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Kriya Yoga: basic principles

Practice for westerners

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Chapter 1: What Is Kriya Yoga? The Bottle in the Ocean

This booklet was written with a very simple purpose. It is not intended to be a technical treatise on Yoga. There are already many excellent technical texts available, often written with great precision and expertise. Instead, this booklet aims to be an introduction, a clear and accessible text that anyone can pick up to understand why meditation has practical value in everyday life. **It seeks to show why following a path such as Kriya Yoga can be beneficial even while living in the Western world, with a job, a family, and an ordinary life**, without any need to withdraw from society.

I wrote it as an ABC of Kriya Yoga, specifically for those approaching this path for the first time, so that they may gain a general understanding of its fundamental principles. To understand quadratic equations, you must first know how to add two plus two. The purpose of this book is precisely to explain that "two plus two." I am convinced that this ABC can also be useful for long-time practitioners. Sometimes a person who believes they fully understand advanced concepts discovers, upon revisiting the basics, that an essential foundation was missing. Not because of any lack of ability, but because truly solid foundations always reveal something new to discover or deepen.
This booklet therefore remains intentionally simple. It offers clear foundations upon which each person may build their own daily practice.

The Meaning of the Words

Let us begin with the words themselves, for the terms already point us in a very specific direction.

Yoga comes from the Sanskrit root *yuj*, meaning "to yoke," "to unite," or "to join together." It is like taking two separate threads and weaving them into a single, stronger thread, or reconnecting two parts that already belonged to each other. **Yoga does not primarily refer to a physical technique, but to the rediscovery of a union that has always existed, even if it was previously unseen**.

Kriya comes from the Sanskrit root *kri*, meaning "to do," "to act," or "to perform." Therefore, Kriya Yoga literally means *an action that produces union*. It is a concrete, practical, and verifiable action that helps one rediscover what only appears to be separate, through a process built upon daily actions.

The Body: A Tool, Not the Goal

Today, when people hear the word *Yoga*, many immediately think of physical practice: movement, postures, and flexibility. That aspect exists and has its value. The purpose of physical Yoga, or Hatha Yoga, is to prepare the mind. A healthier and more stable body helps the mind remain calmer and less restless. For this reason, it should be practiced without fanaticism or competitiveness. Postures are a means, not a measure of a person's worth, nor a contest in which the most flexible individual wins.

Yogananda's View

During his mission in the West, Paramahansa Yogananda reflected deeply on how to make Kriya Yoga accessible to the Western mind. To facilitate understanding, he skillfully integrated Yogic teachings with the language of Christianity, making the message more familiar to Western audiences. He chose not to publicly teach the more physical aspects of Yoga, perhaps recognizing that others would do so in later generations, and instead focused on the heart of meditative practice.

Roy Eugene Davis's View

Roy Eugene Davis also recognized the value of physical Yoga but likewise chose not to emphasize it, dedicating himself entirely to the meditative core of Kriya Yoga.
In summary, physical practice can support the path and prepare the body to sit comfortably for longer periods, but within our tradition it is not considered strictly necessary.

The Example of the Bottle in the Ocean

To understand where we want to arrive, let us begin with a very simple image. Imagine going to the ocean with an empty bottle. You fill it with seawater, seal it tightly with a cork, and let it sink beneath the surface. Because of the weight of the glass and the water it contains, it descends to the bottom, filled with the very same water as the ocean and completely surrounded by it.

The water inside the bottle is identical to the water outside: the same nature, the same origin, the same composition. Yet they do not mix. They remain separate, not because they are different, but because a subtle boundary, a cork, keeps them apart.

We live in exactly the same condition. Within us there is already the same Consciousness that exists everywhere. We do not need to create it, earn it, or become something else. **We simply need to remove what prevents contact and creates the appearance of separation**. We are both Consciousness in our deepest essence and manifestation, the form through which that Consciousness experiences, acts, learns, and expresses itself.

Some people believe that attaining this awareness requires "breaking the bottle," destroying their life, their personality, or changing everything around them. Our path does not work that way. **We do not break the bottle; we simply unscrew the cork**. We work on the boundary, not on the form. The goal is not self-destruction but openness. When we unscrew the cork, individual awareness is restored within Universal Consciousness, recognizing that the water inside and the water outside the bottle have always been the same. We were simply unaware of it.

Living in the World Without Being of It

Paramahansa Yogananda spoke of *living in the world without being part of it*, while Roy Eugene Davis wrote that we should *wear the world as one wears a tattered garment*.

These images do not imply rejection or indifference. A Kriya Yogi lives normally in the world, works, loves, cares for family members, and pays bills. Living in the world without being of it means doing all these things without allowing them to define who you are, without believing that you are merely the role you happen to play. Wearing the world like a tattered garment means using it without attachment. The garment is useful and protective, but it is not you. If it tears, you do not tear with it.

Why is it important to limit attachments? Because **every attachment is another turn that tightens the bottle's cork**. Every time we believe we are only what we possess or what others think of us, the bottle closes. Every attachment released creates more space. This process must unfold gradually through daily practice rather than force, because attachments naturally loosen as clarity increases regarding what we truly are.

How to Unscrew the Cork: The Four Practices

Kriya Yoga becomes effective for a Western practitioner when four essential elements are integrated:

Daily Meditation

This is the direct action that loosens the cork. Kriya Yoga is an individual practice that requires setting aside a period of silence every day at home. It is a path of *inner recollection*, which opens, rather than *isolation*, which closes.

Study of Scripture and Useful Texts

A few carefully chosen pages capable of bringing clarity and reminding you of your direction when life distracts you are worth more than entire volumes read carelessly.

