

Aligarh Journal of Interfaith Studies



Peer Reviewed, , Open Access International Journal
ISSN: 2582-7553 | Impact Factor | ESTD Year 2020

[HOME](#) [ABOUT US](#) [CURRENT ISSUE](#) [ARCHIEVES](#) [INDEXING](#) [SUBMIT PAPER](#) [AUTHOR GUIDE](#) [CONTACT](#)

TRANSFORMATION OF BEHAVIOUR THROUGH SPIRITUAL PRACTICES IN HINDUISM

Akbar Husain* and Rikza Pervez**¹

ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
Article History Published Online: _Published_	Spirituality is knowledge, experience and practice based. Most spiritual paths are aimed at a blend of these three. You can transform your behaviour through spiritual practices. In India, we have been practising various forms of spirituality (e.g., forms of worship; mindfulness; chanting, music, drumming, dancing, exorcism; belief-centred vs. practice-centred religion for healing and enhancing well-being. The Paper deals with Spiritual practices in Hinduism Which include <i>Anahata</i> or Heart Chakra, its consequences for mental health; <i>Chakra</i>
Keywords: ➤ Spirituality ➤ Psychology ➤ Hinduism, ➤ Religion, ➤ Transformati on	

¹ Professor, Department of Psychology, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

** Research Scholar, Department of Psychology, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh,



	<p>Meditation and its results as stipulated by Bhagvad Gita; Sadhana, its meaning and results; Satsang, its effects on mental health; Surrendering the Ego: Triguna Personality and Behaviour .</p> <p>Objective: The intention of writing this article is to make aware of the above mentioned spiritual practices through which one can develop spiritual discipline and perfection.</p>
--	---

Introduction

Spirituality is the path of purity, truth, perfection and unity; it is based on universal brotherhood and sisterhood, where peace, goodwill and harmony prevail. Through spirituality, we can really develop a peaceful world. Spirituality follows certain principles, values and practices. Establishment of one world and humanity is possible through the cultivation of spiritual values.

Spiritual practices vibrate the mind and heart at a higher frequency. We need to transform the dynamic vibrations of the Self through spiritual practices otherwise we would become mentally, emotionally and spiritually unbalanced. Engaging in spiritual practices like *Anahata* or heart chakra, chakra meditation, equanimity, generosity, liberation, *sadhana*, *satsang*, surrendering the ego,



and *triguna* personality and behaviour will help an individual in enhancing well-being. Overall, spiritual practices enhance the practitioners' mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. We believe that coronavirus pandemic can be prevented and managed through these spiritual practices.

Spiritual healing is a way to transformation, a voyage that connects the mind, body and heart to liberate the soul. This is the transformation which Hinduism aims to accomplish through various spiritual practices like *Anahata* or Heart *Chakra*, and *chakra* meditation.

Spiritual Practices in Hinduism

***Anahata* or Heart Chakra:** This is the fourth primary chakra, according to Hindu Yogic, Shakta and Buddhist Tantric traditions. In Sanskrit, *anahata* means "unhurt, unstruck, and unbeaten." *Anahata Nad* refers to the Vedic concept of unstruck sound (the sound of the celestial realm). *Anahata* is associated with balance, calmness, and serenity (Wikipedia, 2020).

Chakras are spinning vortexes of energy in the body that affect your emotions, thoughts, and health. Balance in the chakras means a healthy,



fulfilled life. The heart *chakra* or *anahata* is located in the centre of the chest and is represented by the colour green. This *chakra* mainly governs the rib cage, lungs, heart, circulation, skin, hands, arms and the upper back. Any imbalance or blockage will manifest as dysfunctional relationships, feeling isolated, skin conditions, asthma, circulatory problems, low or high blood pressure, heart palpitations, chest pains and, in extreme cases, heart attack (Sharma, 2016).

According to Tantric tradition, *anahata* chakra, the heart chakra, is just a level or dimension of our being and of the entire manifestation. The Spiritual Heart is more than this. *Hridaya*: The Spiritual Heart is not just a spark of God; the Spiritual Heart is God.

The relationship between atman and Brahman is one of unity. Jnana yogis used to express this paradoxical view by saying that *Atman* (the Spiritual Heart) and Brahman (the Absolute) are one. "This Atman is Brahman," otherwise known as "Ayamatma Brahma," is one of the four *Mahavakya* or great affirmations (we could say suggestions or powerful ideas) of the Vedic and Upanishadic traditions.



