yoga teaching, four devotees from Russia and Ukraine had taken me (Sushil Mahatma, the disciple of guru Vishuddhadev) respectfully to spiritually rich environment of Muktinath. I find it appropriate to mention briefly the events occurring to us in our eleven days long visit.

Alex, a Russian devotee, had shown me a Russian book by a Russian author which contains the colourful pictures of lord Pashupatinath and lord Shiva. This book also contains the beautiful picture of serpentine power. Then he wanted to know the difference between the yoga I taught and the meaning of yoga that book conveyed.

As I perused the book and the colourful photographs of serpentine power imprinted in it was accurate in accordance to the yoga philosophy. I told them that the author of that book must be a yogi. And knowing their intention to learn yoga, firstly, I told them to worship the god and chant the Russian incantation and they did. Then, I made them to chant the Vedic Mantra (incantation).

I also told them that Gayatri Mantra beginning with Om is the greatest Vedic mantra to answer their curiosity. He started writing it when I chanted the Gayatri mantra as: *Om bhurbhuvah swah tatsaviturvarenyam bhargo devasya dhimahi dhiyo yo nah prachodayat.*

I further elaborated it to make them clear that in order to receive the divine cosmic power stored in the sacred words of Gayatri, one has to have absolute faith in it, comprehend its true meaning, purity in thought, speech and work, goodness of food, and chant it more than 108 times in the morning and evening daily without any trace of worry until divine light evolves within the seven chakras of our body. Then one acquires Godly power. This state achieved by a devotee is the state of getting emancipation and freedom.

Then we conducted the yoga postures in accordance with the formula of 3B + MS invented in character-science. I made them clear on the significance and importance of yoga postures maintaining mental and physical equilibrium as well as it gets victory over the pressure of solid body. Out of 84 lakhs of yoga postures, Padmasan and Siddhasan are the chief

one. But the practitioner should build up the power to carryout one of it perfectly.

I told them that it is appropriate to do pranayam after asana. There are various procedures of pranayam. It should be done cautiously, consciously and with strong faith and devotion following the right procedures. Slowly and gradually, it should be done three to twelve years, then, ten constituents' parts of vitality in our body being vibrated takes their way to salvation and emancipation as I experienced in my life. Eventually, these constituents part of vitality situated in different parts of our body through spinal cord (Sushumna) reach to the cerebral plexus. It is the complete state of pranayam to get victory over the vital force. To get victory over it means to reach into the state of thoughtlessness. Thoughtlessness means the realisation of pure consciousness within us which is Absolute Knowledge. Until the vital force of an individual body become one with the universe (the collective vitality), one should consistently continue the procedure. At last, one becomes the witness of God and enjoy the sat (Truth), chit (Conscious) and ananda (Bliss) forever.

This state is the state of salvation and the journey to Muktinath is the journey of emancipation. The realization of Lord Muktinath, in true sense, is the realization of Brahma energy (Brahma, Bishnu, Shiva) that is present in the soul of every human being.

Alex! our pilgrimage to Muktinath is successful.

Rising Above Anger

– Birbhadra Acharya

The innate nature of human being is peace. Peacefulness, like that of an ocean or blue sky. The serenity one gets watching an eagle swoop through the depth of the blue sky or contentment of a grazing cow inside her shed. However, like the wave in the ocean or a black cloud in the blue sky, one's peacefulness of heart is sometimes disturbed by anger. The question naturally arises, why anger overwhelms human? According to Hindu's Holy Scripture "Gita", those people tend to become angry who are overly dependent on physical world. The physical world presents paraphernalia of objects. These people are guided by the attraction and repulsion of these objects. When a person desires some physical object and do not acquire it, s/he is disquieted. S/he then constantly starts to strive for that object from every possible way, and until s/he gets hold of what is desired, the mind is not at rest. This causes continuous irritation within oneself, which generates intolerance towards immediate surroundings. In this situation, if the desire is important, that desire should be fulfilled by right means as ordained by the scripture. When we say overly dependent on physical world, it means that the person is completely guided by his/her sense organs. Therefore, as advised in Bhagbat Gita, one needs to rise above one's sense organs and practice **niskam karma** to be above anger.

Cravings are not heart desire. They are not like desire for peace and love, which is innate and eternal. They tend to change with the change of situation and surroundings. There are many examples of persons who used to smoke cigarette and drink alcohol but suddenly quit both these habits. As they quit, the craving for cigarette and alcohol subsides. From these examples, it is to be noted that, cravings are not heart desire and are temporal and transient. This leads one to observe that people tend to label many things as heart desire while it is just the craving of the senses. It is natural for the sense organs to be allured by sense objects, but the person should use his/her intelligence above the attraction of senses. By practicing meditation one can train one's mind. **Meditation makes a person alert and**



watchful towards his/her thoughts, feeling, speech, acts, and surroundings, as such s/he remains always watchful and alert. This alertness of mind helps the person to rise above anger. When one starts watching one's anger, the anger automatically recedes.