A Lifestyle Compatible with Spiritual Growth

Not an ideal life, but a life that, despite all the responsibilities typical of Western society, does not constantly work against your inner evolution. Attending seminars and spending time with others on the same path can strengthen your faith, but the foundation remains your daily practice at home.

Spiritual Growth as the Central Motivation

Not the only motivation in life, but the unchanging axis around which everything else naturally revolves.

What a Kriya Truly Is

In this context, a Kriya is any action performed with the intention of spiritual growth. It is not the nature of the action itself that makes it a Kriya, but the intention behind it.

- Meditation is a Kriya.
- Reading pages that keep the mind centered is a Kriya.
- Choosing whether or not to say a certain word is a Kriya.

- Taking a moment to return to the breath before reacting inappropriately during difficult situations is a Kriya.

The sincere daily repetition of such actions gradually loosens the cork, until the water inside and the water outside recognize themselves as a single Reality.

Two Final Clarifications

To conclude this first chapter, it is useful to remember two important points.

Kriya Yoga Is a Practice

Kriya Yoga is a practice, not an institutionalized religion. You may follow it while remaining faithful to your own religious tradition, without changing labels or affiliations.

Kriya Yoga Is Not a Path of Proselytism

It is not intended to convince anyone. Its purpose is simply to offer a practical tool for personal inner work.

Chapter 2: Why You Sometimes Struggle to Practice

Karma, the Mind, and Everyday Obstacles

If in the first chapter we looked at the path in a general way, in this chapter we need to understand what sometimes prevents you from walking it. Why do many people begin with enthusiasm and then give up after a

period of time? Not because they are lazy or weak, but because there is a specific mechanism at work that must be understood.

What We Mean by Karma

When people in the West hear the word *karma*, it is almost always understood as a kind of divine punishment, similar to the law of retaliation: you did something wrong in a past life and now you must pay for it. This idea is not only **childish**, but also completely **useless** for practical spiritual growth.

On our path, karma is understood in a much simpler and more practical way: action and the consequence of action. Every repeated action, thought, and emotion leaves an imprint. These imprints accumulate and, over time, become habits, tendencies, and automatic behaviors. This is what blocks you.

Tradition divides these impressions into three main categories:

Sanchita Karma (The Storehouse)

This is the sum total of all impressions accumulated over time, your complete karmic archive. Not all of it manifests in this lifetime; it would be impossible to manage if it did.

Prarabdha Karma (The Present Assignment)

This is the portion of that archive that has become active in your current life. It includes the body you have, the family into which you were born, your psychological tendencies, and the recurring situations you encounter. It is the material you are called to work with right now.

Kriyamana or Agami Karma (New Karma)

This is the karma you are creating now, at this very moment, through the choices you make today. Every time you meditate instead of postponing it, or consciously choose how to respond to events and situations, you create a future oriented toward freedom.

Once you understand this, you begin to see why maintaining a steady practice can sometimes be difficult. It is not simply a lack of willpower. It is the inertia of your *Prarabdha*, which expresses itself through mental habits that encourage you to postpone, give up, or direct your attention elsewhere.

Daily practice exists precisely to create a new *Kriyamana* strong enough to gradually weaken the old patterns. You do not need to erase the past; you simply need to stop feeding it automatically. The key word is **awareness**.

The Relationship Between the Planets and Karma

Here we enter a delicate subject that should be approached without superstition or excessive technical detail.

The guru of Paramahansa Yogananda, Sri Yukteswar, was a great scholar of Vedic astrology (*Jyotish*), which is why this knowledge has remained part of our lineage, even if only in a simplified form.

How does it work?

Your *Prarabdha Karma* does not unfold all at once. Different portions become active at different times.

Planetary movements function like the hands of a clock. They do not create your karma, which already belongs to you; rather, they indicate when certain portions of your karmic archive are likely to become active.

For example, if a period associated with Saturn becomes prominent, a phase traditionally linked with discipline, limitation, and effort, it is natural to experience greater heaviness in daily life. This is not punishment. It is simply a part of your *Prarabdha* asking to be lived through with patience and perseverance.

Understanding this map helps you avoid unnecessary drama. Instead of feeling defeated, you recognize that you are passing through a season that requires steadiness.

An Important Recommendation

We generally recommend having a Vedic astrological chart prepared at least once or twice in your lifetime by a serious and balanced astrologer not to predict the future or create fear, but to understand:

- Where life is likely to challenge you most.
- Where you are naturally supported.
- How to practice with greater intelligence and self-knowledge.

Astrological remedies, whether they involve specific meditations, attention to particular areas of life, gemstones, or mantras, do not erase karma. Rather, they can soften its effects, like a brace supporting an injured knee while you continue walking.

Do the Planets Matter or Not?

It is important to avoid two opposite extremes.

- First Extreme

"The planets do not matter at all."

According to the traditional view, this is not true. Influences do exist.

- Second Extreme

"I am this way because of a certain planet, and there is nothing I can do about it."

This is equally false.

The planets may influence you, but they do not make your decisions for you.

Paramahansa Yogananda once said:

"Give me the worst astrological chart imaginable, and I will still achieve my objectives."

While Yogananda possessed extraordinary determination, the principle applies to everyone: Being influenced does not mean being defeated.

Imagine riding a bicycle against a strong headwind. The ride becomes harder, but the destination and the pedaling still depend on you.

There is a fundamental law:

The more spiritually aware you become, the less subject you are to planetary influences.

Daily practice creates an inner center of gravity that reduces the hold of external forces.