The key to understanding the nature of the essential Oneness of the Universe is to see our Heart - our eternal, undying Self - as identical with Brahman. Another *mahavakya* appears in Chandogya Upanishad: "Tat tvam asi", which translates that the Ultimate Reality, Brahman, is what you are. So, the Spiritual Heart is not just a reflection of everything. It is the Supreme Consciousness, the essence of everything, the background of existence.

The Whole, Unity, is completely us. In the meditation for the Revelation of the Spiritual Heart, we are all revealing the same Heart, the same Divine Self, the same Ultimate Reality. The Heart of man and the Heart of the world are a single Heart. (Hridya Yoga - Blog)

Experts view the Heart Chakra as a kind of bridge between thought, emotions, and spirituality, meaning the *Anahata* or heart chakra is sometimes the most important of all. The heart *chakra* is connected to all of the following:

Your capacity for empathy

The intensity which you can care for another person

- Your emotional openness



- Self-knowledge
- Self-reflective capacities
- How peaceful you feel

So, when your heart chakra is properly aligned and fully open, you are a compassionate, giving person. You feel loving and calm. This does not mean that you focus all your efforts on others, however. Having an aligned heart *chakra* is also about knowing where to draw boundaries in your emotional life. This includes identifying and separating from toxic relationships. Openness in the heart *chakra* also allows you to make sense of your own feelings, fully experiencing the and yet also seeing their rational roots.

On the other hand, a blocked heart *chakra* can develop in response to anything in life that is emotionally hurtful, or that drains your emotional resources.

Blocked heart *chakra* symptoms include the following:

- Restlessness
- Difficulty trusting others
- Impatience and irritability
- Lack of empathy



Some of the physical symptoms of a blocked heart *chakra* can include these (though note that these issues can, of course, have purely biological roots):

- Insomnia
- Increase in blood pressure
- A decrease in immune system function

An opened heart *chakra* allows you to better understand and meet your needs, and to give love to others. You may also find that intense emotions gradually become less frightening to you. You can develop new ways of accepting and moving past your emotions without having to repress them.

As a bonus, an open-heart *chakra* is actually useful for all forms of *chakra* healing. When your mind, body, and spirituality are working together, it's easier to create harmony in your whole body (Hurst - Blog).

The blocked *chakra* can be unlocked by practicing yoga *asanas*, calming your mind through meditation, cultivating positive affirmation of the situations and self, and it is also suggested that as green is the colour of *hridaya chakra* inculcating food items that are green in colour can also help and the



connection with nature with its greenery can help to unblock the *chakra*.

Chakra Meditation: It involves meditating on the heart as well which then produces four feelings – those of *karuna* compassion; *mudita*, joy; *maitre*, friendship; and *upeksha*, imperturbability. These traits are crucial for any successful relationship. The Sage has also explained four kinds of people that inhabit this world. They also fall into four categories – *sukhi*, happy; *dukhi*, unhappy; *punyatma*, righteous people; and *paapatma*, anti-social, negative people.

During corona virus pandemic, we need to have an attitude of happiness towards the people who are diagnosed as Covid-19 positive, compassion towards the sick and negative people. People need to cultivate positive attitude and express positive emotions. Meditation contributes to our mental peace and happiness. It develops equanimity in our lives and hearts.

Equanimity: Bhagavad Gita attaches great value to equanimity. Importance of equal-mindedness has repeatedly been stressed in various *shlokas* of this sacred scripture. Krishna says in *shloka* 2.14 that joy and sorrow, like heat and cold, arise from the



contact of senses with their objects and do not last for ever. Hence, one should learn to endure them. When it is said that pleasure and pain etc. arise from the contact of senses with their objects, it implies that such pairs of opposites relate only to the body and the mind and not to the soul within.

Whereas joy of the soul is self-existent, everlasting and independent of particular causes and effects; the sensations of material delight and distress change from time to time. Since such feelings of the senses are temporary, one should learn to accept them with mental calmness and evenness of temper.

In *shloka* 2.15, it is stated that he who is not troubled by pleasure and pain and remains the same in both, such a man of patience is considered to be eligible for eternal life. In other words, the one who does not lose his patience during favourable and unfavourable circumstances and maintains evenness of his mind, such a serene person becomes fit for achieving liberation from material bondage.