There are people who become angry at every small opportunity. These people are mostly concerned with themselves and do not have respect for the feelings in others. They can control anger if they so choose. For example, a person who gets angry at a situation at home does not get angry if the same situation is repeated outside the home. When these people say that they cannot control their anger, they are trying to cover up their weakness by not accepting the fact that anger could be won over. The angry persons are weak against those who stay serene and poised in any given situation. It is not advisable to refrain from anger when it arises, however, it should not be fanned. If fanned, it will engulf the entire personality like a fire engulfing the entire

object. When one gets angry, the reason for anger should be examined after anger recedes. When the reason for anger is found out, such situation should never be allowed to repeat.

Feeling like anger in a person is similar to the storm that sweeps the earth occasionally. These storms sweep away whatever come in front of their way and destroy everything in their path. One can see the destruction that the storms leave behind when it subsides. Similarly, anger sweeps away every good emotion in a person and destroys even the right cells, leaving the person empty and disturbed. A person in anger not only destroys his/her peace of mind but also causes to obliterate peace within others. It is therefore, the duty of a person to rein his/her anger when s/he becomes aware of anger. According to lord Krishna, attraction and repulsion creates desire, the unfulfilled desire inculcates anger, which covers the right perspective in a person and leads the person to animal behavior. A person who cannot control his/her anger cannot attain soul realization and rather tend to make his/her life and that of his/her immediate family, a hell. Anger also creates physical illness in a person, especially hypertension, leading to heart attack. We have to kill anger within us by practicing generosity, containment, tolerance and compassion. Generosity, love and compassion are key factors for controlling anger. Mathematically, as the degree of these qualities increases within oneself, the space left for intolerance and anger automatically recedes for ever.



WHO IS "I"

*I am neither the Prana, nor the five vital airs;
I am neither the materials of the body, nor the five sheaths;
Neither am I the organs of action; nor the object of the senses;
I am Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute, Bliss Absolute;
I am He, I am He. (Shivoham, Shivoham)*

Maya

The senses drag the human soul out. Man is seeking for pleasure and for happiness where it can never be found. For countless ages we are all taught that this is futile and vain, there is no happiness here. But we can not learn; it is impossible for us to do so, except through our own experiences. We try them, and blow comes. Do we learn then? Not even then. Like moths hurling themselves against the flame, we are hurling ourselves again and again into sense pleasures, hoping to find satisfaction. We return again and again with freshened energy; thus we go on, till crippled and cheated we die. And this is Maya.

So with our intellect. In our desire to solve the mysterious of the universe, we can not stop our questioning, we feel we must know and can not believe that no knowledge is to be gained. A few steps, and there arises the wall of beginning less and endless time which we can not surmount. A few steps, and there appears a wall of boundless space which can not be surmounted, and the whole is irrevocably bound in by the wall of cause and effect. We can not go beyond them. Yet we struggle, and still have to struggle. And this is Maya.

There was never a mother who did not think her child was a born genius, the most extraordinary child that was ever born; she dotes upon her child. Her whole soul is in the child. The child grows up, perhaps becomes a drunkard, a brute, ill-treats the mother, and the more he ill treats her, the more her love increases. The world lauds it as the unselfish love of the mother, little dreaming that the mother is a born slave, she can not help it. She would a thousand times rather throw off the burden, but she can not. So she covers it with a mass of flowers, which she calls wonderful love. And this is Maya.

All the executives of working committee, life members and general members are requested to submit their 2-P.P. size photographs along with a copy of citizenship or identity card for the official record. Thank you.

Ramsheel, G.S., CFA



President of CFA with devotees after completing character yoga shiveer

Cosmic Body and Training

A person is not only a puppet in solid physical body, but also an embodiment of a spiritual, cosmic body. It is through the medium of his cosmic body that man carries himself to innumerable kinds of pleasures and pains, or to heaven or hell, according to his righteous or sinful acts and training, and thus makes himself a victim of the cycle of life. The cosmic body is the aggregate of man's entire proper and improper deeds and education. His training will decide which one his future life is going to be and this decision is implemented by the cosmic body. Whatever kind of training shapes his actions, the body will acquire the same kind of life on water, land or sky. This is known in the religious scriptures as fate or destiny. The existence of such things as moving in the universe by leaving the solid body, transforming the life, or being ghosts, etc. fall under the domain of this astral or cosmic body. It is known as the astral body (to go astray = to roam about) because it is capable of moving into the cosmic world. In the religious scriptures it is called by the names of the genital body, the air body, the vital breath body, the universal body etc.