Astrology is therefore not meant to provide excuses or to dominate your life. Its purpose is self-knowledge. If you know where your challenges are likely to arise, then you also know where you must continue to pedal with determination.

Conclusion

Why do you sometimes fail to practice consistently?

Because your *Prarabdha* contains powerful patterns and momentum from the past. And because, during certain phases highlighted by planetary cycles, those tendencies can make themselves felt with greater intensity.

The solution is not to fight the planets, nor to attempt to erase the past. The solution is to create, each day, through simple and regular actions, a new karma moving in the opposite direction.

That is meditation.

That is practice.

It is the one lever you can begin using tomorrow morning, regardless of whatever planetary influences may be present in your life.

Chapter 3: How to Really Meditate - The Simple Practice You Can Start Today

Why Meditation Works

Meditation works for a very simple reason: it helps detach the mind from its constant movements, called *vritti* in Sanskrit (fluctuations, waves). These are all the movements that arise within individualized consciousness: thoughts, images, memories, emotions, judgments, and expectations. They make up the uninterrupted flow of the mind.

In the *Yoga Sutras*, Patanjali explains this clearly in the very second sutra:

Yoga chitta vritti nirodha

(Yoga, or union, is attained when the movements, vritti, within individualized consciousness, chitta, are pacified and rendered dormant, nirodha.)

As long as these movements remain active, individualized consciousness identifies with them and believes itself to be separate from the Whole. When the *vritti* become quiet, agitation ceases and consciousness recognizes its identity with Universal Consciousness. Returning to the example of the water in the bottle from the previous chapter: as long as the mind is stirred by thoughts, it is like agitated water that can see only its own confusion. When it becomes still, it realizes that it is one with the water outside the bottle, and unscrewing the cap becomes a natural process.

What You Actually Do When You Meditate

When meditating, you do not try to forcefully stop thoughts. Instead, you learn to observe them and detach from them by refusing to give them your attention. You sit, close your eyes, and watch whatever arises without identifying with it. This space between the observer and the movements of the mind is the beginning of freedom.

What happens over time:

When you can maintain this conscious observation, even for a few minutes each day, the soul's superconscious forces gradually begin to permeate and purify the mental plane. This is not something external arriving from outside. It is your true nature making itself known again, bringing increasing clarity and stability.

Techniques are not the goal:

Meditation techniques (with the exception of *Kriya Pranayama* and the *Om Technique*, which have specific purposes and are taught in person) serve only to bring the mind into a meditative state. As Roy Eugene Davis often said, a technique is a tool. Once it has served its purpose, it can be set aside. The goal of practice is meditation itself, not the endless performance of techniques.

What Is Devotion Really?

Before moving on to the daily practice, it is important to clarify a term that is often misunderstood. When we hear the word *devotion*, we usually think of something highly emotional: a great love for God, a feeling of deep inspiration, perhaps even tears.

In a sense, all of that may occur, but there is a much more practical and liberating truth to understand: **You cannot truly love what you do not yet know**.

Until direct spiritual realization occurs, the mind functions through concepts. Even our idea of God is a mental

concept that evolves over the years through experience and practice. For this reason, Roy Eugene Davis consistently reminded students that devotion is synonymous with dedication.

- You are devoted to something when you are dedicated to doing it.

- In our path, devotion means returning to the practice every day: sitting to meditate even when you do not feel like it, maintaining your commitment and your observation.

This does not mean that the heart never opens. At a certain point, a profound opening and a deep feeling at the center of the chest may arise spontaneously. However, that feeling is an effect of dedication, not devotion itself.

Confusing devotion with emotion makes a person dependent on mood. If inspiration is present, one practices; if it is absent, one does not. This prevents the practice from becoming stable.

Remain faithful to dedication. One day, it will allow you to know directly what you could previously only imagine.

A Simple Practice for Every Day

Here are the fundamental steps for structuring your daily meditation session:

How to Sit

Sit comfortably with your spine upright. It is not necessary to sit on the floor or cross-legged if doing so causes discomfort**. If the body suffers, your attention will be absorbed by the discomfort**. Yogananda recommended using a comfortable chair while keeping the spine straight but relaxed, ideally without leaning against the backrest.

Preparation

Sit quietly and, if it feels natural to you, briefly visualize in your spiritual eye the faces of the masters in our tradition. Not in order to reach them physically, but to establish a quiet attunement with their consciousness and energy.

Breathing

Take a deep inhalation through the nose while counting to five. Hold your breath for five seconds while gently tensing the muscles. Then exhale through the mouth using a double exhalation (one shorter breath followed by a longer one), releasing all tension. Repeat this process three or four times while keeping your attention focused on the spiritual eye.

The Technique (*Hong So* or *So Ham*, at least 5-10 minutes)

Observe your natural breath

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- With each inhalation, mentally repeat *Hong* (or *So*).
- With each exhalation, mentally repeat *So* (or *Ham*).

These formulas mean approximately *"I am Spirit"* or*"I am pure consciousness"*, affirming our identity with the Absolute.

Continue for several minutes. Whenever the mind wanders, gently bring it back to the technique.

Pure Meditation (10-15 minutes)

- Remain in silence, focusing gently at the point between the eyebrows.
- Visualize a warm, loving, healing light originating from the heart and filling the entire body.
- Allow this light to expand beyond the body into the room, the building, the city, the Earth, and finally the entire cosmos.
- Realize that there is no separation. You are light within Light, infinite consciousness within Infinite Consciousness.
- This is an ideal time to receive insight, guidance, or inner help.
- Remain in this state of unity for as long as possible.