Further, in *shloka* 5.22, Krishna states that the wise do not indulge in enjoyments that arise out of contact of the senses with their objects, as the



pleasures so derived are transient and eventually lead to sorrow. In this *shloka*, the teacher has analysed the nature of worldly pleasures. An element of inadequacy is inherent in such joys because they are finite. At some point in time, they have to come to an end. Moreover, they cannot satisfy one for long. Ultimately they prove to be a source of misery. Hence, one should not be lost in such enjoyments.

Krishna taught that one should perform his duty sincerely without bothering about success and failure etc. In *shloka* 2.38, he advised Arjuna that treating pleasure and pain, gain and loss; and victory and defeat alike, he should get ready for the battle. In this manner, he would not incur any sin. The same theme has further been elaborated in *shloka* 4.22 wherein it is stated that the one who is beyond dualities of pleasure and pain etc., who is content with whatever comes his way, who is free from envy and who is the same in success and failure - such a person is not bound by action. In *shloka* 2.48 Krishna reiterated that one should do his duty abandoning all attachment; equipoised in success and failure. He further stated that such evenness of mind is called yoga.



It has been explained in *shlokas* 2.56 and 2.57 that intelligence of the one who is able to face ups and downs of life with equal ease, remains steady. He is not shaken by prosperity or adversity and praise or blame etc. He welcomes both with equal-mindedness.

The state of perfect equanimity is the state of blessedness in which one establishes himself in unity with Pramatan, the Supreme Self. It has been stated in *shloka* 5.20 that the one who neither rejoices on getting the pleasant nor is perturbed by the unpleasant, who is of stable mind; and who is free from doubt - such a knower of Brahman is forever established in Him. It has further been stated in *shloka* 6.7 that the Supreme Self remains established in the consciousness of a jit-atman (the one who has conquered all senses including the mind). He remains at peace in joy and sorrow, heat and cold, honour and dishonour etc.

The importance of equanimity of mind also becomes clear from the fact that in *shloka* 13.10, constant equal-mindedness with regard to that which is desirable and to that which is undesirable has been declared, along with some other traits, to be the spiritual knowledge (gyan - wisdom).



In some other *shlokas*, equanimity of mind has also been held to be an important ingredient for being such a devotee who is dear to God, and for the one who is a good doer of work (sattvic karta). Similarly, remaining the same in honour and dishonour has been held to be an essential trait for those who want to transcend the three modes of material nature.

Thus, it can be said that sorrows of the world do not shake the one who has gained inward freedom. To progress on the path of spirituality and also in day to day life, equanimity of the mind is considered to be most essential. But a question is often asked as to how can such an equanimity be cultivated. Answer to this question can be found in *shloka* 6.35 wherein Krishna concedes that the mind being restless is very difficult to curb. At the same time, he has assured that it can still be controlled by constant practice and detachment. When such an attitude of detachment becomes spontaneous, one attains perfect calmness of mind, irrespective of the external circumstances.

To sum up, when a man of patience and steady intelligence is able to face the ups and downs of life with equal-mindedness and remains joyfully and



blissfully immersed in his work; without any worry about success and failure etc., he attains perfect serenity of mind. He remains at peace with himself and others. Such a person of even mind experiences eternal bliss (Singal, 2020). Hinduism promotes rational and ethical way of life based on complete equanimity and tranquillity.

Generosity: To listen to generously. As a spiritual practice, generosity is the first of six "perfections," or virtuous qualities, one cultivates for spiritual awakening. As such, one offers both material donations as well as the giving of spiritual resources out of kindness and compassion for the benefit and enlightenment of others.

In addition to giving to the poor, generosity also includes sharing one's spaciousness of heart, such as sharing in the loss of a loved one or family member, offering a practice of loving-kindness through meditation, or being present with someone within their suffering.

Buddhists often quote the Buddha from an early scripture: "What is the accomplishment in generosity? A noble disciple dwells at home, with a heart free from the stain of stinginess, open-handed, pure-handed, and delighting in



relinquishment, one devoted to charity, one who delights in sharing and giving. This is called accomplishment in generosity.

Guru Nanak has an interesting perspective on charitable giving. In the context of many South Asian traditions, a person's salvation is dependent on charitable acts. Nanak, in the *Japji*—which serves as the Sikh morning prayer—makes a startling statement, especially for the time and the social context in which it was made. He repudiates common practices, including an engagement in charitable acts, which were considered essential for salvation:

tīrathu tapu diā datu dānu/ je ko pāvai til kā mānu//
Pilgrimage, penance, compassion, and charitable giving,
[Only feed one's ego] and bring merit as much as a sesame seed.