It must be noted that the cosmic body goes on doing its work until the ego is set in

motion. The ego continues its job until man decorates his body with the ornaments of name, beauty, race, occupation, etc. and calls his adorned body by the name of the world I. But when the man reaches for his personality, or the formless conscious soul which is his real identity, his ego is automatically lost, exactly like the river Ganges, which loses its name, form and everything else to join the sea. A person, who reaches the stage of formlessness, achieves self-realization, and to achieve self-realization means to know one's own self and possess character. Until passion and prejudice are ended the cosmic body also does not end. With a firm realization of this truth, let us move forward to remove our lust and ego.

According to Maharshi Vishuddha Dev “Meditation is to know the self by the power of one’s own self. When a meditator realizes his or her self then he/she becomes very quiet, very calm because self joins the self. In another words meditation means deep thought. In deep thought there is no thought, a point where thought is stopped i.e. “the deepest thought is known as meditation”.

As our holy scriptures say “Be still and know that I am God”. Learning how to be still is the method of meditation.

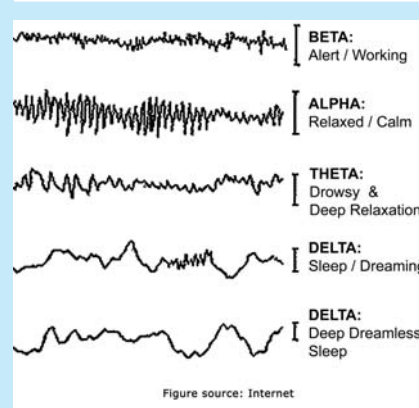
A state of meditation is acquired by practice. It is a gradual process and requires patience. The creator has given us the most powerful tool in the form of the human mind and we haven’t utilized it properly. Mind is subtle matter, an energy force that can take any form instantly. In our society the system of education teaches us to examine things of the external world. There is no system of education which teaches us to look within and understand the mind and its various states. Until we learn to know our self, whatever we do in the external world will be insufficient and will not give satisfaction. Through meditation we learn to understand our mind and our self. Understanding the self (consciousness) one can automatically understand the function of the cosmos. In these days people need meditation because they think about their problems all the time. They need to learn how to relax and forget about them. The ability to stay concentrated for a while is a mastery that can be achieved by frequent practice. When one stays concentrated, one can control one’s physical and mental state and be able to understand one’s self as a soul. Being a soul one gets a feeling of immortality and gains higher values. It gives one the understanding of the law of karma and results in the changing of attitudes and habits.

Let us look at meditation scientifically. Recent advances in medical imaging, such as rCBF (regional Cerebral Blood Flow), real time MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), MEG (magnetoencephalography), and improved EEG (electroencephalography) allow detailed studies that are reshaping our understanding of the effects of meditation on our body and mind. There are several basic effects that have been discovered through scientific research in the recent past. These demonstrate the profound influence meditation has on neurophysiology. In scientific terms, our brain elicits four types of electrical brain wave or frequencies. Brain waves are within the brain. There are four types of electrical brainwave. They are Beta, Alpha, Theta and Delta.

Meditation and Brain Waves



— Navin Adhikary —



In 1929, Hans Berger used an EEG (electroencephalograph) machine to discover the various brain waves. The brain generated 13 to 30 Cycles Per Second (CPS) range. He labeled these brain waves Beta. Similarly 8-12 cps—Alpha. 4-8 cps—Theta brain waves and 0.5-4 cps delta brain waves. Delta brain waves are the slowest oscillating waves.

Beta Waves (13-30 cps): These brain waves represent the conscious mind. Where we do our reasoning and conduct most of our affairs while awake. A debater would be in high beta. A person making a speech or a teacher or a talk show host would all be in beta when they are engaged in their work. Stress and negative thinking and emotions can appear while the brain is in beta state. In the beta state inspiration and creativity cannot occur.