When you feel ready, conclude with a brief prayer of gratitude to the masters before returning to your daily activities.

The Simplicity of the Path

Sometimes people ask: *"Is meditation really this simple?"*

Yes, it is.

Verbal prayer has value, but it keeps the mind active. Nothing is more effective than silent meditation for detaching the mind from thoughts and allowing your true nature to emerge spontaneously.

In summary, the spiritual nature of every being is not some extraordinary power or mysterious energy. It is pure consciousness: calm, luminous, and loving. It is what remains when thoughts become still.

Spiritual growth is normally gradual. Although specific techniques such as *Kriya Pranayama* may accelerate the process, the real turning point lies in receptivity to grace and in the consistency of daily practice.

Chapter 4: The Philosophy That Sustains You

Monism, Masters, and Tradition

The Vision That Keeps You Standing When Motivation Declines

When motivation declines, what sustains you is not a technique but a vision. A clear philosophy keeps you standing because it reminds you who you are and where you are going, even on days when practice seems to bear

no fruit. This chapter is intended to strengthen precisely those foundations.

Monism and Dualism

There are two principal ways of viewing spiritual reality:

Dualism maintains that God exists on one side and creation on the other; the individual soul on one side and the Universal Soul on the other. There is separation, and the relationship is between two distinct entities. You pray to a God who is "other" than yourself. This model is very useful for devotion and for opening the heart, but it has an inherent limitation: **as long as you believe yourself to be separate from the Whole, you remain separate from the Whole**.

Monism maintains that there is only One Reality, a single infinite, omnipresent Conscious Intelligence that is all that exists. We are not separate from this Intelligence but are individualized expressions of it, like waves on the same ocean. A wave is not separate from the ocean; it is the ocean itself in a temporary form.

We follow a monistic vision. This is not merely a philosophical belief but a description of direct experience. When the mind becomes still and the vritti are brought to rest, individualized consciousness does not encounter an "other" Self. It recognizes itself as part of the One Consciousness.

This is why we say that we are infinite consciousness within Infinite Consciousness: not two things, but One Reality recognizing itself.

Consciousness and the Soul

To understand this vision more clearly, it is important to clarify two words that we will use frequently: Consciousness and soul.

When we use the word Consciousness with a capital C, we do not simply mean awareness of something, such as being aware of a thought, an emotion, or what is happening around us. By Consciousness we mean the infinite, omnipresent, ever-existing Intelligence that is the fundamental reality of the universe and of all material and immaterial existence. It is that from which everything proceeds, that within which everything exists, and that which sustains all forms of life, energy, and matter.

By soul we mean an individualized unit of Consciousness. It is not something separate from Infinite Consciousness but rather one of its individual expressions.

A useful example is the flame of a gas burner. The flame is one, yet it appears through many small openings from which many individual flames emerge. The single flame may represent Infinite Consciousness; the individual flames represent souls, or individualized expressions of that same Consciousness. Each flame appears distinct, yet the nature of fire is identical in all of them. Likewise, every soul possesses its own individuality, yet its essence

is identical to the Universal Consciousness from which it arises.

We can use another example as well: Consciousness is like the ocean and the soul is like a wave. The wave has a form and an apparent individuality, yet it is never truly separate from the ocean.

In simple terms, Consciousness is the One Reality.

The soul is that same Reality manifesting as an individual while always retaining its divine essence.

These definitions help us understand monism more deeply: there is one Infinite Consciousness expressing itself through countless souls without ever truly dividing itself. Spiritual practice is therefore not intended to create a union that does not already exist. Rather, it helps us consciously recognize a unity that has always been present.

Yogananda's Adaptation in America

Paramahansa Yogananda arrived in the United States more than a century ago and understood that, in order to reach the hearts of Western people, he needed to adapt part of his presentation to familiar Christian concepts: the personal God, the relationship between Father and child, and divine love.

However, as Roy Eugene Davis explained to us, when Yogananda spoke privately with his closest disciples, he

used deeply Vedantic concepts, speaking of Consciousness, the Self, and absolute unity. This flexibility demonstrated his remarkable intelligence: he knew how to speak to everyone without ever compromising the deepest truth.

Why Tradition Matters

Tradition is not a cage but a current of consciousness. The masters who came before us have already walked the path, clarified its obstacles, and made the teachings simpler and more accessible.

To enter a tradition is to attune yourself to that current without having to begin from zero each time.

We visualize the masters not out of idol worship, but out of attunement. Their realization remains available within the Infinite, and attuning yourself to it means becoming receptive to that frequency.

A Brief Introduction to Samkhya Philosophy

To explain how unity becomes multiplicity, the Indian tradition developed a map known as Samkhya philosophy. Samkhya teaches that from the One Consciousness, at the dawn of creation, a cosmic emanation emerged through an internal movement: first cosmic intelligence, then cosmic individuality, cosmic mind, the subtle elements, and finally the gross elements that form the material world.

It is like light progressively condensing until it becomes matter.

Meditation follows exactly the reverse process: starting from the gross world and moving back toward pure Consciousness.

In light of what we have seen so far, we can understand the process in another way: the One Consciousness progressively manifests as the universe and as individualized souls, while always remaining undivided in essence. What appears as multiplicity is simply a diversity of expressions of the same Reality.

You do not need to understand all of this intellectually right now. What matters is remembering that everything comes from the same Source. As emphasized by Roy Eugene Davis in his book *Seven Lessons in Conscious Living*, and by Yogananda himself, the study of Samkhya is an invaluable tool for understanding our true nature.