Guru Nanak also provides a scathing critique of religious figures who do not work for a living and instead live on the charity of others. This, however, does not mean that he is discouraging Sikhs from engaging in charitable acts. In fact, Nanak sought to create a society in which the indigent and the



oppressed are looked after. He emphatically expresses his solidarity with them:

*nīcā aṅdari nīc jāti, nīcī hū ati nīcu//
nānak tin kai saṅgi sāthi, vaḍiā siu kiā rīs//
jithai nīc samālīani, tithai nadari terī bakhsīs//*

*Those who are lowest of the low class, the very lowest
of the low;*

*Nānak seeks the company of those, for what benefit
can be derived from imitating the high classes?*

The place where the lowly are cared for, it is only there your merciful glance and grace exist.

Guru Nanak provides Sikhs with a new ethical framework in which people who are fit to work are required to earn a living through honest means, while sharing the fruits of their earnings with sections of society that are the most needy. This theology can be summed up in his famous pronouncement that is recorded in the *Guru Granth Sahib*, the Sikh scripture: 'Only they are on the True Path who eat what they earn through earnest work and help support the disenfranchised' (page 1, 245).

One of the institutions that comes out of this ethical framework is the *langar* (or free kitchen). The Darbar Sahib—also known as the Golden



Temple—in Amritsar, Punjab, serves free food daily to 100,000 people, regardless of their status or religious affiliation. As a consequence, it is said, no one in Amritsar has slept hungry in the last four centuries (Singh, 2018)

As we watch the corona virus pandemic play out on a global scale, it's easy to feel helpless. But no matter who you are or what your situation, you can make a difference. Even if you're quarantined at home, there are still many ways to get involved and give back, including donating money or supplies, volunteering virtually, and checking in on people who might need support.

There is always something you can do to help others. And by helping others you will also help yourself. Research shows that volunteering makes you happier and healthier. Especially now—with most of us isolated from others or confined to interacting with only those in our household—it is a great way to reinforce your community ties and remind you that we are all working towards a common goal. Finding ways to give back during COVID-19 will help lower your own anxiety and stress, boost your mood, and give you a sense of purpose during this difficult time.



Start with your community: The easiest way to give back is by reaching out to the people you know. Neighbours, friends, co-workers, and relatives can all benefit from a friendly text or video call. It may seem like a small gesture, but do not underestimate the positive impact of checking up on someone. Start with those who might feel vulnerable right now. This could be your elderly neighbour who is cut off from their social connections or your friend who suffers from anxiety and depression. Providing a touchstone for someone during this time is one of the best ways to be of service. And it will help ease your own anxieties as well and give you an emotional boost.

If you are relatively young and healthy, another way to help is by running errands for those who are at higher risk of serious illness. Think of those in your local social circle who are elderly, disabled, or housebound. Reach out and see if they need help picking up groceries or prescriptions. You can leave bags outside their door to maintain a safe distance. Local social media groups or sites like Facebook or WhatsApp can help put you in touch with people in need in your area (Artley, 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic has exposed our inability to take care of millions of migrant labourers, daily- wage workers and others left to



fend for themselves during the lockdown. But it has also brought to the fore the generosity and passion of our civil society to do good.

The Central and State governments are doing their bit to manage the pandemic but expectedly falling short; they do not have infinite resources. In step the good Samaritans, beginning with the lion-hearted Sikhs. Thousands of citizens across the country are volunteering, and helping NGOs to aid the government steer the nation through this turbulence

In Gurugram, a group of over 400 dedicated volunteers comprising the local administration, NGOs, corporate and private individuals came together to provide cooked meals and food grains to migrant workers.

One of them is photographer Mustafa Quraishi, son of former Election Commissioner SY Quraishi, who joined the group, and with his Isuzu truck packed with 1,000 meals every day and accompanied by a policeman, travels 100-odd km in the area to distribute food to stranded migrant labourers. He could have easily used the lockdown period to watch Netflix or catch up on sleep.



In Chennai, A Saravanan, who owns a supermarket, gives 1,000 credit to migrant workers, auto rickshaw drivers, etc., to buy essentials. The collateral he has from these 450-odd people is their word they will pay him once the lockdown is lifted. Also in Chennai, a Muslim family facilitated the cremation of their Hindu neighbour, who passed away at 78, and whose friends and family could not help because of the lockdown.