Alpha Waves (8-12 cps): Alpha frequencies are less than beta waves. Alpha produces relaxation. A person has completed a task and sits down to rest in often in an alpha state. Alpha state occurs when people enter a meditative state which

gradually turns into theta wave. Alpha rhythms are reported to be identified from the white matter of the brain. The white matter can be considered the part of the brain that connects all parts with each other. When our alpha is within normal range we tend to experience also good moods, see the world truthfully, and have a sense of calmness. So we can increase alpha by closing our eyes, deep breathing, and meditation. Alpha and theta state bring harmonious balance between our left hemisphere activity (rational thinking) and right hemisphere activity of the brain (creativity) and keep the balance within the whole brain. It thus helps to develop a high intellectual level which is connected with creativity, intuition, and feeling of being one with the universe.

Theta Waves (4-8 cps): Theta brain waves are even slower and less than Alpha waves. This is the subconscious range. All our emotional experience seems to be recorded in theta. This is the range where psychic experience is most likely to occur. Found in states of deep relaxation, it is associated with bursts of creative insight. This state is found in more advanced meditators.

Delta Waves (0.5-4 cps): This is the slowest of brain wave activity and found in deep dreamless sleep and some times in very experienced meditators. At this state brain activity slows and the body releases chemical and hormones to repair tissue and spur on growth. Hormones such as serotonin and human growth hormones are released during this wave. Similar activity happens in deep sleep. That is why we feel refreshed and renewed after waking up.

Our brain activity constantly shifts and changes during the day and night. Virtually every form of mental and physical activity will cause changes in this activity. Abrupt, unexpected noises or other events will quickly alter our brain wave patterns. Even while watching TV brainwave activity dramatically alters in an undirected manner. Our ancestors had already developed techniques to allow us to enter these states. Particularly alpha and theta through the technique of meditation requires years of regular practice. We can master brain wave and can alter them according to one’s own will.

Dr. Herbert Benson of Harvard Medical School was one of the first to make a long study of meditation. The following quotation comes from his best-selling *The Relaxation Response* (Morrow, 1975) about his studies on TM and later on the method he devised, called Relaxation Response.

Cont. on page 8



Meditation and

The experiments showed that during meditation there was a marked decrease in the body's oxygen consumption... The major physiologic change associated with meditation is a decrease in the rate of metabolism. Such a state of decreased metabolism, called hypometabolism, is a restful state. Like sleep, another hypometabolic state, meditation causes bodily energy resources to be taxed less... There are differences in the rate of oxygen-consumption decrease during sleep and meditation. During sleep, oxygen consumption decreases slowly and progressively, until after four or five hours it is about 8 percent lower than during wakefulness. During meditation, however, the decrease averages between 10 and 20 percent and occurs during the first three minutes of meditation. It is not possible for a person to bring about such decreases by other means. For example, if you hold your breath, your tissues will continue to utilize the available oxygen at the same rate and there will be no change in the amount of oxygen you consume...Another physiologic difference between meditation and sleep has been documented with the electro-encephalogram. Alpha waves, slow brain

waves, increase in intensity and frequency during the practice of meditation but are not commonly found in sleep...Other brain-wave patterns during meditation are also distinctly different from those during sleep...Meditation is therefore not a form of sleep; nor can it be used as a substitute for sleep. [p.62-64]

A former graduate student of Dr. Benson, Dharma Singh Khalsa, M.D summarizes biochemical effects of meditation:

Meditation is the only activity that reduces blood lactate, a marker of stress and anxiety. The calming hormones melatonin and serotonin are increased by meditation, and the stress hormone cortisol is decreased. Meditators secrete more of the youth-related hormone DHEA as they age than nonmeditators. Meditating forty-five-year-old males have an average of 23 percent more DHEA than nonmeditators, and meditating females have an average of 47 percent more. This helps decrease stress, heighten memory, preserve sexual function, and control weight.

[Meditation as Medicine, page 8, Pocket Books, 2001]

Through meditation one can achieve a peaceful state physically as well as mentally. One has alpha to delta waves in

that state and these indicate a state of mental calm. It is also found that a man who regularly practices meditation has more endurance and tolerance and is able to improve his relationship with others. Through highest state of meditation we achieve thoughtlessness. In this state one will be very relaxed and all mental power will be relinquished. Hence meditation helps to improve concentration, memory, will power, tolerance and patience. It improves creativity in a person. People practicing meditation have good control over their emotions. They become solution oriented rather than problem oriented. Meditation gives the body more resistance and immunity against diseases. It gives a person more stamina, and it is the best tool to fight against old age. For the God seeker, meditation is the perfect way to feel the presence of God within and to understand that he is the person behind the whole creation of this universe. Understanding God fear of death will automatically vanish and one will be able to die peacefully having a positive frame of mind. There is no human being in this whole world who will not have to die. One day it happens to all of us. Therefore meditating and learning how to calm our mind in order to gain inner wisdom is absolutely essential.