The Masters of our Tradition

Detailed information about the masters can be found in *Autobiography of a Yogi* by Paramahansa Yogananda. Here we recall only their essential characteristics to maintain our attunement with the lineage:

Mahavatar Babaji: A master of infinite realization, beyond ordinary understanding. In India, his presence is often represented on altars by the sacred symbol OM. He embodies the eternal continuity of the tradition.

Lahiri Mahasaya: Babaji's disciple, who lived as a householder and worked as an accountant, demonstrating that the highest realization is possible even while living a normal life in the world. He reintroduced Kriya Yoga in the modern age.

Swami Sri Yukteswar: Disciple of Lahiri Mahasaya and teacher of Yogananda. A man of immense wisdom who united Vedantic insight with Western thought. Yogananda regarded him as the embodiment of wisdom.

Paramahansa Yogananda: The one who brought Kriya Yoga to the West, demonstrating through his life that spirituality and practicality can coexist harmoniously.

Roy Eugene Davis: A direct disciple of Yogananda and my guru-teacher. He dedicated his entire life to the ministry of Kriya Yoga, teaching a path of balanced growth, conscious living, and daily meditation.

How to View the Masters

The masters should not be regarded as deities to worship or omnipresent supervisors. Rather, they should be seen as examples to emulate and as infinite consciousnesses with whom we cultivate an inner attunement, one that can offer real support to our spiritual growth.

Chapter 5: The Art of Living

Health, Energy, and How Not to Drain Yourself Every Day

The Foundation of the Bhagavad Gita

There is an ancient wisdom that deserves to be written above the doorway of every home. We find it in the *Bhagavad Gita* (Chapter 6, *Dhyana Yoga*, the Yoga of Meditation), where Roy Eugene Davis masterfully translated these two essential verses:

Chapter 6, Verse 16

"Yoga is not for one who eats too much, nor for one who practices excessive fasting. Nor is it for one who sleeps excessively or fails to obtain adequate rest."

Chapter 6, Verse 17

"For the devotee whose diet and recreation are moderate, whose actions are disciplined, and whose habits of sleeping and waking are regulated, the practice of Yoga removes all suffering."

This is the central message of the chapter:

Illumination and inner stability do not belong to those who exhaust themselves through excess or lose themselves in extremes.

The Body and the Continuity of Energy

Meditation does not occur in a vacuum. It takes place within a body, inside a nervous system, and in the midst of a day lived minute by minute. If you spend all your energy during the day, there will be nothing left to offer your practice in the evening.

Conversely, if you learn to preserve a measure of awareness and vitality, meditation will find fertile ground in which to flourish.

To understand what this principle looks like in daily life, we need only consider the example of Roy Eugene Davis. He was a masterpiece of balance: he worked intensely but without excess, ate appropriately, slept sufficiently, and maintained a regular routine. He traveled extensively but knew how to stop before reaching exhaustion. He was neither an ascetic who punished himself nor a man lost in worldly distractions. He was simply consistent.

For a Westerner, consistency is one of the highest forms of spiritual intelligence.

Of course, we know this is not easy for everyone. Some must manage a family, children, demanding work schedules, or a hectic lifestyle. We are not speaking about the idealized life of a monk in a Himalayan cave, but about finding your own center and personal balance within the limits of your circumstances.

Lifestyle Always Wins Over Technique

Think about it. It makes little sense to spend half an hour in the morning cultivating inner peace and then spend the rest of the day doing exactly the opposite.

Staying up late in front of screens, flooding yourself with digital stimulation, eating excessively heavy foods, and engaging in pointless arguments while expecting meditation to "work" is a contradiction.

These are two completely opposite directions. Practice creates inner gatheredness, while a scattered lifestyle destroys that gatheredness almost immediately afterward. **In the long run, lifestyle always wins over technique**. If your entire day is a continuous stream of agitation, meditation will become increasingly difficult.

The Support of Ayurveda in Rebalancing Energy

A valuable aid in recalibrating your lifestyle and understanding the true needs of the body comes from Ayurveda, the ancient science of Indian medicine.

No one is asking you to become a therapist or an expert, but acquiring some basic knowledge, or working with a qualified and trustworthy professional, can make an enormous difference.

Ayurveda teaches that we are not all the same. According to our constitutional psycho-physical nature, certain activities, schedules, and foods may either support or disturb our balance. What feels light and supportive for one person may feel heavy for another. What energizes one

individual may create anxiety and agitation in someone else.

These are not moral rules or rigid dogmas. They are simply common sense applied to human biology.

Paying attention to nature's circadian rhythms, eating when digestive fire is strongest, resting during the night, and moderating sensory stimulation are not ascetic impositions. They are acts of deep respect toward the instrument that allows you to practice.

Ultimately, caring for your health, your energy, and the regularity of your daily routine does not mean becoming rigid or obsessed with rules. It means creating the ideal conditions in which the mind can naturally become calm.

When the body is healthy and energy is not being wasted, meditation ceases to be a daily struggle and becomes what it has always been: a natural return home.

Chapter 6: Initiation

Why Kriya Cannot Be Learned from a Book and How to Prepare to Receive It

This book brings you to the door. Initiation helps you walk through it.

Let us begin with a simple and honest consideration: there is no point in being initiated into something that you do not intend to practice. For this reason, we always tell the same

thing to the people who follow our teachings. The preparation period, during which you meditate regularly every day, allows you to understand whether this path is truly right for you. Once several months of consistent practice have passed and you have established a minimum level of discipline, it becomes meaningful to request initiation, if you feel this is your path.