In Mumbai, the way in which civil society and voluntary organisations have responded to the plight of migrant labourers has reiterated this metro's steely and caring backbone. A single club – Rotary Club of Mumbai Queen's Necklace – began the lockdown by supplying 1,000 meals a day to migrant workers, daily labourers, etc., but soon realized this was inadequate and quickly ramped up the number to 1.5 lakh daily meals by April 15.

An expert in forging partnerships – it had already funded a 5 crore kitchen for preparing midday meals for schoolchildren in November 2019 – it quickly teamed up with the Annamrita Foundation ISKCON, Taj Sats, etc., to use their kitchens for making over 1.5 lakh daily meals.



Using their friends, family and business connections, the club's 179 members raised 2 crore in seven days, and 4 crore in 14 days, to feed Mumbai's hungry (Bhagat, 2020).

A Gallup World Poll survey of a million people in 130 countries found that whether one had donated to charity in the last month was one of the six main predictors of personal satisfaction. Donations, social psychologists point out, appear to activate some reward centres in the human brain. This psychology, however, works only when people have the choice to give or not to give. They feel happier giving, rather than paying taxes, but they feel the happiest when they can choose where to give; feel connected with the people they give to; can see how their money has been spent; feel that they have made a difference. COVID-19 crisis and the art of giving (Singh, 2020).

Small Acts of Kindness: You do not need to be wealthy or have tons of free time to give (and receive) the benefits of altruism. Even a small gesture like holding the door for a stranger has the potential to reduce stress.

Sharing whatever you can spare is a simple, but generous, way to help others



The best things in life are free, and this applies to smiles, hugs, and other gestures that show you care.

You do not have to commit your time or money to do something kind for someone else. Even a simple squeeze on the shoulder can be reassuring and let someone know that you're supporting them and that you care.

You do not need to make a grand gesture to make a difference in someone's life. The small acts of kindness you do won't just make a difference in the lives of others but can have a positive (even life-changing) impact on your own (Scott, 2020).

Previous research has indicated that helping behaviour predicts favourable health outcomes as well, even if that help occurs in a stressful context such as long-term care giving (Poulin, et al., 2010)

Liberation: The first step in the journey of liberation is the withdrawal and restraint of the senses because they are the ones who perpetuate our interaction and dependence upon the world. When the senses are controlled and the mind is disciplined, a person overcomes his desires and attains peace and inner stability. With practice, he overcomes his attachment to his name and form.



He recognizes his spiritual nature. He cultivates purity and sameness. With his senses subdued, his intellect pointed and his mind freed from passions, he remains undisturbed even amidst turbulence. This is the ideal goal which Hinduism aims to accomplish for its practitioners as part of the four aims of human life, not instantaneously, but in phases through gradual transformation. A person overcomes suffering when he become a friend of the Self. Suffering also gives us all an opportunity to think about our existence and redeem ourselves through selfless actions, God's intervention, surrender and devotion. From suffering comes the knowledge of suffering. From the knowledge of the suffering comes the solution to suffering. From the solution to suffering comes the ultimate freedom. Suffering, therefore is the teacher and also the cause in which the effect, liberation, is hidden.

When a person gives up all the desires in his waking mind and when his self is turned inward and satisfied within itself, at that time he is said to be stable of mind (sthithaprajna) (Bhagavadgita 2.55) (Jayaram, V.)

Desire comes from our attachment to sense objects. Liberation means freedom from all kinds of



desires and attachments so that one is not motivated by self-interest in performing obligatory actions but rather by the pure intention to serve God and His creation.

Sadhana: Hinduism provides Yoga *Sadhana* for all sorts of people to suit their temperaments, capacities, tastes, stages of spiritual development, and conditions of life. It prescribes Yoga *Sadhana* even for a scavenger or a cobbler to attend God-realisation, while doing his ordinary avocation in the world. Hindu Yoga and Vedanta teachers lay great stress on self-restraint, *tapas*, renunciation, and practical *Sadhana*, which is best to control the mind and the senses and unfold the Divinity within or attain Self-realisation.

Sadhana is a Sanskrit term used to refer to a daily spiritual practice. *Sadhana* represents a disciplined surrendering of the ego, in which the practitioner uses tools such as asana, pranayama, meditation and chanting on a daily basis.

Anything that is practiced with awareness, discipline and the intention of spiritual growth can be considered as *sadhana*, but it must be practiced alone and for the sake of the individual. As such, it



does not need to be a physical activity; even daily self-study of yogic or spiritual scriptures is a form of *sadhana*.

Sadhana is also a means of forging a ritual connection with God or universal energy. It encourages the practitioner, known as the *sadhaka*, to use self-discipline in order to achieve power over the ego and maintain connection with universal oneness. With regular daily practice, the practitioner continually realigns his or her inner self, slowly progressing toward the very ultimate expression of consciousness known as *samadhi*.

The term *sadhana* comes from the Sanskrit root, *sadhu*, meaning “go straight to a goal”. Routinely applying mind, body and spirit in the pursuit of a spiritual goal is the most natural and efficient way to surrender the ego, to find relief from suffering and to attain peace.

For this reason, *sadhana* is the cornerstone of the discipline of yoga. Yoga provides a huge variety of tools for this purpose, ranging from physical practices, such as asana (postures) and pranayama (breathing techniques), to more introspective applications, such as *svadhyaya* (self-study) and meditation.



With intention, awareness, discipline and daily practice, almost anything can be considered as *sadhana*. When formulating your own *sadhana*, it is important to choose practices that work for you, in order to provide the best conditions for you to stay committed with ease. It may be useful to vary the practices used for *sadhana* from time to time, so as to keep the practice from becoming an automated or obligatory routine. Ancient Hindu and Buddhist texts, such as *Sadhanamala*, offer suggestions for hundreds of *sadhana* practices designed for various results.

Discipline is arguably the most important facet of *sadhana*, so it does help to practice at the same time each day. The time of day itself is not important - for some, practicing *sadhana* soon after awakening helps them to keep up the practice without distraction or excuses, whereas for others, evenings allow them more focus or concentration.

Although *sadhana* is centred on an ultimate spiritual goal, the practice itself should be undertaken without any specific goal in mind. *Sadhana* should be practiced for the sake of maintaining the practice, and as a means of cultivating discipline. To focus the mind on a goal



during *sadhana* will bring ego into the practice, rather than the sense of surrender that is required (Yogapedia, 2020).

Truly, a *sadhana* can be anything that makes your heart sing. There is only one rule -- that you commit to it every day, no matter what.

Satsang: *Satsang* means being with good people. Being in *satsang* with good people can wonders for personality development in terms of one's self-confidence and attitude. Loneliness is better than living with bad people. Participation in *Satsang* is of paramount importance for healthy living.

Satsang /satsaṅga/satsaṅgam is a word which comes from Sanskrit, meaning to associate with true people, or to be in the company of true people. It is also related to sitting with a sat guru, or in a group meeting seeking that association.

We are like nomads, travelling through an alien land but not here to stay. When we make camp in this world, it is only for the twinkling of an eye; then we will be away again and nothing will show for us having been here. So we should try to live lightly in this spiritual desert and not attempt to make it our permanent home. We can travel



together with each other, the Master beside us, confident that we are now in good company. Here are a few pointers to the purpose of *satsang*:

Satsang helps us remember that this is not our true home. Though we recognize that the creation operates within the will of the Creator, this is not now where we wish to stay. It is an alien land for the soul that is starting to reassert itself after many aeons and millions of lives in servitude to the mind. The soul's longing to leave this spiritually barren place will be establishing itself in the conscious mind of true seekers.

It is to remind us that we have a unique opportunity in having a human birth. In this form only can we make direct contact with the Creator, through a living Master, and journey all the way home.

(c) It helps us to examine the various aspects of the path and to increase our understanding of the importance and significance of the spiritual teachings of the Masters. It is an opportunity to satisfy the intellect - which is a prerequisite to travelling the path.

(d) *Satsang* creates and develops love and harmony among the *sangat*, encouraging us to



remember that we are all members of the same flock, with the same Master who loves and cares for each one of us equally – no favourites, no hierarchy.

(e) It sends us away with a revitalized desire to travel the path and attend to our meditation with renewed zeal. *Satsang* puts ‘a fence around the crop’, as Maharaj Charan Singh used to say. *Satsang* is a form of protection for the efforts we have made. It nurtures the fragile shoots that we have started to grow through our meditation practice.