Initiation is not a mysterious or elaborate ritual. It is a simple and informal ceremony through which the practitioner enters the tradition with both feet firmly planted, choosing to follow the path in a continuous and committed way. It is an adult decision: the conscious affirmation of your desire to make a sincere effort.

Why Kriya Is Not Written Down

We now arrive at the central point: Kriya Yoga is not something that can be learned through a book. It is a strictly initiatory tradition.

Today, in the age of the internet, it is easy to find texts that piece together the techniques handed down by Lahiri Mahasaya by collecting notes, diaries of former disciples, and various fragments of information. The fundamental problem is that those techniques were never intended for a general audience.

Lahiri Mahasaya explained the practices directly to his disciples, adapting them to each individual. One person might receive a specific exercise for six months, while

another would be given something entirely different, depending on personality, constitution, level of preparation, and family circumstances. It was a living teaching, tailored to the individual.

To extract a technique from that living context and publish it for everyone is like taking a personal medical prescription and distributing it indiscriminately.

Paramahansa Yogananda performed a different but equally immense work by creating structured lessons suitable for reaching thousands of people in the West.

Even then, while providing written material, he consistently encouraged students to attend their first initiation in person, either with authorized teachers, monks, or himself whenever possible.

This demonstrates that written lessons prepare you, but initiation transmits the transformative power of the practice itself.

Our tradition functions in the same way. These teachings are only transmitted personally through a ceremony, not because of elitism, but in order to protect both their integrity and their transformative effectiveness.

What Kriya Pranayama Does

The heart of our practice is Kriya Pranayama, whose most precise scriptural reference can be found in the *Kshurika Upanishad*.

On a gross level, the mechanism is simple. The specific breathing method of Kriya increases the amount of oxygen available in the bloodstream, allowing the brain and nervous system to function more efficiently and making the mind clearer, steadier, and more focused.

On a subtler level, however, something extraordinary occurs. Through conscious control of both breath and attention within the spinal axis, a process of magnetization is created along the cerebrospinal channel. This current can accelerate spiritual evolution by burning karmic seeds before they have the opportunity to manifest in external life.

The *Kshurika Upanishad* describes this fact through a beautiful image:

"Just as oil assumes the fragrance of the jasmine flower when brought into contact with it, so this Nadi (the Sushumna) takes on the scent of the good and bad actions performed by a person. Therefore, you should meditate upon this Nadi."

The Sushumna retains the imprint of every action and every karmic seed. Kriya Pranayama works precisely at this level. The magnetization generated along the spine acts like a fire that dissolves those impressions at their root, before they can sprout as compulsive thoughts, emotional reactions, or external events.

This is why Kriya is not merely a breathing exercise. It is a genuine instrument of liberation.

Why Personal Effort Is Necessary

A teaching of such depth cannot be assimilated without effort. If it were only information, reading a book would be enough. Kriya, however, is a process of transformation, and every genuine transformation requires your active participation. It requires movement. It requires attending seminars in person. It requires investing time, presence, and consistency, demonstrating first to yourself, before anyone else, the authenticity of your commitment.

This effort is not a punishment. It is an integral part of the practice itself.

The act of organizing your schedule, taking a train, or dedicating a weekend to your spiritual growth creates the inner container capable of receiving and preserving the Kriya teachings. If everything arrived without effort, you would most likely place little value on it and forget it within a week.

Tradition requires that initiation be conferred by an authorized individual who has personally practiced this path for many years. **One cannot transmit the power of something that one does not personally live**.

Lahiri Mahasaya recounted that after his initiation, Babaji instructed him regarding the ancient laws governing the transmission of yogic knowledge from Guru to disciple.

The blessing of the lineage is required and is transmitted explicitly from teacher to student, never through self-proclamation or dreams.

As Yogananda often stated when quoting an Indian proverb, when someone claims to teach spiritual matters, it is reasonable to ask who their guru was and whether they were trained by a qualified teacher. Very few people learn these things entirely on their own, even if they believe otherwise.

Our teacher, Roy Eugene Davis, practiced and taught for nearly seventy years, ensuring the continuity of an unbroken line.

If one day this booklet is still circulating long after we are gone and you happen to read it carefully, remember that there will always be competent and authorized teachers to whom you can turn.

The Kriya lineage does not depend upon one individual. It is greater than any of us.

Conclusion

If your search is sincere, you will find the right people at the right time because sincerity itself is a magnet. For now, use this booklet for what it is intended to be: **a preparation**. Meditate every day. Live a balanced life. Pray. Clarify your intention. **When you are ready, the door will open naturally**.

Chapter 7: After Initiation

How to Keep the Practice Alive Without Letting It Fade

Initiation is the lighting of the flame. Keeping that flame burning is the real work. This chapter explains how to preserve it over time.

The First Two Months After Initiation

The first thing to establish is regularity, because without it no real progress can occur.

The first two months are decisive. During this period, the nervous system adapts to the new frequency of Kriya, and the subtle body learns the movement of *prana*. Interrupting your practice during this phase sends a message to yourself that the practice is optional.

For the first two months, and ideally forever, sit every day at the same time and in the same place whenever possible.

The duration matters less than the continuity.

The goal is not a perfect practice but the creation of a habit that will support you during periods of low motivation.

Yogananda described this attitude through a perfect image:

"Let your devotion to God be like a log fire that burns steadily for a long time, rather than like a straw fire that flares up dramatically for a moment and then immediately goes out."

Your practice should be like a log, not like straw.

Roy Eugene Davis' Three Golden Rules

Roy Eugene Davis summarized the method through three pillars:

Regularity

Daily practice is infinitely more valuable than a long session performed only once a week. Regularity stabilizes the mind effectively.