It is only through the understanding encouraged by *satsang* and our continual efforts to comply with the teachings, that our spiritual foundation will be made strong. The Masters teach that the time spent satisfying our intellect and investigating the path is not time wasted. (RSSB, 2018).

Surrendering the Ego: The ego is the centre of our conscious awareness. The ego cannot provide the stability what we need. Hence it is a good step to move from the external to internal. Ego must be surrendered so that we can stand on the rock of the Self. Surrender demands us total devotion. And the totality of love that is given to God knows that it is



love which creates a sense of security among us. Surrender is the heart of all spiritual paths.

Maharshi Patanjali, the great exponent of yoga, recommended *Ishwarpranidhan* or devotional surrender to the Almighty as the way to union with the Absolute. Jesus uttered his sincere prayer, "Let thy will be done." Mystic poet Tagore wrote, "Let Thy intentions be fulfilled throughout my life." Our consciousness is intimately connected with breathing and so the practice of *sadhana* is usually breath-centric. It may be noted that our inhalation fills the system with fragmented ego and attachment with peripheral consciousness while exhalation draws us back to the centre of core consciousness. Practice of surrender as a matter of principle needs to be accelerated, implemented, and based on this breathing principle.

The Buddhist meditation practice of *anapan sati* or perpetual watchfulness of breathing keeps us continuously conscious of ourselves. Let us take a few deep abdominal breath and practise progressive relaxation of the whole body from the crown to the toe in slow succession, inducing a feeling of deep relaxation in each body part. When the entire body completely relaxes, be watchful of



our incoming and outgoing breath without any effort to control or regulate the natural flow of breath.

When appropriately established in this practice, utter “I” at the time of inhalation and “surrender” at the time of exhalation. Thus, we must continuously utter “I surrender” with devotion to the Almighty to remain constantly in a state of surrender, counter balancing the ego. This affirmation works excellently on the body-mind complex and operates at the sub-conscious level as well for entire assimilation of the *sadhana* (Kundu, 2010).

Surrendering the ego is letting go of our opinion good or bad, of who we are. The first reason we strive to surrender our ego, is that our ego, how we think of ourselves, is often misguided. Whether we inflate ourselves or put ourselves down, our ego is based on our beliefs, not hard cold facts. When we surrender the lies we tell ourselves, we can reconnect to the reality of who we are.

The second reason we strive to surrender our ego, is we release viewing the world through our perception of ourselves and begin to see the reality of the world. We stop seeing people as actors in our



play, and begin to see them fully and truly as they are. We stop interpreting events through the filter of our ego and begin to see the facts that surround us. We stop seeing the world as a reflection of our opinion and see it more clearly.

The third reason we strive to surrender our ego, is that it allows us to connect to the universal. Releasing our opinion of ourselves, opens us to see the truth of who we are in and of the world. We let go of the personal entity we have created and can begin to see ourselves as part of the whole collective universal spirit. When we can release our ego, when we can release the belief that we can create who we are, who others are and what the world is, we can surrender into the truth of life (Heisler, 2018).

Triguna Personality and Behaviour: Triguna is based on the Gita typology. Triguna comes under the personality domain along with practice domain and in other side personality is dynamic not static. Personality can be changed by practice. Triguna can be purified by practice e.g. in term of life style – Dietary habit (sentient food), way of living, mode of living, living with comic ideation etc. After these practice one can attain the radiant state of mind



that is reflected as sound personality. My aim is to look how *triguna* can purified which type of practices is required or practices conducted by devotees for the purification of *triguna*.

In words of Aurobindo (1980), “all men have in them in whatever degree the *rajasic* impulse of desire and activity and the *sattvic* boon of light and happiness, some balance, some adjustment of mind to itself and its surroundings and objects, and all have their share of *tamasic* incapacity and ignorance”. Individuals are born with certain personality patterns that gradually change as a result of interaction with the environment. Environmental factors can be broadly divided into physical, social and psychological.

Swami Sivananda says: “Satva brings non-attachment and infuses in the mind, discrimination and renunciation. It is the rajasic mind that causes the ideas ‘i’ and ‘mine’ and the difference of body, caste, creed, colour, order of life, and the like.” (p. 12)

An individual’s behaviour, both at the overt as well covert (mental processes) level is determined by the personality operating (manifestation of the three Gunas) at that point of time. Behaviour of



Tamsic people is mainly influenced by traditions while, highly *Rajasic* are aggressive, adventurous and risk taking, as a result of which they take initiative and interact with all kinds of persons for various purpose. On the other hand *Sattvic* have awareness of the effect of interactions with different persons in various situations and their social control is affected by tradition and current group norms. *Sattvic* tend to be democratic stable and cooperative and behave naturally. Highly *Tamsic* are highly dependent on the group. They crave for attention and approval by others.

Conclusion:

The intention of writing this article is to make aware of the above mentioned spiritual practices through which one can develop spiritual discipline and perfection. All spiritual practices lead to the same goal i.e. Divine Connection. Following any practice is your choice. We do not want to compel you to follow one particular way which can help you to transform your behaviour. Keep your mind and heart open to explore the *Anahata* or heart *Chakra*, *chakra* meditation, equanimity, liberation, generosity, *sadhana*, *satsang*, surrendering the ego, and *triguna* personality and behaviour.



Daily practice of spiritual practices is the means to fulfil a higher goal. They are means to an end and in evolving consciousness. Spiritual practices can help you in getting touch with your Self, and indicate what you can do to alleviate problems and attain tranquillity. For example, prayer protects you from committing sins. Be active in providing charity to the needy people.

In conclusion, we would like to point out that Spiritual health is the ground for flourishing of Human Nature.

Resources and References

- Artley, A. (2020, April). Coronavirus: How to Help and Give Back. Helpguide.
<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-living/coronavirus-how-to-help-give-back.htm>
- Bhagat, R. (2020, April 21). Generosity to the fore during the pandemic. The Hindu Business Line.
<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/columns/rasheeda-bhagat/generosity-to-the-fore-during-the-covid-pandemic/article31390383.ece/amp/>
- Heisler, M. (2018, December 9). Ego and Surrender. Its My Life.



<https://www.itsmylifeinc.com/2018/12/ego-and-surrender/>

- Hurst, K. Heart Chakra Healing For Beginners: How To Open Your Heart Chakra. The Law of Attraction. <https://www.thelawofattraction.com/heart-chakra-healing/>
- Jayaram, V. Hinduism on Suffering. Hinduwebsite.com https://www.hinduwebsite.com/hinduism/h_suffering.asp
- Kundu, M. N. (2010, August 12). Sadhana of Surrender. Hindustan Times. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india/sadhana-of-surrender/story-y2Aw0ACPvh6dqGiyWU57iK.html>
- O'Leary, W. (2020, April 9). The Serenity Prayer for Our Times of COVID-19. Catechist. <https://www.catechist.com/serenity-prayer-times-covid-19/>
- Poulin, M. J., Brown, S. L., Ubel, P. A., Smith, D. M., Jankovic, A., & Langa, K. M. (2010). Does a helping hand mean a heavy heart? Helping behavior and well-being among spouse caregivers. *Psychology of Aging*, 25(1), 108-117.
- RSSB. (2018, July). Benefits of Satsang. Radha Soami Satsang Beas (RSSB). <https://rssb.org/2018-07-08.html>
- Scott, E. (2020, January 29). Helping Others Can Increase Happiness and Reduce Stress. Very well



Mind. <https://www.verywellmind.com/stress-helping-others-can-increase-happiness-3144890>

- Sharma, A. (2016). World Heart Day: Heal the heart chakra. The Hindu. <https://www.thehindu.com/features/magazine/world-heart-day-heal-the-heart-chakra/article6452445.ece>
- Singal, V. (2020 February 10, Monday). Sambudhhi Yoga: Equanimity of Mind. The Pioneer. <https://www.dailypioneer.com/2020/state-editions/sambuddhi-yoga--equanimity-of-mind.html>
- Singh, H. (2020, May 1). Financial Express. <https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.financialexpress.com/opinion/covid-19-crisis-and-the-art-of-giving/1944918/lite/>
- Singh, H. (2018 November 26). Why Give? Religious Roots of Charity. Harvard Divinity School. <https://hds.harvard.edu/news/2013/12/13/why-give-religious-roots-charity#>
- What is Hridaya, the Spiritual Heart? Hridaya Yoga. <https://hridaya-yoga.com/hridaya-yoga-articles/what-is-hridaya-the-spiritual-heart/>
- Wikipedia. (2020). Anahata. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anahata>
- Yogapedia. (2020 April 22). Sadhana. Yogapedia. <https://www.yogapedia.com/definition/4994/sadhana>