Simplicity

Practice the technique exactly as it was taught to you without adding complications or variations discovered on the internet. Kriya works because it is simple. If additional practices were necessary, the masters would have taught them.

Patience

Nothing truly profound happens overnight. Practice because it is the right thing to do, not because you expect immediate results.

Why One Path Is Enough

One of the greatest mistakes a practitioner can make is attempting to follow too many different spiritual disciplines simultaneously.

Sometimes this tendency can be understood through subtle psychological or astrological influences, as explained by *Jyotisha* (Vedic astrology). A strong concentration of planets (*Graha*) within the houses of experience (*Bhava*), particularly within the *Dharma Bhava* (the house of purpose and the Guru), can create an intense thirst for truth that, without stable guidance, becomes restlessness and dispersion.

There may be many reasons for this behavior. Astrology is only one possible explanation. Excessive curiosity, emotional instability, or a constant need for novelty caused by inner restlessness may also be responsible.

Remember this axiom:

"The mind seeks novelty; the soul seeks depth."

To find water, **you must dig one well one hundred meters deep, not one hundred wells one meter deep**.

Changing paths whenever difficulties arise merely serves to avoid the lessons that life is presenting to you. Learn to distinguish open-mindedness from dispersion and remain steady whenever the temptation to change direction appears.

Common Post-Initiation Mistakes and Complete Dedication

Paramahansa Yogananda often said:

"God is a very jealous lover."

By this he was not describing a sensitive personal God but a practical law: if you do not dedicate yourself wholeheartedly to practice, the possibilities for genuine spiritual progress remain limited.

Among the most common mistakes are:

- **Chasing extraordinary experiences**. Seeking lights, visions, and unusual phenomena turns practice into entertainment for the ego.

- **Always wanting to add something new**. Adding techniques from outside the Kriya tradition in an attempt to improve it usually ends up weakening it.

- **Talking too much about your practice**. Newly awakened spiritual energy requires silence and protection.

- **Practicing only when you feel like it**. Allowing your mood to determine whether you meditate or not prevents the establishment of stability.

Rose Petals and an Anchor During Difficult Times

During initiation, Yogananda would often give dried rose petals as a symbol of connection with the lineage of Masters. In times when everything seems difficult, holding those petals and sitting down to practice can become a meaningful support.

Yogananda said:

"The purpose of the guru is not to weaken your will, but to teach you how to develop your inner power until you remain unshakable even when worlds collapse around you."

Chapter 8: The Voice of the Masters and the Help of Grace

The energy of the Masters exists within the Infinite, preserved in their teachings and in their spiritual vibration. They are not beings who observe us from above in order to judge our every action. That is a childish view which, over time, produces anxiety rather than liberation.

The Masters are human expressions of Divine Grace.

There is, however, a law of attunement. When Yogananda said,*"To those who feel close to me, I will be close,"* he meant that by elevating one's consciousness and purifying one's heart, one enters his frequency of awareness. The closeness is not that he comes down to monitor you, but that you rise until you can perceive his presence and energy.

Seventy-Five Percent Is Grace

Yogananda explained that, of the one hundred parts required for Self-realization, twenty-five percent consists of our personal effort, which must be sincere and complete, while the remaining seventy-five percent is the combined grace of the Guru and God.

Without our effort, the door remains closed; without grace (Anugraha), however, we cannot cross the threshold.

The Sanskrit word *Anugraha* derives from the root *grah* ("to grasp," "to receive," "to favor"), preceded by the prefix *anu*, which indicates something that follows, accompanies, or supports. In the *Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dictionary*, the term is translated as favor, benevolence, mercy, grace, and blessing.

From the perspective of the deeper spiritual texts, however, grace is not simply an external intervention granted by a deity separate from human beings. The mind tends to imagine grace as something that arrives from outside. God decides whether to grant it or not, the Master distributes it as a reward, and the disciple passively receives it.

This view might have value at the devotional level, but it does not exhaust the deeper meaning of spiritual experience.

The classical scriptures teach that the One Reality is not separate from the human being. The Upanishads

repeatedly declare that Atman, the individual Self in its essential nature, is identical to Brahman, Absolute Consciousness. If this unity is real, then grace cannot be something completely foreign to our deepest nature.

In this sense, grace can be understood as a manifestation of Consciousness itself.

It is not a force arriving from afar to artificially alter our destiny, but the gradual revelation of a truth that has always been present. Grace works by removing ignorance, attachments, and mistaken identifications, allowing the light of the Self to emerge.

When you meditate, serve, and discipline your life, you do not "produce" realization through the ego. Rather, you create the conditions through which grace can operate without obstruction.

Effort does not generate Truth; it removes what prevents its perception. **Grace is therefore the spontaneous movement of Consciousness toward the recognition of itself**.

For this reason, an authentic Guru is not regarded as the personal source of grace, but as its transparent vehicle.

Having become united with Divine Consciousness, the Guru awakens that same latent reality within the disciple. What is transmitted is not a foreign power, but a reminder of what the disciple already is at the deepest level.

In light of this understanding, the following verse from the *Bhagavad Gita* (10:10) acquires an even deeper meaning:

"To those who are steadfast and who worship Me with love, I bestow the Yoga of discrimination through which they come to Me."

The discrimination granted through grace does not add something that was missing. It dissolves whatever obscured vision.

Grace illuminates, clarifies, and accelerates the journey, but it does not replace inner work. It is simultaneously a divine gift and the awakening of our essential nature, because in spiritual realization the seeker, the Guru, grace, and God gradually cease to appear as separate realities.

Chapter 9: Doing and Allowing

On the spiritual path, one must learn the subtle art of doing and allowing.

Many aspirants oscillate between two extremes. On one side is spiritual activism, which turns practice into a continuous effort to achieve results. On the other side is passivity, which becomes an excuse for avoiding genuine commitment.

The balanced path requires steady effort and calm trust in the process.

Doing (The 25%)

Doing is our active contribution.

It means:

- Meditating regularly.
- Living ethically

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- Studying.
- Maintaining physical health.
- Fulfilling your responsibilities in the world without excessive anxiety or tension.
- Developing self-discipline.
- Observing your habits.
- Returning your mind each day to what is essential.

Allowing (The 75%)

Allowing does not mean doing nothing.

It means ceasing to obstruct the process through impatience, through the constant need to evaluate results, or through the expectation that everything should unfold according to our own timetable.

A wise farmer prepares the soil, plants seeds, and waters them. That is doing.

He does not pull on the seedlings to make them grow faster. He understands the value of his effort, but he also knows that **everything develops according to its own natural rhythm**.

After doing what is necessary, he waits patiently while continuing to care for the field. The same principle applies to inner life.

Many people meditate for a few weeks and immediately ask themselves whether they are progressing, whether their experience is correct, or whether they should be obtaining more visible results. In doing so, much of the energy that should support practice is dissipated through constant self-evaluation.

Perseverance Is Born from Simplicity. Perseverance arises from simplicity.

You sit down, you practice, and then you return to your daily life. Day after day.

Without dramatizing difficult days.

Without becoming overly excited about particularly inspired days.

Stability is much more important than occasional intensity.

As Roy Eugene Davis summarized:

"Do all that you can and let the grace of God do the rest." Do not try to make your practice something extraordinary.

Make it a simple and natural habit, like washing your face in the morning.

Sit every day, honestly, for the rest of your life.

The great inner transformations rarely occur through exceptional experiences. More often, they arise from the silent accumulation of small acts repeated consistently over time.

Mr. Davis once said:

"*The spiritual path does not consist of doing extraordinary things, but of doing simple things extraordinarily well*.

Unceasing blessings,

Furio Sclano

About the Author

I first encountered Kriya Yoga in 1994 and met Roy Eugene Davis in 1996. From the very beginning, I felt a deep affinity with his approach to spiritual practice. It was practical, balanced, free of unnecessary complications, and particularly well suited to the needs of modern Western people.

In the years that followed, I carefully studied his books, lessons, and newsletters. Beginning in 2004, I started meeting him personally once or twice a year. The following year I started translating his works into Italian so that a wider audience could benefit from them. To date, I have translated fifteen of his books and have also written two books of my own.

That same year, together with several friends, we invited Roy Eugene Davis to Italy to conduct a seminar. A few months before that visit, he asked whether I would consider becoming a minister in the Kriya Yoga tradition. At the time, I did not feel fully prepared for such a responsibility. However, through practice, service, study, and experience, I gradually grew into that role.

Since 2005, I have continuously shared Kriya Yoga through meditation groups, classes, seminars, translations, and individual guidance. Along the way, I was fortunate to meet Manuela La Iacona. What began as practical assistance gradually evolved into a true partnership in service. Over time, she became a capable

and experienced teacher, and today we work together in all aspects of our ministry.

We currently offer several residential seminars in Italy each year, online guided meditations twice weekly, and monthly study sessions for sincere practitioners seeking a deeper understanding of Kriya Yoga and spiritual life.

One piece of advice from Roy Eugene Davis has remained especially important throughout the years. Shortly after my ordination, he wrote to me and said, in essence: “When you teach Kriya Yoga, teach it correctly. Do not try to be original.” I have always taken that instruction seriously.

Methods of presentation may evolve with the times. Today, for example, I sometimes use modern teaching tools such as slides and presentations. However, I have never felt the need to alter the essential content of the teachings.

Over the years, I became increasingly convinced that the approach taught by Roy Eugene Davis is exceptionally well suited to the needs of contemporary Western practitioners. For that reason, I have made a conscious decision to transmit it as faithfully as possible, exactly as I received it. I do not combine it with other systems, traditions, or modern spiritual trends. My goal has never been novelty but rather clarity, authenticity, and practical usefulness.

From the beginning, I understood that such an approach might attract fewer people than a more eclectic or innovative presentation. Nevertheless, depth and quality

have always mattered more to me than numbers. I chose to remain faithful to the teachings, trusting that sincere seekers would recognize their value. Manuela has always shared this view.

Over time, that trust has been rewarded. Many people have attended our seminars, classes, and meditation programs, not because we offered something new, but because we offered something genuine.

If this booklet has been helpful to you, I warmly invite you to continue your study and practice. Spiritual growth is not the result of extraordinary experiences, but of sincere effort, regular meditation, right understanding, and openness to grace.

With my best wishes for your spiritual growth and inner awakening,

Furio Sclano

Final Words

We are willing to evaluate opportunities to present seminars and retreats in English-speaking countries when sufficient sincere interest exists. You may contact us via e-mail for this purpose.

Supporting This Work

This booklet is offered freely as an act of service. If you found it helpful and would like to support our ongoing work

of teaching, translating, publishing, and sharing the principles of Kriya Yoga, you may consider making a voluntary donation. Contributions of any amount are appreciated and help support our classes, seminars, translations, books, and other educational resources.

Donations may be made via PayPal to:
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We are grateful for your interest, your practice, and your sincere commitment to spiritual growth.

With blessings and best wishes on your spiritual journey,

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